

**Towards a Pedagogy of Disturbance in the English Classroom:
Aesthetics Affecting A Life**

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Secondary Education
University of Alberta

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Abstract

Literature has the power to change lives. Most English teachers trust this to be true. But while there are numerous arguments, of varying merit, that defend literature on cognitive grounds, few studies convincingly point to the underlying mechanisms of what makes it ‘work,’ or explain the sources of literature’s potency. This thesis rests on the assumption that to the degree that we come to understand how literature works, or how it might work more effectively, we will make better informed choices of materials and methods in the creation of affective learning spaces for literary encounters for students. In taking this position, accepting that discourse in education will likely always be dominated by cognitive theory, I embrace comments such as that made by Chris Danta and Helen Groth, who observe that such a limited view “represents the death of an aesthetics that embraces the uncertain, the unknowable and the inchoate meanings and difficult forms that render the literary distinct from the real” (2013, 2). In this thesis, recognizing what I consider to be dangerous and conflicting claims of literature which threaten to mediate or undermine its place in compulsory curricula, I draw on multiple provocations in considering unconscious forces behind literature’s educational potential. In moving beyond the cognitive, I consider the role of aesthetics in the classroom, deferring to the concept’s etymological roots in the Greek, *Aisthesis* – to sense – and recognizing the primary processing of the art of literature as largely precognitive, presubjective and prelingual. In the process, I hope to stimulate new conversations with respect to the profound role of literature, notably the only mandatory art in upper secondary, in stimulating the event of learning.

Drawing predominantly from the work of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, as well as their theoretical progenitors and progeny, following an opening discussion of several motivating factors that led to this work, I proceed through a more thorough elaboration on what I consider to be the primary channels of disturbance implicated in education – affect, problematization and micropolitics – anticipating that a deeper appreciation of these will not only inspire but inform the selection and approaches to literature

in the classroom. Two subsequent chapters explore the nature of teacher and learner agency and various theoretical and practical implications for literary studies.

Having rather arduously laid the foundations for what I refer to as a *pedagogy of disturbance*, I conduct my own experimentation with three very different texts, all examples which I suggest are appropriate selections for secondary school readers. Choosing relatively accessible material, I hope to demonstrate how such a pedagogy might apply, not as a methodology or prescriptive program, but as a set of principles or considerations that might inform new approaches to literary studies.

The next three chapters are devoted to the novel, *Catcher in the Rye*, by J.D. Salinger, the play (in translation) *Scorched*, by Wajdi Mouawad, and selected poems by Métis writer Marilyn Dumont, respectively. In each case, I proceed by highlighting signs of disturbance potentially emerging from reading encounters, followed by explorations of various ways disturbance might be put to work, politically and educationally, as inspired by Deleuze and Guattari's schizoanalysis. The first of these makes a case for play and digression in education; the second for the potential force and work of silence, and the third for the affective capacity of poems to address Canada's Truth and Reconciliation process and move non-Indigenous subjectivities towards visions of good relations.

In my final section, I respond to what I anticipate will be ethical challenges a pedagogy of disturbance might provoke. As both an apologetics of sorts, and an appeal to educators, I contend that a nomadic or immanent ethics challenges us to consider experiments of disturbance as not only pedagogically justifiable, but in the face of current global crises, pedagogically urgent. In this context, I am especially interested in how literary encounters embody the potential to dissolve 'us' and 'them' divisions in society and create the possibilities for a 'people yet to come,' a people connected to and acting according to non-egocentric and non-anthropocentric interests of 'a life' through expressions of compassion.

Dedication

To learners past, present and future: may we all be students of, by, and for a life.

In nature's economy the currency is not money, it is life.

(Vandana Shiva, 2006, 33)

True compassion does not come from wanting to help out those less fortunate than ourselves but from realizing our kinship with all beings.

(Pema Chödrön, 2004, xi)

Right now there is such a profound collective cultural awareness that we need to practice love if we are to heal ourselves and the planet. The task awaiting us is to move from awareness to action. The practice of love requires that we make time, that we embrace change.

(bell hooks, 2021)

Acknowledgements

I would like to begin by thanking my supervisor, someone who I now consider a close friend, mediator, and confidant. For his inspiration, his wisdom and his seemingly unwavering patience and support, my gratitude goes to Jan Jagodzinski.

As well, I wish to express my appreciation for my co-supervisor, Jason Wallin, whose generous, though quietly intimidating voice haunted me, in a good way, to work with Deleuze and Guattari with as much depth and integrity as I could muster in these many years.

My gratitude also goes out to my committee members, Ingrid Johnston, Olenka Bilash and my external examiner, Nathan Snaza. To Olenka, with whom I hope to collaborate around future work in the areas of cultural intersections and troubling citizenship, Ingrid, whose monthly meetings around social justice and post-colonial literature never failed to stimulate my questions, and to Nathan, whose generous time spent closely and critically reviewing my manuscript, your questions and your suggestions will continue to provoke long after this is over. I cannot think of a more generous and more inspirational audience for my work.

For so many who have touched my life in some profound manner along the way, I want to thank all of you and hope we may continue to cross paths in the years to come: Kevin McBean, Robert Piazza, Cammy Feehan, Tania Kajner, Kathy Dawson, Shelane Williams, Deb Schrader, Jennifer Crumpton, Maureen Crawford, Greg McNulty, Colin Wolfle, Jan Favel, Brigitte Hipfl, Ron Wigglesworth, Karen Douziech, Melissa Bruin, Christine McGill, Robyn Mott, Ofelia Leon, and no doubt many others I have missed.

I also want to thank those individuals who have supported, inspired, and sustained these efforts simply by being present, and for patiently putting up with many years of erratic questions, tangential discussions, and constant interjections of both Deleuzian and Deleuzional ideas. I feel do privileged to have you in my life: Braum Barber, Mary Matsushita, Karen Jacobsen, Jim Kaiser, David Oberholtzer, Evelyn Hamdon, Lynette Schultz.

To this list I would like to add my extended family who include Barbara, Alan, Randi and Michelle Gumbos, Susan, Nancy and Heather More, Cleo, Adrian and Teddy Halls, Michael

Lambert, Richard Kasperski, my son's very special partner, Constance Hazlett, and my godchildren, Raene and Quinn Barber.

I am especially grateful to my immediate family members who have patiently put up with my distractions and digressions over the course of this work, and who continued to support me seemingly unconditionally: my parents, Florence and Bill Howe for whom I would not be here today, let alone capable of doing something like this, and my children Marynek and Aubryne, who may someday read this as a kind of coming to terms with and apologetics for my many failures, vulnerabilities, and insanities you have endured over the years. As our entangled rhizomes knit together tighter and tighter with age and love, I hope you will look forward to many more spontaneous Deleuzian digressions in the future.

Lastly and firstly I want to thank my partner, Lillian More, who has so very patiently supported me throughout these years and who has provided a constant in my life when seemingly nothing else was. For her curiosity, her wisdom, and her compassion, I am truly grateful that she has entered my life and chosen to journey it with me.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Beginning in the Middle

What matters on a path, what matters on a line, is always the middle, not the beginning or the end. We are always in the middle of a path, in the middle of something...One begins again through the middle... There are only intermezzos, intermezzi, as sources of creation.

Gilles Deleuze, Dialogues, 28

*I should have been a pair of ragged claws
Scuttling across the floors of silent seas.*

(T.S. Eliot, The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock, 2009)

Why does literature matter? How does it matter? And for what might it matter? This current research intends to reenergize, deepen, and broaden the discourse surrounding the role literature plays in the secondary English Language Arts classroom. Building on a steadily growing library of explorations across several disciplines – psychology, education, literary theory, ethics, aesthetics, sociology and even anthropology – I wish to explore the importance of literature as it faces reform logics that threaten to remove its status as compulsory, or at the very least, severely limit its scope of influence. Against an overabundance of competing arguments, the majority of which focus on cognitive premises, this work encourages educators to make room for what I believe are crucial considerations largely absent in current discussions.

Put simply, literature’s singular contribution to education – and life – lies in its capacity to disturb. While what I mean by this forms the primary substance of this work, in brief, my contention is that we need to reconsider literature for its aesthetic force in activating the learning event, but also the political and environmental ecologies that both condition and are implicated by the learning event in an era of environmental devastation and social division.

Though discourse in education will likely always be dominated by cognitive theory, we must also acknowledge the insight of scholars such as Chris Danta and Helen Groth who observe that to a certain extent, it also “represents the death of an aesthetics that embraces the uncertain,

the unknowable and the inchoate meanings and difficult forms that render the literary distinct from the real” (2013, 2). Along with many of the scholars I cite in this work, including my supervisors Jan Jagodzinski and Jason Wallin, and the profoundly influential work of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, Danta and Groth conclude that without taking the underlying and complex forces of aesthetics into consideration, we “run the risk of undervaluing the social agency of literature” (9). Similarly, Nathan Snaza develops a conceptualization of the ‘literacy situation’ to reveal “how events of conscious meaning production are inseparable from a much wider field of relations and movements” (2019, 17).

Such a re[visioning] of ELA’s potential leads us to not only think more carefully about the kinds of texts we introduce into the classroom, but what we as teachers and students as readers, can or will do with them. It is clear that each work of literature constitutes a unique experience to every student, and therefore the nature and extent of their educational experiences is somewhat dependent on the texts they encounter. And though teachers have limited control over the unique experiences enjoyed (or endured) by each student, there seems no question that the selection of text is a decisive factor in exposing readers to forces of learning, and therefore change. In contrast to many assumptions underlying current pedagogical practice, Claire Colebrook emphasizes how literature as an aesthetic power is “not making a claim about what the world is” (2002a, 12), as perhaps implied in questions related to what a selection says about the world, but instead, it is “about the imagination of a possible world” (12). In other words, literature is about making connections beyond or outside the world as we know it. As she adds, “Art is not about representation, concepts or judgement; art is the power to think in terms that are not so much cognitive and intellectual as affective (to do with feeling and sensible experience)” (12). As an aesthetic and material force, one might even argue that it is only when literature produces affect, a residue of disturbance, that any learning that deserves to call itself learning can actually take place.

This poses no small challenge to educators. Deleuze and Guattari inspire a vision of learning that is profoundly creative, reliant on and generative of differences, and potentially and quasi-

causally actualized as shifts in subjectivities. But in the process, they also challenge us to rethink all that stands in the way of such creative forces, including our inclination to seek comfort in habit, reiterations of representational thought, territorializing pressures of opinion and judgment, codifications and normalizations of objects, actions and thoughts surrounding us, and numerous other stratifying forces that fix us into stasis, like Eliot's proverbial pin. Literature matters not because of its ability to represent reality, or affirm reality, or even to interpret reality. It matters not because of what it says, but because of how it says, how it exceeds what it says, and ultimately what it can do.

As will hopefully become clearer over the course of this thesis, a *pedagogy of disturbance*, with and through literature, anticipates shifts in subjectivities. In sparking different ways of thinking and acting, changes potentially entail a gradual erosion of ego and individualism, creation of new trajectories of becoming, a waring down of habit, and an opening to affirming relations or connections to otherness, including the other-than-human.

While the Anthropocene and the future survival of the planet (human or non-human) is arguably the single most pressing social justice issue, this work's primary focus is a more modest target, and perhaps a necessary first step of addressing what is now a 'collective action problem' (Heath, 2012), of expanding connections across relationships of difference, dismantling the many forms of literal and psychological walls that create or perpetuate divisions between ingroups and outgroups – 'us' and 'them.' Many scholars have pointed to the relative ineffectiveness of cognitive approaches to addressing these issues. For example, Shakil Choudury, author of *Deep diversity: overcoming us vs. them* emphasizes that,

[T]he problems of diversity are not cognitive in nature... our blocks exist at the feeling, unconscious level. When we encounter those who are racially different than us, our unconscious, emotional selves can take over. And yet, most of the approaches used today are very cognitive, or head-based. To undo a problem that is emotional in nature, it is not very effective to try to think our way through it. Like throwing a fire extinguisher to a drowning person, it's the wrong tool for the task. (2015, 12)

Though this will be addressed more fully in my final section devoted to ethics, these projected or imagined possibilities are consistent with the non-individualist nature of what has been

called an affirmative ethics of immanence, and what I envision as its primary attribute, its compatibility with a more ecologically positioned ethics of immanent compassion.

Rewinding

Several years ago, I embarked on my doctoral studies journey burdened with questions with which I had been struggling since I first began teaching. Of these, by far the most persistent has been the one that strikes at the existential and social heart of the profession, the one already introduced earlier: assuming literature matters, then why? I had plenty of evidence of literature's impact, both from my own experience, as well as many I knew or had read about, an early influence being Robert Coles, *The Call of Stories* (1989). But when, how and why it had such power.... Those questions have continued to haunt me as each year I consider the selection of texts I will put in front of students and wonder whether they are really the best choices. At times, the intensity of the inquiry has suffered under the weight of sheer exhaustion, day-to-day demands of administrivia, assessments, 'emergencies', and the rapidly increasing challenges and demands of the profession. But without exception, my years have been punctuated with the question reappearing again and again, preventing any sense of comfort or complacency I might otherwise have relaxed into over the course of my teaching. And to this day, with each piece of literature I bring to the class, I wonder ... with all the options available to me, why do I choose this text over another? Why do I choose any text at all? ... Each time the question repeats itself. Each time with stress and distress. And each time with a subtle, though not necessarily noticeable difference.

Those familiar with Deleuze will likely recognize the allusion to one of his most important texts, *Difference and Repetition* (1994), and that the difference I refer to is not of the kind experienced in consciousness, but one that generates turmoil underneath, and indirectly contributes to the difference we may 'actually' perceive later. As he explains:

There is a crucial experience of difference and a corresponding experiment: every time we find ourselves confronted or bound by a limitation or an opposition, we should ask what such a situation presupposes. It presupposes a swarm of differences, a pluralism of

free, wild or untamed differences; a properly differential and original space and time; all of which persist alongside the simplifications of limitation and opposition. (DR, 50)

I might say that, confronted with my own opposition, or that of students who sometimes resist the literature before them, in taking up the challenge of this thesis, I am attempting to flesh out what the situation presupposes.

Inspired then, primarily by the work of Deleuze and Guattari, as well as scholars who have built on or extended their initial provocations, my dissertation will focus on literary encounters and pedagogical practices in the secondary English Language Arts education, with various implications to all fields of study. As for the question of why literature matters, I would argue that, despite its rather banal or clichéd wrappings, there is more urgency than ever in it being asked now, and because of that, intrinsic to this question are implications for how literature can matter in a world that is suffering under the weight of division, conflict, and environmental collapse.

Why This Question Now?

The sense of urgency I attach to this question and this work derives from two immediate threats. While the most significant is the one just mentioned, the impending devastation of life, the second is the threats I sense against the discipline itself, or the role of literature within the discipline. Though far less extreme in scale, assuming literature's role in engaging students with the first, as a prerequisite to student encounters with aesthetic material, it is just as salient. Not surprisingly, this fear has existed since the earliest years of curricular discussions in North America, evidenced by a comment made by Emma Breck in the *English Journal* in 1912:

And never in the history of America have we English teachers had more need than today to hold clearly before ourselves this great spiritual purpose of our work, that our mission is primarily to stimulate, to awaken, to quicken, to feed, for never has the nation more needed our help. (in Reed, 2006, 16)

As it was in 1912, a year after the inaugural conference of the National Council for the Teachers of English (NCTE) in the States, so it largely remains true today. And yet, though the polemics are familiar, I would argue that the circumstances are very different today than they were a century ago, as are the reasons why such challenges need to be taken even more seriously. As the previous century was coming to an end, Louise Poulson observed that despite its continued position as a compulsory subject, debates and controversies were still circulating regarding its purpose, content, and methods and that in the previous 25 years, "English and its teaching have been the subject of more official inquiries, reports and general political interest than any other subject on the school curriculum" (1998, 5). Now, as our province continues to be embroiled in the tensions and controversies surrounding curriculum development, there is arguably no other question more crucial than that of purpose.

The subject area of English Language Arts (ELA) has been under scrutiny since its earliest conception. In North America, and more specifically in the province of Alberta, its survival hinges rather precariously at the intersection of multiple tensions. The most dominant of these continues to emerge in the increasingly more imbalanced opposition between the extrinsic or instrumentalist view of education that prioritizes neo-liberal economic competitiveness and

what many might continue to call progressive views which champion the intrinsic values of education that prioritizes education as both a personal and social good.

The former aligns with the embedded ethos of individualism that colours both liberal and conservative influences and propagates a notion of success presumably measurable by percentage values attached to a student report card. Not surprisingly, the word success appears 68 times in the Alberta Education Guide to Education (Alberta Education, 2019), the primary source of regulations and expectations for all schools in Alberta. It also appears 70 times in the *2017-18 Alberta Education Annual Report* (Alberta Education, 2018) and in my own district, Edmonton Public Schools' vision is "Success, one student at a time" consistent with their 2018-2022 priority, to "foster growth and success for every student" (EPSB, 2020). Success, along with the equally empty signifier, 'excellence,' emphasizes getting ahead (of whom we might ask?) and accessing whatever competitive edge might be available in order to 'succeed.' Even if it is never quite understood what success is, nor which personal, social, or ethical compromises are made, intentionally or unintentionally, in the process of achieving it. The implications for ELA have been a more concerted focus on basic literacies and competencies, with debates circulating around what skills -- what 'basics' -- are or will be necessary for 'jobs,' with common themes of beating out competitors, leveraging opportunities, and meeting demands of projected, though never certain, markets and employment. It is perhaps no accident that the shifts in this direction have paralleled the intensification of both social and print-media support for neo-liberal, capitalist market logics, and a heightened rhetoric around education as credentialing.

At the time of this writing, the province recognizes and offers credits in three distinctive levels of English in High Schools. Students can complete English 30-4 (Knowledge and Employability), English 30-2 (what at one time might have been referred to as non-academic English), or English 30-1 (Alberta Education, 2003). In addition to these, some schools offer Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) classes which include, in addition to the provincial diploma exams, their own respective exams and assessments to achieve further

qualifications or special status towards competitive university admissions. Of these options, only credit in English 30-1 qualifies as a prerequisite for admission into most post-secondary institutions, including universities, colleges, and many technical programs. It therefore stands alone as the so-called gateway course – the only universally required high school course for admission to all faculties in provincial post-secondary Colleges and Universities.

How it gained such status would itself make an interesting topic of further investigation, but that it remains as such today is without a doubt cause for a slowly swelling ground of contention across the province. With a growing barrage of voices from students, parents and even educators and education administrators arguing against it, heightened with the much-contested provincial curriculum redesign, the status and form of English Language Arts is positioned rather precariously in the intersection of various tensions, pointing to the question – related directly to that at the heart of this thesis: does literature deserve to maintain its significance within the curriculum?

Ironically both sides, for and against, are arguably tainted by what I perceive as misunderstanding or underappreciation of the key merits of both the discipline and the art of literature. Supporting its more conservative role, including many who unwittingly fall into this camp, the vast majority of citizens, educators and school administrators still consider the primary purpose of ELA to be teaching reading and writing skills. Admittedly, my evidence of such concern is largely anecdotal. But drawing from 30+ years in public education, my experience has yielded a generally consistent observation: most people, including even teachers of the subject, defend English based on our need for strong communication skills. As a side note, this is also consistent with the deference yielded to demands of the marketplace.

One of the implications of the work around 21st century literacies has been the dissemination of responsibilities for literacy to all subject areas, recognizing that to read or write in science, for example, is as specialized as reading and writing around literature, and that the person best qualified to teach these discipline-specific skills is the science teacher. This, combined with the

shift proclaimed within Alberta's ongoing curriculum redesign's foundations of learning, which include literacy and numeracy that are intended to be cross-disciplinary (Alberta Education, 2020), foreshadows the slow dissolution of the once secure justification of ELA as the primary grounds for reading, writing and speaking instruction, and one that will be considerably more deprioritized as responsibilities for literacies are distributed across all disciplines. This shift has already started south of the border as the United States adopt the "Common Core" curriculum standards.¹ As it progresses, we might wonder whether the residual 'content' of ELA, misconceived as primarily focused on communication skills, will be enough to warrant the continued status of ELA as a compulsory gateway course. Will the kinds of 'communication' skills specific to literature be enough to sustain its relevance within the curriculum?

Another possible direction reform might take, also driven by the more utilitarian driven contingent, should ELA survive as a discipline; would be a shift in focus away from literature and towards content that better represents the demands of industry and business. Consistent with interests in functional literacies, a move which back-to-basics dogmatists will quickly champion, and one which has already been set in motion with the common-core standards in the U.S., will be towards non-fiction texts. As the latter states,

In accord with NAEP's [National Assessment of Educational Progress] growing emphasis on informational texts in the higher grades, the Standards demand that a significant amount of reading of informational texts take place in and outside the ELA classroom. Fulfilling the Standards for 6-12 ELA requires much greater attention to a specific category of informational text—literary nonfiction—than has been traditional. (Common Core Standards Initiative, 2010)

Either as a result of attacks on the continued relevance of English Language Arts as a prerequisite to post-secondary, or as a result of the dominant defenses of English on grounds that it provides the foundation for communication skills for post-secondary, the core singularity of the discipline, which I would argue is still literature, is at risk of being dissolved. It seems

¹ "The standards establish guidelines for English language arts (ELA) as well as for literacy in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects. Because students must learn to read, write, speak, listen, and use language effectively in a variety of content areas, the standards promote the literacy skills and concepts required for college and career readiness in multiple disciplines. The College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards form the backbone of the ELA/literacy standards by articulating core knowledge and skills, while grade-specific standards provide additional specificity. Beginning in grade 6, the literacy standards allow teachers of ELA, history/social studies, science, and technical subjects to use their content area expertise to help students meet the particular challenges of reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language in their respective fields." (Common Core State Standards Initiative, 2010)

only a matter of time before the literary ‘arts’ in English Language Arts will be dissolved altogether, relegated to the same ‘options’ list as drama, dance, music, and visual arts. Sadly, even as an art, misunderstanding, misappropriation and misappreciation, in the service of the same dubious masters of questionable opportunism that portend repurposing of the rest of the curriculum, also threaten to taint and dull its potential to infuse life with vitality. From the technical to the banal, as the arts fall prey to the tools – machines – of capitalism and neo-liberalism, the crucial role they might play in education is either obscured or smothered entirely.

The most obvious of these tools of control are the measures of accountability, including, but not limited to, standardized assessments. While arbitrary measurements infused within testing procedures would be a topic for a whole other book, in brief I would suggest that the shifts Jacques Ellul warned of in *The Technological Society* (1967) have come to bear on education as instruments of assessment, perhaps at one time intending to be means to ends, have become the ends themselves, leaving out of consideration not only experiences of learning that either are not or cannot be measured, but often any considerations of learning at all. Too often conversations move directly to ‘a mark’ received, desired, or rejected. Tragically, much of what is ignored or devalued because they are not measured or do not appear on the report card, are the experiences with the most significant and most sustainable life value. Stated more succinctly in an observation sometimes attributed to Einstein but more accurately is associated with sociologist William Bruce Cameron: “not everything that can be counted counts, and not everything that counts can be counted” (1963, 13). In pointing to one of the central ironies of education today, often what can be measured, and typically what can be measured most conveniently, very quickly becomes, for many parents, administrators and unfortunately even students, what is valued, when what is more educationally significant is too unclear, too difficult, or too inaccessible to be measured. In the case of literature, arguably this would include the active residue of the direct encounter with literature that resides within the body and operates at the level of the unconscious, potentially acting on the life of the organism for years to come.

As a hypothetical exercise, it might be worth considering how English classes might be designed if teachers were no longer constrained by the demands for numerical measures of progress? If they could set aside current standards of accountability and standardized assessments? And at the same time, if there was some way of observing the molecular or cellular changes taking place within the body of readers as they engage with literature – no longer counting what is memorized, but rather what shifts happen in thought and action? In such an imaginary scenario, how would classes be re[vision]ed? What would be emphasized or deemphasized?

Lamentably, the flows of difference accompanying the aesthesis of literature, often producing non-representational forces and effects, are either crudely dismissed or ignored, in the service of expediency and the conforming insistence of measurable products. To the extent that we cannot measure what matters most in literature, we fill in report cards with more convenient and more expedient ‘counts’ to satisfy the need to perceive tangible or concrete evidence of ‘progress.’ And while certain exercises may have their place in nurturing specific skill development, when applied to the prospect of genuine thinking and learning (to be discussed in more detail in the chapters to follow), expectations and standards designed for and aligned with assessment not only violently restrict excursions of thought and imagination, but they stifle the very differences the arts exist to generate.

A more subtle incursion from the marketplace is the misappropriation which comes as the proverbial wolf in sheep’s clothing, arriving in the alluring mask of advocacy for more art in the curriculum. For example, an early influence in curriculum redesign discussions in Alberta, and one of the most seductive and pernicious of the wolves, is Daniel Pink. As a former speech writer for the White House, Pink’s background is the world of business and economics. The title of his most influential publication says it all: *A Whole New Mind: Why Right-Brainers Will Rule the Future* (2006). In brief, Pink makes the case for arts, creativity, and divergent thinking, not because of any intrinsic value, but because they yield an edge over competition. Pink, along with many others (Yong Zhao, 2012, 2013; Tony Wagner, 2014) champion the virtues of the arts building competencies necessary for innovation. As Jagodzinski states convincingly, “it has

become imperative to put art and aesthetics to use [and thus] for art programs to survive, the demand is that their utility be manifest” (2010, 29).

As he further observes, more and more we see the promotion of art couched within the language of economic competitiveness and the ends of what he calls “designer capitalism.” And the distinction between fine arts and vocational arts or art and design often imply coded signs for ‘useless’ and ‘useful’: “Creativity lies at the heart of the enterprise of art and its education and at the same time it is that which remains unacknowledged and repressed, forming the fundamental antagonism of art and its education as art teachers toil to ‘count’ within the broader educational edifice” (2010, 30-31) At a time when quantity is valued at the expense of quality, and success is measured in terms of economic returns on investment and patent applications (Yong Zhao, 2012), people are looking more and more for the humanities and arts to deliver in terms of a dollar value. Even recognizing that questions of value or what ‘counts’ may be just as concerning in other subjects, including math and science, measures of progress are rarely challenged to the extent that they are in the arts, in which judgments are often dismissed as either subjective or irrelevant.

In her rather vehement defense of the arts in education, Maxine Greene challenges the impact of the demands for measurement, suggest that in stimulating the imagination, the arts offer a necessary source of escape from what Deleuze will refer to as the control society shaped by the demands of neo-liberalism:

We are concerned with possibility, with opening windows on alternative realities, with moving through doorways into spaces some of us have never seen before. We are interested in releasing diverse persons from confinement to the actual, particularly confinement to the world of techniques and skill training, to fixed categories and measurable competencies. We are interested in breakthroughs and new beginnings, in the kind of wide-awakeness that allows for wonder and unease and questioning and the pursuit of what is not yet. (2001, p. 44)

In our paranoid attempts to ensure accountability, recalling Ellul’s cautioning about the tyranny of technology, the instrumentality of marks and grades orient parents, students, and

administrators to what they quickly assume to be important, while at the same time distracting them from elements equally if not more worthy of their attention.

And while it may indeed be true that an emphasis on creativity, even if coopted under the banner of innovation, might generate economic potential, to settle for such utilitarian arguments is to sell out the possibilities of an education for difference and in the process, hobble or hinder its potential. And even if it offers us a temporary reprieve against literature's dismissal, to sublimate its potential within the syntax of the market logic is, as John McMurtry points out, to cater to a system which ultimately destroys that which it so deceptively appears to celebrate:

Humans are value-bearing beings and their ultimate ground of value is life itself; but because the ruling economic order has not life-coordinates in its regulating paradigm, it is structured always to mis-represent its life-blind imperatives as life-serving... the freedom of unfreedom, the terror of anti-terrorism, the peace-seeking of war are, like the life-endowing properties of dead commodities, contradictions which are generated by the global market system's syntax of meaning itself. (2002, 55)

With this in mind, it is the life-endowing properties of literature which I wish to argue are most at stake at this point in the discipline's history. Contrary to the common misconceptions surrounding English Language Arts, I would argue that its most unique, its most precious, and its most important attribute is precisely that which is under siege: the aesthetic potential to ignite learning. As Claire Colebrook emphasizes, "The problem, today, is that when we ask what art or philosophy are for, we tend to feel they should serve some everyday function: making us better managers or communicators [and] we fail to see that the purpose or force of art and philosophy goes beyond what life is to what it might become. (2002a, 13-14). It is perhaps no small miracle that English remains the only academic course, the only core subject, and the only required diploma course with art at its centre.² In much simpler terms, as the character of Mr. Keating reminds his class in the film, *Dead Poets Society*:

² None of what has been said here is to suggest that the merits of literature surpasses that of any art. I narrow my focus here not only because of its currently tenuous status as a requisite component of English Language Arts, but because it is the art form for which my studies and experiences, both personal and professional, have yielded some degree of familiarity.

We don't read and write poetry because it's cute. We read and write poetry because we are members of the human race. And the human race is filled with passion. And medicine, law, business, engineering - these are noble pursuits and necessary to sustain life. But poetry, beauty, romance, love - these are what we stay alive for. (1989)

I might add, not only does literature embody “what we stay alive for,” but as an art, it opens access to what will be referred to as ‘a life,’ and in doing so it is generative of life in life.

As a course centered on the art of literature, it is the only required course engaged on a day-to-day basis with the production of difference, production of the non-representational, and the production of affect. It is the only course, with art at its centre that might, given the chance to do so, find refuge from the expository spaces of opinion, representation, and cognitive exercises. And while the degree to which this can occur depends on the instructor, the pedagogical practices and the literature chosen, where there is art, as I will argue throughout this thesis, there is bound to be the possibility of disturbance and with it the productive flow of affect. Nathan Snaza echoes this urgent call to defend programs of study, albeit at the post-secondary level, against the incursion of the kinds of attitudes and reforms that I fear are at risk of constraining or even removing the ‘art’ from English Language Arts:

When we practice disciplined knowledge production, whatever our politics, we scholars have our energies, attentions, and perceptions captured by institutions that are calibrated to the project of humanization and its dehumanizing exhaust. What we need, then, is not more disciplinary knowledge but ways of attuning to the more-than-human political situation that, from the perspective of disciplines, become errant, delinquent, and failed. We have to learn to attend more precisely to how we are affected by literacy situations, and to follow those affects into uncertain and uncontrollable relations.” (2019, 76)

In summary, the focus of this current investigation will address not only the question of why English matters, but why it matters as the matter of art. For it is because of literature’s material force that it does what other disciplines either cannot or typically do not, in part due to their rootedness in the cognitive. Simply stated, the student who begins reading a great work of literature is not the same student who finishes the novel. And it is the change – the difference – that arguably constitutes the learning that matters.

From the day I decided to enter the field of education, I envisioned opening students to literature in a way that would affect them as deeply and profoundly as it had myself, to the extent that it led me to leave my first profession as an engineer in order to focus on what I felt offered a potential source of revolutionary shifts in the social justice issues I had struggled with from my earliest days as a young teenager. Encountering works such as *Brave New World*, by Aldous Huxley, *Siddhartha* by Herman Hesse and *Catcher in the Rye* by J.D. Salinger – three works I read in my second year of university that shifted my life path completely – I was profoundly convinced of literature’s ability to disrupt life. They did not solve problems of social justice, but rather committed me to certain inarticulable problems that have stayed with me since I first encountered them. Having immersed myself in the work of Deleuze and Guattari, I now think of literature’s impact, as suggested by my title, in terms of disturbance, arising in large part from the affective nature of certain texts and the ability of art to yield the kind of problems that defy words yet resist dismissal. But it is also a kind of disturbance which, paradoxically, is strangely satisfying and life affirming.

Building on this groundwork as a prescient plane of contention, I turn then to a recapitulation of my own struggles through what I shall refer to as the three paradigms of English instruction, the first two of which largely comprise the primary focuses of the classroom today. Following the example set by Deborah Reed who offers a discourse analysis of the history of the field of secondary English studies, albeit in the American context, each of the paradigms approaches the discipline according to “deeply embedded assumptions about learning, knowledge and purpose of literacy [which] lie at the heart of the issues surrounding literature instruction” (2006, 131). These, in turn, lead to very different responses to the questions of why literature ought to be taught, how literature ought to be taught, and of course, what literature or what kinds of literature ought to be taught.

Paradigm One: Choice and Method above Content

Both theoretically and practically, the significance of this research rests on a convincing, compelling, and hopefully novel contributions to discussions surrounding the secondary English curriculum. To adequately do so, however, will require a brief but important review of the methods, justifications and choices regarding text selection that dominate current practice. Though there are unique anomalies across the continent, particularly when it comes to specialized courses in the International Baccalaureate, Advanced Placement or private school curricula, the majority of teachers still follow the residual threads of some combination of New Criticism or reader-response theory and swings of the proverbial pendulum between traditional-classical and contemporary-progressive education.

Perhaps stretching back to early reactions to Dewey's emphasis on the educational experience of art as developed in *Art as Experience* (1934/2005) and Louise Rosenblatt's introduction to the transactional theory of reading in her work *Literature as Exploration* (1934), the field of English Language Arts has, like many other disciplines, experienced a rather sweeping transition from teacher-centered classrooms revolving around a list of canonical texts to child-centered methods centred on student choice.

But when I first began my career as an English teacher, reader-response theory was the dominant discourse in education. However, caught up in the more popularized tunes of progressive education's bandwidth, the presiding sentiments in the field were, I now believe, far removed from the original intent of either Dewey or Rosenblatt, having been diluted in both purpose and substance. Dewey's ideas, perhaps the most influential in the 20th century, have been applied superficially, and his influence has eroded to the extent that, were he alive today he would no doubt be dismayed with schooling's obsession with assessment and measurable results. In ELA, the trajectory of progressive thought, while no doubt well-intentioned, has drifted into practices that I would argue have lost their way, and in the process have diluted the very forces behind literature and art that they might have intended to bolster. The potential of

Dewey's vision has faded under a regime of deferral to often unacknowledged relativism, and teacher as 'guide on the side' in an imposed binary opposition to 'sage on the stage'.

I did not, however, encounter Dewey or any other theories of reading until much later in my career. Instead, when I entered the profession, the instructors of my curriculum and instruction courses at university as well as the teachers I encountered in my first assignment, were captivated by the latest developments in 'reader response' theory, largely centered on works such as Nancie Atwell's *In the Middle: New Understandings about Writing, Reading, and Learning* (1989, 1998). Whether it was because I was new to the profession or because of where and when I started teaching, I was immediately drawn into Atwell's methodology. With its guise of a more democratic classroom, the reader's workshop is built on assumptions that all reading experiences are positive, that students ought to be allowed to read what they want, and that independence in choice and reading offers the best chance to raise a nation of readers. In other words, reading matters absolutely and unconditionally! It was the banner under which I began my career. It is better to have students read anything, rather than nothing at all; what matters is that they read. An anthem still championed by many today. Reflecting on it now, I realize that while apparently more egalitarian, in practice it often leaves students vulnerable to the neo-liberal marketization of and for student desire and imagination.

I remember my first year, in the early 90's, being placed in a school with no textbooks, no materials and no book room. Just the library and Nancie Atwell's philosophy of reading already implemented in other classes down the hall. Though initiated at younger grades, many of the principles of her 'readers' workshop' approach have increasingly gained devotees in high schools especially given the popularity of the second edition in 1998, and subsequent works (Atwell, 2007; Atwood and Atwell Merkel, 2016; Miller, 2009; Krashen, 2004, 2011) that build on it, with the centre pieces continuing to be free reading and free choice. In her most recent book, Atwell includes an entire chapter devoted to high school English. Building on the assumption that every teacher "would want every high school graduate to be able to read fluently, deeply, and with pleasure" she insists that the way to achieve such a goal is "by putting

frequent, sustained, pleasurable experiences with books at the heart – or at least as an essential part – of the secondary curriculum” (2016, 161-162).

Atwell’s love of reading and the readers’ workshop is infectious. And I do not doubt the success she has with grade 7 and 8 students in her demonstration school at the Centre for Teaching and Learning in Maine. But the assumption that all reading is good reading – success is measured, seemingly, not by the content of books, nor the impact of the books, but by sheer numbers of books and the pleasure attained from such reading, is in my mind deeply flawed. As this thesis will hopefully demonstrate, reading is a pedagogical act, but it is also deeply political in nature. And the literature we encounter has the potential to challenge or change us, or alternatively to subjugate us to habitual ways of being in the world, with the latter restricting life rather than affirming it. Again, while it may sound perfectly admirable, giving students free choice in the classroom, it worries me both in the context of current trends in curriculum development and as a flawed premise for literary study.

In highlighting the rights of the student reader within the context of education, we continue to prioritize individualism over wider considerations of the ecology of community, society and the non-human world surrounding us. Early in my career, the naiveté behind such a premise was barely understood and to the extent that it was, it did not have the power to push me, yet, beyond the dominant methods and beliefs of the time. I emphasize methods, because from the perspective of the common practices of the time, the substance of literature was, and for the most part still is, much less of a concern than what activities, exercises or approaches will surround it. Ironically, another prominent advocate of free or independent reading, Jeffrey Wilhelm, proclaims, “We are focusing too much on the what and not enough on the why and the how of reading” (2013, 56). Yet how do we untangle the why without implicating the what? Reflecting on reader-response theory, Jason Skeet draws our attention to its inability “to account for the ways in which a text activates a reader in unforeseen ways” (2017, 89).

It should be noted also that even from the standpoint of the ‘individual’ rights of the child, the right to choose, or the deference to what they desire or consider ‘relevant,’ is arguably in tension with other rights which are conceivably just as valid and perhaps more important. Within the literature of political philosophy surrounding rights issues, one might find ample support for the rights of the child to learn, to provide educational experiences which will allow children the greatest range of informed choices in the future and to participate fully as members of a community. This latter consideration may, to risk a common cliché, require short-term pain for long-term gain, including exposing students to literature they may not have chosen on their own. Though English teachers will always be able to recall exceptional readers, during my brief immersion in the practice of readers’ workshop, I found that student choices were just as likely to be products of ignorance, naiveté or market-constructed desire and self-interest. Which is perhaps what at least one teacher expects: “As a teacher of eighth and ninth grade English I seek to interest kids in reading in general rather than in particular authors... and I want them to regard books as pleasant pastimes rather than as intellectual obstacle courses” (in Jennifer Nicol, 2008, 26). In response to such positions, one might ask whether this is really the most we can expect of literature? Books as pleasant pastimes? Escape? And are ‘intellectual obstacles’ not the opportunities educators ought to relish rather than avoid? I do not profess to have the answers, but the longer I teach, the more such questions now perturb my practices.

In her review of Cara Mulcahy’s *Marginalized Literacies* (2010), Patricia Gross notes the contrast to the more liberal stance of free reading, observing that “Progressive literacy promotes personal growth, failing to question cultural or political contexts” (2011, 2). In contrast, Mulcahy’s proposal of critical literacy is “aimed at empowering people to think and act reflectively to become change agents who disrupt the commonplace, interrogate multiple viewpoints, and focus on socio-political issues to end oppression and privileging some people over others” (2).

Similarly, in recognizing the broader possibilities of education, Martha Nussbaum makes a strong case against leaving literature, and by implication text selection, to chance, stating that,

Even when we have found a good story to tell, we should not hope to change years of institutionalized abhorrence and discrimination by appeal to 'fancy' alone, since fancy, even when adequately realized, is a fragile force in a world filled with various forms of hardness... On the other hand, what we see in such human refusals... [are those who] cultivate their human sympathies unequally and narrowly. (1997, xvii-xviii)

Though Nussbaum's humanism and centering of the cognitive contrasts the aesthetic philosophies to be discussed here, I find her words regarding institutionalized attitudes commensurate with Deleuze and Guattari's conceptualization of territorializations within majoritarian regimes.

Recalling my own experience teaching world literature, many students balked at the strange and often difficult language of texts in translation. This is never unexpected. Regardless of age, all readers are inclined, I believe, to resist texts the more they become non-representational – difficult to paraphrase or exceeding the language and imagery of common experiences. We might hypothesize that the more the text challenges representative models of 'reality', the more it challenges, thwarts, and frustrates readers' expectations. Conversely, the less literature challenges, the more it affirms our existing frames of reference, our likes and dislikes, and consequently the easier it is to digest. And if education is properly understood in terms of change, movement, or becoming, then we cannot settle for comfortable. As Deleuze points out, "representation fails to capture the affirmed world of difference...it mediates everything, but mobilizes and moves nothing" (DR, 56). As a side note, despite the challenges of world literature, unexpectedly there were a few students who admitted to taking the course, not because they knew they would like the literature, or find it 'pleasurable' but rather because they knew they would be exposed to literature they would not find or choose on their own. In time, students may come to trust a teacher's capacity to recommend texts that may be more challenging, but also more gratifying.

The question of content is central to all curriculum studies. But while most disciplines enjoy, or regretfully endure, the specifics provided in required textbooks and fact driven agendas, English language arts teachers are often given a wide range of choices, so long as they fulfill the broad, if not vague, expectations of skills summarized in the provincial program of studies. On the

positive side, this leaves considerable freedom for teacher choice in the classroom. On the downside, as with all freedoms, it also comes with the weighty burden of responsibility for choices made.

What surprises me is that even in high schools, while rarely to the degree that it is implemented in junior high classes, the practice of allowing students to choose their literature, often in small group novel studies or for independent novel studies, is now common across the province. In an informal survey of English teachers conducted by the English 30-1 Diploma Examiner, Barbara Proctor-Hartley and myself, we discovered that in choosing literature for the classroom, the majority of teachers either select literature based on what is available, or based on what they feel students will like, what is often translated – erroneously in my mind – as relevance.

In other words, teachers, school boards and even curriculum designers have deferred to frantic attempts to appeal to and fulfill 'student interests in response to the questions, 'Will students want to read that? Write that? See that? Do that? Study that?' Clearly there is a balance to be drawn here between deferral to texts that might appeal to students and texts that challenge them. As many teachers will readily admit, there are works of literature which students will never choose on their own but that nevertheless offer important learning opportunities. I agree with David Jardine's analogy (2010) of young children's explorations with paint; left free to try whatever, they are as apt to end up with mud, as they are a rainbow. If we take our vocation as English teachers seriously, then surely we must concern ourselves with the nature of experiences students will encounter with literature. And if choices are made based more on relatability or ease of consumption, we risk disrespecting our students' worthiness, but in the process also abdicating our ethical responsibilities as educators. Paradoxically, freedom without struggle rarely yields freedom.

Many of us who are passionate about our subject are already lamenting what appears to be a decline in the intrinsic importance of literature and as we continue to move towards a more

arbitrary and more 'student-centered' curricula, it is becoming more and more difficult to argue for literature's enduring value as central to education. With literary selections essentially a free-for-all, professional conversation, professional development, and professional resources have steadily trended towards questions of method rather than text. And with fewer and fewer common texts being taught and teachers' choices becoming increasingly more idiosyncratic, discussions rarely lend themselves to any specifics of literature – content or value. We have spent so much time over the past few decades focusing our attention on process – reading, writing, viewing, speaking, representing, and listening – that we have largely neglected what I believe are more significant questions: reading what? Speaking what? Listening to what? Viewing of what? And of course, all of these for what? Are the answers to these questions really as indefinite as a curriculum of free choice suggests?

With attention no longer focused on the merits of specific selections literature, professional development and teachers' guides are almost entirely devoted to classroom strategies to engage students. It seems that, with a burgeoning shopping list of generic methods and exercises one could apply to virtually any text, many teachers in high school are now foregoing the study of a novel and moving toward independent reading or literature circles (group novel studies). In a field, not unlike others, ready-for-Monday activities or how-to guide fulfill the craving for quick, mend-all, superglues, readily available and universally applicable.

Whether justifiable or not, our freedom to choose what texts students desire risks being interpreted by parents, administrators and even students to mean texts aren't important. Likewise, the more English teachers demonstrate a lack of willingness to engage in discussions of literary merit, whether out of disinterest or out of fear of irritating lines of contention, we risk further depreciation of defenses against encroaching attacks on literature's necessity. Ironically, one of the subject's scholarly matriarchs, Louise Rosenblatt, agreed that there is no such 'formula' by which we might claim the relative merits of "contemporary literature as against literature of the past, nor minor as against major works, nor even syntactically simpler as against more demanding works" (1956, 71). But this observation does not mean we have no

reason to recommend one reading over another. As she concludes, being flexible, “we need to understand where our pupils are in relation to' books, and we need a sufficient command of books to see their potentialities in this developmental process. Our main responsibility is to help the student to find the right book for growth” (1956, 71).

Her assertion is consistent with the remarks of Italian designer, Massimo Vignelli, who in emphasizing his disdain for American style ‘market research,’ points out that people “barely know what they need, but they definitely do not know what they want” (in Millman, 2010). But even more relevant to the proposal I wish to make in this present work, he adds that “They’re conditioned by the limited imagination of what is possible” (2010).

None of this is to say that what students do with literature is not important. Nor are the approaches which best serve the maximization of a text’s potential impact. But method should not drive substance. Removed from the context of place, time, audience, not to mention the literary selection itself, the prioritization of method risks dampening, if not suffocating, the unique and immanent forces that might otherwise seize the attention and the productive imagination of the reader.

Paradigm Two: Meaning, Interpretation and the Literary Canon

In contrast to pedagogies revolving around processes and methods aimed at getting students to read...anything, are those that focus on meaning in text. High schools today are still largely under the influence of both reader response theories and what is generally referred to as New Criticism or Formalist approaches to literature. Arguably we might conceive of these two approaches as a spectrum wherein at the extreme end of reader-response, the student-reader interprets what the text means to them, and at the extreme end of New Critical response theory, most notably associated with the influence of Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren, wherein meaning is understood as residing entirely within the text, there to be pried open or uncovered by the reader. As Robert Blake and Anna Lunn point out, New Criticism would read a poem, for example, guided by the assumptions that “interpretation means discovering the objective meaning of a piece, determining the author’s intended meaning, and reading and responding objectively to the piece itself, not to the biography of the writer or to the cultural or social history of the time in which it was created” (1986, 68).

Of course, in the classroom, other sources of meaning such as biographical, historical, cultural influences are factored in along the spectrum and occasionally, though rarely, even Marxist, psychoanalytic, archetypal, post-colonial, queer, feminist, and deconstructive theoretical lenses are introduced. But the interpretive practices applied largely vary from teacher to teacher, school to school, classroom to classroom and program to program, with enriched programs such as the International Baccalaureate and Advanced Placement leaning heavily towards strict formalism.

While I was initially inculcated into reader response methodologies, more compatible with the emphases described previously under paradigm one, despite the influence of colleagues in my first school placement I was never fully satisfied with the level of understanding students demonstrated or challenges they willingly chose in their reading. In spite of the labels often associated with the two extremes of the spectrum, with reader response aligned with a

student-centred progressive education and New Criticism with the more directed top-down classical or traditional models, I was truly conflicted as to which offered the better education. And the more I immersed myself in the study of the discipline's history, and the provocations of the philosophical arguments associated with various proposals and positions, the more I began to shift my allegiances... at least for the time being.

The history of English as a subject in North America has, in both Canada and the U.S., derived largely from what was taking place in the U.K., driven by figures such as Matthew Arnold and F.R. Leavis. Up to the 19th century it had only really been reserved primarily for the education of young women and enculturation within the colonies (Fred Walcott, 1956, 77; Robert Eaglestone, 2000, 10). In the U.S. the study of high school English was initially driven by the entrance exams to the universities, though as early as 1894, the "Report of the Committee of Ten on Secondary School Studies" pronounced that the two 'main direct objectives' of English were "(1) to enable the pupil to understand the expressed thoughts of others and to give expression to thoughts of his own; and (2) to cultivate a taste for reading, to give the pupil some acquaintance with good literature, and to furnish him with the means of extending that acquaintance" (National Education Association, 1894, 1894, 86). The report specifies the 'study of literature' to mean "the study of works of good authors" (90), with elements of rhetoric connected to analysis and criticism, as well as composition and "principles and maxims relating to effective discourse" (90).

Nevertheless, the universities did remain influential, as they do today, in terms of what literature is taught in high schools. As Deborah Reed points out, "the Harvard Entrance exams may have even influenced the Committee of Ten's decision to anoint English as a major subject of study" (2006, 24) in the first place. Harvard President Eliot declared, "School teachers are encouraged to familiarize their pupils with a few choice specimens of English literature . . . and to cultivate in their pupils, through correct translation and the reading of prescribed books, accurate methods of thought and expression" (in Reed, 2006,25).

Not surprisingly, as Reed also points out, at their inaugural conference in 1911, secondary English teachers of the newly created National Council of Teacher of English (NCTE) challenged the authority of the university and Eliot's remarks, noting that not all of their students were heading to liberal arts colleges. More vehemently perhaps, though they recognized the "the importance of studying literature for thought and expression," under the influence of the 'progressive reform movement' teachers began to "bristle at the notion of "accurate" thought and expression" (25). Questions of authority regarding which literary thoughts or expressions are accurate and more importantly, which are of value, have haunted the profession ever since.

To this day, considering the two most prominent theoretical frameworks – reader-response and New Criticism – the production of meaning, when discussed or written about, is largely a hybrid of both. Though in constant competition with the influence of child and reader-centered practices, English at the high school today is largely a hybrid of both, still retaining a heavy residue of formalism. Though some might disagree, I would contend that this is largely due to the continued weight of the provincial exam for which both the written and multiple-choice sections place a heavy emphasis on close-reading skills. The blending of the two dominant methodologies of reading is also evidenced in the demands of Alberta Education's current program of studies, now two decades old. General outcome 2, for example, requires students to "Comprehend and respond personally and critically to oral, print and other media texts," and in doing so, use "prior knowledge," "comprehension strategies," "textual cues," "Structural analysis," and "Appreciate the artistry of texts" (2003, 16).

Thus, from free reading or independent reading and an emphasis on method over matter (Paradigm One), my own studies in literary theory further reenforced my sense that not all texts are of equal merit. Today, though I do not agree with the stringent restrictions of neither New Criticism nor any other specified lens, I am convinced that more deliberation around text choice is needed than I expect typically takes place. And based on the survey mentioned earlier and other informal surveys carried out within my board, text selection needs to consider reasons other than those typically applied.

The question remains, however, that if we can reasonably assume different texts engage readers in different experiences, then which experiences are of most value with respect to learning and their potential impact on students' lives and relations with the world. At one point, as I'm sure many are, I became fascinated with lists of 'must-read' literature, even though I was often in disagreement with the selections and criteria (if offered). The origin of the term, *canon*, refers to 'measure or rule' and was initially reserved for discussions surrounding authoritative sacred texts. Considered in its broadest terms, lists of canonical works or 'Great Works', not only ordain a certain prescriptive authority over titles listed, but an air of pretentiousness or elitism to those who defend them. And it is no wonder they are often contested. As Michael Benton (2000) points out, while on one hand "control of the canon is an expression of political power...who controls the curriculum" (2000, 271), at the same time, "the inevitability of the canon cannot be taken for granted... What we read and talk about sows the seeds of a literary culture, and part of that culture is to share the aesthetic experiences of reading" (273). Canons arise in any space in which a community of readers resides, but they also arise whenever there is a special interest influencing the reigns of selection, and advocacy for one text over another is often shaped by the loudest or most powerful voices of influence and the issues trending in the media.

But regardless how much teachers might resist authoritative book lists, knowingly or unknowingly they cannot escape having to contend with canons of one form or another. Even for teachers who practice free or independent reading, the infinite list from which each teacher makes their selections is 'measured or ruled,' not necessarily by any exhaustive set of criteria or by external prescription, but by certain default criteria: the teacher's own idiosyncratic reasons (not always conscious), the limits to their budget for new texts, what has 'worked' in the past, what others have taught in the school, what unit plans are available to the teacher, what texts are readily accessible in the stock room, or what texts are trending in the market or being popularized in the media or in film. With or without associated criteria, a 'short list' of available selections seems inevitable, whether we call it a canon or not. And simply stated, I believe our

profession would arguably be made much richer, and perhaps more respectable, if selections were more clearly revealed, shared and most importantly, questioned or defended.

In what has often been dubbed the 'canon wars', there is a continuing tension between those who are more-or-less positioned in the traditionalist or conservative camp, lamenting the fading luster and pedagogical dismissal of 'classical' canonical works (represented more-often-than-not by white, male, Western, heterosexual authors), and those situated in the more progressive or liberal camp, demanding more representation among authors and authentic literary experiences from diverse cultures, abilities, genders and sexual orientations. Clearly, while both sides may champion literature's importance, there is considerable disagreement as to which texts deserve curricular attention. On one hand, for example, we still hear references to Allan Bloom's *Closing of the American Mind*, now with a 25th anniversary edition (1987/2012), who states rather polemically, that "Only in the Western nations, i.e., those influenced by Greek philosophy, is there some willingness to doubt the identification of the good with one's own way" (1987, 36), arguing against what he sees as an onslaught of relativism. Arriving in the form of feminist and cultural demands to open the canon, these are "unified only in their relativism and in their allegiance to equality" (25). On the other hand scholars such as Martha Nussbaum who, even as a classicist, directly counters Bloom in *Cultivating Humanity: a classical defense of reform in liberal education*, in which she challenges him directly: "If Bloom and others do think that American traditions are so fragile that mere knowledge of other ways will cause young people to depart from them, why are they so keen on endorsing and shoring up these fragile traditions?" (2003, 33). And while Nussbaum shares Bloom's disdain for identity politics, she comes to a very different conclusion regarding the openness to more diverse literature reflecting the need for citizens of the world, inspired by the Greek figure of Diogenes the cynic: "The world-citizen view insists on the need for all citizens to understand differences with which they need to live; it sees citizens as striving to deliberate and to understand across these divisions" (111).

The irony, of course, is that neither accepts easy classification as either left or right and both ultimately place a premium of literature as a force of new ideas. For Bloom, “The failure to read good books both enfeebles the vision and strengthens our most fatal tendency—the belief that the here and now is all there is” (1987, 64). Which is not so dissimilar to Nussbaum who reminds us that “Becoming a citizen of the world is often a lonely business. It is, in effect, a kind of exile—from the comfort of assured truths, from the warm nestling feeling of being surrounded by people who share one’s convictions and passions. (2003, 83). They are also united in their staunch defense of certain qualities of literature as essential to education, echoing Mark Twain’s often quoted line, “The man who doesn't read good books has no advantage over the man who can't read them.” Similarly, they both would likely affiliate themselves with the ‘liberal’ tradition of education, and while Bloom is more adamant in his dismissal, as mentioned, both eschew identity politics. Nussbaum, for example, associates the identity-politics view as “depict[ing] the citizen body as a marketplace of identity-based interest groups jockeying for power, and views difference as something to be affirmed rather than understood”(111), arguing that while the curriculum should reflect the plurality of society, “the great contribution literature has to make to the life of the citizen is its ability to wrest from our frequently obtuse and blunted imaginations an acknowledgment of those who are other than ourselves, both in concrete circumstances and even in thought and emotion” (111-112).

After some 20 years since the publication of Bloom’s polemic, both Bloom and Nussbaum would likely agree with Louis Menand’s ‘big question’ which is “How do we explain why what we do is important for people who aren’t humanists?” (in Rachel Donadio, 2007). Setting aside his emphasis on humanism, the pedagogical implications are clear; without some sense of why we choose the texts we do and what value they potentially embody, it is difficult to defend why literature should be part of our education.

This has already been foreshadowed by shifts in post-secondary studies where the requirement that all first-year university students at the University of Alberta complete one full year literature-based course in English has been lifted. Instead, classes have been redesigned to fit

each faculty's professional demands which, for engineering, science, business and medicine, are now largely focused on technical writing. Just as alarming is the direction countries such as Brazil have taken by replacing secondary requirements for courses in literature to 'cultural studies,' in which historical and other expository texts now dominate. Are these shifts the result of a declining consensus on literature's value? Or, as already noted, deteriorating discussions, at least in the political or public arenas where decisions are made, regarding what, if anything, its value is. For if we can no longer decide what, if anything, is essential in literary studies, either thematically or textually, then can we blame others for questioning the requirement for literature at all?

The fact that literature became such a significant part of the secondary curriculum was, after all, at least partially due to influences such as Matthew Arnold in the 19th century. Written in an era of cultural ethnocentrism, cultural imperialism and religious conservatism, Arnold is perhaps best known for his declaration of "culture being a pursuit of our total perfection by means of getting to know, on all the matters which most concern us, the best which has been thought and said in the world" (1869, viii). Ironically, Arnold is sometimes interpreted as supporting literature for the reproduction or maintenance of culture, but the rest of his statement, rarely quoted, seems to imply the very opposite. As he continues, it is through certain works that we move beyond the here and now, by "turning a stream of fresh and free thought upon our stock notions and habits, which we now follow staunchly but mechanically, vainly imagining that there is a virtue in following them staunchly which makes up for the mischief of following them mechanically" (viii). Right or wrong, perhaps if we were to have continued debating his words today, we would not be as concerned with the demise of the humanities as we are.

Paradigm Three: Aesthetics, Aesthesis and Beyond the Cognitive

To summarize the first two orientations, then, my argument is that neither satisfies the justification for literature in education. Paradigm one, which I associate with the prioritization of freedom of choice or ‘independent reading’ and an emphasis on method over substance, is characterized by few if any text-centred criteria applied as valuing one choice over another. Likewise with paradigm two, which I associate with a focus on textual meaning that may lead to a judgment of worthiness. Here, again, we run into a similar impasse. If meaning in literature is what makes it valuable, then how is it any different than social studies or science. Except that we are deciphering and articulating a works meaning rather than simply reading summaries or expositions of similar statements as might be found in a social science textbook.

Though it may seem obvious enough to many, it was this realization that defined a significant shift in my own appreciation of literature and recognition of what I was doing and not doing as a teacher of literature – both helpful and harmful. The more often I heard the question, “Why didn’t she/he just say that”, the more uncomfortable I became with how I was approaching literature. For so much instructional time is expended doing just that: ‘saying’ what we believe a writer would have said, had they been asked to just say it, without recognizing the impossibility and absurdity of the exercise. Rarely, if ever, do we mention the intrinsic capacity of art to express what cannot be said.

In short, I eventually realized that the value of literature does not reside in whatever meaning is gleaned from it. No matter how many essays or reflections are written in response to a text, they cannot account for the direct experience of reading it. If we can and do summarize the key significance or meaning of works such as Hamlet, sometimes humorously into one-minute synopses, then as many students ask more seriously, why bother watching or reading the play, especially with it being as challenging as it is. And as many teachers are aware, students will sometimes proudly boast about having not read a novel for years, having relied on Coles or Cliffs notes, not to mention a plethora of websites readily available to answer their questions,

all nicely packaged and ripe for regurgitation. To add salt to the proverbial wound, many of these same students actually pass with high marks, proclaiming themselves as truly 'successful'. To the degree that such successes are even possible speaks to how 'meaning' or the communication of meaning, regardless of whether it derives from the literary work itself or a summary found on the internet, has displaced the experience of reading the literature, and just how far removed and misaligned the measurements of success seem from what I would argue is the real value of the literary encounter. As many students can and do assert, all we need to do well in English is a good computer and access to the internet.

We might ask then, what is lost in the process of moving from a student's personal encounter with a text, the process of reading, to the deviating demands for assessment and official course outcomes ... such as the literary essay? In the expediency and pressure to share their response to a work, or to answer prescribed questions about a work, what comes through is a numbing reduction of the intensity, inarticulability and complexity of the actual reading experience. And what is ultimately regurgitated in essays is closer in approximation to what is discussed in class or taught directly than it is to the reading experience itself. All too often, the most powerful moments of reading are deadened, lost and/or replaced by the authority of *Wikipedia*.

Even Cleanth Brooks, one of the key figures attached to New Criticism, recognizes that, for example in the reading of a poem, "whatever statement we may seize upon as incorporating the 'meaning' of the poem, immediately the imagery and the rhythm seem to set up tensions with it, warping and twisting it, qualifying and revising it" (1947, 197). Mindful of the fallacy of reductionism, he believes that the challenges of criticism derive from what he famously refers to as the "heresy of paraphrase" which, "if we allow ourselves to be misled by it, we distort the relation of the poem to its 'truth,' we raise the problem of belief in a vicious and crippling form, we split the poem between its 'form' and its 'content'—we bring the statement to be conveyed into an unreal competition with science or philosophy or theology" (201). Likewise, Maurice Blanchot, an influence of Deleuze, argues that "the essence of literature is precisely to escape

any essential determination, any assertion that stabilizes it or even realizes it: it is never already there, it always has to be rediscovered or reinvented” (2003, 201).

None of this is to say that skills such as literary analysis or interpretation are not important. Skills of summation, analysis and discussion serve some purpose in developing students’ abilities to articulate, question, and defend their opinions. But we must still ask, can such explanations, no matter how eloquently communicated in the critical and analytical responses required by provincial exams, supersede the experience of the text itself? If so, then perhaps it is true that the literary work is no longer necessary. But if not, then we must continue asking what then is missing from the first two paradigms?

This, in brief, highlights a significant point of disturbance in my life as an English teacher. While I continually struggled to find ways to teach students how to draw meaning from text and express their understandings of the text, I came to realize that in the process, I was ignoring, undervaluing, and even destroying the aspect of literature that matters the most: what happens in the moment of reading, between the text and the reader. As Susan Sontag poignantly argues,

The modern style of interpretation excavates, and as it excavates, destroys.... The effectiveness of the work depends on the participation of the reader, but explanations arise from (and also lead to) detachment; they will therefore dull the effect, for they relate the given text to a given frame of reference, thus flattening out the new reality brought into being by the fictional text. In view of the irreconcilability of effect and explanation, the traditional expository style of interpretation has clearly had its day.
(2001, 3)

In my exhausting efforts to teach students how to write profound essays worthy of honours on their report cards, I have unintentionally, as Sontag puts it, flattened and dulled what the text initially brought into their being. And I have inadvertently taken them further and further from the experience which, as this thesis hopes to demonstrate, educationally deserves the most attention.

It is this realization that brings me to the third paradigm to which these studies have ultimately led me today. The element either ignored or underestimated in the first and second paradigms

is central to this third orientation, the aesthetic experience, or more accurately, *aisthesis*, or sense perception, which as Jagodzinski points out, replaces aesthetics “‘captures’ the intrinsic or pre-subjective unconscious body” (2014, 3). Moving from questions of meaning to questions of aesthetic experience involves a subtle but significant shift from an epistemologically centered practice that currently dominates education to one which is more ontologically oriented, with the latter further implicating the political and the ethical of learning. As a scholar also inspired by Deleuze and Guattari, Simon O’Sullivan reflects,

How could it happen that in thinking about art, in reading the art object, we missed what art does best? In fact we missed that which defines art: the aesthetic. Because art is not an object amongst others, at least not an object of knowledge (or not only an object of knowledge). Rather, art does something else.... we can think the aesthetic power of art in an immanent sense – through recourse to the notion of affect. (2001, 25)

In considering how literature affects us aesthetically, we must contend with processes happening or initiated in the direct encounter with the text, difficult if not impossible, as the references above suggest, to capture cognitively. This is reflected in the original distinction between *aisthesis* and *noesis* which Merriam Webster defines as “purely intellectual apprehension” or cognition. Interestingly, deference to the cognitive over the non-cognitive or in this case the aesthetic was recognized as early as 1884, as William James observed that “the physiologists who, during the past few years, have been so industriously exploring the functions of the brain, have limited their attempts at explanation to its cognitive and volitional performances... but the aesthetic sphere of the mind, its longings, its pleasures and pains, and its emotions, have been so ignored in all these researches” (2018). Likewise, John Dewey, whose tome *Art as Experience*, continues to be echoed in discussions today, also notes that “the poetic as distinct from the prosaic, esthetic art as distinct from scientific, expression as distinct from statement, does something different from leading to an experience. It constitutes one” (1934, 88), suggesting that art acts on the body in a way that the prosaic or expository, exemplified by many natural and social science texts, do not. And relating directly to the study of reading, Louise Rosenblatt, mentioned earlier, devoted much of her energy distinguishing what she referred to as the “efferent, from the Latin word meaning ‘to carry away’” (1982, 269) employed in the process of seeking information, from the ‘aesthetic stance’ operating in the

reading of literature during which “attention will shift inward, will center on what is being created during the actual reading ... not simply the abstract concepts that the words point to, but also what those objects or referents stir up of personal feelings, ideas, and attitudes” (269). Though a contemporary of Rosenblatt, Wolfgang Iser is rarely considered in the realm of K-12 education even though his text, *The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response*, is not only compatible with Rosenblatt’s, but in many ways offers a more compelling argument. For Iser, meaning is moving and dynamic; meaning is a verb rather than a noun. Meaning is not an object to reach for out of reading a text; but an effect to ‘be’ savoured while immersed in it. Tellingly, while this text was published over 40 years ago, the expository essay continues to constitute one of the primary elements of secondary English. As Iser adds, in the instant the reader/ student is required to express their thoughts or interpretations, the ‘effect’ of the experience, “is extinguished, because the effect is in the nature of the experience and not an exercise in explanation” (1978, 22). In other words, from the first time a work is described or explained, there is a certain persistent stability to these initial interpretations as they gradually begin to replace the experience itself. Iser also predicts the general inclination of readers to look for meaning, our desire to immediately come to some sort of understanding or conclusion, warning that “the aesthetic nature of meaning constantly threatens to transmute itself into discursive determinacy” (22).

Thus, the impact and importance of literature as defended in paradigm three is much more elusive, and much more difficult to substantiate with traditional methods of assessment as so much of it takes place prior to or beneath the realm of consciousness and the cognitive. In emphasizing how sensations work on the body, there is also a recognition that we may never be able to see the impact of the reading, or if we do, it may be days or years before perceivable signs become evident. Furthermore, as the affective forces of literature combine with a heterogeneity and multiplicity of other intensities impinging on and circulating within the body, not only is it impossible to trace with any confidence the underlying causes of surfacing effects, but the nature of these chains of causality will be unique to each reader.

With so much occurring materially below the seat of consciousness and as we will see later, prior to the subjective 'I' of the body, it is critical that we begin to consider art as sensation as prefiguring the more conscious, heavily processed conscious perceptions of art. According to Deleuze and Guattari, art works through a bloc of sensation, percepts and affects, which occur at a level that is prepersonal, presubjective, prelinguistic. Though I will expand on this in later sections, it is perhaps useful to share Inna Semetsky and Terrance Lovat's summation that "The body, for Deleuze (borrowing from Spinoza), is both physical and mental as well as both cognitive and affective; and the affect is not just a feeling or emotion but a real material force influencing the body's mode of existence in the world: its potential power (2011, 487)

Recognizing how encounters with literary art impact the body materially, at the level of the unconscious, within the realm of what Deleuze refers to as the virtual, the ecology of the body's interconnectedness with other bodies, it no longer matters so much what details a student can recall or what themes they can recite. Relative to forces that will impact a student and their relations for the rest of their life, such tasks seem almost petty. From the banality of such assessments, we can now turn our attention to the *quality* of the reading experience itself. My readings in affect theory have led me over the past couple of years to begin to question my classroom teaching and particularly the machines of literature I select. Mindful of the potential flows that might arise from literature, the productivity of said machines, I began to look for encounters with the potential to affect difference in students' lives.

Clearly, not all texts have the same potential in this regard. In the sections which follow, I will explore, both theoretically and practically, the qualitative differences in literary selections and classroom approaches to such texts that I believe have the greatest potential to offer students the kind of aesthetic / aeisthetic experiences that will have the most profound impact on their education. And in contact with the vitalism of the unsayable, the classroom enters a course of movement – of becoming – and of material learning. Together this set of principles comprises what I refer to as a pedagogy of disturbance.

Consistent with the spirit of their writing, to suggest specific works of literature would be anathema to the shift away from representation and all-constraining territories. But by working through my own application of these principles in non-prescriptive and non-programmatic ways through a set of examples – novel, play and poetry – I hope to inspire, at the very least, a heightened awareness of the ways in which certain literature can ‘matter.’ Through these explorations, by no means exhaustive of the infinite other texts and approaches possible, I will not only highlight signs of affect that have consistently captured my attention as a reader, but also how they might work to produce different ways of thinking and acting in the world, new possibilities of becoming, and more expansive relations within the world.

In brief, this thesis is motivated by a simple, yet persistent realization, first encountered in Eric Fromm’s, *To Have or To Be?* (2005): that possessing knowledge, or regurgitating knowledge at the prompt of an exam or essay is far less vital than being and more importantly, becoming in relation to the world.

Introducing a Pedagogy of Disturbance

*Do I dare
Disturb the universe?
In a minute there is time
For decisions and revisions which a minute will reverse.*

(T. S. Eliot, Lovesong of J. Alfred Prufrock, 2009)

I think we ought to read only the kind of books that wound or stab us. If the book we're reading doesn't wake us up with a blow to the head, what are we reading for? So that it will make us happy, as you write? Good Lord, we would be happy precisely if we had no books, and the kind of books that make us happy are the kind we could write ourselves if we had to. But we need books that affect us like a disaster, that grieve us deeply, like the death of someone we loved more than ourselves, like being banished into forests far from everyone, like a suicide. A book must be the axe for the frozen sea within us. That is my belief. (Franz Kafka, Letter to Oskar Pollak, January 27, 1904, in Kafka, 2016)

In my proposal of a pedagogy of disturbance, three concerns immediately come to mind, as implied by Eliot and Kafka above. First, is the risk involved, that this is an ethos not commonly championed in education for all the dangers one might imagine. Second, that it will be difficult and, as Kafka's imagery suggests, even violent or painful which, in the presence of a contrasting temptation to settle for the comfort of confirmation, is especially daunting. And third, perhaps most significant, is the nagging challenge that disturbance of mind-body may be necessary. Kafka, for example, highlights the quality of certain selections of literature that work through the forces of affect in fundamentally changing the body of readers. This axe to the frozen sea 'within us' is the disturbance I especially wish to explore in the sections that follow. Like an axe into frozen currents, the impact I am interested in exploring is that which really does produce flows within. It is this same paradox that Margaret Wheatley highlights in observing that our work for an imagined, albeit uncertain, future needs "a new and strange ally—our willingness to be disturbed... to have our beliefs and ideas challenged by what others think" (2009, 38). And while it is unlikely that Wheatley has Deleuze in mind when writing these words, they both speak to the need to reorient education in ways that run counter to the individualist, neo-liberal and narcissistic traits that colour it today.

My work in schools has, throughout my career, been motivated by issues of social justice. As I write this, Canada, North America and rest of the world appears more violently polarized than ever before, with growing paranoia, resentment and rejection of difference evidenced by anti-immigration and anti-refugee protests (the yellow-vest movement) and a spike in racist, homophobic and gender violence. And as many have pointed out, though climate change has already displaced millions, with many populations living under the threat of starvation, with draught and fire impacting more and more populations around the world, and rising oceans threatening to wipe out coastal populations, we will no doubt see increased pressures to respond to a rise in climate refugees seeking homes in countries reluctant to welcome them.

Yet learning about or exposure to social and environmental injustice does not seem to translate student cognition to student action. Even when they can dissect the concerns, identify moral issues, and speak eloquently to dos and don'ts, once out of the classroom, the impetus for change seems to quickly fade away. Verbal reactions of sympathy or even horror seem rarely matched with clear changes in behaviour and lives continue as before, despite the surrounding world edging ever closer to collapse. Tellingly, on the eve of such environmental catastrophe, and the world witnessing very tangible signs of melting glaciers and ice caps, vast forest fires blackening our summer skies, and record-breaking temperatures, floods and weather disruptions, our province voted 70% in favour of a petroleum-embracing conservative majority. I am therefore more convinced than ever that we, or I, need a new pedagogy. Though it is perhaps a cliché to speak of the need for new ways of thinking about education, in the face of these events, it does not seem too much of an exaggeration to suggest that educators must open themselves to new ideas and new methods of instigating concern and action. And while the one proposed here may not be the only answer, it will hopefully contribute to or at least motivate considerations of others.

In brief, the disturbance I wish to explore in such a pedagogy is much less cognitively oriented and much more 'material' and affective in nature, working through the underlying conditions of

and for transformation. The experience of literature, as with other arts, is less to do with learning about the world and more to do with learning as something that happens in the body as part of the world. Disturbance of the kind I am considering here has the potential of leading (albeit indirectly or quasi-causally) to 'actual' shifts in thought and action, even though these may not always be readily visible. Such disturbances I will argue, following Deleuze and Guattari, are primarily unconscious, moving as additions to multiple flows and penetrations within a wider ecology of connections. Mindful of such possibilities, teachers can actively introduce new trajectories through the choices they make in both materials and methods.

As such, in referring to a *pedagogy of disturbance*, I am pointing to both a teaching practice and a curriculum (text selection) that places importance on experimentation with 'material' disturbance. A pedagogy that strives to create conditions or populate ecologies with disturbances, not for the purposes of motivation or entertainment in learning, as one might think of sensationalistic or literal disturbances, but in a deeper sense that speaks to the very possibility of learning.

In one of the lessons I occasionally refer to when teaching writing – show-don't-tell – I share a quotation generally attributed to Mark Twain: "Don't say the old lady screamed. Bring her on and let her scream." Perhaps this insinuates a similar idea in terms of the differences I am getting at here. That the disturbance isn't about the scream, it's what the scream does. How it impacts the reader directly, viscerally, in excess to any narrative context which may surround it. It isn't that the character screams that's important, but rather the scream itself -- the conditions or forces revealed by the scream and the degree of intensity or affect generated in the body of the reader. And though disturbance of the body may not be witnessed, we will sometimes perceive evidence that even the reader may not notice as hairs raise, shoulders clench, eyes close or breathing quickens. Certain texts disturb. Not always. And not for every reader of those texts. But often enough. And whether the scream does or doesn't disturb raises the question of what kind of literary works might be more likely to do so. More importantly, what works might provoke educationally productive disturbance. Do they have to contain

screams? Likely not. But are there qualities that are more predictive of disturbance than others.... My guess is, yes.

At the same time, motivated by interests in ethical considerations and a growing urgency to respond to issues of social and environmental crises, I am especially intrigued by student reactions to what is typically categorized as tragic literature. Despite signs of anger, sadness, or distress, when I ask former students, many having graduated some 10-15 years previously, what literature they feel had the greatest impact from high school, without exception they name works that would be described as 'dark,' or disturbing, and almost always with fondness. Based on these informal findings, I became interested in how such experiences might also anticipate breaking through resistances to difference, softening feelings of disdain or rejection and opening readers to other ways of being or becoming. And yes, early in these reflections I sensed a possibility for opening spaces for greater belonging and compassion across social divisions. While this latter objective might be met with suspicion of over-romanticizing possibilities, the Buddhist notion of compassion resonates, I believe, with Deleuze's emphasis on immanence. Literary scholar Arnold Weinstein articulates a similar notion in his book, *A Scream Goes Through the House*, in which he declares his focus on "feeling, pain, and illness as ways to get at life" (2004, xxi). Continuing, he elaborates further:

The biologists tell us that pain is nature's way of signaling trouble; I suggest that art reconceives this signal system by making feeling and pain vehicular as well as communicative.... Such a journey is educative, in the etymological sense of the word: leading us out. (xxi)

While Weinstein's comments about pain and illness suggest a more overt, narrative, or cognitive notion of disturbance (throughout he tends to blend body affections with cognitive judgements), I interpret disturbance as firstly and more profoundly material in genesis. There need not be a literal or narrative disturbance in order to disturb the unconscious. Proceeding further, he adds,

[A]rt's purposes have little to do with information...the voyage is visceral and experiential, it entails vicarious immersion in others' lives, endowing us with new eyes and ears, perhaps changing our hearts. Such transactions are, of course, exciting, but their true rationale has a more ethical and existential cast to it: to bring us closer to the world's heartbeat, to bring to—and into—us something of the world's great theater,

even to function like a lightning rod, so that the great energies and forces that have coursed through history might, via art, strike us, jolt us with their vibrancy and intensity. Feeling moves, and feeling moves us. A scream goes through the house ... human feeling travels the world, passes from person to person, and especially stamps our connection to art. The books we read and the paintings we see are vital energy sources, rippling through us, however staid or contained we or they may appear. (2004, xxi)

Though it is unlikely that Weinstein draws from the same theoretical influences as Deleuze and Guattari, as one passionate about literature, he nevertheless insinuates the kind of transformations in readers as I have intuitively sensed in former students. As stated earlier, unlike the social and natural sciences, literature's claim on the curriculum resides neither in the factual, nor even in the strictest telling of narrative, both of which can be found in other disciplines. Rather, it is as I argued previously, the aesthetic qualities of literature that most distinguish it and can, as I wish to emphasize here, account for its power to change lives. It is its ability to reach beyond the limits of language, to exceed articulation or representation and to affect the unconscious body that is most crucial in student encounters with reading.

Why does literature matter? In looking to literature for its potential in education, this work links to many other significant voices who have explored a similar 'why' to literature. Among others, Robert Coles (1989), Martha Nussbaum (1997, 2001) and Dennis Sumara (2003) were early inspirations for this work. While influenced by their arguments for the necessity of literature in life, as well as Nussbaum's eloquent defense for the ambiguity and 'greyness' of fiction as foundational to, and as a necessary counterweight to the coldness of impartial logic in public decision-making and judicial arguments, I am for reasons already stated, no longer satisfied with purely cognitive explanations for literature's potency.

Inspired by the work of Deleuze and Félix Guattari, I now try to stay away from 'categorical' references to works that might otherwise be described as tragic literature or trauma literature. In considering material disturbance at a molecular level, accepting that every 'body' encounters literature on its own terms, with its own bodily histories, it should be clear that any such classifications as tragic or traumatic somewhat erroneously assumes a 'common' or universal

experience. That said, many of the works discussed here would likely be labelled as somewhat 'darker' in nature, at least in parts, and unlike 'lighter' fare, they have, in the classroom, appeared to be more predictable in generating disturbance. As readers will quickly note, the selections all revolve around tensions of varying forms: mental distress in J.D. Salinger's, *Catcher in the Rye*, civil war in Wajdi Mouawad's play, *Scorched*, and colonial violence in the poetry of Marilyn Dumont.

Somewhat analogously, Dorota Golańska (2015) refers to 'dark tourism' in describing the 'tourist' sites associated with violence, disaster, suffering, poverty or death. As she explains, while the motivations behind their visits may be unclear, it is what happens to these tourists, with or without their conscious awareness, that is most important: "they rely not exclusively on meanings and emotions, but also on affects and sensations, grasping visitors at the immediately embodied or visceral level, somewhat autonomous from political or ideological contexts in which the sites are undoubtedly immersed" (774). Interestingly, as is the case with similar limits in literary discourse, while she does not necessarily dismiss previous scholarship associated with the cognitive domain, Golańska suggests that such approaches "are just not enough to thoroughly understand how certain memorials operate." Considering the significant influence of Deleuze and Guattari's work, reading literature of the kind described above is similar in many ways to being a visitor to the types of 'tourist sites' Golańska describes. As is her observation that most theories of tourist motives "take into account intellectual cognitive motivations, bracketing off the issue of immediate bodily experience/event that actually takes place on site while tourists physically encounter the place" (778). The same could be said about the divergence of theorizing motivations and implications in the reading classroom. As suggested in my earlier comments, especially with respect to what I called paradigm one, left to their own volition, it is quite possible that students will either never choose or never have the opportunity to visit the textual sites most likely to affect certain experiences. And similar to the dark sites Golańska describes, the motivations to visit or not visit may be incongruent with the "aesthetic bodily experience (i.e. pure intensity)" (780), they might actually experience.

Unlike in the case of ‘dark sites’ of tourism, however, for which motivations – whether reliable or not – determine if the tourist will actually visit them, in the context of education, it is, I have argued, incumbent on the teacher to apply their informed expertise to encourage students to visit book-sites they may never have chosen on their own. Though this may sound to many as overly authoritarian, within reason I believe there are ethical and political grounds for such interventions made in the best interests of students. In making the case for the role of trauma literature, Elizabeth Dutro takes a similar stance regarding the necessary inclusion of such works in the classroom:

I attach words such as productive and important to difficult life experiences purposefully, but not comfortably. The weight of hard life experiences, particularly in the lives of students, is hard to bear. Yet, those stories are part and parcel of classroom life – whether or not those experiences are invited in or acknowledged, met with caring or disinterest, they are always present. Even in their ever-presence, the emotionally fraught experiences, the ongoing struggles, do not comfortably reside within traditional notions of schooling (2011, 195)

The axe of which Kafka speaks not only infers literature with an edge, but more importantly, literature which encounters and spills over the edge, generating problems deep enough in the unconscious to stimulate real learning. To struggle with the ungraspable. The nature of disturbance is often accompanied by profound confusion which accompanies unrecognizable, inarticulable-or non-representable experiences of tension, discomfort or loss that inevitably correlate with threatening stabs at habits of seeing, understanding, and being. From the perspective of Deleuze and Guattari, one might say that it is through such experiences that subjectivities are most prone to shift. It is when one encounters the edge, the flow of disturbance, that not only problems and questions emerge, but one is most likely to experience a heightened sense of what matters. Their stasis or equanimity is disturbed to the point that they can no longer ignore the discomfort they experience.

Literature and disturbance of the kind to which I refer here might, without exaggeration or melodrama, approaches the edge of many territories, including those that define the conventionally ‘appropriate’ for the classroom. To reiterate, it pushes the edge of comfort, the edge of the zone of proximity and, within the conceptual fields of Deleuze and Guattari, the

edge of territory, strata and representation. If successful, it pushes to a point of excess... outside the readily recognizable, the effortlessly articulable, or the easily assimilable. And, as I will discuss in the next section, the closer literature comes to this edge, the more likely it opens to the flow of affect.

The sections which follow focus on 'encounters' with literary texts. To the extent that I consider the encounter as central to the possibilities of disturbance, one which is ultimately affirmative and generative, each of the next three sections address a facet or driver of learning: disturbance as impingement of affect, disturbance as problems of learning instigated by signs and disturbance as political deterritorializations of assemblages. Though addressed separately for clarity, they are all interrelated. As well, for purposes of maintaining continuity, I apologize in advance for what may appear to some readers as repetitious or overlapping ideas, believing them to be necessary and helpful in each new context. Following these three framing sections, I address possibilities of agency and its centrality to an understanding of the role of education and spaces of maneuverability available in the classroom, however slight or blurred these might be given the overwhelming influence of the unconscious. In pulling these more theoretical sections together, prior to proceeding with the chapters addressing the three exemplars of literature, I will speak more specifically to how the theory pertains specifically to the art of literature and literature as art that disturbs. The final section, following the three chapters dedicated to the literature itself, I will conclude with a brief exploration of the ethical implications and defenses for the pedagogy I have proposed.

Chapter 2: Disturbance as Affect

How could it happen that in thinking about art, in reading the art object, we missed what art does best? In fact we missed that which defines art: the aesthetic. (O'Sullivan, 2001, 125)

In conventional encounters, including those in school, literature as art is generally valued for its powers of representation – its ability to [re]present reality to the perceiver –reflecting, pointing to, or highlighting aspects of the world or the ‘human’ condition that the audience/reader either already agrees with, is consistent with their current world-view, or, at best, points them to some knowledge or meaning presumably in or about ‘their’ world. This is typified by the most common questions accompanying texts studied: “What is it about?” “What does it say about our world?” “What does it say about the human condition?”

In contrast, Simon O’Sullivan argues that it is precisely art’s remove or being ‘apart from the world’ which constitutes its value (2001, 125). In other words, encounters with literature introduce us to something in addition to understanding or knowledge of the world. Something about literature ‘extends’ the world and in so doing, expands life. That something is affect. As O’Sullivan adds, “There is no denying, or deferring, affects. They are what make up life, and art ... Affects are ... the stuff that goes on beneath, beyond, even parallel to signification” (126). Though arguably originating much earlier, it has become a significant point of interest in the work of Baruch Spinoza in the 17th century and has since seen a resurgence of attention leading up to and following the so-called affective turn.

As already stated, this thesis is devoted to examining that which has largely been left out of the conversation of English education and curriculum inquiry by seeking a fuller consideration of readers’ direct or immanent encounters with reading and the potential changes they set in motion. With the value of literature no longer limited to meaning and explanation (though these arguably still have a role), our attention turns to what it does to us in the process of reading. And what it does, much of which is outside our awareness or cognition, rests on the

force it conveys in the encounter. “We can think of the aesthetic power of art,” O’Sullivan suggests, “in an *immanent* sense through recourse to the notion of *affect*” (125).

Unfortunately, understanding affect turns out to be no easy task. Conceptualizations and theories of affect have multiplied and diverged in both application and definition across multiple disciplines, including philosophy, psychology, sociology, architecture, neuroscience, biology and, of course, education. In the field of psychology, with the exception of those theorists who align their work with a Spinoza-Deleuze lineage, affects are treated as synonymous or in close relation with emotions, feelings, shifts in mood and attributes of personality, particularly for those theorists following the work of Silvan Tomkins. Likewise in health and neuroscience where it typically draws on the work of Jaak Panksepp, Antonio Damasio and Joseph LeDoux.

In the field of education its employment has been heavily influenced by the cross-over field of education psychology. Consider, for example, the common taxonomies familiar to many teachers (D.R. Krathwohl, Benjamin Bloom, Bertram Masia, 1964) which, since 1964, have included one specifically devoted to the *affective domain*, which James Popham equates to “attitudes, interests and values” (2009, 85).

In highlighting the variations across disciplines, Melissa Gregg & Gregory Seigworth (2010) describe eight “main” approaches to affect, with two in particular that stand out (see also Brian Ott, 2017): that of Silvan Tomkins (mentioned above) and that of Deleuze and Guattari. Though there are definitely affinities between the two, their theories are vastly different, particularly in origin. Tomkins’ work draws from biological-evolutionary frameworks (Elspeth Probyn, 2004; Vernon Kelly, 2009; Seigworth and Gregg, 2010; Nicholas Addison, 2011) that focus on human motivation and the force of attention. From this perspective, as Probyn emphasizes, “affect amplification makes us care about things” (26) while according to Addison, the affective system “evolved as a mechanism of attention enabling humans to focus and direct motivational impulses” and, with so many stimuli surrounding us, “without affect our sensory fields would

continuously overwhelm us” (2011, 365). Notably, for Tomkins, affects and related feelings are also hard-wired as part of a specific system in the brain.

In contrast, as Felicity Colman emphasizes, Deleuze (and later Guattari) reject “the value-laden associations of ascribing emotions to subjective experience or perceptions” (in Parr, 2010, 12), theorizing instead that affect “can produce a sensory result ... [and] is physically and temporally produced.” Not unlike the earlier description of the literacy situation associated with Nathan Snaza, she also points out that affect “consists of a variety of factors that include geography, biology, meteorology, astronomy, ecology and culture” (12). Inspired by the work of Baruch Spinoza, Deleuze conceptualizes affect as either increasing or decreasing the body’s (human and non-human alike) capacity to act – to affect and be affected – drawing on Spinoza’s reference to power as ‘potentia’: “to be able to exist is to have power” (Spinoza, 1985, 418; also Curley’s note, 651). Gregg and Seigworth (2010) offer an important distinction between the lineage of Spinoza-Deleuze and that of Tomkins, “a certain sense of reverse flow between these lines of inquiry—a certain inside-out/ outside-in difference in directionality: affect as the prime “interest” motivator that comes to put the drive in bodily drives (Tomkins); affect as an entire, vital, and modulating field of myriad becomings across human and nonhuman (Deleuze)” (6).

That said, aligning my affiliation with the conceptual lineage of Deleuze and Guattari still demands a journey through the varying and occasionally contradicting interpretations and applications that have stemmed from their initial work. Following in the wake of the ‘linguistic turn’, much of the discourse around affect has shared a common emphasis and general agreement on the need to account for that which eludes or exceeds language and representation. However, considerations of affect relative to conceptualizations of consciousness and agency and relative to more cognitive reflections of feeling and emotion have been inconsistent.

Affect vs Affection

Both Deleuze and Spinoza make a distinction, albeit occasionally blurred, between affects and affections. In one of his lectures, for example, Deleuze hints at the lack of clarity rising from the choices of translators, both from Spinoza's original Latin and Deleuze's original French:

In Spinoza's principal book, which is called the Ethics and which is written in Latin, one finds two words: AFFECTIO and AFFECTUS. Some translators, quite strangely, translate both in the same way. This is a disaster. They translate both terms, affectio and affectus, by "affection." I call this a disaster because when a philosopher employs two words, it's because in principle he has reason to, especially when French easily gives us two words which correspond rigorously to affectio and affectus, that is "affection" for affectio and "affect" for affectus. (1978)

While it is not always clear throughout his writings, this distinction between 'affections' and 'affects' is an important one, particularly when it comes to education. It is also, unfortunately, a distinction that is often lost or confused in subsequent affect scholarship. Deleuze contends that, "The affection refers to a state of the affected body and implies the presence of the affecting body, whereas the affectus refers to the passage [or movement] from one state to another, taking into account the correlative variation of the affecting bodies" (SPP, 49).

Affects may refer to shifts in the body's capacity to either be affected or to affect other bodies. As Deleuze states, "from one state to another, from one image or idea to another, there are transitions, passages that are experienced, durations through which we pass to a greater or a lesser perfection" (SPP, 48). Already there appears to be some slippage: Affect as capacity vs affects as passages or transfers to greater or less capacity. Though clearly referring to the same general idea, we can see that affect also implies movement and heterogeneity. Within a given ecology, there exists multiple affects moving simultaneously.

In contrast, affections equate to what will later be discussed as 'signs' that are potentially available to consciousness, albeit often necessitating particularly astute or sensitive awareness or mindful attention to be noticed or observed as a felt sense of shifts in the body. Though distinguished from affect, empirically affections are all we have to go on in monitoring the

quasi-causal impact of affects, including in the classroom. As such, observations and statements of cause and effect are intrinsically limited and subject to inaccuracies, including those due to prejudice or bias who jump to conclusions of causality. For example, the assumption that a shift in body posture is a direct result of the encounter with a passage of literature is too simplistic and ignores the heterogeneity and multiplicity of affective forces operating at the same time one encounters the book. That said, similar affections coinciding with the same text might, over time, accrue to a more convincing inference, and perhaps increased predictability, accepting that the underlying dynamics will still vary from reader to reader.

In clarifying his own translation of *A Thousand Plateaus*, Massumi defines the two terms as follows:

AFFECT/AFFECTION. Neither word denotes a personal feeling (sentiment in DG). L' affect (Spinoza's affectus) is an ability to affect and be affected. It is a prepersonal intensity corresponding to the passage from one experiential state of the body to another and implying an augmentation or diminution in that body's capacity to act. L' affection (Spinoza's affectio) is each such state considered as an encounter between the affected body and a second, affecting, body (with body taken in its broadest possible sense to include "mental" or ideal bodies). (ATP, XVI)

Here, we recognize a third sense of the concept of affect emerging within these definitions – ‘a prepersonal intensity’ – implying affect can also be understood as a physical force.

In all cases, however, the difference between affections and affect remains consistent: ‘affections’ are perceivable, conscious, cognitive, and subjective, while ‘affects’ are considered non-cognitive, pre-conscious, pre-subjective, and pre-personal. Pertinent to the present project regarding literature as a work of art, Deleuze and Guattari introduce the role of affects (along with percepts), being behind the unique power of art:

[T]he work of art is ... a bloc of sensations, that is to say, a compound of percepts and affects. Percepts are no longer perceptions; they are independent of a state of those who experience them. Affects are no longer feelings or affections; they go beyond the strength of those who undergo them. Sensations, percepts, and affects are beings whose validity lies in themselves and exceeds any lived. (WIP, 164)

Here as well, they allude not only to the ability of art to express the inarticulable, but its embodiment of an excess to the lived, known or understood life. Art gives expression to a

complexity, richness or thickness that is resistant to explanation – it's ability to touch on the infinite nature of life, a life beyond the subjective or personal. It is the immediate or immanent impact of the aesthetic power of art, in this case literature, through which affect potentially provokes processes of learning. Colebrook provides a concrete example of fear in order to distinguish affects from affections and percepts from perceptions:

Affections are what happens to us (disgust, or the recoil of the nostrils at the smell of cheese); perceptions are what we receive (odour, or the smell itself). Affects and percepts, in art, free these forces from the particular observers or bodies who experience them. At its simplest level imagine the presentation of 'fear' in a novel, even though it is not we who are afraid. (2002a, 21-22)

Elaborating further, she points to how these concepts are realized in the playwright Harold Pinter's creation of what she refers to as the affect of boredom through "long pauses in the dialogue, by characters who exchange questions (rather than questions and answers), by interactions that seem to have no reference or direction" (23). But as she points out, distinguishing the affect from specific personalization of affections: "boredom is created as a general affect. We are presented with 'boredom' – not bored persons or a boring play (23). Though it might appear that she conflates affect with affections, feeling or even emotion, she clarifies the difference between the impersonal affect and personal or processed feelings, observing that "great art disengages affects such that we are no longer capable of simply identifying and delimiting the feelings of boredom, or fear or desire," and perhaps its value lies, in part, in its ability "to dislodge affects from their recognised and expected origins" (23). Some affect-centred scholars might be inclined to accuse her of still conflating affects with affections by naming the former with labels such as boredom or fear, which are descriptors more appropriate for cognitively processed feelings or emotions. However, I find it entirely forgivable given the limits of language and our struggle to specify the nature of such an abstract concept as affect or to theorize affects as quasi-causally generated by various ecologies of experience. In further distinguishing affect from affection, it may be helpful to also consider Deleuze's conceptualization of 'the actual' and 'the virtual,' which he reworks from Henri Bergson.

The Actual and The Virtual

This distinction is not to be understood as a dichotomy but rather as an enfolded unity, with the virtual referring to that aspect of reality which encompasses the unconscious, prepersonal, prelingual, presubjective and, importantly, unhuman. In other words, it is the element of reality that precedes human consciousness, but still conditions what is expressed in consciousness. As Deleuze explains, “The virtual is opposed not to the real but to the actual... [it] must be defined as strictly a part of the real object - as though the object had one part of itself in the virtual into which it plunged as though into an objective dimension” (DR, 208-209). The forces of affect that ‘impinge’ on the virtual are forces that generate ‘pure’ difference, fueling the ‘differential elements and relations’ constituting the “reality of the virtual” together with “the singular points which correspond to them” (209). To the extent that these differentials converge on points of singularity, along what Deleuze refers to elsewhere as the ‘plane of immanence,’ we have an event of actualization: “The plane of immanence includes both the virtual and its actualization simultaneously, without there being any assignable limit between the two” (DII, 149). As he clarifies further, “the actualization of the virtual is singularity whereas the actual itself is individuality constituted” (DR, 149-150). The process by which the world becomes ‘different from itself’ is what Deleuze refers to as *differenciation* as contrasted by the reverse movement of pure difference from the actual to the virtual which he calls *differentiation*.

While the language of difference and differentials may seem particularly abstract, it is helpful to consider these in terms of intensity. As Deleuze explains, “Intensity is the determinant in the process of actualisation... immediately expressed in the basic spatio-temporal dynamisms and determines an 'indistinct' differential relation in the Idea to incarnate itself in a distinct quality and a distinguished extensity” (DR, 247). In both the virtual and the actual, movement is fueled by degrees of intensity: both extensive and intensive forces and both quantity and quality are thus inextricably entwined. John Protevi offers a helpful clarification, suggesting that,

The virtual is a purely differential field composed of differential elements. Differential relations and singularities. The actual is the set of stable substances endowed with sets or extensive properties and locked into stereotypical behavior patterns. The intensive is first encountered as the actual knocked off its tracks. Intensive processes are triggered

by differences between a system and its environment such that the resultant matter/energy now moves systems toward thresholds where their behavior patterns might change. Such a change of behavior patterns-not merely a change to a different behavior within an established pattern-is what Deleuze calls a 'deterritorialization,' a "line or flight," or a 'becoming.' (2009, 11)

Though I will return to this notion of deterritorialization and becoming throughout this thesis, the immediate implication is a deeper sense of what might be involved in a pedagogy of disturbance and its contingency positioned in encounters with 'difference.' If by *learning* we assume a 'change' taking place in the body, then it clearly depends on some activation of intensity, signaling the force of affect as a necessary consideration in education.

Returning to the distinction made between affect and affection then, the former is now associated with the virtual, and the latter with the actual, though conditioned by forces within the virtual (including the intensities and differentials contributed by past experiences/memories). We begin to see why Jeffrey Bell, among others, views immanence as "the most important concept in all of Deleuze's work" (2008, 2). If our consciousness – including the cognitive processes of thought – emerges from the virtual and the virtual is comprised of forces of experience (both present and past), then our trajectory of becoming – our individuation – as humans, subjects, personalities, thoughts, and actions hinges entirely on what is immanent in our experience. As O'Sullivan explains, "Affects are passages of intensity, a reaction in or on the body at the level of matter. We might even say that affects are immanent to matter. They are certainly immanent to experience" (2006, 41).

These considerations of movements back and forth between the virtual and actual provokes a significant shift in how we understand cause and effect as it is generally understood and theorized in the classroom and certainly complicates the simplistic equation of reaction 'Y' being caused by reading 'X.' That which is actualized is never so straight-forward; affects associated with the text interact with a heterogeneity and multiplicity of other forces, cloaking immediate or gradual consequences with indeterminacy and making education a very complex and unknowable task. Every encounter is experimental in nature and, with time and repetition may or may not suggest quasi-causally, inferred relationality.

Pure Difference

As already discussed, affect is directly related to difference and may at times be used synonymously in so far as intensity arises or is constituted by difference. Difference here is understood not in its usual sense but rather as emerging from immanence. It is also not a negative difference – neither ‘dialectical nor comparative – as such a formulation remains anchored in actualized and processed representation, which by implication is always transcendent in so far as it requires an already existing idea or image to which something can be compared to determine its difference. Deleuze, instead, refers to difference as a differential, a movement in intensity:

[D]ifference is an object of affirmation; that affirmation itself is multiple; that it is creation but also that it must be created, as affirming difference, as being difference in itself. It is not the negative that is the motor. Rather. There are positive differential elements which determine the genesis of both the affirmation and the difference affirmed (DR, 55)

Significantly, Deleuze explicitly distinguishes difference from the more commonplace notion of diversity which lies at the heart of much of the identity politics and other discourses of social justice: “difference is not diversity” (222), as the latter depends on labeled or recognizable identities. As he clarifies, “Diversity is given, but difference is that by which the given is given, that by which the given is given as diverse” (222). Here, too, he emphasizes that “Difference is not phenomenon,” something open to perception, which would not only suffer the limitations of perception but would necessarily be reduced to identity and representation. Instead, difference is “noumenon [the thing in itself] ... this irreducible inequality, forms the condition of the world” (DR, 222). This offers a much more revealing conception of diversity as ‘conditioned’ by the virtual:

Every phenomenon refers to an inequality by which it is conditioned. Every diversity and every change refers to a difference which is its sufficient reason. Everything which happens and everything which appears is correlated with orders of differences: differences of level, temperature, pressure, tension, potential, difference of intensity. (DR, 222)

This distinction also speaks to the formation of subjectivities and identities as entirely contingent on forces of the virtual. As Dan Smith and John Protevi suggest:

[W]hat happens in genesis is that the virtual is actualized... The virtual is the condition for real experience, but it has no identity; identities of the subject and the object are products of processes that resolve, integrate, or actualize (the three terms are synonymous for Deleuze) a differential field. (2018)

To the extent that an encounter is characterized by comparative difference, as for example, in the exposure to the ‘other’ or the unfamiliar, it still, I believe, has the potential to generate pure difference or differentiation at the intersection or connecting of two bodies, especially if the connection is defined by affective intensity. It is important to remember, however, that in these cases, diversity generates molecular difference – differentials – which may not be sufficient enough to form singularities, let alone immediate actualizations. The shifts they set in motion are miniscule in this ontology and the forces of newly formed differentials may remain circulating in the virtual until such time as there is a critical accumulation of intensity to form a singularity – an idea – a problem. As Protevi explains, “high-intensity systems tend toward virtual fluidity, and low-intensity systems tend toward actual fixity” (2009, 12). Amidst the noise of forces encountered in everyday experience – including those of habit and deferrals to recognition – *molecular differentiation* may not be steep enough to contribute forces with enough potency to impact the virtual? However, conceivably, if such encounters with difference, even as diversity, were to yield sufficient differentiations – *often* enough, *long* enough, and *intense* enough – then there is potential for shifts in the ‘fixity’ of the actual. This becomes a crucial understanding in advocating works of literature that exert enough ‘disturbance’ to register sufficient differentiation to effect change. But it is the prospect of such encounters with literature that yields its affective force. As Colebrook explains:

For Deleuze, the concept that best [offers us] the power to think the whole of life is difference. Life is difference, the power to think differently, to become different and to create differences.... [Art] encounters difference: not by producing a concept of difference but by presenting and creating differences (such as all the different characters in a novel or different sounds in a symphony). (2002a, 13)

In this way, art as literature becomes central to an education imagined as material shifts in the body. Though a more thorough explanation of the complexity of this relationship of differences across the virtual and the actual is beyond the scope of the present thesis, it is hopefully clear

that recognizing this broader ontology implicates a much more complex understanding of the process of creativity, transformation, and education. It also volleys a possible challenge to English teachers who, in the search for effective literary selections, might consider which ones offer sufficient fuel or generative potential as differential intensities in the virtual to alter [event]ual actualizations.

What is a Body?

In conventional discourse, when we refer to a person's body, we understand it as the human body associated with a personal identity – 'my' body. But in acknowledging the virtual, the pre-individual that exists prior to actualization into an identifiable form, including human, it follows that 'body' must be understood in a much broader ontological sense. With a commitment to radical immanence grounded in the virtual, a body extends beyond the perceived physical boundaries of the human figure. And what we most commonly consider the individual human body, Deleuze, following Spinoza, refers to as a mode, an expression of a univocal material which Spinoza refers to alternatively as substance, nature, or God that comprises all of reality. Though he will also occasionally refer to the human body, more often than not, body consists of a set of connected entities or relations, or as Simone Bignall describes it, "a complex assemblage of elements organised into an enduring pattern of relationship" (2007a, 202). Not only does body not refer to any specific "entity," or to "any form of stable organization or being" but being more abstract than concrete, it encompasses "all kinds of things that can be characterised in terms of the stability of their form, including both material bodies, and bodies of knowledge or ideas" (202).

Related to Deleuze's definition of affect as the capacity to affect or be affected, he also notes that "you will define an animal, or a human being, not by its form, its organs, and its functions, and not as a subject either; you will define it by the affects of which it is capable" (SPP, 124). In other words, a person an animal or a thing "is never separable from its relations with the world" (125). An understanding of affect begins with a recognition that human bodies are not

isolated from their surroundings; as Robert Hurley explains in his introduction to Deleuze's first book on Spinoza, "The environment is not just a reservoir of information whose circuits await mapping, but also a field of forces whose actions await experiencing. In a human sense, it can be called the unconscious, or at least the ground on which the unconscious is constructed" (SPP, ii). If we recognize the body as comprised of multiple bodies, continually shifting in points of contact with other bodies, then we can no longer speak of 'individuality'.

"An animal, a thing" says Deleuze, "is never separable from its relations with the world" (125). Far from being isolated, we are, as O'Sullivan declares, "necessarily infinite" (2012, 15). In this case the ecology comprised of surrounding entities – things, ideas, animals, technology, lighting, chemicals – directly impacts and becomes integral to the virtual, from which the actual, including human subjectivities, emerge. Likewise, Gregg and Seigworth suggest that,

[A]ffect is integral to a body's perpetual becoming (always becoming otherwise, however subtly, than what it already is), pulled beyond its seeming surface-boundedness by way of its relation to, indeed its composition through, the forces of encounter. With affect, a body is as much outside itself as in itself – webbed in its relations – until ultimately such firm distinctions cease to matter. (2010, 3)

In shifting from the anthropocentric and anthropomorphic view of the body, Deleuze pushes the image even further, insisting that the body is not "a nutritive medium in which a plurality of forces quarrel" (1977, 80). Instead, he argues,

There are nothing but quantities of force 'in a relation of tension' between one another... What defines a body is this relation between dominating and dominated forces... Whether chemical, biological, social, or political, every relation of forces constitutes a body. Any two forces, being unequal, constitute a body as soon as they enter into relation... Composed of a plurality of irreducible forces, the body is a multiple phenomenon. (80-81)

We might imagine then that an encounter with a literary work– one sufficiently intensive – becomes an added component of the reader's virtual body, which even long after the encounter leaves behind a residue of affective differentials, and therefore continues to contribute to the multiplicity of forces in the unconscious. Viewed in this way, the reader

becomes part of what will be referred to as an assemblage of various connected components, encompassing the swarm of differences or forces circulating within class discussions, or generated by elements such as the teacher, peers, lights, the political atmosphere of the moment, social media, forces from home, charges circulating in fragments of non-chronological memories, and the fears, worries or anticipations embedded in imaginings of possible futures. It is into this virtual body that the text now projects its potential, depending on the degree of intensity it possesses relative to other forces in the multiplicity. While we are naturally inclined to speak of disturbance in terms of felt experiences or perceptions at the personal or subjective level occurring to 'our' bodies, the real disturbance, one that may or may not ever be felt or realized in consciousness, occurs in the virtual, beyond, or below cognitive access, in the form of affect. As Felicity Colman explains, "Affect is an experiential force or a power source, which, through encounters and mixes with other bodies (organic or inorganic), the affect becomes enveloped by affection, becoming an idea, and as such, as Deleuze describes, it can compel systems of knowledge, history, memory, and circuits of power" (in Parr, 2010, 12). It is therefore only to the extent that the encounter impacts the virtual through the strength of its affective potency that we might anticipate disturbance as shifting underlying conditions enough to realize actualizations of new ways of thinking and acting. It is also why Deleuze and Guattari can explicitly state that "affects are becomings" (ATP, 256). Which points to a more direct consideration of subjectivity, identity, and individuation.

Subjectivity, Identity, and Individuation

Our everyday lives revolve around the assumption of the unitary and stable sense of the subjective 'I'. Philosophically this is said to derive from the Cartesian claim of the thinking I, a 'self' that is receiver and rational interpreter of experience, as well as the primary agent of choice and destiny. But this view is now contrasted with another, as suggested by Spinoza and Deleuze, which accounts for the unconscious and the ecological web of relations that fuels it. As Colebrook points out that, inspired by his reading of Hume, Deleuze recognizes,

[T]he human subject and its stable outside world was a fiction produced within the flow of experience... In arguing for the image of the subject and the world as products of the

imagination, Deleuze already showed a tendency to interpret philosophy creatively and to argue that there was a creative tendency in life itself: the tendency for human life to form images of itself, such as the image of the rational mind or 'subject'. (2002a, 3)

In other words, the common view is both limited and distorted because it fails to consider the body in flux. Nor can it account for the entangled nature of causality that reflects the complexity and multiplicity of relations comprising the body. With the actual understood as emerging from heterogenous forces within the virtual, the subject as constant, unitary, rational, and autonomous is simply no longer tenable. To speak of student or teacher, then, is to accept their apparent subjectivities as part of a continuous genesis – becoming through the process of individuation, actualization and, pertinent to the present work, learning. What we 'think' of as cognition, and generally accept as our thoughts, ideas, and actions, is arguably pre-determined within the body prior to our awareness of them, including our choices and desires.

That which we accept as our identity – the 'I' – is largely a product of habit, a duration of repeated patterns or continuous contact with the same and what will be argued as a repeated capture of the same desires and the same connections to the outside. As Deleuze explains in one of his seminars:

[T]he simplest bodies do not have any interiority. They are always determined from the outside. What does this mean? By shocks. By impacts from another part. In what way do they encounter shocks? In the simplest way, to know that they never cease changing relations, since it is always within a relationship that the parts belong to me or do not belong to me... life does not stop being like that: shocks, appropriations of parts, transformations of relations, compositions to the infinite, etc. This system of parts external to one another that do not stop reacting, at the same time that the infinite totalities in which they enter do not stop varying. (1981)

This becomes foundational to recognizing affect's significance in and for education. It is also through this account of individuation that we most clearly begin to recognize the importance of disturbance within education. Though shocks – affects – might be of various degrees of intensity and affects might be attenuated through an infinite number of other forces acting in the same moment, if the text and the conditions or relations to the reader are of a certain nature – a certain intensity or quality – then the reader is potentially impacted by the shock of

the reading. But it is never predetermined, never predictable and always, as will be discussed later, subject to 'experimental' conditions and the ecology of entities that form the virtual body. Deleuze and Guattari illustrate the distinction between individuated and non-individuated bodies (referred to by this point as assemblages) through the analogous comparison of chess pieces to those in the game of Go:

Chess pieces are coded; they have an internal nature and intrinsic properties from which their movements, situations, and confrontations derive. They have qualities; a knight remains a knight, a pawn a pawn, a bishop a bishop. Each is like a subject of the statement endowed with a relative power, and these relative powers combine in a subject of enunciation...Go pieces, in contrast, are pellets, disks, simple arithmetic units, and have only an anonymous, collective, or third-person function: 'It' makes a move. 'It' could be a man, a woman, a louse, an elephant. Go pieces are elements of a nonsubjectified machine assemblage with no intrinsic properties, only situational ones." (ATP, 352)

Levi Bryant expands the analogy further, observing that, "unlike chess pieces which are intrinsically predefined and have pre-ordained stable identities, in Go, "the *identity* of the disk changes depending on its relationship to other pieces placed on the board... the disk, as an individual, is perpetually becoming or is a process" (2006). The same goes for human subjectivities. Deleuze suggests that "every time we find ourselves confronted or bound by a limitation or an opposition, we should ask what such a situation presupposes" (DR, 51). Like the disks in go, he contends that as the qualities of contexts change, it is likely that we are more comfortable surrounded by the familiar, whereas a situation which is perhaps novel or otherwise in tension with our habitual expectations, "presupposes a swarm of differences, a pluralism of free, wild or untamed differences; a properly differential and original space and time" (51).

As Bryant concludes, Deleuze's "central thesis, then, is that difference precedes representation, representation (the logic of identity) does not precede difference" (2006), perhaps echoing Sartre's earlier existentialist contention that "existence precedes essence" (2007, 20) which he clarifies further stating that "man first exists: he materializes in the world, encounters himself, and only afterward defines himself" (22). Deleuze, however, offers a much more complex and

extended materialist theorization of subjectivity through his conceptualization of pure difference, highlighting the distinction mentioned earlier between identity and diversity. If we consider individuals as products of individuation, recalling the earlier definitions of differentiation as a process of actualization and differentiation as movement from actual to virtual, then “virtual multiplicities that distribute differential relations along with their singularities (potentialities)... share no resemblance to the actualized individual” (Bryant, 2006). It is through this process of differentiation that forces of literature fuel the virtual realm wherein potentialities are first formed. The swarm of differences to which the reader is exposed, likely intensified in connection with unfamiliar elements or incompatibilities with their own previously engrained world views, can therefore contribute through the process of differentiation or actualization to shifts in subjectivity.

Such shifts in subjectivity relate directly to conceptualizations of identity. Differences that we associate with an individual’s ‘identity’ or the diversity we observe across a population are all actualizations emerging from the virtual field. As Deleuze explains,

The problem of classification was clearly always a problem of ordering differences. However, plant and animal classifications show that we can order differences only so long as we are provided with a multiple network of continuity of resemblance...one asks which among several differences is the one which truly forms a 'characteristic' - in other words, the one which allows to be grouped under a reflected identity those beings which resemble one another on a maximum number of points (DR, 247-248).

People are grouped or coded in the same manner as the classification of other plants and animals, by choosing one set of common ‘characteristics’ or actualized qualities which appear continuous in resemblance or recognition. The identities we use to label these characteristics and groups are often chosen over an infinite number of other possibilities, and not surprisingly, the emphasis of one label over another is prone to shift not only according to the limits of our perceptions and our scientific understanding, but also as a result of the mediating forces of political and capitalist persuasion, often employing popular media to orient audiences’ attention to one trait or another. As Rosi Braidotti explains, the body is but an interface, “a threshold, a field of intersecting material and symbolic forces, it is a surface where multiple

codes (race, sex, class, age, etc.) are inscribed; it's a cultural construction that capitalizes on the energies of a heterogeneous, discontinuous, and unconscious nature (2003, 44).

Because of the often, arbitrary nature of classifications and their vulnerability to manipulation, bias and distortion, the intersections of comparisons, competition and recognized inequities are points within the social field ripened for conflict. This will be discussed in greater detail later, as the codings associated with these territorializations also assert affective forces that further exacerbate tensions between opposing camps, and further motivating a vicious cycle of repetition and animosity. As social divisions form, lines are drawn, and populations grouped according to whichever identity label is being highlighted, oppositions are further fueled by a social contagion of affective forces circulating within the respective camps of belonging. As In other words, as Richard Langston observes, "Affect not only engenders borders within and between cultures, but it also fosters identity formations and aligns people vis-a-vis various hubs of power and authority" (2006, 95).

One might ask, however, that with so much multiplicity and continuous flows of material fluctuations, how can we account for the tendencies to view identity as stable? Colebrooke explains, "Life does not produce closed forms, but 'strata' – relatively stable points that slow the flow of difference down by creating a distinction between inside and outside (2002a, 77). Again, it is not difference, per say, that instigates change, but differentials or pure difference. It is relationships of intensity that trigger flows of affect, and most of us live lives that are surprisingly dull and steady repetitions of the same day-to-day cycles. Fluctuations in actualizations are often so insignificant that they are quickly absorbed or 'stratified' into existing strata. We are, in fact, "nothing more than our contracted habits and contemplations; we are events of life – and a life that is nothing outside all these singular expressions" (83).

Arguably, events or singular expressions only occur when there exists a critical buildup of differential forces, what Deleuze referred to earlier as 'shocks.' When Deleuze argues that life is difference, I believe it is the fact that we remain numb – constant – habituated automatons

unless we experience events of actualization that are significant enough to disturb our stasis. This understanding of the individual as but one of many modes or expressions of 'life' is critical as we later look at the ethics of the encounter. For it is this understanding of individuation, subjectivity, and life that challenges the very prospect of education. Whether or not the literature students encounter is capable of the degree of disturbance necessary to instigate erosion or dissolution of the social divisions erected according to frozen identities is dependent on each unique context or *literacy situation*, including the student, teacher and text and the socio-political forces surrounding the classroom.

Debating Affect

Moving further into questions of actualization – arguably the product of learning – echoing earlier comments, the abstract nature of affect and the complexities of differentiation has led to numerous of debates surrounding its understanding and application, particularly in the field of education. Considering the differences already apparent in this present thesis and the steadily increasing volumes of scholarship built around the work of Deleuze and Guattari, it is perhaps not surprising to find widely divergent opinions, interpretations and equivocating employments of the concept. And though many of these are beyond the scope of what I am able to discuss here, I do think it is critical to mention a few so as to clarify my own assumptions and theoretical affiliations.

Prominent among the debates surrounds the relation between affect in the unconscious and quasi-causally associated effects in consciousness, what is often referred to as ‘the gap.’ Without going into the minutia of the arguments, arguably instigated by Ruth Leys (2010, 2011a, 2011b, 2012) and followed by multiple reactions and extensions which continue to this day, it is worth noting a few of the core issues. These largely revolve around the question of the autonomy of affect and its correlation to cognitive agency. As Leys articulates it, the notion that affect is autonomous stems from the ‘belief’ that “affects are fundamentally independent of intention and meaning because they are material processes of the body,” and “that there is a radical separation between the affect system on the one hand, and intention or meaning or cognition on the other” (2010, 667). She proceeds to challenge the assumption of such autonomy by questioning scientific evidence offered as proof of a so-called ‘gap’: a half second delay between an action and our conscious awareness of the action. Both the complexity and the confusion presented by the varying interpretations of affect make for some rather muddled theorizations but simply stated, we are left wondering to what degree does that which is either inaccessible to or goes unnoticed by our consciousness impact our conscious choices. How much of what we think or do or decide is predetermined and therefore beyond our control?

These issues relate directly to entanglements of freedom and determinism, with the former associated with the subject's agency or choice and the latter with arguments for affect's autonomy. From one perspective, even if we stubbornly cling to our belief in the image of the rational human being, a growing body of research in the field of neuroscience points to some sort of gap between stimulus and awareness and therefore between stimulus and response. Yet in spite of such claims of confirmation, the mechanisms by which the unconscious (virtual) relate to conscious processing (the actual) remain a subject of contention and confusion. If, as Kasper Kristensen suggests, "the ontological primacy of affect over cognition leads to affective determinism in which the affects prime human judgments without much scope for the intellect to intervene in the course of forming judgments and deciding upon action" (2016, 12), then we come dangerously close to a conclusion of numbing futility. With no space for conscious intervention, teachers in education and activists in social change are left impotent.

Though many psychoanalytical therapeutic practices, including approaches to trauma, have developed around theories of the unconscious, there remains considerable skepticism and debate between competing theories and claims to validity. William James, prior to the 20th century, observed that:

One of the most extraordinary facts of our life is that, although we are besieged at every moment by impressions from our whole sensory surface, we notice so very small a part of them. The sum total of our impressions never enters into our experience, consciously so called, which runs through this sum total like a tiny rill through a broad flowery mead. Yet the physical impressions which do not count are there as much as those which do, and affect our sense organs just as energetically. Why they fail to pierce the mind is a mystery, which is only named and not explained when we invoke die Enge des Bewusstseins, 'the narrowness of consciousness,' as its ground. (2018)

As Deleuze emphasizes, following Nietzsche, "we stand amazed before consciousness, but "the truly surprising thing is rather the body . . ." (SPP, 17-18). Notions that we sense far more than we are aware, or that there is much that cognition misses but which nevertheless impacts actions, are already acknowledged and accepted by many people across multiple disciplines, with implications in education and psychology, but also on witness stands in trials, medical assessments, and the whole field of neuro or subliminal messaging in politics and marketing. But, as Leys concludes, "what is at issue is the materialist claim that our intentions have no

influence on our actions because they arrive too late in the chain of events to do anything but monitor what the brain decides for us” (2011b, 800). Inferring affect’s autonomy or independence based on ‘the gap’ leads to what she views as a serious oversight, arguing that for many affect theorists, “political campaigns, advertising, literature, visual images, and the mass media are all mechanisms for producing such effects below the threshold of meaning and ideology” (Leys, 2011a, 451). In other words, accepting the wholly deterministic model of affect, transformation of subjectivities occurs “without regard to the content of argument or debate” (451). Or, as Claire Hemmings exclaims, “worryingly, affective rewriting flattens out poststructuralist inquiry by ignoring the counter-hegemonic contributions of postcolonial and feminist theorists, only thereby positioning affect as ‘the answer’ to contemporary problems of cultural theory” (2005, 548). Intuitively, I tend to agree with these concerns, as do many current affect theorists who take a more moderate stance.

My own response to these remarks is firstly that what she observes as a dismissal of the role of cognition overlooks the many affect theorists who don’t necessarily reject cognitive strategies of social justice, but in recognizing that purely cognitive arguments often fail to sway thinking or behaviour, have looked to shift their emphases to factors or processes which political, cultural and educational theorists have tended to ignore in theorizing change. As Felicity Papoulias and Constantina Callard contend, “affect theory works to compensate for an assumed neglect of the body’s materiality in earlier paradigms dominating the humanities and the social sciences” (2010, 34). Viewed from the perspective of the classroom, I would whole-heartedly agree with this impulse. Even decades after questions of unconscious influences were first theorized in education, the field of classroom teaching, administration and selection of educational materials and programs has seen little to no shift from the dominance of cognition-based pedagogies.

A second response to Leys’ arguments would be that they seem unnecessarily polemical in their dissention, perhaps because of her fixation on her primary nemesis, Brian Massumi. Jan Slaby suggests that critics such as Leys “have so far aimed mostly at a number of fairly easy targets:

authors that, despite the initial prominence of their writings on affect, have for the most part ceased to be representative of what is at the center of cultural affect theory today” (2016, 5). In my own reading of the field, it appears that many, if not most, theorists assume a kind of middle ground in attempting to bridge the divide between the unconscious/virtual and the cognitive/actual. Slaby, for example, offers the following definition:

[A]ffect is construed as a dynamic and forceful processuality that traverses in and between bodies of various kinds, not yet consolidated into clearly bounded and thus nameable sequences. Accordingly, affect is here construed as what partly or wholly escapes the capture of reflective consciousness, at least initially. This furthermore implies a certain distance from language and signification, in the sense that affect tends to outrun or undermine at least the more conventional attempts at capturing it in words (although the relationship of affect and language is ultimately a much more complex one) (2016, 3)

On one hand, then, as Leys notes, “The disconnect between ‘ideology’ and affect produces as one of its consequences a relative indifference to the role of ideas and beliefs in politics, culture, and art in favor of an ‘ontological’ concern with different people’s corporeal affective reactions” (2011a, 450-451). And to the extent that theorists do side with the autonomy of affect, then as Kristensen adds, it follows that “any transition from the vicious circle of reproduction of existing (oppressive) social relations seems impossible” (2016, 12). In other words, without conscious access to means by which affect can be ‘affected’ or acted on intentionally, we are left with a version of hard determinism which leaves no room for subjective agency, including the agential force of literary works, to purposefully incite change.

But on the other hand, to the degree that both theorists and classroom practitioners focus solely on the cognitive, particularly in education, they risk the limitations of anthropocentric, individualistic, and egocentric views which over-emphasize controlled and controlling reason at the centre of learning. In doing so, Protevi notes that we also fail to account for affective forces working “above, below and alongside the subject in examining politically shaped and triggered affective cognition: above to the social, below to the somatic, and alongside to the assemblage” (2009, 4).

The position I have assumed here is less about ignoring or dismissing cognition and more about broadening pedagogical considerations of ‘aesthetics’ which necessarily demands a closer consideration of affect. This focus on sense, affect, and the body, allows for a deeper explanation for the underlying processes that thought, behaviour and dispositions at the heart of learning. At the risk of unveiling my own naive understanding of the ontology and metaphysics of affect and of their theoretical writings, I do not see my stated position as significantly incompatible with anything Deleuze and Guattari have written. As others have stated, their work has resulted in a renewed interest in and a deeper consideration of the immanent forces that contribute to events of learning, without which we would lack appreciation of and responsibility for the full breadth of what takes place in social, political, or aesthetic – literary – encounters. To conclude that for Deleuze, affect and conscious processes are independent, is to ignore his ontology of the real as comprised of both the virtual and the actual. Accepting that affects move as forces on and within the prepersonal, presubjective, and precognitive level of experience, does not, in my mind, preclude their relationship, albeit indirect, with the cognitive.

Rather than viewing cognition and affect as either/or contributions to thought and behaviour, it is possible to consider them as somehow intertwined, with both the unconscious and conscious operations projecting affective force. For example, it seems hard to deny that political or cultural arguments also contain affective energy, and even ‘meaning,’ arising as a sudden awareness or epiphany, contains and projects affective force. Recalling the circular flow of differentiation (actualization) and differentiation (differential flows into the virtual), we begin to realize complex nature of the entanglements between the virtual and the actual. It is therefore not surprising that, as mentioned earlier, distinctions between affects and affections are often blurred in the scholarship, as for example, in this passage by Elspeth Probyn:

[T]he traffic in affect goes both ways. As I observe an ethology of movements and relations displayed upon student bodies, so do they on mine. My facial ticks, body movements, use of language, eye contact and other elements I am not aware of are often brought to my attention. A student remarks on the freckles I have in my eyes. How many lovers have missed that? How close is this attention? I squirm. The same student asks me in class about my ‘embodied pedagogy’. It’s an intensive graduate seminar on

affect, and the question throws me. I stuttered, blushed, and went headlong into some abstract argument about politics, pedagogy, and so forth. The students looked bemused at this sight of my body writhing in affect, and my recourse to ‘theory’ in ways not used in the class.” (2004, 38)

Considering to how affect has been taken up in political, cultural, and educational literature, Slaby points out that the ‘strand of affect theory’ he adopts “frames affect moreover in terms of a *constitutive relationality* between bodies and bodies and objects, in the sense that these dynamic relations are taken to be ontologically prior to the entities related” (2016, 4).

Numerous noteworthy theorists have taken similar approaches in their application of affect theory, many of whom have influenced my own work (to name but a few, these include Megan Boler (1999, 2004, 2018; Sara Ahmed, 2004a, 2004b, 2009, 2010a, 2010b; Lauren Berlant, 2004, 2011; and Michalinos Zembylas, 2007a, 2007b, 2013, 2014, 2015a, 2015b; Boler and Zembylas, 2003, 2015; and Boler and Elizabeth Davis, 2018). Inevitably their work tends to blur the lines between unconscious and conscious associations with affect. As Slaby also points out, these applications share a common focus on relational dynamics wherein “affect is often conceptualized with regard to complex social dynamics, such as interaction rituals, crowd behavior, shared media practices and in general the immersion of people into places, their resonant attachments to – or dissonant distancing from – nations, communities, groups, institutions and so on” (2016, 4), and many cultural affect theorists “do not operate with the notion of an individual affective episode’s cognitive or representational content. Instead, they look at the initially nameless affects of social relatedness, at the affective dynamics involved in media use, at the subtle affective workings of place (like the home, the cityscape or the corporate office), or at the diverse affective significances of everyday objects “(5-6).

One reason I have included so much explanatory material around this expanded conceptualization of body and relationality (and will do so again in the later section on assemblage theory), is to more clearly situate myself in this latter camp, viewing education as primarily a relational ecology and learning as a relational event. Though reading itself would appear to be a solitary exercise, not only will the text itself be construed as a collective

enunciation, but the reader, as part of a larger body of connected relations, is but a receptacle into which the book (later referred to a literary machine) is connected. The affective power of the book works through the reader into the wider assemblage of elements of which the reader is but one part.

When we think of affect as increasing or decreasing the body's capacity to act, this does not, in my mind, necessitate a complete dismissal of the role of cognition. Only that there is so much more to understanding our behaviour, our intentions and our inclinations. As but one example, through certain experiences of literature, there is a potential force of affect which partly depends on and quasi-causally results in an increase in the body's capacity to opening up or expanding the porous boundaries of its habitual assemblage – often defined in part by an associated 'ingroup' – to become more inclusive or less negative towards the kinds of intensities generated through encounters with members of so-called 'outgroups'. This is what I refer to as a consequent leaning in or leaning away from difference intrinsic to ingroup and outgroup relations (Anthony Greenwald and Mahzarin Banaji, 1995; Marilynn Brewer, 1997,1999; Galen Bodenhausen et al., 2001; Lindsey Cameron et.al., 2006, 2006, 2007, 2011). I believe it is therefore possible to consider affect as key to understanding considerations such as denial (as in climate change), racism, prejudice, ingroup bias, and implicit memory and avoidance in education. And to the extent that it is considered in the process of literary selection, engagement, and instructional approaches, affect has a significant role to play in pedagogies surrounding literature in the classroom.

Affections, Feelings and Emotions

Though perhaps less topics of debate and moreso points of confusion or contention, it is worth acknowledging other concepts subject to slippage in the literature surrounding theories and applications of affect. One of these regards the relationships between affect, feelings and emotions, the latter building on what has previously been discussed regarding conscious or actualized affections. With many affect theorists writing across intersections of political,

cultural, and educational concern, it is not surprising that focus inevitably turns to the more tangible or concrete language of affections, the signs first realized by the individuated human subject. This is inevitable, not only in appealing to audiences circulating outside of the field more familiar with the discourse related to affect, but also because of the need, as I sense in my case, to bridge the theoretical with problems and applications in day-to-day practice.

Eric Shouse contrasts affect, which he defines as “a non-conscious experience of intensity ... a moment of unformed and unstructured potential” (2005) to ‘feeling’ which he distinguishes as “a sensation that has been checked against previous experiences and labelled,” claiming that having entered the realm of our awareness, “it is personal and biographical because every person has a distinct set of previous sensations from which to draw when interpreting and labelling their feelings” (2005). Similarly, Olsson suggests that being “incapable of registering affect,” consciousness “only registers the effects of affect, that is, our feelings” (2009, 152). Again, we can only assume a quasi-causal relationship between the affect and the affections, or as in the case discussed here, between the work of literature, or a part of a longer work, and the effects or impact felt by the reader.

Adding to the confusion surrounding feelings is the more common slippage between feelings, affects and emotions. Though they are also often used interchangeably, many theorists consider emotion as further along the spectrum of cognitive processing. Massumi, for example, describes emotion as

a subjective content, the sociolinguistic fixing of the quality of an experience which is from that point onward defined as personal. Emotion is qualified intensity, the conventional, consensual point of insertion of intensity into semantically and semiotically formed progressions, into narrativizable action-reaction circuits, into function and meaning. It is intensity owned and recognized. (2002a, p. 28)

Alyssa Niccolini distinguishes emotions as “residues of affect, remainders signaling that a body has been affected and processed an affectation... individualized and influenced by personal biographies” (2016, 895). Though by no means consistent in the literature, Shouse suggests a further distinction between feeling and emotion, arguing that the latter is the “projection” or “display” of feeling. It is an active expression and “unlike feelings...[It] can be either genuine or

feigned” (2005). But despite these distinctions, emotions and feelings are rarely distinguished in most discourse. Consider, for example, phrases such as ‘a display of emotion’ or ‘emotional labour,’ which are likely to implicate both feelings and emotions without finer discriminations of difference.

In spite of the slippage here,’ Papoulias and Callard assert that there is some consistency, at least in the humanities, in distinguishing emotion and affect. For them affect points to “an amorphous, diffuse, and bodily ‘experience’ of stimulation impinging upon and altering the body’s physiology” while emotions are “the various structured, qualified, and recognizable experiential states of anger, joy, sadness, and so on, into which such amorphous experience is translated” (2010, 247). Elaborating further, while accepting affect as precognitive, they, too, appear to conflate feelings with emotions, referring to the latter as “distinct categorizations of experience related to a self. (We feel fear because of a physiological event: fear, the identifiable emotion, is a judgment on a primary bodily mode of engagement with the world)” (2010, 247).

And while affect might be more consistently distinguished from emotion, as discussed earlier regarding the entanglement or interactions between the consciousness and the unconscious, there often appears to be neglect or confusion regarding how affect can also be viewed as a product of emotion in the process of differentiation, the move from actual to virtual. In so far as the body constantly experiences movement from the virtual to the actual and the actual to the virtual, we must also consider the possibility that, along with other sources of affect in the ethology, the individualized subjects and either their emotional expressions or their emotion-arousing expressions can also become potential sources of affect exerted in both outward and inward directions. Consider, for example, how a simple statement like ‘I am angry,’ sometimes even more impactful when spoken without emotion, can produce a reaction of sheer terror in certain contexts. Of course, it is not a one-to-one relationship, but rather the statement carries with it a certain force into the virtual realm of the receiver and is processed along with the heterogeneity of multiple other forces which quasi-causally produce the feelings and emotions experienced by the receiver. Similar is the case with the actualized text of a work of literature.

Depending on the context and the unique virtual environment of the reader, we never know which line will contribute to the production of perceivable reactions.

In discussing the interplay between emotion and affect, Deleuze provides the example from William James in which he “suggests a paradoxical order: (1) I perceive a lion, (2) my body trembles, (3) I am afraid; (1) the perception of a situation, (2) the modification of the body, a reinforcement or a weakening, (3) the emotion of consciousness or the mind” (1998, 123). In this case, the modification of the body seemingly conflates the affect with the affection of trembling. Though Deleuze points out that James was “perhaps wrong to confuse this order with a causality,” (reminding us of the ‘quasi-causality’ we must attribute to affections), he insists that “the order is correct:”

I am in an exhausting situation; my body ‘crouches down and crawls’: my mind is ashamed. The mind begins by coldly and curiously regarding what the body does, it is first of all a witness; then it is affected, it becomes an impassioned witness, that is, it experiences for itself affects that are not simply effects of the body, but veritable critical entities that hover over the body and judge it. (ECC p. 124)

Building on Deleuze’s statement, Hemmings makes an important observation that again speaks to inextricable relationship between cognitive and non-cognitive processes: “If judgement is always secondary to bodily response, poised above it, but crucially tied to it, the intensity of that response must also presumably be curtailed or extended by that judgement, forming an affective cycle in which each element has the capacity to affect (intensify or diminish) the other... Judgement links the body and the social and gives both interpretative meaning” (2005, 564). These observations parallel Deleuze’s own example of what he calls “affective constellations” recalled in his anecdote of ‘Little Hans’ who “defines a horse by making out a list of its affects, both active and passive: having a big widdler, hauling heavy loads, having blinkers, biting, falling down, being whipped, making a row with its feet” (ECC, 64). The ‘distribution of affects’ he describes ultimately constitutes what he refers to as a ‘map of intensity,’ consistent with what James Williams (2016), drawing on Deleuze’s conceptualization of the sign, might refer to as a set which constitutes the affective production of the process sign.

This is but one of several examples in which either we interpret Deleuze as blurring the lines between affect, affections, unconscious and conscious, or we recognize the reciprocating flows of affect in the processes of differentiation and differentiation. It also offers additional insight into the cognitive-non-cognitive gap whereby gradients of difference might conceivably be produced by the brain or body's processing of 'meaning' which in turn produces its own affects circulating back into the virtual. Importantly, Watkins points out that, the affection "may be fleeting but it may also leave a residue, a lasting impression that produces particular kinds of bodily capacities" (2010, 269). As she also notes, the residue of affect in turn contributes to the formation of 'dispositions' such that, in the context of education, we might say that "a sense of self is formed through engagement with the world and others and the affects this generates" (269-270).

From our own experiences, we are likely able to recall occasions of sudden realization: finally getting a joke, noticing the 'punctum' in a work of art, or discovering a point of interest in a work of fiction. In each case, the realization of meaning is more-often-than-not accompanied by an outpouring of feeling or emotion: joy, elation, devastation etc. Meaning and/or emotion relate, quasi-causally, to the projection of affect into the body. Whether self-realized or the result of having a teacher or friend guide us, we experience a difference in our body as the 'aha' suddenly dawns in a moment of discovery, of meaning realized. But it's more than a difference of understanding. Such epiphanies are tinged with bodily reactions, moving us in ways of which we may or may not be immediately aware. It is often these very moments, in which emotion and/or affect spills over, sometimes impacting others in the class, that many teachers live for. Sara Ahmed, likewise, challenges Massumi's characterization of affect as autonomous intensities, "unqualified and beyond narrative" which as she contends, "under-describes the work of emotions, which involve forms of intensity, bodily orientation and direction that are not simply about 'subjective content' or qualification of intensity... but shape how bodies are moved by the worlds they inhabit" (2009,32).

One of the examples Ahmed offers revolves around the emotion/idea of happiness, specifically pointing to the complex case of the *feminist killjoy*. In an imagined social scene, several friends are gathered together all presumably sharing a common emotional orientation towards the notion of ‘family’ as the ‘happy object’ of attention: “not because it causes happiness, or because the family affects us in a good way, but because we share an orientation toward the family as being good” (2009, 35). Things run smoothly so long as the unspoken social contract of agreement is maintained. But what happens when someone in the group doesn’t conform with the ‘spirit’ of the group? Suddenly, someone says something construed as offensive, though in this hypothetical case it appears that only one person, the feminist killjoy, is sensitive enough to pick up on its offensive nature, becoming the person in the room who has the power to ‘convert’ happy feelings into discomfort: “What passes between proximate bodies might be affective precisely because it deviates and even perverts what was ‘sent out’” (35), threatening to disrupt the flow of contentment and congeniality. At this point, Ahmed asks, “Does the feminist kill other people’s joy by pointing out moments of sexism? Or does she expose the bad feelings that get hidden, displaced or negated under public signs of joy?” (2009, 35). No matter what happens next, the disturbance takes hold. Regardless of whether the killjoy – the ‘affect alien’ – remains silent or not, her reservations are likely received as disturbing affects by other bodies in the gathering:

[H]er failure to be made happy is read as sabotaging the happiness of others... You can be affectively alien because you are affected in the wrong way by the right things. Or you can be affectively alien because you affect others in the wrong way: your proximity gets in the way of other people’s enjoyment of the right things, functioning as an unwanted reminder of histories that are disturbing, which disturb an atmosphere (35, 36).

Ahmed offers us but one approach to considering affect within the complexity of the relations between meaning, emotions, and the body, which I would suggest speaks to similar understandings and applications to educational and political contexts, while remaining consistent with a Deleuze-Spinozist perspective. This is implied in her observation that when we are in alignment with “an affective community” we likely “feel happiness.” But when we “become alienated” and in disagreement with the affective community, and don’t experience

the happiness we are expected to feel because the community has judged something as good, then “the gap between the affective value of an object and how we experience an object can involve a range of affects, which are directed by the modes of explanation we offer to fill this gap” (33). This is similar to Steven Shaviro’s claim that “emotion is affect captured by a subject, or tamed and reduced to the extent that it becomes commensurate with that subject” (2010, 3). In other words, “subjects are overwhelmed and traversed by affect, but they have or possess their own emotions” (3). Ahmed also refers to the distorted and reactive nature of certain judgements of causality, both following an experience, in which case, “attribution of causality is retrospective” or prior to an experience in which we assign ‘anticipatory causality’ which, due to proximity, “the object becomes a feeling-cause” and “when we feel the feeling we expect to feel, we are affirmed” (33). In either case, judgements of causality are subject to faulty attribution or what Deleuze-Spinoza will call inadequate knowledge, a topic to be discussed in more length in a later section.

As a result, the gap between virtual or unconscious ‘affects’ and actual or conscious ‘emotions’ begins to collapse. As Ahmed explains,

Emotions are not ‘after-thoughts’, but shape how bodies are moved by the worlds they inhabit...While you can separate an affective response from an emotion that is attributed as such (the bodily sensations from the feeling of being afraid), this does not mean in practice, or in everyday life, they are separate. In fact, they are contiguous; they slide into each other; they stick, and cohere, even when they are separated. The ‘fear affect’ can be separated from the self-conscious recognition of being afraid (the flicker in the corner of the eye signaling the presence of the stranger, which registers as a disturbance on the skin before we have recognized the stranger as a stranger)... The flicker is more likely to become an emotion that we retrospectively recognize as fear in places that are already given affective value as fearsome (the ‘rough neighbourhood’ is one that we anticipate to be frightening), or for somebody whose body remembers other flickers becoming frightening (2009, 32)

As this explanation suggests, Ahmed not only rejects the notion of affect’s autonomy, but begins instead by focusing on “the messiness of the experiential, the unfolding of bodies into worlds, and what [she has] called ‘the drama of ‘contingency’, how we are touched by what comes near” (33). Though one might argue that Ahmed’s explanation is potentially reductive in

so far as it skips over the complex and heterogeneous nature of forces at play in the virtual, in terms of its tangibility she provides what I believe to be a helpful example of how affect might be employed to explore the affective nature of social environments such as the classroom. It also highlights again how emotions are not so easily distinguished from affects. As Jan Jagodzinski explains, speaking more specifically to encounters with art objects, if we consider the two ‘levels of image reception,’ affect and emotion,

[W]hile parallel, [they] interfere with one another via their modulation in complex ways. The intensity or the effect of the image (affectus) and the content of the quality of the image in relations to its meaning (articulated as emotions) become entangled producing various effects. The question whether the difference between affect and emotions is one of degree or kind remains rather open since their heterogeneity, that is, their difference is not easily distinguished, neither in practice nor in the literature. (2017, 8)

Similar to Ahmed, though with considerably more deference to the groundwork of Spinoza and Deleuze, Megan Boler and Michalinos Zembylas both implicate affect theory in discussions of racism, equity and discrimination, often in the context of education, and in particular as it operates in what they call a ‘pedagogy of discomfort.’ Boler, for example, contends that in the process of teaching, by ‘following the affect’ rather than the words people actually utter, one can begin to see how emotional investments reflect both individuals’ willingness to grow as well as the embedded quality of dominant cultural values” (2004, 116-117). Likewise, consistent with Ahmed’s apparent employment of affect, Zembylas describes something called “affective citizenship” which refers to “a concept that identifies which emotional relationships between citizens are recognized and endorsed or rejected, and how citizens are encouraged to feel about themselves and others” (2013, 5). In both cases, the authors raise issues that not only apply to the relationship between affect and individuation discussed previously, but also aspects that might apply directly to the force of literary encounters as texts can either endorse or reject the perspectives, including value orientations, readers have for themselves and for others. In this way, we begin to understand how an understanding of affect can have significant implications for learning and disrupting or even counter-actualizing destructive attitudes, emotions and actions against difference. As Zembylas contends elsewhere:

[B]odies and affects in the classroom may be redefined as intensities and energies that produce new affective and embodied connections. What I suggest is that reconceiving teaching and learning as a plane for the production of intense affects that connect bodies can perhaps problematize current discourses around 'emotional intelligence' and 'emotion management' in classrooms... Deleuzian ideas can open up planes where improbable affective and bodily connections can be made. In such planes, affects such as desire, pleasure, joy and even anger can form platforms for social solidarity and the understanding of differences. (2007, 19)

It is important to remember, however, that affective relations can create or reinforce positive social relations or, as has been demonstrated throughout history, perhaps most dramatically portrayed in images of the Nazi youth gatherings, extremely destructive. This distinction also relates to the difference between what will be discussed as subject groups and subjected or subjugated groups.

As Protevi also notes, "bodies, minds and social settings are intricately and intimately linked" (2009, xi). And though he explicitly denies neglecting subjectivity he observes that "subjectivity is sometimes bypassed in favor of a direct linkage of the social and the somatic," offering the example of "politically triggered basic emotions, such as rage and panic" (xi). At the same time, he draws our attention to how affect is often excluded from cognition, "insisting that subjectivity be studied both in its embodied affectivity and in terms of the distribution of affective cognitive traits in a population" (xi).

With respect to this thesis, I have chosen an application of affect that remains open to these broader, albeit more blurred, conceptualizations of how it contributes to cognition directly or indirectly, based on the unclear imbrication of conscious and unconscious processes in the body as well the entanglement of feeling and emotion. While some might accuse me of assuming the lowest common denominator between various theoretical positions, for the purposes of this exploration of literature and pedagogy, these more nuanced distinctions do not diminish my central thesis, regardless how much they might trouble it.

A Life: The Importance of Affect

A much more significant aspect of this research is the often-neglected relationship between affect and what Deleuze refers to as ‘a life.’ It is a non-subjective, more-than-human conceptualization of life that Colebrook suggests, among others, is at the very core of the Spinoza-Deleuzian ethical project: “if we want to know what something (such as art, science or philosophy) *is*, then we can ask how it serves life” (2002a, 13). More specifically, in considering the ‘work’ of literature in the classroom, it is not about the more visible signs of affection that matter so much as what happens on the plane of immanence – the theoretical conceptualization for the intersection between the body and the field of differences, and the forces of affect which are introduced to the body from this outside field – a life.

As Jagodzinski emphasizes, “by hinging pedagogy on the play of emotion, we ignore the actual source of vitalism or what Bergson called, ‘elan vital’ which draws from a much larger sense of ‘a life’ that has not been reduced to simply ‘human’ sources” (2002, 27). But this vitalism of which Deleuze speaks is also prone to misunderstanding. Following Deleuze and Guattari, Colebrook distinguishes two forms of vitalism or ways of “understanding this notion of ‘life as it really is’” (2010, 77). The most common, ‘active vitalism’ refers to a reduction to ‘actual’ life, wherein “vitalism begins from living bodies (usually human, usually heterosexual, usually familial) and then asks what it means to live well,” which is an active notion of vitalism that “‘life’ refers to acting and well organised bodies” (77). Or as Deleuze and Guattari state, active vitalism acts “only from the point of view of an external cerebral knowledge” (WIP, 213). In contrast, ‘passive vitalism,’ what Deleuze implies when speaking of ‘a life’ rather than an individuated person’s life, “is also a way of understanding reality, or “‘life as it really is,’” which Colebrook proceeds to explain, is life as “a pre-individual plane of forces that does not act by a process of decision and self-maintenance but through chance encounters” (2010, 77). In this case, life relates to the virtual, outside and exceeding the necessary reductions and limitations of human consciousness, including language and other forms of representation. Adding further

clarity around this very complex idea, one that is critical to this present study, jagodzinski explains that

A Life is not the Life of an already constituted individual or subject. A Life is made up of singularities that are outside the human as well as constituting our symbiotic relationships to this outside so that it becomes possible to say 'we,' as well as 'I.'" The attention is to life that occurs before and alongside the formation of subjectivity, across the human-inhuman-non-human divides. It is an attempt to take into account the world's own forces: affects and percepts as relations rather than affections and perceptions that are all too human. (2014, 12)

Whether or not an encounter with literature will yield such forces or possess the potential to generate change at the service of life, we never know with certainty. Nor can we expect the same work to convey the same degree of potency for every reader, as each body possesses different capacities to be affected. But in the interest of those for whom an encounter does 'work,' life expands, and through actualizations, subjectivities expand, opening to new connections. Worlds shift ever so slightly, but in ways we cannot ignore. Nor, as teachers, should we.

In one of his many interviews, Deleuze summarizes that: "Everything I've written is vitalistic, at least I hope it is" (N, 1995, 143). Likewise, in one of his later essays he remarks, "What is immanence? A life..." (PI, 28). Speaking specifically to 'a' life rather than 'the' life, Deleuze offers an extended example directly from the fiction of Charles Dickens:

A disreputable man, a rogue, held in contempt by everyone, is found as he lies dying. Suddenly, those taking care of him manifest an eagerness, respect, even love, for his slightest sign of life. Everybody bustles about to save him, to the point where, in his deepest coma, this wicked man himself senses something soft and sweet penetrating him. But to the degree that he comes back to life, his saviors turn colder, and he becomes once again mean and crude. Between his life and his death, there is a moment that is only that of a life playing with death. (PI, 28)

So much is implicated in this one example. To begin with, Deleuze distinguishes between 'the life' of the individualized character recognized for his wickedness and the non-individuated or "impersonal and yet singular" life that exists outside the "subjectivity and objectivity of what happens." This is what he refers to as "a life of pure immanence, neutral, beyond good and

evil,” since it was only the individuated subject, the personalized life that could be judged as good or bad, but this actualized being is what, in the event of death for example, “fades away in favor of the singular life immanent to a man who no longer has a name, though he can be mistaken for no other. A singular essence, a life ... (29)

In literature, as this example from Dicken’s illustrates, characterization impacts the reader on multiple levels. With our interpretations, discussions, and explications at the level of consciousness and meaning, more-than-likely only individuated qualities will be recognized as associated with a character. But in accepting Deleuze’s suggestion that “a life contains only virtuals,” (31), it is perhaps also true that characterization also works on readers at the level of affect – at the level of pure intensity: “The singularities and the events that constitute a life coexist with the accidents of *the* life that corresponds to it” (29). jagodzinki sheds further light on this distinction between ‘the’ life and ‘a’ life:

A Life is a transcendental field, a pure plane of immanence. It is a plane of existence, of genesis, the clamour of becoming. This material vitalism or A Life exists everywhere but it is covered over and hidden to ordinary conditioned perception, as the phenomenology of lived life. A Life and the living are in reciprocal presupposition with one another; that is, they presuppose and determine each other. (2017, 3)

It is for this reason, perhaps, that readers can find themselves with mixed ‘feelings’ about a character: abhorring their behaviour and personality, yet finding them somehow strangely appealing. One example that comes to mind is that of Iago, the clear villain in Shakespeare’s Othello. It is perhaps a passive vitalism that, like the characters surrounding the rogue in Dicken’s passage above, we as readers or audience members vaguely sense and find so beguiling in an otherwise despicable character. Approached from a slightly different angle, Papoulias and Callard argue that in so far as affect’s forces operate outside “any social or psychic structuration,” then “it promises an engagement with the living present and a break with the tyranny of representational memory—that is, a break with an apprehension of the present through particular understandings of representation and signification, as a second-order reality. (2010, 247-248).

In this sense, the literary work does not ‘vitalize’ in the commonly inferred active form, similar to the more romanticized notion of nurturance. Instead, as Colebrook clarifies further, “Deleuze insists on real and immanent conditions, and also on the virtual or vital, not as an active underlying ground but as a ‘swarm’ or chaos that, far from grounding or returning life to its animating power, deterritorialises life beyond any of the seemingly proper forms that we know” (89). The two different understandings of vitalism parallel what Protevi calls Deleuze and Guattari’s ‘double sense’ of life, “reflecting both stratification and destratification. It means both “organisms” as a certain set of stratified beings and also the creativity of complex systems, their capacity to produce new emergent properties, new behavior patterns, by destratifying and deterritorializing” (2012, 248).

Literature, then, has the potential to do so much more than what we typically understand it as offering us. While no doubt it can do all of the above, its most valuable contribution to education is, echoing Jagodzinski’s comments earlier, to break through the banality of the habitual – or, if you will – Blake’s mind-forged manacles, and open up new possibilities of life. Considering literature’s connection with ‘a life,’ then, at the unconscious or virtual level its affective impact speaks to what Mark Hansen refers as “the capacity of the body to experience itself as ‘more than itself’ and thus to deploy its sensorimotor power to create the unpredictable, the experimental, the new” (2004, 6). As Deleuze emphasizes, “There’s a profound link between signs, life, and vitalism: the power of nonorganic life that can be found in a line that’s drawn, a line of writing, a line of music. It’s organisms that die, not life. Any work of art points a way through for life, finds a way through the cracks” (N, 143).

Affections Against ‘A Life’

As already insinuated, if we accept Colebrook’s claim that the value of affect is ultimately to serve a life, which I do, then we must also consider the ways in which certain interests in affect can and have been intentionally or unintentionally coopted for purposes other than life, including in education. Colebrook, for example, points to the neglect of affect’s potential, as

described above, in preference to the tangibility and excitement of affections themselves, and the lure of feelings or emotions at the expense of a “contraction or weakening of grammars and syntaxes of cognition in the face of instant gratification of affections” (2011a, 47) or, more significantly, the productive (and nonhuman) capacity of affect to disrupt the steady diet of feeling or disturb the lure of affection.

It is easy to be distracted by affections for the sake of affections, and how these are easily manipulated within capitalism for less benign ends, if not those entirely detrimental to life. In a cultural environment now prone to sensationalism, we can readily see how markets rely on the manipulation or capture of desire, even to the point of fueling addictions. As Colebrook observes, “A culture of shock and awe allows us to sit before a screen and enjoy the affects of horror, terror, mourning, desire, disgust, fear and excitement without sense” (47). Elaborating further, she explains that,

[A]s long as everything is organized according to consumption and production (in terms of the digits of the private organism) the potential for forces to be produced – such as affects - will always be grounded upon affections. The visual production of the affect of horror or terror will be oriented to horrifying or terrorizing (as in many horror films or political campaigns). As long as affects are confused with affections, or feelings of the lived body, then nothing will ever be felt; the body will only re-live itself. (2011a, 49)

Related to what might otherwise be considered a sign of a cultural illness, she suggests that one of the dangers of affect, and in particular how it has been taken up as a tool of capitalism, lies in the over-emphasis our society now places on heightened ‘affections’ of the body, without realizing these as not only devoid of substance, but potentially exacerbating the ‘feelings’ of animosity that further separate us from the possibilities of connection. As she emphasizes,

“We are suffering, today - here and now - from hyper-hypo-affective disorder. We appear to be consuming nothing other than affects; even the supposed material needs of life - food, sex, sociality - are now marketed affectively. Branding relies on irrational attachments or “lovemarks,” while politics trades in terror and resentment” (2011a, 45).

This is reminiscent of Aldous Huxley’s 1934 novel, *Brave New World*, in which the corporation-controlled culture adopts the pleasures of large screened ‘feelies’ and the drug ‘soma,’ frightfully not so distant from our own where political manipulation and distraction industries

share much in common with marketing and entertainment industries. As Colebrook explains, when the body is “suffering from hyper-affective disorder” a kind of short-circuiting takes place: “The social and political organization of bodies does not occur by way of ideas or beliefs ... but by way of affective addiction, either to the diverting stimuli of personal screens and headphones, or to the bodily stimulants of caffeine, sugar, tobacco or other widely ingested and publicly legitimated substances” (2011a, 51). In other words, far from the potential of affect to disturb and spark new forms of thinking and being, more often than not it is sought and manipulated for its potential to produce feelings and nothing more.

In turning more specifically to the field of education, Colebrook’s conclusion that “there is nothing effective about affections” (2011a, 53), reminds us that regardless how much we might rely on ‘feelings’ as our only indicators for shifts occurring in the virtual, we must remain ever cautious in maintaining our focus on the underlying conditions that open towards life rather than distance us from it in an enslavement of our own making. We can readily see how affections alone are often taken as evidence of good teaching, when in reality it is just as likely to feed into the comfort zones, often in the name of ‘relevance,’ while steering student bodies far from the swarm of differences that might otherwise foster learning. As Colebrook also notes, “much of what passes as Deleuzian inflected theory” serves instead to champion “precisely what [Deleuze and Guattari’s] aimed for future would go beyond” (49). In other words, instead of expanding life, many technologies of media, including those employed in education, serve to reinforce the habitual, being as she states, “less events of production, created to stand alone or possess a certain force, as events of consumptive immediacy” (48). Given the benefit of the doubt, even if the sensual enticement of newly discovered affections is initially unintentional, it is highly unlikely that even accidental discoveries of visceral reactions will remain innocent and coincidental for long. Whether by accident or by design, markets are quick to capture, package and resell whatever works for whoever will pay, including political propaganda machines, entertainment industries, and, most tragically, education venders and brokers – whoever might have an interest in customer or user sales and therefore their satisfaction/ pleasure.

Associated with this concern, though not surprising given our understanding of bodies, is what Anna Gibbs refers to as “affect contagion” (2001, 2008), which she describes rather dramatically: “Bodies can catch feelings as easily as catch[ing] fire: affect leaps from one body to another, evoking tenderness, inciting shame, igniting rage, exciting fear – in short, communicable affect can inflame nerves and muscles in a conflagration of every conceivable kind of passion” (2001). Slaby, likewise, points to the “conspicuous affective dynamics in groups or crowds... unfolding in protests, riots, parties or events of mass entertainment” (2016, 10) describing “how a crowd can work itself into a collective frenzy, a mass panic or collective rage or aggression, so that individuals, even if disposed quite differently prior to entering the crowd, are likely to be swayed into rolling with the dominant ‘wave’ of affect” (2016, 10).

Approaching from a slightly different perspective, Hemmings notes the “myriad ways that affect manifests precisely not as difference, but as a central mechanism of social reproduction in the most glaring ways” (2011, 53). And employing descriptions not so distanced from the cautionary warnings of Huxley and Orwell, she describes, “the delights of consumerism, feelings of belonging attending fundamentalism or fascism... are affective responses that strengthen rather than challenge a dominant social order” (2005, 550-551). While the ‘affective turn’ may have helped to expand our understanding of experience and influence, it has also introduced what Colebrook refers to as a “pathology of the populace,” which, as she clarifies, “is certainly not a polity for it has nothing to do with bodies assembling to speak, deliberate and communicate in common” (2011a, 53). In other words, at a certain point the affected subjects are united in what might later be referred to as ‘subjugated groups.’

How might this concern my present consideration of literature in the classroom? Though he might have used different terms, Plato was one of the first to point out the potential dangers of literature, going so far as to advocate for outright censorship, primarily due to the corrupting forces of what we might now refer to as affections:

And as for sex, and spiritedness, too, and for all the desires, pains, and pleasures in the soul that we say follow all our action, poetic imitation produces similar results in us. For

it fosters and waters them when they ought to be dried up, and sets them up as rulers in us when they ought to be ruled so that we may become better and happier instead of worse and more wretched. (Plato, 360 b.c./1991, 290)

Choosing the example of Homer, Plato is especially concerned with the depiction of heroism and the glorification of violence, a point that continues today in debates over gaming, television, film, social media, and, of course, literature. And though I am not one to advocate for censorship, there is no doubt a kind of literature – or writing – that is designed almost exclusively for consumption by virtue of the affections it primes. This includes not only the extreme examples of mass marketing of Harlequin’s, pulp fiction, murder mysteries and pornography, but also the ‘publishers’ anticipated sales of young adult literature that often contractually demands of writers’ and editors’ strict adherence to frequency and style expectations of action, dialogue, syntax, and content designed to ‘hook’ readers.’ Here we notice educational suppliers and teachers, often in the interests of student satisfaction, as sometimes guilty of focusing on means – heightened eagerness of readers – without necessarily considering the learning or lack of learning that ensues.

Again, the shadow of what jagodzinski refers to as “designer capitalism” (2010, 2015) is every bit as ubiquitous in the education industry as it is elsewhere. It would be an exaggeration to suggest that the sole purpose for such books in classrooms is to appease the demand for affections – books that promise action and titillation – but at the same time, as already mentioned it seems that more and more, educators are encouraged to ‘settle’ for whatever book the child chooses so long as they read. And so long as these trends continue, the potential work of literature in connection to ‘a life’, including the possibility for educationally productive disturbance, is largely ignored, dismissed, or never considered. It goes without saying that there is a real risk for both students and teachers to become habituated to literary preferences and selections, not for the challenges and differences they might open onto, but solely for their ability to keep the pages turning.

In discussions of ‘relational aesthetics,’ jagodzinski points to two possible directions art [literature] might take. One is in favour of the ‘experience industry’, “the new shift of capitalism

where the core notions are the same as that of relational aesthetic: connectivity, flexibility, adaptability, mobility, openness of network and so on, the third spirit of capitalism as developed by the creative industries where relationships are the core value, as is having ‘an experience’” (2014a, 3). In contrast, the other is towards the possibility of art that exerts a “relational agonism and the rupture of experience ... that ‘exposes habituated assumptions’” (3). It is in the interests of this latter direction that I propose a pedagogy of disturbance, anticipating a move that disrupts the further territorialization of education onto capitalistic landscapes, in the anticipation of literature’s capacity to “open new forms of life” (5).

Sadness and Negative Affects

With this in mind, it is likely that the prospect of ‘disturbing’ literature, even of the kind which aims at a virtual disturbance of affect, will inevitably result in affections of distress actualizing in some student readers. Recalling the incongruent reactions to the abhorrent Dickens character shared earlier, which Deleuze distinguishes according to the difference between active and passive vitalism, a similar contradiction arises in terms of feelings and emotions that characterize responses to literature experienced as perhaps sad, disturbing, or tragic. Here again we need to discriminate between literature (if indeed it can be categorized as such) which is less likely to serve a life, and in worst case experiences, even contribute to denying it, and literature that is more likely to serve ‘a life.’

In other words, literary encounters are not always associated with expansion of life or what Deleuze might refer to as increasing affect or ‘becoming.’ Many scholars, including Deleuze, have made a point of explicitly pointing out the prospect of both positive – life expanding -- and negative – life contracting-- flows of affect, often referring specifically to what Spinoza identified as joyful and sad affects. Deleuze, for example, cautions against an over-emphasis of the positive at the expense of neglecting negative affect, recalling that “as Spinoza suggests (E III, Pref.), the sad passions are ‘equally deserving of our investigation’ and it is the destabilizing

moment of the encounter, which might be joy or sorrow, which ‘perplexes’ the soul, ‘forces it to pose a problem’” (DR, 139-40).

In considering Deleuze and Guattari’s often cited assertion that “We know nothing about a body until we know what it can do, in other words, what its affects are” (ATP, 257), we are necessarily confronted with the rather daunting realization that we cannot predict the nature of the affective flows or how they will be received by the body; we do not know “how [affects] can or cannot enter into composition with other affects, with the affects of another body, either to destroy that body or to be destroyed by it, either to exchange actions and passions with it or to join with it in composing a more powerful body” (ATP, 25). In fact, Deleuze explicitly draws attention to the fact that Spinoza “underscores the reality of the passage to a lesser perfection: ‘sadness’” (SPP, 39). Expanding on this point, Deleuze interprets the affect of sadness, “as a diminution of the power of acting or of the capacity for being affected, a sadness that is manifested in the despair of the unfortunate as well as in the hatreds of the malicious” (39). In other words, as with all affect, there can be quasi-caused actualizations of affections and emotions that encompass a range of expressions. In this instance, the despair can, in worst case scenarios lead to bitterness, feelings of futility, and eventually giving up on life. And for the ‘malicious’ or embittered, it can spread to hatred, conflict and even war at the collective level. In numerous places, Deleuze, following Spinoza, equates the “decrease of the power of acting” to “sadness-hatred” and increase of power to “joy-love,” (72), though it is not always easy to determine when he is speaking of affections and when of affects themselves.

Many of the examples already shared speak to the particular dangers of affective environments. In Ahmed’s description of the ‘feminist killjoy,’ for example, we might imagine that affective dynamics in the air, so-to-speak, can rise to such intensity that certain desires and bodily resistances to the will of the crowd are shut down. One can think here, as well, of the bystander observing a racist rant against an innocent target. Slaby, for example, describes “affective atmosphere” as “buzzing with forces and tendencies and charged with meaning” (2016, 9), primed for the affective contagion described earlier. He also characterizes relational

affect as inhered with “an enthralling interplay of gaze, gesture, posture, movement rhythm, tone and pitch of voice, and so on, through which an immersive sphere of relatedness is established and then jointly lived-through” (2016, 9). In terms of contagion, Slaby refers to the affective dynamics of crowds, described as “immersion into an energetic sphere or field of force, so that it can seem as if one’s limbs are moved not through one’s own initiative but by the crowd’s collective dynamic” (2016, 10). One might imagine numerous examples, historical and current, of mob mentality: the madness of crowds exemplified by lynching parties, political rallies, musical raves, religious revivals, or union protests, many of which, bolstered by seemingly paradoxical decreases in affect, quickly escalate to anger and hate. What might begin with a relatively benign statement of opinion can, with the added weight of affective diminution, shut down possibilities of bridging differences or overcoming boundaries surrounding an ‘ingroup.’ Consistent projections of attitude have led to a long list of categorizations derived from identifiable outsider groups: sexism, misogyny, racism, homophobia, transphobia, etc. In considering ‘a life’ and its associated ethics, all contractions or closures of borders are potentially dangerous, including one that seems especially prevalent among student populations: apathy. As a further observation, however, in response to the antagonistic expressions of intolerance to difference, these same forces have contributed to categorizations of the targeted groups, reinforced by affective comforts of or desires for belonging and protection have contributed to the formation of many identity groups which are susceptible to their own reactionary and often limiting affective diminutions.

Seigworth and Gregg conclude that, “whatever their multiple trajectories” it is their employment that matters most: affect must provide, at the very least,

a generative, pedagogic nudge aimed toward a body’s becoming an ever more worldly sensitive interface, toward a style of being present to the struggles of our time. Or, as Lauren Berlant phrases it in her essay, considering those moments when one briefly slips free of the cruelty of normative optimism: how “the substitution of habituated indifference with a spreading pleasure might open up a wedge into an alternative ethics of living, or not.” Maybe that’s the “for-now” promise of affect theory’s “not yet,” its habitually rhythmic (or near rhythmic) undertaking: endeavoring to locate that propitious moment when the stretching of (or tiniest tear in) bloom-space could precipitate something more than incremental. If only. (2010, 12)

Considering sadness in the context of schools and student populations, and in light of my central concern around the propagation of insider and outsider groups divided by attitudes of suspicion, distrust, or repulsion, my interest is not only in the avoidance of sad affects and affections, but in considering literature for its potential to raise the intensity of 'joyful' affects that might counter-actualize the sad. Relevant to my consideration of potential impacts of literature, Hemmings (2005) offers one of Franz Fanon's recollections as an example of 'affective racialization':

My body was given to me sprawled out, distorted, recoloured, clad in mourning in that white winter day. The Negro is an animal, the Negro is bad, the Negro is mean, the Negro is ugly; look, a nigger, it's cold, the nigger is shivering, the nigger is shivering because he is cold, the little boy is trembling because he is afraid of the nigger, the nigger is shivering with cold, that cold that goes through your bones, the handsome little boy is trembling because he thinks that the nigger is quivering with rage, the little white boy throws himself into his mother's arms: Mama, the nigger's going to eat me up.
(Fanon, 1952, p. 82)

As Hemmings explains, "While the white boy's fear, learned within a racist familial and social order, can attach to an unknown black object, Fanon's body is precisely not his own, but is 'sprawled out' and 'distorted', presented to him via the white boy's affective response" (2005, 561). It is also clear that both in what might have begun as a flow of affect and imagined future encounters and relations, the boundaries become blurred between the shifts in affect and the contagion of feelings and emotions surrounding distorted representations.

The potential for either increases or decreases of 'sad' affects, profoundly implicates a 'pedagogy of disturbance' focused on selections of and approaches to literature. In referring to Spinoza's conception of the body as an ethology, Deleuze asks: "[G]iven an animal, what is this animal unaffected by in the infinite world? What does it react to positively or negatively? What are its nutriments and its poisons? What does it 'take' in its world?" (SPP, 125). In so far as this project considers works of literature as potential sources of affect, ethically it must be cautioned that, contrary to the position of those defending the position of 'all reading is good reading,' we must proceed carefully in making cautious but informed selections, avoiding books that seed the poison of sad affects and searching for those more likely to nourish joyful affects.

Though these encounters remain experimental, we can still, I contend, base our experiments on previous experiences and probabilities for joy.

But we also need to heed a key point of clarification with respect to the language of 'sad' and 'joyful.' It is not only the necessary considerations of contingency and experimentation that must accompany student encounters with literature, but the recognition that 'sad' and 'joyful' affects are not at all the same as sad or joyful feelings or affections. In other words, the affections of sadness or distress should not be interpreted as a decrease in affect. On the contrary, pointing to what might be the central paradox of this whole work, we cannot rule out the possibility of feelings or emotions related to shock, tears, or anger that may, and often are, products of 'agreeable' or 'joyful' affective encounters. This is an extension of the classical problem of aesthetics raised through observations of viewers fondness for and desire to seek out tragedy (or even horror). By considering the questions raised in terms of affect, the paradox takes on profoundly ethical, political and ontological repercussions. The primary thesis which I am exploring is whether or not encounters with disturbance are capable of reducing sad affect and thus contribute to actualizing or counter-actualizing projections of more positive or creative affect by softening rigid or negative attitudes, and opening subjectivities to more agreeable encounters with difference.

As such, when considering the works of literature I explore later in this thesis, it will be critical to keep this in mind: emotions of sadness at the end of a book do not in any way reflect or predict a reduction in the body's capacity to act, no more than feelings of 'joy' necessarily correlate with increases in affective capacity. With respect to the latter, as in the case of tragedy, more often than not observations in the classroom and of reading populations suggest the opposite. The feelings derived from the comfort food of comedy (different than the more disturbing flavour of satire) or the sweetness of romance often fades or stales in a matter of minutes or hours, while the impact of a more tragic narrative can keep one awake long into the night and retain its grip on our psyche for days and months after, a topic that will be reflected later in a discussion of 'signs'. Reiterating the point made above, in a 'pedagogy of disturbance,'

the disturbance, including that which may derive from literature that results in ‘sadness’ or distress, is more-often-than-not quasi-causally related to joyful affects. And at the risk of being criticized for too much optimism, I also believe this increase can be evidenced in actualized expressions of compassion – what Spinoza-Deleuze might identify as love – that produces actions of connection and leaning towards rather than detachment and withdrawing from otherness.

In summary, the role of affect in education challenges the dominant image of learning. As Protevi concludes, “advances [from multiple fields of study] allow us to situate subjectivity in a network of natural and social processes and practices. We thus are led below the subject to neurological and physiological processes that at least condition subjectivity” (2009, xiv). Yet in spite of the contributions of Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung well over a century ago, considerations of the unconscious forces at work in education have had little impact, with professional discourse in the field retaining the largely unexamined or unacknowledged assumption of the rational, cognitive subject. Likewise, despite the proliferation of the theoretical work surrounding affect and the conceptual provocations and applications of Deleuze and Guattari’s contributions across virtually every discipline, not to mention considerable verification of their work in the empirical advances of neuroscience and our understanding of the brain, we have yet to see the implications of this work penetrate classroom practice. In this regard, Stephanie Springgay suggests three reasons ‘the affective turn’ challenges us to rethink pedagogy:

First, it challenges and offers an alternative to the Cartesian traditions, which reify cognition, reason, and distance with a more proximal, contingent, and bodily form of thought. Second, affect theory attends to the materialities of normative power emphasizing movement and force in realizing a world that exceeds the boundaries of the norm...Likewise, the affective is an attempt to shift from the “linguistic turn” and an emphasis on discourse towards the senses and ethico-aesthetic spaces. Moving across these three orientations is pedagogy. (2011, 67).

With respect to the literature classroom, this thesis considers affect as central to an understanding of literature’s value and potential educational force within the curriculum. As the proceeding sections will explore, it is literature’s material connection with ‘a life’ that shifts

underlying conditions to individuation, and which has the potential to generate disturbances of the unconscious that increases affective capacity. These, in turn, contribute to actualizations of different ways of being and becoming, different ways of acting and thinking, and ultimately, different ways of relating to the world. In the next section it will become clearer how affect becomes integral to 'learning' as it incites thought and problems in the virtual body.

Chapter 3: Disturbance as Violence to Thought

If affects are the means by which an encounter disturbs the body, then we might theorize thinking as the means by which an encounter disturbs the process of learning. As literature provides a potential flow of affective disturbance, it also provides the immanent spark that creates the conditions – virtual problems -- for thinking to take place and ultimately for learning-as-becoming to take place. The two views of disturbance are of course related, though the latter focusses much more on the processes taking place, and by attending to these more closely, we become, as educators, more aware of the resistances and obstacles for such thinking. Through what Massumi famously called a ‘shock to thought’ (2002b), affects contribute to the formation of problems or ideas, which in turn become the stimulus around which thinking occurs. Though thinking may be triggered at the immanent level of the encounter, it proceeds, though by no means linearly, within the virtual unconscious through the circulation and ‘repetition’ of intensities as differential relations before shifts are actualized in conscious thought.

Mark Higgins refers to the notion of being “wounded by thought” (2017) which in turn is inspired by Gayatri Spivak’s paradox of the very possibility of thought being instigated by its impossibility: “Any act of reading is besieged and delivered by the precariousness of intertextuality.... ‘penser’ (to think) carries within itself and points at ‘panser’ (to dress a wound); for does not thinking seek forever to clamp a dressing over the gaping and violent wound of the impossibility of thought?” (1976, p. lxxxvi). Hence, by ‘disturbance of thinking’ I am referring specifically to the problem, like a wound, arising in the virtual real, fueled or conditioned through an encounter that demands attention. As will hopefully become clear, however, addressing the disturbance of the wound-problem by no means entails simple solutions or answers. Rather, as Deleuze will argue, it is a sustained or endured through the ‘repeating’ nudge of discomfort.

Recognizing that ‘learning’ is what happens between the encounter and the *actualization* or *becoming*, it is important to clarify what happens in the virtual space between. As Colebrook contends, “If we can create philosophies, art and science then this tells us that thought is productive. If we understand the power that drives this production then we will be able to maximize our creativity, our life and our future” (2002a, 13). In what follows, I wish to explore further what this might mean, particularly as it pertains to the proposal of a pedagogy of disturbance. How can or do disturbances generate thinking, particularly in disrupting habit and orthodoxies of thought as a precondition for becoming?

What is Not Thinking: Representation and The Dogmatic Image of Thought

In Deleuze’s own preface to the English edition of *Difference and Repetition*, he ascertains the concern which lies at the core of much of his work, stating that “besides multiplicities, the most important thing for me was the image of thought such as I tried to analyse it in *Difference and Repetition*” (cited in Voss, 2013, 68 n. 17). This provides a rather revealing sentiment that grounds his subsequent introduction to the text:

It seemed to me that the powers of difference and repetition could be reached only by putting into question the traditional image of thought. By this I mean not only that we think according to a given method, but also that there is a more or less implicit, tacit or presupposed image of thought which determines our goals when we try to think. (DR, xvi)

As his arguments unfold over the course of this text and others, Deleuze attacks the very notion of ‘method’, as well as the image of thought and ‘common’ sense which he considers pervasive in philosophy and implies its dominance in virtually every field, including education. Deleuze elaborates on this criticism of the dominant image of what generally passes as thinking, explaining that,

[I]t retains the essential aspect of doxa - namely, the form; and the essential aspect of common sense - namely, the element; and the essential aspect of recognition - namely, the model itself (harmony of the faculties grounded in the supposedly universal thinking subject and exercised upon the unspecified object). The image of thought is only the figure in which doxa is universalised by being elevated to the rational level. (DR, 134)

The harmony of the faculties includes those of “sensation, memory, imagination, and thought,” all of which cohere to create an “objective unity [that] is captured by the notion of ‘recognition’ such that it is the same object that is sensed, remembered, imagined, and thought. (Smith and Protevi, 2018). As this same coherence is largely established a priori, the speed at which thought seeks out and freezes upon the nearest object of recognition by-passes outliers – gradients of pure difference – that do not fit recognized categories, identities, or pre-established images to which experience of the object is compared. With the force of traditional, peer, or communal agreement, including those presented as fact in most school textbooks, it is not surprising that so many find creativity such a challenge. Deleuze states,

[T]hat everybody knows and is presumed to know what it means to think...this image which already prejudices everything... We may call this image of thought a dogmatic, orthodox or moral image.... Many people have an interest in saying that everybody knows 'this,' that everybody recognises this, or that nobody can deny it...The most general form of representation is thus found in the element of a common sense... (DR, 131).

This notion of representation echoes Plato’s conceptualization of the eternal ‘forms’ which work as master keys or models to which all ‘real’ or earthly imperfections are compared, again defaulting to difference by contrast as opposed to pure difference. Deleuze elaborates further on the how pure difference is stultified or eviscerated under the dominance of common sense:

The 'I think' is the most general principle of representation - in other words, the source of these elements and of the unity of all these faculties: I conceive, I judge, I imagine, I remember and I perceive - as though these were the four branches of the Cogito. On precisely these branches, difference is crucified. They form quadripartite fetters under which only that which is identical, similar, analogous or opposed can be considered different: difference becomes an object of representation always in relation to a conceived identity, a judged analogy, an imagined opposition or a perceived similitude. (DR, 138)

Citing Plato, Deleuze identifies two kinds of encounters in the world, “those which do not disturb thought and... those which force us to think” (DR, 1994, 138). While the first may put to work as ‘thought and all its faculties,’ he contends that “such employment and such activity have nothing to do with thinking,” and though it may be construed as an image of thought – the

dogmatic image of thought – its ‘business’ is merely exerted in recognizing things: “this is a finger, this is a table, Good morning Theaetetus” (138).

Under the influence of representational thinking, we all struggle to imagine a ‘table’, for example, as anything other than a table. Despite the clichéd challenge to think outside the proverbial box, few of us can, even when we set our minds to it. I recently experienced an ‘icebreaker’ exercise challenging people to build their best paper airplane. All of the planes were similar, and all were based on the ‘model’ of the real airplane. Coincidentally, I recently came across an article in which engineer Collin Cupido pointed to his favourite design of paper airplane shaped more like a flying tube, far removed from any I have seen, stating that it reminded him “to think outside the box when solving problems or coming up with new ideas. This design shows that simple and weird can be really effective” (in Purvis, 2018, 29).

As Deleuze laments, “‘Everybody’ knows very well that in fact men (sic) think rarely, and more often under the impulse of a shock than in the excitement of a taste for thinking” (DR, 132). But he is justifiably cynical, on virtually every level. Even what we refer to in education as discussion, sharing of ideas, or even brainstorming in the classroom, is, as Deleuze argues, simply sharing opinion and deferring to prior models of comparison. Again, returning to Plato’s cave, Deleuze expands on the inertia of representation as the shadows we surround ourselves with in our everyday experience:

[S]o long as one only abstracts from the empirical content of doxa, while maintaining the operation of the faculties which corresponds to it and implicitly retains the essential aspect of the content, one remains imprisoned by it.... We have not advanced a single step, but remain imprisoned by the same cave or ideas of the times which we only flatter ourselves with having 'rediscovered', by blessing them with the sign of philosophy. The form of recognition has never sanctioned anything but the recognisable and the recognised; form will never inspire anything but conformities. (DR, 1994, 134)

Somewhat ironically, Plato sees these same ‘forms’ as images of truth, while for Deleuze, they become mere extensions of the shadows themselves. Both the forms and the shadows of the forms are contained within to the world of representation which serves to inhibit any real journey into the unthought. And Plato’s metaphorical climb out of the cave never succeeds in

extending beyond the previous models encountered. François Zourabichvili notes that, far from being an adventure into new territory, for Plato discovery is merely a process of recollection:

The object of thought is less the object of a discovery than of a recognition...As soon as thought interprets its object as reality, it assigns it a priori the form of identity: homogeneity and permanence. The object is subjected to the principle of identity in order that it may be known, and as a result all cognition [connaissance] is already re-cognition [reconnaissance]. Thought recognizes what it has first identified—it does not give itself anything to think that it has not first passed through the screen of the Same. (2012, 47)

What passes for thought, then, is more-often-than-not merely regurgitation, establishing a link to the previously known through the process of re[cognition]. Which relates directly to Deleuze's critique of transcendence. Too often, both in life and in reading, we live according to pre-establish images, rules, ideas or representations of what we ought to think, ought to believe or ought to live like. But though convenient, and sometimes necessary for survival, these 'guides' or reference points serve to 'enslave' us and "legislate over experience" (Colebrook, 88). Deleuze contends that it is the 'transcendental model' embodied in the dogmatic image of thought that must be treated with suspicion. Kustov Roy explains the limitations of representation this way:

[E]xcessively categorical thinking can be maintained only at the expense of further becoming; strata upon strata generate forces that gravitate toward specific channels only. Over time, stringent orthodoxies appear that govern modes of being and thinking, along with rigid investments in maintaining the status quo. These tell us what should be, and what is acceptable or not acceptable, molding and shaping experience in highly selective ways. In other words, these adherences and allegiance to categories reify, strangling life and repeating old forms. It must be immediately clear that all forms of power and subjection must be predicated on ideas of "what must be," that is, from preset notions that shape experience. (2003, 11)

As Roy suggests, many of these 'signifier systems' are readily found throughout education, including the outcomes that are carefully guarded in standardized testing. The very notion of 'standards' while arguably having a place in certain disciplines, can all too-easily end up establishing the 'ground' or the transcendent rules or molds of comparison, which lock down any conceivable exploration or leakage beyond. Such are the ever-present models of 'success'

found everywhere: the teleological models of national success, economic success, and of course, ‘student success,’ circulating across multiple platforms of media and marketing with pretensions of assumed agreement in meaning. As Deleuze implies regarding education, in the framing of our questions, there is already an assumed correct answer, or at the very least, one within a range of acceptability. In fact, the very premise of the necessity of ‘lesson plans’ taught ad nauseam in teacher education courses, points to the emphasis on pre-established goals, outcomes and standardized ‘measures’ of success which not only don’t allow time for more, but they serve to shut down opportunities for the thinking Deleuze champions.

Continuing, Roy suggests that the ‘objective reality’ of the school,

is largely a result of the continual affirmation of rules, dispositions, and habits of thought through the everyday decision-making practices of teachers and administrators...In other words, it is through the boundaries and categories affirmed daily through organizational "habitus" that school is experienced in a certain way. The result is a structure of beliefs and categories that emerge as solid and stable in our signification systems, and depend on the habitual substratum of similarity and repetition for its perpetuation (Roy, 2003, 12)

Indeed, much of both popular and scholarly work surrounding education assumes this same position, even drawing on brain science to show that textbook and lesson plan designs work better if the ‘new’ is somehow bridged or mapped onto previous experience or learning. And there is no doubt a place for this. But not as a consistent default. If we are seeking a truly transformational image of thinking in education, then not only must we heed Deleuze’s concerns here, but we must open ourselves to a more creative conceptualization of thought, such as that proposed in Deleuze’s critique of doxa. As Colebrook explains, “if we limit thought to simple acts of representation and cognition – ‘this is a chair’, ‘this is a table’ – then we impose all sorts of dogmas and rules upon thinking ... we fail to extend life to its maximum” (2002a, 14).

In doing so, many expectations and practices of contemporary education serve only to reproduce similar values and perspectives and prematurely curtail seeing anything beyond what is looked for, that is, beyond the point of recognition. As Todd May states,

“Transcendence freezes living, makes it coagulate and lose its flow; it seeks to capture the vital difference that outruns all thought and submit it to the judgment of a single perspective, a perspective that stands outside difference and gathers it into manageable categories. Transcendence substitutes knowledge for thought” (2005, 27). Similarly, Cameron Reid explains that “the effects of transcendence—i.e., of transcendent power, transcendent forms, transcendent modes of thinking, and so forth—are all enabled by a kind of vampirism, a purging of the life, or of its material and self-organizing powers, from that which has been rendered subordinate to an abstract power” (2010, 93).

Education in the age of media overload is especially prone to such dangers. Students must not only struggle to overcome the gravitational pull of common representations fueled by their families and friends and traditional sources of ‘tradition’ and popular culture, but they must now contend with the dominating images of the marketplace and social media, many which reach into the classroom. Jan Jagodzinski and Jason Wallin suggest that “the fabrication of common sense has become the domain of marketing firms and mainstream media outlets that depend on representational thought in their aspiration to recognizability. Briefly put, *common sense* is that which assures the harmonious resemblance between the act of judgment and the reality of its object.” (2013, 6). Accepting Deleuze’s argument against ‘good sense’ – i.e., that students will automatically desire or seek the truth – we know that this struggle does not come naturally, leaving teachers with “virtually no tools to break with that which everybody already knows” (6).

With respect to education, I would suggest that nowhere is this kind of transcendence or top-down imposition of expectations and models more pronounced than in the English classroom. And in particular, in the boundaries of both text selection and text interpretation often arbitrarily created and homogenized over a history of tradition and handed-down lesson plans. As will become clear in later sections, considering education and learning through certain conceptualizations offered by Deleuze and Guattari, these sources of representational thinking are arguably what most need disrupting through alternative and less prescriptive methods and

challenges to reading. As Deleuze emphasizes, “What is recognised is not only an object but also the values attached to an object... In so far as the practical finality of recognition lies in the 'established values', then on this model the whole image of thought as *Cogitatio natura* bears witness to a disturbing complacency” (DR, 135). To connect this further to many of the natural implications of concern in this dissertation, it is the values attached to representation which arguably explain the roots of prejudice, racism, and the discrimination between ingroup and outgroup members that challenge the very possibility of peaceful and non-ostracizing social relations – what will later be discussed as assemblages of agreeable or joyful affect, necessary, I would add, for life to continue expanding.

In summation, not only are texts and questions primarily constructed on the basis of representation, but they are largely based on the lowest common denominator of frequently conceived and politically correct – filtered or muted – descriptions and images. Or as Deleuze explains,

Representation fails to capture the affirmed world of difference. Representation has only a single centre, a unique and receding perspective, and in consequence a false depth. It mediates everything, but mobilises and moves nothing. Movement, for its part, implies a plurality of centres, a superposition of perspectives, a tangle of points of view, a coexistence of moments which essentially distort representation: paintings or sculptures are already such 'distorters', forcing us to create movement - that is, to combine a superficial and a penetrating view, or to ascend and descend within the space as we move through it. (DR, 55-56)

So, while representation may still have a place in the pragmatics of digesting ‘knowledge,’ an education based solely on such a model runs the risk of not only limiting what students (and teachers) see or think but closing us off from immediate or direct encounters with difference. In referring specifically to literature, Colebrook explains that the dominance of the dogmatic image of thought, of doxa, “return[s] a text to an assimilable logic and allow[s] thought to remain the same,” with the dire consequence being not only the further propagation of such representations or standards, but “[n]either philosophy nor thinking flows inevitably and continuously from life; reason is not the actualisation of what life in its potential was always striving to be” (in Parr, 2010, 4). Too often in schools, including the literature class, we look for

students to 'get it' when the 'it' is loaded with the boundaries and expectations, and therefore closed to the prospects of thinking that stretches into pure difference.

Without allowing for an alternative image of thought, we risk an education that not only limits thinking, but one that is disconnected or sanitized from the generative forces of creativity, transformation, and life. Colebrook adds that,

Transcendence is just that which we imagine lies outside (outside thought or outside perception). Immanence, however, has no outside and nothing other than itself... The power of creation does not lie outside the world like some separate and judging God; life itself is a process of creative power. Thought is not set over against the world such that it represents the world; thought is a part of the flux of the world. To think is not to represent life but to transform and act upon life. (2002b, p. xxiv).

One might ask then, is it possible, as is sometimes argued in multicultural education, to simply multiply the representations offered to students, thus providing multiple perspectives and an appreciation of the fuller plurality of existence? With enough variance in representation can we minimize what Chimamanda Adichie famously called the "danger of a single story" (2009)? And while no doubt expanding the so-called canon or multiplying the number of stories helps, to the question, "is it enough," Deleuze responds:

Infinite representation includes precisely an infinity of representations - either by ensuring the convergence of all points of view on the same object or the same world, or by making all moments properties of the same Self. In either case it maintains a unique centre which gathers and represents all the others.... The prefix RE- in the word representation signifies this conceptual form of the identical which subordinates differences. The immediate, defined as 'sub-representative', is therefore not attained by multiplying representations and points of view. On the contrary, each composing representation must be distorted, diverted and torn from its centre. Each point of view must itself be the object, or the object must belong to the point of view. The object must therefore be in no way identical, but torn asunder in a difference in which the identity of the object as seen by a seeing subject vanishes. (DR, 56)

Regardless how many representations one can pile on, we never truly escape from the dogmatic image of thought. We never really consider, in approaching thought from this direction, the forces of the nonrepresentational or pure difference. Against the purely

transcendental, Deleuze offers further insight into what is now referred to as transcendental empiricism:

Empiricism truly becomes transcendental, and aesthetics a discipline, only when we apprehend directly in the sensible that which can only be sensed, the very being of the sensible: difference, potential difference, and difference in intensity as the reason behind qualitative diversity. It is in difference that movement is produced as an 'effect', that phenomena flash their meaning like signs. (DR, 56-57)

Opposing transcendence is Deleuze's commitment to an ontology, epistemology and ethics of immanence. Rather than looking for knowledge or truth as though it were already out there waiting for us to recognize, what matters most to our expansion as beings is how we process the immediacy of our experience. Colebrook explains that "The error of thought or its fundamental illusion is transcendence, where we begin from some already given term or foundation that acts as an outside or ground for our arguments. A transcendental approach, on the other hand, asks how any outside or any given term is produced; it therefore leads us into, not away from, experience" (2002a, 88). In other words, thinking is material and empirical in origin. Hence the idea of transcendental empiricism. The thinking arises out of the virtual, and out of the immediate encounter with pure difference. In what appears to be contradiction, the transcendental in Deleuze's conception of thinking refers to the movement from the virtual to the actual, but both are very much real and very much unfolding within the experience. In contrast to the transcendental appeals to truths, codes or models introduced from outside our immediate experience, Deleuze's transcendental empiricism rests on a philosophy and ethics of immanence. Peter Pelbart proceeds to outline the many consequences of thought as originating from the outside: "(1) the task of thought is to liberate the forces that come from the outside; (2) the outside is always openness unto a future; (3) the thought of the outside is a thought of resistance (to a state of affairs); and (4) the force of the outside is Life. The major challenge has therefore been launched from the very beginning: to seize life as a power of the outside" (2000, 206). Rejecting notions of category, form, or Truth imposed as representation from above, Deleuze seeks to understand only from what emerges or is 'expressed' through life – a life in which the human body is just as much an expression of difference as the chair or table. Only in enduring the immanent can change grab hold of bodies.

But this, unfortunately, turns out to be no small challenge. While I might glean small shifts in subjectivities in the classroom and perceive what Spinoza called affections or signs of shifting subjectivities, I must remain content with a more theoretical (albeit one now complemented by research in neuropsychology and physics), exploration of passive vitalism arising quasi-causally or indeterminately from the pre-conscious, pre-personal and pre-lingual virtual, a domain which is no less real, but clearly far less accessible, than the conscious actual.

As stated, the real sacrifice we make in education is that much of how we construct our curriculum and practice, as much out of habit as tradition, either dominates over or disallows the work of pure difference. As Bryant explains,

Deleuze wants to defend a pure concept of difference, an account of difference in itself, yet our experience is representational through and through. Everywhere we are creatures of habit that recognize beings and therefore do not encounter difference. We subordinate the beings of our experience to the same, similar, and the identical, assimilate what we experience to what we have experienced (2017).

This not only jeopardizes the potential of literature to disturb, but in both the classroom and society, the easy application of identities and models of what is appropriate, what is acceptable, what is 'normal' reduces or closes the flow of life. More specifically it shuts down or closes opportunities for immanent encounters, fictional or real, to affect us through the body's engagement with pure difference and the intensity of the unthought. As Colebrook warns, "We no longer actively question what our life ought to become so much as aim to know, discover, manage and communicate the facts or data of life" (2008a, 36). This, she declares, following Deleuze and Guattari, amounts to nothing more than a failure to think.

What Thinking Is – Violent Disturbance

How, then, does Deleuze and Guattari respond to the powerful pull of habit and tradition and easy default to representational thinking? In contrast to the dogmatic image of thought, Deleuze challenges us, including educators, to consider an alternative that could be generative of new ways of “worlding” (Palmer and Hunter, 2018), including expanding our being in life and opening the body to a *life*. Deleuze’s image of thought is not only epistemological in nature, but also intrinsically ontological in so far as it embodies a sense of creative becoming. As Deleuze emphasizes, “[T]he new – in other words, difference - calls forth forces in thought which are not the forces of recognition, today or tomorrow, but the powers of a completely other model, from an unrecognised and unrecognisable terra incognita” (DR, 136) and that it is only “when we do not recognise, when we have difficulty in recognising, that we truly think?” (138). In other words, “We need to create ways of thinking which do not allow for the production of a transcendent image that will enclose and explain experience” (Colebrook, 2002a, 78). These new ways of thinking, which respond to difference-in-itself, materially change the body and, in terms of new discoveries in neuroscience, generate new neuro-pathways.

But this image of thinking, as mentioned earlier and as he stresses on numerous occasions, is not so easily achieved. The dogmatic image of thought “crush[es] thought under an image which is that of the Same and the Similar in representation” and “profoundly betrays what it means to think and alienates the two powers of difference and repetition, of philosophical commencement and recommencement” (DR, 167). Referencing the faculties, Aiden Tynan explains that,

For Deleuze, all thinking begins in a kind of pathos. This is because thinking must be distinguished from knowledge or mental activity in general: remembering, sensing, imagining and so on. These modes of cognition remain at the purely empirical level of recognisable objects. Thought, however, goes beyond the limits of the recognisable and thus needs to be grasped in a way which distinguishes it from our day-to-day cognition of the world. In other words, thought goes beyond the given differences which allow us to recognise the objects of our experience, and in turn leads towards a realm in which differences are not yet distributed in objects. (2012, 23)

In other words, and of particular relevance to the foundation of a pedagogy of disturbance, it is not encounters which are easily recognized – those for which there is easy agreement across the faculties – but rather encounters which are characterized by discord or confusion that are of special interest for Deleuze. As he emphasizes,

The violence of that which forces thought develops from the sentiendum to the cogitandum. Each faculty is unhinged, but what are the hinges if not the form of a common sense which causes all the faculties to function and converge? Each one, in its own order and on its own account, has broken the form of common sense which kept it within the empirical element of doxa. (DR, 141)

Though I wish to explore this further at a later point, it is worth noting Colebrook's emphasis on the importance of art and philosophy: "Not only do they invent forms of experience that are not those of some universally recognised subject, they also destroy the harmony of any single subject such that thinking is shattered into affects, concepts and observations" (2002a, 73). Disturbance as unhinging, destruction or shattering underlies the terms of violence to which Deleuze continually returns in describing the process of thinking beyond representation (also called the unthought or non-representational thought). This is much more difficult than one might imagine. Obviously, perhaps, because to achieve such thought, *one can't defer to the imagined*. All we have, unfortunately, are the implications of abstract references to the unthought. As Ronald Bogue explains,

What escapes orthodox thought is difference, or the genuinely 'new,' which can only be engaged through an 'imageless thought.' Rather than arising from a conscious exercise of good will, genuine thought must be forced into action through the disruption of ordinary habits and notions.... Rather than reinforcing the common functioning of the senses and faculties, difference splits them apart and pushes each sense or faculty to its limits, no single and selfsame object confirming the unified operation of a sensus communis. The object of an imageless thought defies recognition (2004, 333)

As stated, for Deleuze such thinking is a kind of violence. If this were not the case, then doxa and representation would remain untouched and that which has already been accepted as knowledge would remain unchallenged: "What is a thought which harms no one, neither thinkers nor anyone else?" (DR, 135-136).

But once again Deleuze warns that such thinking is rare, not only because of the expectations engrained in habit, tradition and education as ‘common sense’, but likely also because as he describes it, the process of thinking is inevitably associated with a certain pain or [dis]ease. Though the image of thinking Deleuze speaks of largely transpires in the virtual, it also can surface as affections of discomfort. It is no wonder that the conscious mind often shortcuts to the comfort of the familiar in representation. Echoing Deleuze’s distinction of the two images of thought, and perhaps why we tend to default to the dogmatic, Simon O’Sullivan suggests that,

An object of an encounter is fundamentally different from an object of recognition. With the latter our knowledges, beliefs and values are reconfirmed. We, and the world we inhabit, are reconfirmed as that which we already understood our world and ourselves to be. An object of recognition is then precisely a representation of something always already in place. With such a non-encounter our habitual way of being and acting in the world is reaffirmed and reinforced, and as a consequence no thought takes place. Indeed, we might say that representation precisely stymies thought. (2006, 1)

As such, it should not be surprising that Deleuze critiques the assumption of ‘good sense.’

In *Proust and Signs*, Deleuze confirms his earlier dismissal of the generally taken-for-granted belief that our desire for truth is somehow natural:

Proust does not believe that man, nor even a supposedly pure mind, has by nature a desire for truth, a will-to-truth. We search for truth only when we are determined to do so in terms of a concrete situation, when we undergo a kind of violence that impels us to such a search...The mistake of philosophy is to presuppose within us a benevolence of thought, a natural love of truth. Thus philosophy arrives at only abstract truths that compromise no one and do not disturb. (PS, 15; 16, my emphasis)

In other words, often what seems to count for seeking truth, as is often the case in education as well as philosophy, the resulting claims are constrained by the desire to remain within the comfort zone and an unwillingness, either self or communally imposed, to ‘disturb’ or ruffle the proverbial feathers of institutionalized norms. Against such a dominant notion of ‘good sense’ or the assumption that thought is somehow self-initiating and requires some impetus of arousal or movement, Deleuze reminds us that,

[T]here is only involuntary thought, aroused but constrained within thought, and all the more absolutely necessary for being born, illegitimately, of fortuitousness in the world. Thought is primarily trespass and violence, the enemy.... Do not count upon thought to ensure the relative necessity of what it thinks. Rather, count upon the contingency of an

encounter with that which forces thought to raise up and educate the absolute necessity of an act of thought or a passion to think. The conditions of a true critique and a true creation are the same: the destruction of an image of thought which presupposes itself and the genesis of the act of thinking in thought itself. (DR, 139, my emphasis)

Hence, against the romanticism of ‘good sense,’ with such a natural inclination to the easiest and most habitually travelled pathways of dogmatic thought, including the neurological pathways of the brain, to create new pathways requires significant disturbance or disruption of the defaults. Deleuze explains such mechanisms as reactive forces, perhaps not unlike the forces of habit – against which the forces of disturbance must engage:

Thinking depends on forces which take hold of thought. Insofar as our thinking is controlled by reactive forces, insofar as it finds sense in reactive forces, we must admit that we are not yet thinking. Thinking means the activity of thought; but thought has its own ways of being inactive which can occupy it and all its forces entirely...we are awaiting the forces capable of making thought something active. (NP, 108)

Or put in other words, as Bryant suggests, “We cognize and recognize all the time as creatures of habit (the first synthesis of repetition), but we do not yet think. It is only as a shock to our system that we begin to think” (2017). And though the images of violence and shock may seem extreme, perhaps it is our own representational thinking that conflates this to something more abhorrent than it is. As François Zourabichvili explains, this is not a violence of domination, but rather a violence that “is taken up—as critical aggressivity—only in a second moment, and on the condition that it be directed against his former ego or his own stupidity” (62). Rather than dominating, this is “a force that exercises itself upon another not so much in order to destroy it as to induce a movement” But this movement is in a direction which is “incompatible with what preceded it” (69-70). In other words, this is not a violence for violence sake, nor the kind of violence one might imagine in the service of indoctrination or authoritarian education systems.

It is for this reason I have chosen the term *disturb*, which better reflects the underlying processes taking place as one’s customary or taken-for-granted worldview is shaken. While there appears to be an internal reckoning taking place between the habitual and the new, the represented and the non-representable, there remains a tension between subjective life (ego) and pre-subjective life -- ‘a’ life. As Jonathan Sholl explains:

Through this encounter thought's activity isolates the thinker by violently denying generalities, the vagaries of common sense and good sense ... Because thought naturally takes the form of such universals, it is difficult to give up the ideas that one finds ready at hand: thought does not want to do violence to its own nature as this would apparently separate the individual from its own common sense, from society and from seemingly all that it values. In other words, as thought is the contact with something which forces one to think, with an intense repetition that refuses universalisation, it requires that an individual deny socialised presuppositions. (2012, 55)

Imagining what this might look like in more concrete terms, as but one immediate example that perhaps speaks to the necessary disturbance or violence to which Deleuze alludes, I believe we are surrounded by individuals in the world, including and perhaps especially those holding significant power, who are incapable of seeing past the beliefs and values they have used to justify actions or which leave their status (power and property) untouched. While writing this, I happened to be listening to a CBC radio broadcast in which host Michael Enright interviews Israeli scholar Yossi Klein Halevi, author of *Letters to My Palestinian Neighbor*. Without delving into the specifics of the discussion, one of Halevi's admissions stood out:

What I've said to my neighbours in this book is, I believe deeply that all of this land is mine. But I understand that you also believe that all of this land is yours. And so the only way that we're going to ever reach an agreement is if both sides contract and do violence to what we really know is ours (2020).

In considering both sides as frozen within their own dogmatic image of thought, what else can be done with this impasse of fixed opinions – no doubt fueled by decades of cultural, media-driven messages and skewed or erroneous facts and stats? Decades that have done little to move either side. In very graphic metaphorical terms, Halevi answers “The only solution is that each side accepts the fact that we're going to have to perform a kind of amputation on ourselves.”

Returning to an earlier comment, without the tools of our imagination, it is difficult to even conceive of what this kind of thinking might be. Reiterating Bogue's statement that “the object of an imageless thought defies recognition,” we realize that we are so grounded in a certain kind of thinking that no matter how hard we try, we habitually search for something to hold on to, something to recognize, and something concrete. But the minute we do so, we are back to where we started. This is perhaps what Deleuze means when he states that we can't plan for

this kind of thinking...we can't make ourselves think like this. Not only because this thinking largely occurs in the virtual space beneath our consciousness, but because the minute we try, we end up by resorting back to thinking through images.

Hence, we are forced to rely on a kind of bodily sensing, highlighted earlier in Deleuze's association of a transcendental which is embedded in empiricism. The immanence of aesthetic experience. This is not the kind of sensing that ends in identity and agreement of our faculties, but rather a kind that we only experience consciously as undeciphered affections. What Deleuze refers to as "affective tones" in perhaps one of his most well-known passages:

Something in the world forces us to think. This something is an object not of recognition but of a fundamental encounter. What is encountered may be Socrates, a temple, or a demon. It may be grasped in a range of affective tones: wonder, love, hatred, suffering. In whichever tone, its primary characteristic is that it can only be sensed. In this sense it is opposed to recognition. In recognition, the sensible is not at all that which can only be sensed, but that which bears directly upon the senses in an object which can be recalled, imagined or conceived. (DR, 139, my emphasis)

Suggesting that this disturbance can 'only be sensed,' it is clearly not something that we can identify or recognize, though we will no doubt try and in doing so settle for impotent substitutes. Far from meeting with the agreement of our faculties, disturbance, pure difference, continues to return – repeating and building, especially for those sensitive enough to acknowledge it. This, as will become clearer, can form not only the basis of the artist's raw materials, but also the non-representational affections felt by, in this case, the reader of literature. jagodzinski applies the term "forcework by art reflexion," utilizing a capital X to refer to "how affect is heightened and intensified so that a person is only then able to feel at the conscious level the intolerable intensity of the actual" (2019c, 10).

Elsewhere Bryant clarifies that encounters with difference "can only be sensed, this is because it cannot be perceived" (2017). For most of us, I would expect, this is difficult to comprehend, removed as it is from our day to day assumptions of reality. But as he explains, "Perception implies recognition. 'That is a glass.' 'That is a book.' 'There goes my wife.' Recognition is recognition. It is that which can be remembered or subsumed under an extant concept." But what

happens when we only sense something but we can't put our proverbial finger on it? What does sensing without perceiving even mean? Thinking the 'unthought' or the non-representational is, as Bryant continues,

[T]he un-re-cognizable, and therefore an encounter with something that can't be subsumed under any pre-existing concept, meaning, or memory. If it can only be sensed—what Deleuze calls the “sentiendum”; and his book is designed to be a sort of sentiendum—then that is because we've encountered something that can't be perceived or recognized; something that departs from all “conceptual schemes”. “Something is different here, yet I have no idea what it might be precisely because there isn't yet any concept or meaning for it. This is why Deleuze claims that thought instigates a discordant functioning of the faculties. Where, in perception, memory functions to show how the current experience resembles other past experiences, in the encounter thought is in discord with memory... And this is why the encounter generates the cogitandum, or that which can only be thought: the unprecedented. (Bryant, 2017)

Beginning to understand the experience of Deleuze's proposed image of thought, we might consider under what conditions might such thinking arise? We know that it cannot be orchestrated, as Deleuze emphasizes repeatedly. Or as Zourabichivili reminds us, “Thought is born of chance. To think is always circumstantial, relative to an event that happens unexpectedly to thought” (2012:57). But, even so, as educators we might still hope to gain some understanding by exploring the nature of those circumstances that might make the necessary violence or discord more or less likely: “The question is no longer ‘how do we attain the truth?’ but ‘under what conditions is thought led to seek the truth?’” (57). To this inquiry, recognizing that ‘truth’ as spoken of here is not the kind of truth that is defined by concepts and identity, the answer inevitably points to something beyond the boundaries of recognition: “an ‘encounter’ is the name of an absolutely exterior relation...[W]hen thinking assumes the conditions of an effective encounter, of an authentic relation with the outside, it affirms the unforeseeable or the unexpected” (57).

Though generally criticized by Deleuze, Plato's cave is perhaps a relevant allegory here, even sharing some of the same emphasis on the violence, pain or agon involved in the subject's detaching from chains to venture an encounter with the outside, crossing the border to the unknown, unfamiliar, unrecognizable...the unthought. Interpreted from a more Deleuze

inspired perspective, the chains become the force of habits, representation, beliefs. But leaving them behind, and taking the proverbial ‘road less travelled,’ there is no predicting where the journey will go. Or as Sholl explains it,

As the contingent and violent encounter produces a sense of urgency in thought, this urgency must be maintained in spite of the fact that we do not know where the thought will lead us. However, while anyone can abstractly have an idea, this idea has to be utilised: it has to be pursued with ‘guile, perseverance and prudence’ if it is to have vitality. Ultimately, thinking requires taking a chance, throwing the dice, and allowing this chance to affect you without escaping you. (2012, 555)

Unlike Plato’s cave, however, in relinquishing our attachment to a life ‘shackled’ by a reliance on representation and identity, our subsequent encounter with the ‘outside’ of this image of thought is not, for Deleuze, necessarily involved in journeying to the truth, or at least not truth as we typically think about it. Unlike Plato’s original allegory where the path leads to the metaphoric light, Zourabichvili explains that Deleuze places emphasis on the journey itself, the struggle with that which lies outside of thought... the unthought: "when thinking assumes the conditions of an effective encounter, of an authentic relation with the outside, it affirms the unforeseeable or the unexpected, it stands on a movable ground that it does not control, and thereby wins its necessity. Thought is born of chance" (2012, 66). The ‘dark’ beyond the shadows is just that...experiential, experimental and unidentifiable. It is not surprising then, that Deleuze would contend that such thinking is rare. It would take special qualities – perhaps courage, curiosity, or what Deleuze refers to as a kind of worthiness – to leave the comfort of the orthodox.

However, Deleuze is not necessarily asking for a complete leap of faith into the chaos. In fact he warns against it. As Colebrook points out, “If there is a concept of life in Deleuze it is a life at odds with itself, a potential or power to create divergent potentials. Admittedly, it is possible to imagine thinking, with its concepts, dictionaries and organon, as shoring ‘man’ against the forces of chaos and dissolution” (in Parr, 2010, 4). Questions and uncertainty are, by nature, unsettling. As an alternative, Colebrook continues,

[W]e can also – when we extend this potential – see thinking as a confrontation with chaos, as allowing more of what is not ourselves to transform what we take ourselves to be. In this sense thought has ‘majoritarian’ and ‘minoritarian’ tendencies, both a movement towards reducing chaotic difference to uniformity and sameness and a tendency towards opening those same unities to a ‘stuttering’ or incomprehension. (4)

Echoing an earlier discussion, Deleuze and Guattari’s concept of majoritarian parallels the dominance of representation, while minoritarian tendencies reflect those forces which act on or begin to undermine the majoritarian from within. The tension, perhaps understating the terms of violence Deleuze employs, is between the two forms of thinking, the metaphorical boundary marking the encounter with the ‘outside.’ Importantly, Deleuze and Guattari both emphasize that not only is it likely impossible for the human subject to move entirely into the outside, but it is indeed dangerous to do so. Developing the concept of the ‘body without organs,’ also to be discussed in greater depth later, they suggest a necessary balance whereby extension into the dark can tragically stretch the subject from break-through, where genuine movements of becoming take place, to break-down, which infers a complete break from functioning in the world as is. As Colebrook explains,

If one is to live, there must both be a minimal connection or exposure to the outside alongside a creation or perception of that outside, with perception being a difference. Deleuze, far from believing that one might return thought to life and overcome the submission to system, recognises that the creation of a system is the only way one can really live non-systemically. One creates a minimal or dynamic order, both to avoid absolute deterritorialisation on the one hand and reactive repetition of the already-ordered on the other. (in Parr, 2010, 4-5)

Here it is perhaps also appropriate to elaborate briefly on the notion of ‘habit’ that, according to Elizabeth Grosz, “exist somewhere between the necessity of ease and the torment of need” (2013, 220). Habit, which might be considered in some ways as the opposite extreme to ‘the outside,’ is not necessarily deleterious to life. Elizabeth Grosz, in an extended exploration of habit drawing from an early work by Ravaisson, as well as Bergson and Deleuze, argues that,

Without habits and their tendency to automatism, living beings would not have the energy and singularity of purpose that enables them to survive and to create, to produce the new, to live artistically... It is only because there is some orderly repetition in both the

regularities of the world and in the performative possibilities of bodies that habits can ease the burden of a creative freedom (2013, 225)

Habits, which are clearly not the same as instinct in so far as they are constructed over periods of relative stability, can serve an important purpose in freeing up ‘thinking capacity’ which might otherwise have to be devoted to the mundane of everyday living... getting to work, preparing meals, gardening and even exercising. Notably, each of these, with the provision of habit, frees up time and space for both conscious and unconscious contemplation and creative problem solving. Continuing, Grosz insists that,

It is only because we undertake these activities in a state of half-consciousness that we have the energy and interest to undertake less routinized actions, to elaborate relatively free acts. Habits, incorporating memories of past performances in similar contexts, leave both consciousness and the energetic forces of the body able to address other issues than the habitual only because the habitual accommodates so much of what is required from us. (2013, 226).

Though beyond the scope of this thesis, a thorough examination of the role of habit would distinguish habits of thinking from those ingrained in the body’s motor functions and actions, though there is clearly a point of fusion between the two. Likewise, we might point to the distinction between habits of thought in and out of consciousness. For the purposes of my work, I believe it sufficient to point out that habit, particularly of thought, can, as I’ve mentioned, short-circuit thinking along well-trodden pathways of ‘common sense,’ or popularly repeated and held beliefs, which can be dangerous depending on what is at stake.

Literature that is art is one potential source of the outside – anything that disrupts or defies the easily articulable and readily assimilable. Of note, repeating a concern raised in my introduction, not all literature carries such potential, nor does all literature meet the inferred quality of art which constitutes an encounter with the outside. It is no wonder why certain formulaic texts, comfort reading, have served capitalist marketing interests (and arguably educational ones) with such success and often meet the minimal expectations of reading in many schools with hardly a dent in terms of challenging new ways of thinking. In contrast,

Deleuze offers the examples of Nietzsche and Kafka as the kind of literature they have in mind, possessing the potential to take the reader to the edge:

[T]exts like these are traversed by a movement which comes from the outside, which does not begin in the page of the book, nor in the preceding pages, which does not fit in the frame of the book, and which is totally different from the imaginary movement of representations or the abstract movement of concepts as they are wont to take place through words and in the reader's head. Something leaps from the book, making contact with a pure outside. (DIOT, 256)

In more concrete terms, Pelbart elaborates on the manner in which thought emerges through an encounter with the outside, which he describes as resulting from “the heterogeneous forces affecting thought, those that force her to think, those that force thought towards that which she does not yet think, urging her to think otherwise” (2000, 205). Again, we recognize a somewhat more understated language than the violence Deleuze describes. Continuing, Pelbart explains that “forces of the outside are not such because they come from the outside, from the exterior, but rather because they put thought in a state of exteriority, throwing her into a formless field where the heterogeneous points of view, corresponding to the heterogeneity of the forces at play, enter into a relation with one another” (2000, 205).

As already suggested, one of the most readily available sources of such heterogeneous forces is in the form of art and literature. Colebrook contends that from his earliest writings, Deleuze viewed philosophy in terms of its ability to “challenge to think differently” and art and science as potentially stimulating “new problems in philosophy.” Though distinguished in terms of their minimum functions, literature often shares the qualities of both art and philosophy, as might be surmised in the examples of Nietzsche and Kafka above. Colebrook goes on to note that in fact, “All thinking is an art and event of life and Deleuze regarded the three main modes of thinking – art, science and philosophy – as powers to transform life...Philosophy, art and science need to be seen as distinct moments of the explosive force of life, a life that is in a process of constant ‘becoming’” (2002a, 12).

What makes Deleuze’s ideas so appealing to educators is that one of his most overarching projects is to understand how organisms can think differently, behave differently, and live

differently in the direction of affirmation of difference. Encounters in education ought not, if we can help it, remain simply those of representations, nor should methods be consistently those that demand deferral to recognition and representation – reception of and confirmations of already familiar and acceptable knowledge. Rather, as O’Sullivan asserts, in a ‘genuine’ encounter, quite the opposite is true:

Our typical ways of being in the world are challenged, our systems of knowledge disrupted. We are forced to thought. The encounter then operates as a rupture in our habitual modes of being and thus in our habitual subjectivities. It produces a cut, a crack. However, this is not the end of the story, for the rupturing encounter also contains a moment of affirmation, the affirmation of a new world, in fact a way of seeing and thinking this world differently. This is the creative moment of the encounter that obliges us to think otherwise. Life, when it truly is lived, is a history of these encounters, which will always necessarily occur beyond representation. (2006, 1)

This expectation has a profound impact not only on how we view thinking – itself an expression – but also how we view encounters with literature. Far from recognizing pre-existing ‘truths’ within the pages of the book, reading is an encounter with forces which, if attended to, might offer an experience of transcendental empiricism. Colebrook contends that,

if we accept that life is never composed of closed systems then all aspects of life will be in a condition of ever-renewing difference and change. Organisms live only by responding to other changing systems, such as the environment and other organisms. Similarly, acts of thought, such as philosophy and literature, are also active responses to life. (2002a, 4)

With a deeper understanding of the kind of thinking we might aspire to, we return to the question stated earlier: “How can we think without the mediation of ordering ideas (representations) and ordering words that immediately capture and name experience through the a posteriori lens of doxa – of pre-established schemas of a particularly human, cultural and personal way of structuring the world as *our world*?”

Responding to Deleuze’s challenge, Colebrook remarks that in fact there are many “texts and styles of thinking that go well beyond representation or simple pictures of the world. Not only philosophy but literature, art, cinema, stupidity, madness and malevolence all testify to a

thinking that is not that of representation so much as production, mutation and creation” (2002a, 15). But it is important to recognize that such encounters are not sufficient in themselves to shift thinking and being. It is worth repeating that encounters with literature are, in the best-case scenarios, simply sources of affect or pure difference that resist easy assimilation into habit. Along with such encounters, it is important to recognize Deleuze’s companion conceptualization, inspired by Nietzsche, of repetition. Once exposed, such difference continues to return. This is not, of course, a habitual repetition, but rather, a repetition of difference, well removed from anything language might represent as known. As Colebrook emphasizes, as soon as we feel we recognize a difference, relating it to what we already understand, “we have lost the very power of difference,” [since] repetition is not the reoccurrence of the same old thing over and over again; to repeat something is to begin again, to renew, to question, and to refuse remaining the same” (2002a, 7). Likewise, Sholl explains that for Deleuze, “Thought arises out of a contingent encounter, forcing itself upon the individual and requiring the individual’s separation from all presuppositions, be they from common sense or good sense, so as to grasp what is novel about this thought” (2012, 556). Importantly, however, he also notes a particular condition which should be of interest to all educators and learners, reminding us that “The development of this thought in turn requires perseverance: it requires repetition” (556).

The significance of this for education is not to be underestimated. Clearly learning opportunities are often lost in the rush of curriculum and daily pressures to expedite state-defined ‘learning’ and get through the material. Yet perseverance of this kind requires space and time. As Sholl points out, for both Bergson and Deleuze, life, as discussed in the previous section, is “conceived as the production of differences” (2012, 544). But, he also explains that thought for Deleuze – ‘thought without image’ – is “that contingent encounter with the persistent forces of life that demand the perseverance of thought. Far from stressing difference alone, both link the repetition in life to the unsettling persistence required to develop a truly new thought....What thought lacks most of all is repetition” (544). Deleuze himself refers to “the stubbornness of the existent” (1994, 13) and to repetition as “the power of difference and differentiation” (220).

Sholl, drawing on this notion of resistance, describes “a thinker who effectively repeats” –one that might conjure the image of the artist writer, or the student who has been struck by an encounter – as someone who “expresses a force that does not want to give itself up, one that stubbornly resists, and thus one that continually transgresses laws, the confines of representation, the marketing of opinions, and common sense” (2012, 555-556). As such, he defines repetition in terms of Deleuze’s third synthesis of time, what might be considered a combination of the first and second syntheses that stretches into the future, “that which combines the actual repetitions of habit and memory with the virtual repetition of intensities. This repetition is the process of relating intensities such that they are expressed in the actual” (559). In contrast to how repetition might be taken up in common parlance, as something negative and habitual, by focusing on the repetition of difference, Deleuze’s conceptualization is one of “a difference that insists in its vital singularity or virtual intensity and thus cannot be given an identity in terms of what already exists” (555).

Applied to the context of education, in order for repetition of difference to incite learning, it must have both space and time. Not only might we find ways to discourage or distance both teachers and students from ready clichés and easily accessible representations, such as those contained in ‘Coles notes’ or online reference guides, but they must be provided the opportunities to attend to the felt intensities, as well as persistence of these over time. Furthermore, though it is certainly possible for such attention to take hold without intervention, having been habituated to the ‘search’ for quick ‘answers’, immersed in a culture of readily available distractions, and already inclined toward the dogmatic, students might benefit in what will later be described as an apprenticeship of sorts.

Concepts and Different Images of Thought

In turning away from the dogmatic image of thought, Deleuze considers two important and relatively pragmatic ways non-representational thinking can be provoked while endeavoring to retain the generative forces of difference: the creation of concepts and the 'interpretation' of signs. Both offer alternatives to dogma. And in understanding these processes of thinking through difference, we are hopefully challenged to arrive at a more informed understanding of the forces implicated in education. It might be suggested that while signs turn us inward through the body, concepts turn us outward through the body. Both are profoundly centred on the immanent movements of becoming through the work of difference.

And while both concepts and signs can emerge through art, if we consider the example of readers of literature, they are distinguished in their outcomes. Signs, to be discussed in more detail in the next section, grab hold of us through the kind of violent encounter that disturbs habit. Should the reader be willing or able to persist, allowing difference to repeat itself in a kind of gnawing at our attention, then signs can lead not only to a deeper understanding of our own subjective constitution, but through non-representational thought, can lead to different actualizations of becoming. Concepts, on the other hand, are created and put to use as the work of philosophy, drawing on literature's affects and percepts – blocs of sensation – to generate different ways of thinking. They ultimately serve as tools of analyses, necessary to examine more clearly the forces at work on the body, including the collective body of society, human, non-human and ahuman. As Colebrooke argues,

Any truly philosophical thought, therefore, will strive to think the whole of life: so it must encounter art and science but then go on to think the world beyond art and science. Science may give consistent descriptions of the actual world, such as the things we observe as 'facts' or 'states of affairs', but philosophy has the power to understand the virtual world. This is not the world as it is, but the world beyond any specific observation or experience: the very possibility of life. (2002a, 13)

Not surprisingly, Deleuze distances his *conceptualization of concepts* from the more commonly accepted term which, as mentioned, is associated with representational thinking, the

convenient short-hand for naming, categorizing, and freezing thought. Though they may serve the purposes of practical semantics, providing shared points of identification, these do little to generate thinking. Concepts as they are typically applied, tend to reduce or ignore difference in kind or pure difference. Deleuze rejects concepts of this type in reference to their potential to shift thinking, emphasizing that “They lack the claws of absolute necessity - in other words, of an original violence inflicted upon thought; the claws of a strangeness or an enmity which alone would awaken thought from its natural stupor or eternal possibility” (DR, 139). Or as Colebrook insists, acknowledging their service to expediency of thought, such concepts “reduce complex differences to generalities so that thinking can proceed efficiently, in the service of action” (2011a, 50) and elsewhere, “our daily uses of concepts follow the models of representation and opinion, where we assume that there’s a present world that we then re-present in concepts, and that we all aim for agreement, communication and information” (2002b, 16).

As an aside, in his rejection of concepts which tend to flatten or eliminate difference – Deleuze’s focus on the richness of the unique is echoed, though arguably at a dissimilar level metaphysically, in the work of philosophers Iris Marion Young and Martha Nussbaum, (1997 and 1991, 1997, respectively). Both speak emphatically about literature’s ability to clarify particularities, thickening or challenging our generalized recognition of identities and social experiences and thereby expanding the imaginary, especially for those in positions to make social, judicial or political judgements. For example, Young points out that,

Some feminist and postmodern writers have suggested that a denial of difference structures Western reason, where difference means particularity, the heterogeneity of the body and affectivity, or the inexhaustibility of linguistic and social relations without a unitary, undifferentiated origin. [I seek] to show how such a denial of difference contributes to social group oppression, and to argue for a politics that recognizes rather than represses difference. ... [T]he ideal of impartiality, a keystone of most modern moral theories and theories of justice, denies difference. The ideal of impartiality suggests that all moral situations should be treated according to the same rules. By claiming to provide a standpoint which all subjects can adopt, it denies the difference between subjects. By positing a unified and universal moral point of view, it generates a dichotomy between reason and feeling (2011, 10)

Pertinent to my own interests, this taps at the core of many issues of social justice today. As representation or identification, concepts in general circulation reduce or negate differences,

particularly when it comes to identity politics and labels which ignore differences that exceed the categories identities define. As Young further contends,

The logic of identity denies or represses difference. Difference, as I understand it, names both the play of concrete events and the shifting differentiation on which signification depends....The logic of identity flees from the sensuous particularity of experience, with its ambiguities, and seeks to generate stable categories. Through the logic of identity thought aims to master that sensuous heterogeneous embodiment by bringing the object fully under a concept. (2011, 98)

And though her understanding of difference may not be as nuanced as Deleuze's (though at times it is certainly suggestive of pure difference), ultimately, her challenge to orthodox philosophy seems compatible. As opposed to broad categorizations and the transcendental 'rule' books of laws and statutes, literature not only complicates, but generates problems that trouble easy decisions and indictments, whether those be from positions of power or those exercised every day by all of us.

Colebrook emphasizes that "Everyday concepts, then, allow life to carry on in an orderly or functional manner... Our day-to-day concepts do not capture what a concept is because they do not allow the full force of what a concept can do" (2002a, 15). Stated differently, Greig De Peuter and Christine Shaw emphasize that 'concepts' "are tools of thinking that orient thought not towards re-presenting the known, but toward expanding possibilities for life that transcend the given" (2006, 151).

Instead of placing boundaries around what can be thought, understood in this way, concepts become active in generating thought. As Wallin states,

Within the Deleuzeguattarian machine, such concepts function as devices for extending the field of experience, composing planes for the exploration of new artistic, political, and ethical actions that productively fail to correspond to an a priori image of thought. Put differently, the concept is neither a descriptor nor signifier, but rather, a machine for producing a style of thought capable of short-circuiting the image of the world as it is. Implicated here are those educational models of instrumentalism, standardization, and developmentalism which predetermine the becoming-subject... (2012b, 150)

From a dogmatic image of thinking, as Colebrook points out, we can think of concepts such as justice, democracy, humanity as labeling something already understood, something that ‘is’ rather than something active as a force in becoming: “[T]here could also be concepts that destroyed efficiency and action – such as the concepts of justice, democracy, humanity – but that opened thinking to a future. What would justice be?” (2011, 50). In a similar but much more elaborate literary example, Wallin (2012a) explores the film, *Pontypool*, in which the ‘concept’ of love has become so ubiquitous and so overused, that it is completely emptied of value to the extent that in the narrative of the movie, it flows as a virus that affects language, limits speech, and creates zombies (literal and metaphoric) in the process. So much so that, like happiness or the examples Colebrook offers, it becomes a challenge to reimagine it as a concept that can be put to work in the manner which Deleuze and Guattari have in mind. In contrast to such commonplace applications of concepts, what Deleuze has in mind is far from stale and static:

Concepts are what interests me. It seems like concepts have their own existence. They are alive, like invisible creatures. But we have to create them. For me philosophy is an art of creation, much like music or painting. Philosophy creates concepts, which are neither generalities nor truths. They are more along the lines of the Singular, the Important, the New. Concepts are inseparable from affects, i.e. from the powerful effects they exert on our life, and percepts, i.e. the new ways of seeing or perceiving they provoke in us. (TRoM, 2006, 238)

Perhaps more directly relevant to the context of education, and drawing on a passage which Nussbaum employs, we can turn to Dicken’s novel *Hard Times* in which the young student resists the caricatured teacher, aptly named Gradgrind, who insists that ““Now what I want is, Facts! Teach these boys and girls nothing but Facts. Facts alone are wanted in life,” (Dickens, 2000, 41) and then proceeds to belittle “Girl number twenty” who is “unable to define a horse!” (43). He continues to make an example of her, pointing to ““Girl number twenty possessed of no facts, in reference to one of the commonest of animals!”” (43). As the narrator clarifies, that the young girl only knows horse through her encounters with her father, who “belongs to the horse-riding” (43). The concept of ‘Horse’ simply can’t be so easily pinned down for her. Or defined by facts. The tension falls on the distinction between the two applications of concepts, one which deadens and one which prompts further thinking in opening up the plane

of immanence, of becoming, and the struggle with that which resists simple capture by representation and denotation.

In some ways, this presents a radical examination of the sentiment running through the history of philosophy, the notion of the free thinker, the foundation of the liberal arts. It also may set a standard that seems high. But the underlying call for a dynamic or animated notion of concepts—thought which moves us—thought that moves *a life*—aspirational though it may be, reminds us of what is at stake when we fail to even consider it. Returning to the concept of happiness, Colebrook explains further that,

[P]hilosophical concepts cannot have these succinct definitions because they create a whole new path for thinking: the concept of happiness would not refer to this or that instance of happiness; it would have to enact or create a new possibility or thought of happiness. Philosophical concepts are not amenable to dictionary style definitions, for their power lies in being open and expansive. For this reason we have to understand them through the new connections that they make. (2002a, 17)

In the case of readers, when we resist the differences, we encounter in literature because they are too bazaar, or too ‘stupid’ to take seriously, we limit all that such encounters can potentially offer. In a practical sense, the ability of readers to become sensitive to the potential richness of the connotative value of words rather than limit themselves to the static images fostered by strictly denotative frames is often the difference between the text remaining closed and its ability to open itself to horizons of becoming. Likewise, regardless how the notion of ‘concepts’ are distinguished by definition or denotation, ultimately the true test of the value of a concept in opening to differences in thinking rests on its potency in application. Citing Deleuze and Guattari, as well as scholar Todd May, Wallin points out that, “In Deleuzeguattarian (1987) terms, what a concept is is of less significance than what it does. Rather than a tool that purports to reflect an a priori reality, the active force of the concept creates connections across fluxes and milieus, allowing us ‘to consider . . . a new way of conceiving being, the world, or what there is’ (May, 2005, p. 116)” (2010a, 1).

It perhaps goes without saying that Deleuze and Guattari’s oeuvre is filled with concepts, many of which revisit, revitalize or animate existing terms by putting them to productive work

disorienting or reorienting thought. Bogue claims that the ‘ultimate aims’ of Deleuze’s teaching are “(1) to help students ‘be happy with their solitude’ and (2) to provide students with pliable concepts, applicable in diverse spheres, such that each student, in his or her solitude, may encounter something that stimulates genuine thought” (2013, 33). Though not a primary focus of my work, I do suggest certain new conceptions as naturally arising through a closer encounter with the literary works I have chosen to discuss. These, I contend, follow the characteristics described thus far, and are associated with components of concepts suggested by Todd May: ‘intensities’ or ‘singularities’ which are “pre-conceptual, since they form concepts rather than being formed by them” (2003, 141). In each case, I have challenged myself to consider whether these concepts allow us, as teachers, to “be able to see and to live in a fresh way, a way that might not have been available to us without the concept.” (May, 2003, 142). Each of the concepts I suggest as part of the work which follows, fashioned from the three literary selections I’ve chosen, imply dynamics along the plane of immanence – pre-conceptual, pre-subjective forces which derive from, as May suggests, “difference itself ... out of which the concepts are formed and on which they are articulated” (2003, 142). And though some may be inclined to take me to task as to whether or not this can be said of the concepts I propose – as each in turn might also suggest a more static representational concept – having questioned this myself I believe that the qualities or intensities captured by these concepts truly point to the pre-cognitive affects that condition them.

Because concepts actively extend the field of experience, they also create a plane for the exploration of new artistic, political, and ethical praxis (Bogue, 2003). As May clarifies, this is not about idealism, but “Rather, the point of a philosophical perspective is not to tell us what the world is like – that is the point of science – but to create a perspective through which the world takes on a new significance... Thus, philosophy, the practice of creating concepts, is not to tell us the truth...[but] to engage us in the interesting, the remarkable, and the important” (2003, 142). One might say that the problem of learning is the problem of thought and the problem of thought is “tied...to the evaluation of what is important and what is not, to the distribution of the singular and the regular, distinctive and ordinary points” (DR 189).

Signs, Apprenticeship and Education

In turning to the second way in which literature might be reconsidered in education as difference in thinking, while Deleuze and Guattari themselves employ a revisioning of concepts throughout their work, I would argue that in the pragmatics of day-to-day teaching, it is their revisioning of the concepts of signs that warrants the most attention. While educators may not create concepts, though they will no doubt put them to use, they might be convinced to place more emphasis on signs as potential triggers for an education of the senses, of disturbance, or in the interest of thinking and becoming.

In highlighting their significance, once again Deleuze states emphatically that: “Thought is nothing without something that forces and does violence to it. More important than thought is ‘what leads to thought’; more important than the philosopher is the poet” (PS, 95). Unlike other concepts reimagined by Deleuze, as might be anticipated in his own words, signs are easier to apply to encounters with poetry, and literature in general. This should not be surprising considering he devoted a full text to Proust and the apprenticeship of signs.

In our encounters with literature, of the kind which potentially brings us in contact with the outside of thought, we struggle to understand. But even without understanding, finding the solace of representational thinking, we often cannot escape the sense that something is at work on us. Something is ‘affecting’ us. And though we might strive – according to anticipated or ‘educated’ expectations – to articulate meaning, as soon as we state what something ‘means,’ in a way that makes sense to us and to those with whom we share it, we risk foreclosing on the immanence and aesthetic experience of the encounter. Replacing the aesthetic vibrancy of the experience with a staid convergence on words and names drawn from our limited vocabulary and our limited field of recognition. We break our connection to the *Outside* and tame whatever we can under the umbrella of the known and communicable. The Turkish writer, Elifa Shafak, implicates both the urgent need for such disturbance of the dogmatic as well as the force of virtual intensities which exceed any known representation: “as

someone who often felt like an ‘insider outsider’ even in her own motherland, stuck between cultures and cities, my need for an ‘elsewhere’ was profound” (2018). Having “only learned an official version of Ottoman history,” Shafak describes how a high school encounter with Yugoslav writer, Ivo Andric’s novel *The Bridge on the Drina* shook “years of nationalistic education.” As she says, by the time she had finished the novel, “something had shifted forever.” As she further exclaims, “Suddenly, I had to rethink what I thought I knew. I had to unlearn.... the novel matters because it punches little holes in the wall of indifference that surrounds us. Novels have to swim against the tide. And this was never more clear than it is today.” (2018).

Those little holes, in Deleuze’s terms, might presumably point to the work of signs encountered in the novel. Not unlike Shafak’s description above, here again, Deleuze invokes the language of violence to describe one’s encounter with a ‘sign’:

What forces us to think is the sign. The sign is the object of an encounter...The act of thinking does not proceed from a simple natural possibility; on the contrary, it is the only true creation. Creation is the genesis of the act of thinking within thought itself. This genesis implies something that does violence to thought, which wrests it from its natural stupor and its merely abstract possibilities. To think is always to interpret—to explicate, to develop, to decipher, to translate a sign. Translating, deciphering, developing are the form of pure creation. (PS, 97)

As with concepts, Deleuze links signs with thinking, and therefore with ‘true creation.’ But here more than ever Deleuze emphasizes the impetus to think as a kind of violence that acts upon the inertia or stasis of habit, one that shifts the body into movement or instigation to journey in search of its source:

We search for truth only when we are determined to do so in terms of a concrete situation, when we undergo a kind of violence that impels us to such a search.... There is always the violence of a sign that forces us into the search, that robs us of peace. The truth is not to be found by affinity, nor by goodwill, but is betrayed by involuntary signs. (PS, 15)

Echoing comments made earlier regarding the dogmatic image of thought and our deferral to ‘common sense,’ Deleuze suggests that, in considering the object of an encounter, whether

that be in literature or something that draws our attention on a walk to school, “explicit and conventional significations are never profound; the only profound meaning is the one that is enveloped, implicated in an external sign” (PS, p. 16). Or as Zourabichvili insists, “Something must force thought, shocking it and drawing it into a search; instead of a natural disposition, there is a fortuitous and contingent incitation derived from an encounter... he undergoes the effraction of a sign that imperils the coherency or relative horizon of thought in which he had moved until now” (2012, 56). Later, they ask, “What is the status of this object that is encountered without being recognized” (2012, 67). Whether the object be physical or abstract, if it acts as a sign in the sense that Deleuze proposes, it places the subject in contact with an outside – an unthought. Interpreting Deleuze, the authors conclude that in escaping representation, “The exterior world becomes interesting the moment it produces signs, thereby losing its reassuring unity, its homogeneity, its truthful appearance” (67). In other words, should the object work on us as a sign, reiterating earlier descriptions, we might infer:

That which is encountered is not simply different from thought (as, for example, an image or fact is, etc.), but is exterior to it as thought: it is what thought does not think, does not know to think, and does not yet think...The sign is this positive instance that does not merely refer thought to its own ignorance, but orients it, sweeps it along, engages it (67).

The sign envelopes or ‘enfolds’ a significance which troubles us, without our being able to put our finger on just what it is that troubles us, though there are no doubt numerous false leads and identified causes that prove incorrect. As a result, we are compelled to embark on a ‘search,’ or what Deleuze refers to as an *apprenticeship in signs*, drawing from Marcel Proust’s “In Search of Lost Time” to which he dedicates an entire book.

Considered from the perspective of reading, signs refer to those aspects of the text which grab our attention. As with so many other concepts, it is crucial that the use of ‘sign’ within a Deleuze-Guattarian theoretical perspective is not confused with its use in other contexts, and in particular classical semiotics and literary symbolism. But unlike the symbol or even metaphor, the sign does not draw from external or transcendent rules in order to affix meaning. The reader is caught by something within the text, often difficult to point to directly, that leads to a reflexive pause...something that triggers, activates, or demands thought.

However, though deviating from the structuralist approaches of Saussure and Peirce, there remains some affinity to the importance semiotics places on the search for something beyond. As Jagodzinski explains, “Signs produce desire; they are intensities that are invested in creating territories. Unlike the semiotics of Ferdinand de Saussure, the radicalness of this position presents arting as becoming-being, a transitivity without the mediation of a preposition, but part of the creative process of the becoming of the world” (2017, 6). For Deleuze, the search is much less about identifying the signified without, but rather searching for the conditions of disturbance within: why does this ‘sign’ affect me the way it does? And more universally, how does the sign connect my subjective conscious ‘I’ to ‘a life’ that conditions it? As Colebrook explains,

Fiction helps us avert the illusion of transcendence. It is the error of transcendence to think that there is a world that we need to represent through a separate order of signs. For empiricism, all life is a flow of signs; each perception is a sign of what lies beyond, and there is no ultimate referent or ‘signified’ that lies behind this world of signs. (2002a, 86)

Deleuze, in one of his earliest texts devoted to Nietzsche, notes that “There’s a profound link between signs, life, and vitalism: the power of nonorganic life that can be found in a line that’s drawn, a line of writing, a line of music. It’s organisms that die, not life. Any work of art points a way through for life, finds a way through the cracks” (N 143).

And while the work of signs is primarily unconscious, as with affect and thinking, it is important to note that the violence or disturbance is also indicated in the conscious experience of affections on the body. As Deleuze states,

Signs do not have objects as their direct referents. They are states of bodies (affections) and variations of power (affects), each of which refers to the other. Signs refer to signs. They have as their referents confused mixtures of bodies and obscure variations of power, and follow an order that is established by Chance or by the fortuitous encounter between bodies. Signs are effects: the effect of one body upon another in space, or affection; the effect of an affection on a duration, or affect. (ECC, 140)

Once we understand that the ‘affections’ of disturbance are only the tip of the proverbial iceberg, mere ‘signs’ of a vast array of processes circulating in the virtual unconscious, we begin to appreciate their contingent relationship to innumerable factors. How a disturbance will ‘affect’ us is largely determined in the unconscious virtual as a multiplicity of forces or differentials that congregate in singularities that formulate problems, sometimes referred to as ideas. As Deleuze emphasizes, citing Spinoza,

A work of art is worth more than a philosophical work; for what is enveloped in the sign is more profound than all the explicit significations. What does violence to us is richer than all the fruits of our goodwill or of our conscious work, and more important than thought is “what is food for thought” (II, 549). (PS, 30)

Based on what has already been discussed, it is perhaps already obvious that a primary zone of disturbance encompasses the unconscious virtual. However, as with affections, all we have to work with as empirical evidence is what actually appears in the actual. Christopher Drohan explains the felt disturbance as follows:

[A] sign is a sign on account of our engagement with it. A sign affects us. In its presence we are filled with feelings that set it apart from other objects, and which makes us aware that there is much more to it than a simple presence at hand...Its ‘signing’ is constituted by this existential grip upon us, that demands we surpass its mere appearance in order to fully explore its relation both to the feeling it conjures within us, and to the other things that surround it....The sign grips us and impresses upon us because we are not familiar with its meaning. (2007, 9-10)

We can readily see the difference here between sign and, for example, the symbol, and how Deleuze understands a kind of interpretation which, unlike the more conventional application of the term, is much more immanent and organic, unfolding as part of the immediate experience. The flow of affect enters the virtual as a multiplicity, which in due course becomes the quasi-cause of the actualized sensation of the event... one that demands to be examined in terms of what and why it moves the subjective I. What is this thing which has a grip on us? Significantly, though the sign passes through the virtual of the reader, it operates and is actualized as an event – emerging as sensations associated with the encounter with something that cannot be easily assimilated, understood, recognized. Drohan suggests that,

[T]he first thing we can say a posteriori of the sign is that even though it emerges in relation to what we already know, it assails us because it has no place in that

knowledge. Otherwise it would not 'sign' to us, but would be understood immediately. Instead, it brutally exists before us as a recognizable but amorphous material, but also as being more than that material, as feelings that drive us, and which motivates us to grasp its significance. (2007, 10)

In returning to an earlier discussion of feelings and affections and their relation to sad or joyful affects, once again it seems necessary to avoid the confusion of affects and affections. For example, while we may be inclined to read 'signs' within the novel as somehow related to 'symptoms,' health, and affections related to the life of the writer, Deleuze warns us against such temptation. Again, we are reminded that signs, too, point to 'a life,' one free of subjectivization. As Deleuze explains, signs within an art work are "not just a matter of diagnosis" but they also "imply ways of living, possibilities of existence, they're the symptoms of life gushing forth or draining away" (N, 143). Signs in a work of art must not be taken as 'representative' or indicative of the life of the artist. Elaborating further, Deleuze states that,

[A] drained life or a personal life isn't enough for an artist. You don't write with your ego, your memory, and your illnesses. In the act of writing there's an attempt to make life something more than personal, to free life from what imprisons it. The artist or philosopher often has slender, frail health, a weak constitution, a shaky hold on things: look at Spinoza, Nietzsche, Lawrence. Yet it's not death that breaks them, but seeing, experiencing, thinking too much life. Life overwhelms them, yet it's in them that 'the sign is at hand' – at the close of Zarathustra, in the fifth book of the Ethics. You write with a view to an unborn people that doesn't yet have a language. (N, 143)

It is this intensity which points to the paradox discussed earlier in terms of sad and joyful affects as potentially coinciding with joyful and sad affections. Again it is worth recalling that joyful and sad affects reside at a virtual level in Deleuze's proposed relational ontology and therefore actualized feelings and even fully processed emotions that we might describe as joyful or sad, are but mere signs of the passive vitalism flowing through the plane of immanence – individuations expressed in the becoming of subjectivities. This is critical in terms of recognizing how a pedagogy of disturbance might enter into relationship with the reader.

The encounter between reader and literary text, especially of the kind as those described herein which may involve 'tragic' or disturbing elements, may feel 'sad' while at the same time, seemingly exciting or increasing the reader's capacity to connect with others. Such experiences

of 'sad' literature are often accompanied by an outpouring of emotion, perhaps not so unlike what Aristotle might have viewed as 'cathartic,' and but as well, and more remarkably, a feeling of expansiveness, compassion, or even love. Though these might include feelings directed at one or more identifiable characters, at the same time, there often appears to be a general feeling of 'love' or compassion to others and to 'life' in general. The apparent contradiction or paradox discussed earlier reveals itself as, on one hand feelings of 'sadness' and even tears, while at the same time a sense of exhilaration – indeed a desire to repeat the experience with similar reading choices. Distinguishing the sadness as affections or actualized emotions from the sadness of affect that reduces the body's capacity, whether or not experiences which students might describe as sad actually derive from sad or joyful affects might only be indicated by signs of the body withdrawing, contracting or pulling away from further contact, or, as described earlier, expanding, leaning in, or opening up to further contact.

In my own experiences in the classroom, 'signs' that seize our attention are often generative, as Deleuze suggests they should be. And sadness, characteristic of so-called 'tragic' art, is more likely to fall into the category of that which shocks or 'saddens' readers into thinking. In fact, Deleuze himself appears to speak to the importance of this productive sadness, at least in terms of thinking, when he announces that "A philosophy that saddens no one, that annoys no one, is not a philosophy" (NP, 106).

As a personal example, to this day I remember my initial encounter with Willa Cather's short story, "Paul's Case," Arguably one of the most 'disturbing' and most depressing reads I've ever come across. And yet not only have I returned to reread it many, many times, but every time I do, I am just as saddened as I was the first time, and yet as distraught as I am, I sense a sudden exhilaration – a kind of joyful agony. Dorota Golańska, citing Deleuze, also speaks to this paradox in describing encounters with rather depressing memorial sites:

Crucially, in a Deleuzian framework, the sensation is not an end in itself, but rather an important catalyst for further critical inquiry. Because of the way it grasps us and forces to engage deeply yet involuntarily, affect is considered as a trigger for a profound thought. As Deleuze underlines, 'More important than thought there is 'what leads to

thought”, ‘a material impression’ that reaches us ‘through our senses’ (1972, 161).
(2015, 780)

In other words, it is not the resulting sadness which characterizes the encounter, but rather what such sadness generates in terms of becoming and a sense of openness to further encounters. In challenging the reader to follow the signs which most trouble or disturb, their investigation will potentially lead to a deeper understanding of the complexities surrounding the sign. As Deleuze explains, “In Proust it's not memory he's exploring, it's all the different kinds of signs, whose natures have to be discovered by looking at their setting, the way they're emitted, their matter, their system” (N, 143). As the search begins to reveal or unfold the implicate gestures behind the sign's initial stimulation, distinctive ‘worlds’ are opened up to the reader, which in Proust, are distinguished as those of worldliness, love, sense, and art.

But perhaps more important than the specific world's discovered is the search itself, a process of ‘thinking’ which inevitably creates material change in the reader, potentially expanding, in the process of becoming, the worlds of the reader. Following Deleuze's suggestion that “The Search is presented as the exploration of different worlds of signs” (2000, 5), Drohan adds an important reminder that, “every sign inaugurates a search that may propel us into a new world, one in which we are, prior to the apprenticeship, unacquainted with” (Drohan, 11).

Inspired by and responding to Deleuze's employment of signs, James Williams (2016) cautions against the limitations imposed by a typology of signs. While acknowledging that categories allow for clearer framing of discussions, Williams suggests that rather than considering ‘signs’ as divided into categories, we ought to consider a more open and borderless concept: “the definition of the process sign denies foundational distinctions of the sign into, for instance, signs of love and worldly signs” (127). The chosen ‘world’ will always remain “open to challenge” depending on how one selects what is to be included in the consideration or “how the diagram can be redrawn in ways that move its centres of gravity and distant points” (127). This in no way contradicts Deleuze's own characterization of ‘sign systems’ which unify ‘worlds’: “But the plurality of worlds is such that these signs are not of the same kind, do not have the same way of appearing, do not allow themselves to be deciphered in the same manner, do not

have an identical relation with their meaning” (Deleuze, PS, 5). In other words, depending on the ‘system’ of signs chosen, or what Williams will call the selected ‘set,’ interpretation or deciphering leads to different worlds.

Taking as an example the discovery of a white cross freshly painted on a door, Williams illustrates that though it may be a sign of any number of things, from quarantine to ostracization, questions of meaning and indication are secondary: “[I]f you want to understand the real workings and power of the sign...The sign is not a fixed relation between an indicator and a meaning... the sign is neither static nor dependable because the sign is many different processes” (2016, 1). Expanding on this same sign, its fluid nature is recognized not only as the paint fades over time, but as its meaning changes with respect to the wider environment or ecology surrounding it, actively (and materially) transforming the perceivers of the ‘sign.’ As he elaborates further,

The day started out well. Children were playing upstairs; a pot was brewing fresh tea. Now, the young have been marked out and a threat hangs over them. Your tea will taste bitter behind drawn curtains. The sign is doing this...The first task of the process philosophy is to define the different process at work in the sign...In order to appear as a sign the threatening message painted on your home had to bring together a set of elements; for instance, the sign is yourself, your door, your thought about a message, your feelings, white paint and the shape of a cross. There is a selection of a set, the condition for the appearance of any sign, before there can be meaning.” (Williams, 2016, 1-2)

In my own work, I have found William’s extension of Deleuze’s conceptualization of signs well suited to applications in the secondary literature classroom. The way he introduces ‘sets’ resonates with how I often experience discussions unfolding in the classroom. As participants introduce or comment on a passage or aspect of the text, with each additional observation shared, whether it be the realization of a particular colour, a tone, a seemingly innocuous detail missed earlier, the frame of discussion shifts, as do corresponding levels of intensity. Noticing this serves to reiterate a point made earlier with regard to affect and how, for some students, a reconsideration of the ‘set’ in question, can lead to sudden ‘aha’ moments of discovery or

wonder, introducing entirely new flows of affect into the body of the discussion and the body of the student.

A second illustrative example from Williams perhaps helps us to begin to see this even more clearly. Rather striking in its 'apparent' simplicity is the seemingly benign perception of a cup of tea, a small detail that could easily have been encountered in a descriptive passage of a literary text. Williams proceeds to describe possible alternative 'sets' that might serve to condition the sign and its unique 'work' on the respective perceivers of each of the different sets. For example, the set might include "tea, breakfast, Britishness and tradition" (2) ...very quaint. Alternatively, though with a noticeable implication of a very different affective force, it could include the "tea, tea leaves and the hills of Sri Lanka, the history of plantation life, the exploitation of young women and its many modern guises" (2) ... not quite so quaint. It is readily apparent how the choice of signs and their extended sets can drastically shift the impact on the reader.

In labeling the concept as a 'process sign,' Williams emphasizes that the sign does not work so much through the selected 'set' but in the actual 'process' of selecting the set. This entails not only drawing out from a 'background' or what he will call the 'substratum', which plays an integral part in the process, but then gathering the specific elements together in a process of "extraction and collection" (2). In offering still another concrete example, Williams goes on to describe the 'trick of perspective' that occurs in the drawing out or 'extraction' of the elements isolated to comprise the set: "When a lassoed calf is separated from the herd, the director's camera and our attention are attracted to the single beast about to be branded by the hot iron.

The rest of the herd are affected too, though, as they trample with fear and apprehension" (3-4). Hence there are now two potential focal points for our attention – the selected set and the background or substratum. The latter which, far from being connoted as a still or static backdrop, is also "transformed in detailed and precise ways by the extraction" (4). As more and more details are either noticed by the viewer or, as perhaps the case in the classroom, brought

to the viewers' attention, "the set and its substratum are in ongoing and open-ended transformation. The singeing of the calf's hide resounds back through the herd while this wider panic increases its terror" (4). As Williams emphasizes, the selection of the set and its substratum recognizes that each continues to work on each, and there is a continuous shifting of attention and values that is, in part, initiated by where we throw the proverbial lasso. It is important to note as well, that with process signs, there is no predefined boundary between human and non-human and that "For the sign and its substratum, this process philosophy defines these differences in values as changes of intensity in the relations between elements: greater watchfulness, more curiosity, increased desire and rising disappointment" (5).

Depending on the set and background selected, or the details operating on the viewer or readers' attention at any one time, the flows of and shifts in intensities operate as vectors with both direction and amplitude. Any one diagram might provide a "picture of increasing and decreasing intensities of relations around things and in different directions." To be clear, Williams does not seem to be suggesting there is an exactitude to such diagrams, but that in understanding the process sign, we recognize that the 'process' includes both the selection and movement of 'multiple changes in intensity' that might be represented by way of diagrams.

Recognizing this, we might imagine the varying paths which students might take based on the sets they choose and the bodies (in their expanded sense) they bring to the encounter. Clearly, the diagrams or mapping of intensities can also take on different forms, depending on the set. For example, Williams describes one possibility as "a sketch you might draw of your family of all the potential effects and implications" (6) of the sign. Or as an alternative, a diagram might be constructed of "the many directions of social and political change that come with a new sign" (6), or "the intended and unintended directions of change in values" that might accompany the use of a particular 'sign' such as the white cross described above or a purple tie worn in a political campaign. The 'process in signs', Williams insists, "comes before the actual effects occurring around the sign. In a rage you paint over the cross marking out your family" (7). Many might easily recall a time when either they or someone they observed (a student perhaps),

suddenly slammed a book closed, or emoted physical signs of disturbance upon reading a particular passage or selection. Williams reminds us, however, that, “The main question for the process philosophy is how did the sign work to prepare for this act?” (7). It is this question that instigates the initial stages of apprenticeship.... a search for how or why the sign works the way it does on us.

Finally, Williams explains that the process is both ‘speculative’ and ‘experimental:’ in so far as in drawing our attention to different ways of viewing or thinking about the world: “signs are detached from established ways of representing the world in two ways. First, signs are unconditioned selections. Anything can be selected into a sign and there are no laws or rules for this selection” (7). This means that the set that comprises the sign can be made up of both linguistic and non-linguistic elements, and that the elements outside of representation also need to be considered as part of the sign, no matter how abstract or speculative they might be. Furthermore, the signs and the diagrams include the recognition that the flows of intensities are both conscious and unconscious and therefore actual and virtual across the plain of reality. As Williams explains,

Signs are events on the threshold of actions and effects... Actions and effects can be included in signs, but then only as intensive relations. The definition of the process sign allows for layers of process by including signs within others, for example when the sign {tea, taste, good health} is included in another sign {exploitation, {tea, taste, good health}}. (10-11).

As for the speculative nature of the process sign, Williams suggests we consider aspects of probabilities in terms of the flows of intensities. For obvious reasons, there is no easy way of actually capturing or measuring all of the potential changes that might conceivably arise from the sign. I imagine this within a classroom setting as the discussion unfolds and signs become more and more elaborate with additional observations and discoveries. Williams therefore defines the sign as follows:

[A] moment of uncertainty providing the opportunity of thinking and acting differently. Where some processes can be described as necessary or extremely likely, for the sign there is a moment of hesitation and openness which provides a gap for things to be otherwise, not only as critical alarm but also as creative difference. (8).

Because it is also speculative, the sign cannot be represented objectively but, as Williams further points out, 'situated' at "transition points between stable ways of seeing the world," the sign as process "is a creative and critical approach designed to allow for shifts between established pictures" (9). There is no way to predict to what or in what way a student might react, or if they will at all. But we might, with process signs, as Williams suggest, experiment and speculate. As with Deleuze, the process sign for Williams and the diagrams of intensities, "are defined to prioritise their capacity to raise critical questions and alarm around ideas and things in the world" (7). It is no wonder they have such appeal to someone working in education today.

In considering signs as instigating non-representational thinking, the process signs can potentially work much the way Deleuze and Spinoza have suggested in terms of the violence they entail and the energy they imbue into virtual and actualized struggle. In referring to Deleuze's work on the apprenticeship of signs, it is clear now that how the sign works on the apprentice is largely determined by the selection of signs and sets, whether this be as a sudden personal sensed awareness or as the result of outside provocation, perhaps from a companion, someone Bogue will refer to as a *master apprentice*. Either way, the sign or set works through disturbing the habits of thought and being, as well as instigating a kind of thinking through which the body extends or expands its subjectivity and the boundaries and openings to new relations. The questions Williams points to -- "Which signs are important? How can we divide them into manageable categories? What signs can be ignored? Which are essential threats and risks? Which signs are under my control and how? What errors and faults are in these signs?" (2016, 122) -- will in turn be brought to bear on the selections of signs I have made in each of the literary works that follow. Though they are always speculative and experimental, the signs I have chosen to discuss will be based on my own observations, superficial though they may be, of the evidenced affections of bodies, my own included. In the context of literature, Williams argues that,

The arts are masters of this troubling wealth of signs because they themselves play on multiple layers of signs and find themselves at the centre of busy webs of interpretation. ... Of the arts, literature and poetry are the pre-eminent teachers of the excess of signs....

This ability to match the rich order and disorder of signs explains why the novel or the sonnet has best captured and created some of the signs we search for most, like those of love and death (2016, 123)

In addressing Proust's search as an apprenticeship of signs, Deleuze emphasizes that "we learn nothing except by deciphering and interpreting" (PS, 2000, 5). And while this may strike some as similar to various versions of reader response theories, there are considerable differences. Foremost of these, I believe is the complex multiplicity conditioning the effects of signs. While in reader response theory, a word, a phrase or a whole description might surprise and even disturb the reader, these are not usually taken past the point of personal or worldly associations. Nor are these elements viewed in terms of the 'violence' Deleuze describes or with the requisite challenge of 'thinking' – the tenacity necessary to stick with the 'apprenticeship' to follow the signs as far as possible – well beyond an easy 'solution,' quick answer and easy referral to representational or 'common sense' answers sitting at the most superficial levels of response. The sign demands the repetition implied by such a difficult search: Why does this passage force me to pause? Why can't I get it out of my mind? And why do I keep going back to it? Which brings us back to Deleuze's emphasis on thinking as both difference and repetition and reminds us of the particularly important role signs can play in a pedagogy of disturbance.

Learning as Encounters with Problems

These conceptualizations of thinking, concepts and signs challenge us with a revitalized theory of learning. Though Deleuze only occasionally speaks explicitly to the field of education, we might anticipate two potential images of learning that correspond to the two images of thought he proposes: the dogmatic image at the heart of Deleuze's critique, and the alternative he proposes as associated with a process of transcendental empiricism or an immanent image of thought. Tano Posteraro claims that learning in general is, "a model for the conditions of thought" (2015, 467) and that in this regard it points to the process of navigating affective encounters that "awaken the faculties, forcing thought to think and the thinker to learn" (459).

Though there exists a definite antagonism between them, and there is no question which one Deleuze favours, these two models of learning need not be mutually exclusive. Bogue goes so far as to suggest that “Learning for Deleuze is a subset of what we usually mean by learning, just as thought for him is a subset of what generally passes for thinking” (2004, 340). What most of us have considered to be *learning*, is likely closer to the first image, at least as it is *represented* in our education systems – one that emphasizes the bestowing of knowledge and truth as preconceived propositions that can be represented in ‘accepted’ banks of answers. In other words, “What often passes for learning is simply the reinforcement of common sense notions, standard codes and orthodox beliefs” (328).

In this more familiar model of education, stretching at least as far back as Plato in the Western tradition, the targeted outcome is the attainment or ‘possession’ of knowledge. This conceptualization of learning has the advantage of providing a clear – visible – and measurable set out of outcomes in the form of curricula or programs of studies outlining what students should learn and what teachers must ‘deliver.’ As Deleuze points out, drawing from Foucault, knowledge “is defined by the combinations of visible and articulable that are unique to each stratum or historical formulation. Knowledge is a practical assemblage, a ‘mechanism’ of statements and visibilities. There is therefore nothing behind knowledge (although, as we shall see, there are things outside knowledge)” (F, 51). Though Deleuze’s bracketed aside clearly discloses his suspicion of such knowledge, so long as such a conception of knowledge remains central to the institution of education, learning can be observed, monitored, and assessed, thus providing easy access for legislation and vast structures of accountability. And in spite of many efforts to shift this model, as Bernard Ricca argues, many of the methods courses in education faculties today “are likely the descendants of Tyler’s (1950) four criteria for good curriculum – goals, experiences, organization of those experiences, and assessment – there can be little doubt about the influence of these commonplace methods even today” (2012, 31). He goes on to cite Kimball Wiles (1952) who summed up teaching 60 years ago:

Teaching consists of organizing knowledge into some pattern, of presenting the facts and generalizations in a clear, easily understood fashion, of testing to determine the amount of information acquired, and of marking the pupil’s attainment ... any change

from this pattern is a softening of the educative process, a departure from the fundamentals. They are concerned with better ways of telling, explaining, drilling, testing, and marking. (p.11, cited in Ricca, 2012, 31)

It is not difficult to conclude that the Tyler model of education has been decidedly resistant to change, and that the description of teaching in 1952 might very easily have appeared on our provincial government's education website of today. And no doubt the incursion of the market and neoliberal interests into education has placed even more emphasis on both the setting and the measurement of outcomes.

It is rather eerie to read Deleuze's caution written nearly 40 years ago that "When knowledge becomes a legislator, the most important thing to be subjected is thought" and that "rational knowledge sets the same limits to life as reasonable life sets to thought" (NP, 1983, 100-101). This is a model of learning focused on accessing knowledge, as well as an assumption of 'Truth' that is eternal and fixed – in other words, transcendent, one which is undoubtedly questioned in Deleuze's pronouncement that learning "Knowledge is opposed to life" (NP, 100, 1983). No less than life suffers the judgement of transcendent models, and so too is an education system that suffers the constraints and shadows of transcendent rules of what is or isn't allowable. A strict logic ordained by 'common sense' is as quick to affirm knowledge/life which fits a mold as to dismiss knowledge/life that doesn't.

In this model of learning, Deleuze acknowledges that "the importance and dignity of learning are often recognized" (DR, 166). This, he suggests, is because of the "homage" paid to "the empirical conditions of knowledge" which unfortunately "disappear[s] in the result" (166). In other words, while learning may acknowledge roots in a process of empiricism, the focus remains on the end product of knowledge, removing the results from the active means to those results... the learning itself: "learning is, after all, an infinite task: it is none the less cast with the circumstances and the acquisition of knowledge" (166). As such, learning is reduced to the mere status of "intermediary between non-knowledge and knowledge" (166). As Bogue concludes, this implies "a process with a definite beginning and ending, in which thought, like a

dutiful pupil, responds to pre-formulated questions and eventually arrives at pre-existing answers (2004, 333).

An Alternative Model of Learning

In bracketing his reminder that “there are things outside knowledge,” Deleuze clearly points to the alternative model implied throughout his life’s work, one that places importance on the learning – and thinking – outside the dogmatic image of thought. One that rejects “the subordination of learning to knowledge” (DR, 167). Such a model, I would suggest, infers a very different set of interests, values and practices from both the perspective of the student and the teacher. As Deleuze emphasizes repeatedly, “Learning is essentially concerned with signs. Signs are the object of a temporal apprenticeship, not of an abstract knowledge” (PS, 4). Echoing the earlier discussion, Bogue explains that, “To learn is to encounter signs, to undergo the disorienting jolt of something new, different, truly other, and then to explicate those signs, to unfold the differences they enfold” (341).

This speaks to the learning I wish to highlight in this thesis. Realizing that much of what passes for education falls under the umbrella of identity and recognition, not only does such pedagogy not necessarily equate to thinking or ‘becoming’-transformation, but in certain circumstances, education as recognition can, as suggested earlier of thinking, actually limit or undermine learning. And going further, when recognition imposes models of identity, it not only inhibits learning, but freezes it into strict frameworks through which the world is viewed and judged. This reflects the historical *raison d’être* of education to maintain and reproduce the national culture. As Bogue elaborates further,

By 'learning' Deleuze clearly does not mean the mere acquisition of any new skill or bit of information, but instead the accession to a new way of perceiving and understanding the world....[T]he commonsense, conventional, orthodox world is ultimately illusory. Genuine learning, the learning through signs, takes us beyond the illusions of habit and common sense to the truths of what Proust calls 'essences' and Deleuze labels 'differences.' (2004, 328)

But these ‘truths’ are not at all the kind we refer to in common sense, or that which Plato’s cave dweller pursues on his path toward the metaphorical sun. Truth for Deleuze is, as might be expected, much more elusive, embodied and dynamic. As Colebrook explains,

Truth is not some external substance that thought may adequately represent, but this does not mean that truth is nothing more than an effect of relations. Indeed, for Deleuze there is a truth or power of life that insists and produces relations, relations that cannot be reduced to a single network of power. Thought is not the grasp or apprehension of truth, and truth is not a correct idea or content. Striving for the truth is still an education, a leading away from the present content, but to problems... Deleuze is critical of a truth that thought must simply represent adequately, and is critical of an education, which would consist of the formation of a correct method. (2008a, 36)

Deleuze and Guattari, writing more specifically about philosophy but with implications to all thinking, and learning, insist that “Philosophy does not consist in knowing and is not inspired by truth” (WIP, 82). In place of the dominant operative markers of goals or outcomes, they refocus attention, not surprisingly, to the conditions that inspire thinking, proposing that “it is categories like Interesting, Remarkable, or Important that determine success or failure” (82). Removing the emphasis on traditional measures of success, the number of correct answers, it does not matter whether facts or theories are ultimately right or wrong, as within the context of ‘learning’ such ends have much less value. Redirecting their attention to education as they imagine it could be, they observe that, “Only teachers can write “false” in the margins, perhaps; but readers doubt the importance and interest, that is to say, the novelty of what they are given to read” (83).

They reiterate this sentiment in their contention that “To think is to experiment, but experimentation is always that which is in the process of coming about – the new, remarkable, and interesting that replace the appearance of truth and are more demanding than it is. (WIP, 111). This diminution of knowledge and truth echoes Deleuze’s much earlier text when he remarks that “[T]he truths that intelligence grasps directly in the open light of day have something less profound, less necessary about them than those that life has communicated to us in spite of ourselves in an impression, a material impression because it has reached us through our senses” (PS, 2000, pp. 95-96). Clearly for Deleuze and Guattari, the

conceptualization of truth is much more amorphous in nature than that which is typically applauded in education. It is also more closely aligned with process than with specific outcomes measured by knowledge acquired, and to a search for the conditions of thought rather than a product judged by its accordance with transcendent [T]ruths imparted from outside the immanence of experience. Problems that are well made retain a consistency to their virtual composition and are not exhausted by their solutions; for Deleuze problems insist and persist in solutions. Also important to any discussion of learning through problems are what makes for “bad problems ... which are only the image of a problem but which have been answered already from the outset” (Dern-Sisco, 2016, 10).

In contrast, Deleuze turns his attention away from knowledge and Truth as the impetus for learning, and toward the creative potential in the act of thinking, both conscious and unconscious, of problems: “Learning is the appropriate name for the subjective acts carried out when one is confronted with the objectivity of a problem (Idea), whereas knowledge designates only the generality of concepts or the calm possession of a rule enabling solutions” (DR, 164). Such a framing of knowledge echoes philosophical expressions of essentialism, defined by necessary and sufficient conditions, which are commonly utilized in many disciplines today, including law through judicial court rulings based on pre-defined *tests* and of course education in the form of assessment rubrics. Expanding on this further, Deleuze offers a particularly cogent delineation of these two images of thought:

In fact, the Idea [Problem] is not the element of knowledge but that of an infinite 'learning', which is of a different nature to knowledge. For learning evolves entirely in the comprehension of problems as such, in the apprehension and condensation of singularities and in the composition of ideal events and bodies...To what are we dedicated if not to those problems which demand the very transformation of our body and our language? In short, representation and knowledge are modelled entirely upon propositions of consciousness which designate cases of solution, but those propositions by themselves give a completely inaccurate notion of the instance which engenders them as cases, and which they resolve or conclude. By contrast, the Idea and 'learning' express that extra-propositional or subrepresentative problematic instance: the presentation of the unconscious, not the representation of consciousness. (DR, 192)

Once again, we recognize that the concept of problems for Deleuze and Guattari differs dramatically from what is generally understood in education. They are emphatic to the point of satirizing the prominent model of classroom calls and responses: “as the creation of thought, a problem has nothing to do with a question, which is only a suspended proposition, the bloodless double of an affirmative proposition that is supposed to serve as its answer (“Who is the author of *Waverley*?” “Is Scott the author of *Waverley*?”)” (WIP, 139). In so far as common sense or the ‘dogmatic image of thought’ hinders our ability to look further or think differently, as Bryant contends, “The failure to see that sense or the problem is extra-propositional, that it differs in kind from every proposition, leads us to miss the essential: the genesis of the act of thought, the operation of the faculties” (2007). Suggesting instead that problems are ‘synonymous’ with ‘ideas’ or ‘multiplicities’, Bryant characterizes a problem as “a field of differential relations and their accompanying singularities or potentialities” (2007). Audrey Wasser adds that “problems are determined neither subjectively nor privatively, so that they would mark an insufficiency in knowledge, but that problems belong to thought as transformative moments in the act of learning” (50). Therefore, she notes, “[A] view of problems as ready-made neutralises the activity of thought in problem-formation. Moreover, it masks the degree to which problems are determined within already existing fields of relations.... an impoverished view of problems turns the activity of thinking into a neutral game of question and answer (2017, 63)

Deleuze emphasizes the fact that problems begin well before something is ‘posed’ as a problem by the subject: “This prejudice goes back to the childhood, to the classroom: It is the schoolteacher who ‘poses’ the problems; the pupil’s task is to discover the solutions. In this way we are kept in a kind of slavery. True freedom lies in the power to decide, to constitute problems themselves” (B, 15). Furthermore, it is important to realize that for Deleuze, “It is signs which ‘cause problems’” (DR, 164). But as discussed earlier, following his emphasis on both violence and chance as characterizing the instigation of thinking through signs, Deleuze asks rhetorically, “On the basis of which signs within sensibility, by which treasures of the memory, under torsions determined by the singularities of which Idea will thought be

aroused?" (165). To which he answers emphatically, "We never know in advance how someone will learn: by means of what loves someone becomes good at Latin, what encounters make them a philosopher, or in what dictionaries they learn to think. The limits of the faculties are encased one in the other in the broken shape of that which bears and transmits difference" (165).

A mind-body attending to problems is simultaneously engaged in creative solutions, albeit solutions unlike those we associate with truths or definitive answers. For Deleuze, thinking conceptually understood as thinking, is oriented towards virtual problems with multiple possible solutions creatively actualizing:

[P]roblems and questions must no longer be traced from corresponding propositions which serve, or can serve, as responses. We know the agent of this illusion: it is interrogation which, within the framework of a community, dismembers problems and questions, and reconstitutes them in accordance with the propositions of the common empirical consciousness— in other words, according to the probable truths of simple doxa... The failure to see that sense or the problem is extra-propositional, that it differs in kind from every proposition, leads us to miss the essential: the genesis of the act of thought, the operation of the faculties. (DR, 157)

As an interesting side note, the work of Merim Bilalić et.al. (2008a, 2008b, 2010) appears to add further grounds for Deleuze's critique under the umbrella of the 'Einstellung effect,' a phenomenon which is traced back at least as far as Francis Bacon in 1620, who observed "the unfortunate human tendency to ignore new evidence which could undermine a firmly held opinion" (2010, 111). They describe the Einstellung effect as a "fixation of thought produced by prior experience" (111) and present it as one of the dangers we face in deferring to experts opinion as well as the bias we bring to every day problems and solutions. In a similar manner, but from a distinctly Deleuzian theoretical background, Bryant emphasizes that in the context of education,

[T]he classroom becomes a battle ground where one must perpetually be aware of the commonplaces that haunt the social unconscious, and where techniques are used to combat these commonplaces, to disrupt these commonplaces, so an encounter with the problem might take place at all. These commonplaces are so many resistances to thought: 'All is opinion!' 'People might think differently!' 'Knowledge is what we're

taught!' etc. It becomes necessary to creatively pre-empt the commonplace so an encounter with thought might take place. Error, it seems, is the domain of petty administrators and bureaucrats who are unable to think beyond properly filled out forms and who have scarce conception of what takes place in a classroom. (2007)

The 'creative pre-empting' within a 'pedagogy of problems' as Bryant (2007) refers to it, poses an approach to thinking which appears to address the issues of the model based on 'knowledge' as well as phenomena that go with it, such as the previously identified Einstellung effect. In liberating thinking from representational thinking and a priori targets of thought, a pedagogy based on the circulation of problems opens the individual to the outside of thought and the potential for further becoming.

This conceptualization of learning strives for something more demanding than the pursuit of knowledge and truth through recognizable, text-book ready exposition. For as Bogue points out, "Learning and problems belong to the domain of the virtual, whereas knowledge and solutions belong to the separate domain of the actual; and learning is a matter of opening thought to the virtual domain of problems, which has its own autonomous existence, not a matter of solving specific questions and securing a permanent body of knowledge" (2004, 336). And as Bryant suggests, the 'process of individuation' reflects the "the movement from problems to solutions" (2007). In fact, he explains that for Deleuze, a problem, "is synonymous with what he refers to as Ideas or Multiplicities. That is, a problem is a field of differential relations and their accompanying singularities or potentialities...we are not to understand problems as negative entities or mental entities, but as properly ontological instances presiding over the process of individuation" (2007) Echoing Deleuze's reference to 'affective tones' derived from the encounter with the unknown, as cited earlier, Posteraro, suggests that,

everything needs to be reoriented around the problem, but only once the problem is itself rethought in terms of the differential relation. Ideas are the site for the genesis of thought: they are virtual, composed of differential relations that awaken the faculties, forcing thought to think and the thinker to learn. Encounters are contingent; they lack a method. We never know in advance which encounters will force us to think or in which affective tones those encounters will resonate. (2015, 459)

While our subjective 'I', might sense a grappling with the 'affective tones' of a disturbance, these again are but actualized affections conditioned by events in the virtual, prior to any subjective or personal designation. As Colebrook explains,

[T]he power of life – all life and not just human life –was its power to develop problems. Life poses problems – not just to thinking beings, but to all life. Organisms, cells, machines and sound waves are all responses to the complication or 'problematizing' force of life. The questions of philosophy, art and science are extensions of the questioning power of life, a power that is also expressed in smaller organisms and their tendency to evolve, mutate and become. (Colebrook, 2002a, 1)

Perhaps the most elaborate of the illustrations Deleuze offers which might suggest what such a model of education – a pedagogy of problems – might look like, is the one he returns to numerous times: learning to swim. The opening of the passage, Bryant suggests, "contains, in larval or fractal form, the whole of Deleuze's thought" (2007). Deleuze explains that,

To learn to swim is to conjugate the distinctive points of our bodies with the singular points of the objective Idea in order to form a problematic field. This conjugation determines for us a threshold of consciousness at which our real acts are adjusted to our perceptions of the real relations, thereby providing a solution to the problem. Moreover, problematic Ideas are precisely the ultimate elements of nature and the subliminal objects of little perceptions. As a result, 'learning' always takes place in and through the unconscious, thereby establishing the bond of a profound complicity between nature and mind. (DR, 165)

Recalling the earlier discussion regarding flows of differentiation and differentiation, movements between the virtual and the actual, Deleuze points to the complexity of learning that crosses back and forth between conscious or 'subconscious' awareness and unconscious processes. In other words, as Bogue describes it,

Through contact with the sea, then, the singular points which are incarnate in the swimmer's body are conjoined with the singular points embodied in the sea, and the complex of singular points belonging to swimmer and sea together form a virtual, problematic field. The swimmer, of course, possesses an actual body, the sea has an actual material existence, and the swimmer learns to interact with actual waves. (2004, 336)

As Deleuze states, “Problems and their symbolic fields stand in a relationship with signs. It is signs which ‘cause problems’” (DR, 165). Problems, in the unconscious are directly related to the charge of signs at the level of awareness, albeit an awareness that lacks clarity but demands attention. Continuing, he explains that,

These are two aspects of an essential apprenticeship or process of learning. For, on the one hand, an apprenticeship is someone who constitutes and occupies practical or speculative problems as such. Learning is the appropriate name for the subjective acts carried out when one is confronted with the objectivity of a problem (Idea), whereas knowledge designates only the generality of concepts or the calm possession of a rule enabling solutions.” (164).

Though Deleuze’s language is marked by ambiguity, we might find here the allusion to the two models of learning identified at the beginning of this section. We might argue that the difference here is simply that between knowing what and knowing how. But in fact, a closer look would suggest that all becoming, the change at the core of learning, passes through the virtual problem field. Even if we ‘know’ about some phenomenon, for that knowledge to truly affect our being or subjectivity, it must pass through some aspect of the apprenticeship to which Deleuze refers as a direct encounter with signs. Otherwise the knowledge remains remote, static and impotent serving little more than a rote answer—proposition – in response to a test question. Though there is no doubt some value or application to this latter body of learning – in what Deleuze admits to as ‘rule enabling solutions’ these serve the necessary habits of daily survival and existence, the often banal demands of daily existence... how to cook, for example. But they do not yield the kind of shifts in body experience that come from a generative force of passive vitality, solutions actualized from grappling with the forces of a problem field. Or as Deleuze concludes,

To learn is to enter into the universal of the relations which constitute the Idea [Problem-Multiplicity], and into their corresponding singularities. The idea of the sea, for example, as Leibniz showed, is a system of liaisons or differential relations between particulars and singularities corresponding to degrees of variation among these relations– the totality of the system being incarnated in the real movement of the waves. (DR, 165)

Deleuze’s choice of the example of learning to swim seems especially appropriate in that it describes a literal ‘immersion’ into which a student-apprentice enters into a field of “relations which constitute an idea” – a problem – otherwise referred to as a ‘system’ of ‘differential

relations.’ As Bogue explains, “One may say that the problem of the sea in general, its universal problem, is that of differential relations between dynamically interacting water particles, and that the problem's singular points are the nadir and apex of diverse potential wave functions. Each concrete, physical wave is an actualization of one particular set of singular points, and the whole of the sea is an embodiment of the system of differential relations that constitute the problem of the sea” (2004, 336). Understood as a problem, the example of the sea might be compared in many ways to a student’s immersion into a text. In that case, the encounter, unlike that between a subject and an object as it is often characterized, becomes a single extended body, as described earlier. And the liaisons between the organism of the student and the organism of the text become a ‘system of liaisons’ with certain touch points, singularities, or moments of conscious or subconscious contact, allowing the student to ‘float’ or move through the text, as she/he gains familiarity with and follows the direction the signs appear to point, knowing that any number of articulations – solutions – might unfold in the process. As Bogue clarifies,

Consciousness, however, does not afford us direct access to problems and their singular points. Consciousness operates via good will, good sense and common sense, all of which distort difference and reinforce an interpretation of the world in terms of ready-made questions and pre-existing solutions. Only through an involuntary confrontation with something other does thought engage difference, and that which provokes the thought of difference is a sign. (336)

What does this imply for teaching? Bryant concludes that, "A genuine pedagogy would thus be a pedagogy of problems, rather than the recitation of solutions...it would be a pedagogy of creative individuation, where one is thrown into a problematic field and comes out the other side as a different subject" (2007). And in thinking about education in this way, inquiry shifts from “questions of whether or not the world is faithfully represented ... to questions of how encounters stimulate learning through the arousal or coalescing of problems” (2007).

The example of learning to swim is more than simply a pedagogy of problems, however. Anyone who recalls their first encounter with deep water, let alone moving water such as that found in the ocean, would not hesitate to call this an understatement. In its most visceral

sense, it truly harkens back to the language of violence – hence the more aptly name ‘pedagogy of disturbance.’ In a later section, Deleuze applies much more graphic imagery when he says that “Learning to swim or learning a foreign language means composing the singular points of one's own body or one's own language with those of another shape or element, which tears us apart but also propels us into a hitherto unknown and unheard-of world of problems” (DR, 192). Once immersed, it is difficult to escape from the pull of the ‘field,’ for experiencing the force and sway of the problem. As Bryant points out,

[T]he real challenge in teaching philosophy, the social sciences, and literature classes, even in teaching the sciences and mathematics, consists not in coaxing the students to get the ‘right answers’ (here I have a little less faith in my social science colleagues, who seem to ‘teach from the book’ and focus on bold print definitions), but rather to properly formulate problems and questions... and whether singular points are properly distinguished from ordinary points. (2007, my emphasis)

In other words, ‘points,’ such as those described above, which mark events of disturbance or violence to thought, and open thinking to pure difference. These are entries into thinking the outside of representation. Whether learning to swim or learning through the encounter with literature, both point to shifts within the body which, given the virtual nature of the process, may or may not actualize into a conscious ‘response’ in the form of an essay or short answer offered in a class discussion or quiz. And what does, is more likely an escape, relief or reprieve from the body’s struggle within the problem field to default to a response desired or acceptable within the ‘official’ or legislated demands of the school system – in the language of representation. This in turn has the rebound effect of, in many cases, dulling or prematurely terminating the learning actually taking place. An escape from learning with unfortunate consequences.

In contrast, we might think of either teaching or learning as a process of generating problems that demand and actualize new ways of ‘swimming’ without drowning. As Bryant explains:

Is not learning to undergo unheard of individuations? In the process of learning the very nature of my way of experiencing world and self are transformed, and my perception is transformed. Learning is not, as the bureaucrats of education would claim, the mere acquisition of information, it is not as the accountability movement believes, memorization, but is rather the co-production of subjects and objects that did not hitherto exist. (2007)

For teachers, this implies a double task. “[T]he pedagogy of signs entails first,” Bogue suggests, “a critique of codes and conventions, an undoing of orthodox connections” (2004, 341). This no doubt entails disrupting the habitual reliance on question-and-answer protocols. At the same time, he suggests, we ought to attempt “a reconnection of elements such that the gaps between them generate problems, fields of differential relations and singular points. Such teaching, however, is itself a form of learning, for it proceeds via an encounter with signs and an engagement with problems (341).

In keeping in mind Deleuze’s claim that “Truth depends on an encounter with something that forces us to think” (2000, 16), my premise going forward is that such encounters are made more likely through certain texts... texts which act like ocean waves, forcing moments of individuation through points of contact with singularities. And though students may experience the discomfort of infinite learning, their flailing will hardly be without merit. With a specific nod to literature, Bryant asks,

[W]hat is a seminar in a literature class if not the discovery of the problem of reading? From what perspective, for instance, does Descartes’ Meditations “come alive” as a solution to a problem? How can this problem be revitalized for my students here, today? And, of course, a pedagogy of problems, a problem based pedagogy, is the production of freedom, for in excavating the problematic field from which a text emerges, we are simultaneously open to other solutions, other individuations. Silverware is just one solution to getting food to one’s mouth. (2007)

But how, then, do we avoid either the demand for or the enticement of the orthodox image of education that is so often put before us – “the allure of not-thinking” (Colebrook, 2008, 36). In our current institution, everything appears to point in that direction. In part, it is perhaps the comfort of knowing what we must learn, of being able to size it up with clarity, measure it with precision and accuracy, and knowing when it is finally known ... a comfort shared by student and teacher. Sadly, it is also a false measure of progress demanded by and sold to parents and institutions. And ultimately, in an age of neo-liberal and late capitalist values, it is easier to package, commodify and direct to the job market.

Perhaps, a deeper awareness, if not complete understanding of thinking, problems and signs that Deleuze challenges us with provides the impetus to reconsider how we might disrupt and reconsider the common-sense understandings of the concepts of ‘education,’ and ‘learning.’ Through both the critique of ‘doxa’ — doxological images of thought—as well as the compelling case for the untamed outside of thought, it is perhaps possible to re-imagine an alternative pedagogy in the context of the English Language Arts class.

Colebrook points to what she calls the “two sides of empiricism” that literature opens: “On the one hand it presents the affects that go to make up larger forms” (2002a, 85). These, she suggests, points to the representational concepts Deleuze critiques. As she argues, “There is a critical strand in Austen, for example, which displays how the feminine has been assembled from frivolity, sensualism, mindlessness and false ideas of romance” (85). Many teachers of literature will recognize this as the exercise often demanded of students when they are asked to identify the ‘theme(s)’ of a work. “On the other hand,” she suggests, “literature goes beyond the presentation of diverse affects to the positive organisation of those affects into ideas” [2002a, 85-86]. As discussed earlier, Deleuze refers to ideas and problems more-or-less synonymously, both of which point to the dynamic and non-representational element of literature to initiate a search....one that engages thinking and following the nudge (violent though it may be) of signs. The ethical basis of this ‘other’ side of empiricism becomes readily apparent as once again, Colebrook reminds us of the responsibility to ‘a life’ beyond the defined and boundaried subjectivity of the reader:

Fiction and imagination is part of the very production of life. We produce ideas of the self, of society and of institutions such as justice or democracy. In its legitimate form such productions are immanent; we recognise them as produced fictions for the sake of life. In its illegitimate form such productions become transcendent; we think we should obey or recognise the idea of society, justice or democracy, which supposedly governs our experience. Literature is one of the sites in which such ideas can be displayed as fictions...Fiction is at the heart of empiricism because it exposes the productions and extensions of ideas from their affective components. (2002a, 85-86)

Aware of these two sides of literature, as two possible directions an encounter might take in the classroom, there is a clear pedagogical (and ethical) challenge that faces both teacher and student. Bogue concludes that,

[T]he goal of teaching and learning is to think otherwise, to engage the force of that which is other, different and new. What Deleuze details in his accounts of learning and teaching is that dimension of education that inspires all true students and teachers, the dimension of discovery and creation within the ever-unfolding domain of the new. It is also the dimension of freedom, in which thought escapes its preconceptions and explores new possibilities for life. (2004, 341)

Recently coming from a new, and somewhat experimental, theatrical production, I asked my partner what she thought of it. She responded, rather disconcertedly, “I don’t know. I haven’t put it together?” More typically, “putting it together,” “getting it”, or “understanding it,” would be a sign of success in education. But seen through Deleuze’s discussions of what is or isn’t thinking, it now appears to be tantamount to abject failure, at least in terms of ‘thinking’ or, as I have discussed in this section, in terms of learning. When we look for signs of ‘understanding’ or ‘getting it’ or worse yet, when we ask students to provide their essays telling us what they think something is about, what we are doing is asking them to freeze the work into a single categorization into an accepted representational model. Our question should not be whether a student *gets it* but rather, how can we create and hold the space of not *getting it*. “Why,” asks Colebrook, “would we spend two hours in the cinema watching a film if all we wanted were the story or the moral message?” (2002a, 24-25), echoing a response I have offered to many a student who repeatedly asks, “Why didn’t he just say that!”

With regard to my present dissertation, it is the disturbing excess embedded in literature that creates the possibilities of escaping representation, that creates problems as Deleuze understands them: internal, virtual, or breaking into the actual as felt discomfort, not yet named or understood emotionally or cognitively. Something that simply doesn’t sit right and continues to gnaw in moments of continued reflection. Either such problems – signs -- are ignored or they are investigated further. As an artist, returning again and again to an indefinable or ineffable problem. And as a reader, returning again and again to a sign: repetition with difference. For as Jagodzinski explains,

Deleuze tells us that art is simulacra. As mere appearances or artifice they act as 'signs.' Art forces us to think. Art appears as a 'problem' that is generative of an Idea, Idea written with a capital 'I' refers to a transcendental virtual realm of differences. A work of

art is an encounter with difference instead of a recognition of the same; as an assemblage it deterritorializes, and (for Deleuze) works against clichés (Deleuze, 2003, p.63). Rather than art being a question of recognition, it should be a question of an encounter as to what it 'is'?" (2014a, 5)

And if it is, as Deleuze reminds us, a ‘fortuitous’ encounter, then it is one that haunts us, in the best way possible, with these questions over and over and over. Perhaps the best definition of a great work we might imagine. Such an understanding of thought and the unthought, one that ultimately ‘disturbs’ doxa and habit, helps to inform how we might take up the practice of working with literature in the classroom. Far from considering it or any work of art as a vehicle to transfer knowledge, as per Freire’s ‘banking’ metaphor, Deleuze and Guattari would no doubt conceptualize literature as a form of art which punctures assumptions and forces new questions...new thinking. Reiterating the primary emphasis of this section, Colebrook, in unison with Bryant emphasizes that “Education is not just the communication of content, the transfer of information, but is inextricably tied with the force and affect of the way in which the self passes beyond itself to what it comes to know” (2008, 35). But what, Colebrook asks, is it that the student comes to know? “[T]he ‘leading out’ of the soul has to exceed the soul of the enclosed human subject” (35).

In summation, Springgay provides a rather poignant digest of the view of learning and education established thus far:

Thinking about pedagogy from a Deleuzian/Guattarian agenda is thus a political and ethical framework; a thinking outside the boundaries of epistemological, Cartesian thought. An affective or sensational pedagogy is a pedagogy of encounters that engender movement, duration, force, and intensity, rather than a semiotic regime of signification and representation. Moreover, “the sign” in Deleuzian thought is aesthetic and not dependent on recognition. Rather it operates as force. Thus, the pedagogical encounter becomes an event of sensation, a “processural creativity” (Guattari, 1995, p. 13), and thus an alternative to universal reductionism. (2011, 78)

Springgay’s reference to the political provides a natural segue to my third and final element of disturbance I wish to discuss. And one that, should it not have been clear up to this point, asserts a clear shift from the individualism of the most dominant or majoritarian paradigm of education in the West.

Chapter 4: Disturbance as Political

While disturbance of affect and disturbance of thinking both reflect the ‘what’ of education, my turn to disturbance of assemblage addresses the question at the heart of this work: why? As Sholl observes, “if the philosophy of difference advocates nothing more than the continual reproduction of novelty – stating *that* change occurs but not addressing *how* it occurs – then it would seem to be of little help for understanding how and why to do anything in the world” (2012, 545, original emphasis). Or as May states so succinctly: “The task is not merely to think the world differently, but to live it differently” (2005, 16). In other words, none of what has been discussed so far in the relation to disturbance matters if we don’t consider potential consequences. In brief, disturbance as political addresses not only the question of why education matters, but more specifically, the question of why literature matters in education.

Accepting that literature offers a potential source of affect[ive] materiality as an art work, and likewise, a source of problems and thinking, then disturbance as political should be an expected consequence. But with much of the Western paradigm of education weighted by the untenable artifices of individualism –personal achievement, personal success and getting ahead [of others] – it should come as no surprise, that of the many volumes expounding the virtues of reading for the sake of reading, very few have deigned to address the social and political, particularly in the field of pedagogy. As mentioned earlier, in spite of the numerous claims that reading has intrinsic value, and that it doesn’t matter what students read, so long as they read, I have found little in my own experience to support such claims. Though this argument is grounded in the previous discussions of affects and thinking, it should be very clear by the end of this section, that what students read considerably impacts the very nature of their subjectivities, their relationship with others, and the ecology of and for *a life*.

The dominant individualist perspectives that saturate Euro-Western models of education, include numerous layers and regimes of assessment, celebration of student-centred instruction, and disproportionate emphases on knowledge acquisition over relationship skills. In a

predominantly capitalistic and neo-liberal environment, it centres not on the success of the collective, but that of the individual: competitive edge, competencies and credentialing, fitting into the instrumentalist mechanics and logic of a life-span largely shaped by the ebbs and flows of jobs, income and 'edge' materialism. And even when it talks about group success, it is often framed in the language of advantage over some other group (school, city, province, nation). All of which serves to reinforce artificial divisions between an 'us' and a 'them.' And all of which is seemingly ignorant or unaware of the much more intrinsic matters of ethical wellness in the face of social and environment collapse.

Against a context of individualism, my own concerns remain focused on the social: the collective, communal, and relational threads that connect the one with the many in a profound sense of universal belonging. Without relying on the personal gains of health and wellness, healthy [and pluralistic] social connections are necessary for a unified and unselfish response to the problems of our world, which now require a collective, collaborative and cooperative response across the planet. To echo earlier comments, I come to this work, first and foremost with an interest in social justice, understanding the implications of student belonging or lack of belonging, and the question of what, if anything, schools might offer to contribute to a species which is more inclined to treat each other, as well as other living organisms, with compassion.

As such, this study centres on a rather obvious central paradox: that disturbance of a type difficult, if not impossible, to predict, can potentially 'actualize' into both an attitude and an inclination towards the other – the intensive and extensive minority – that is characterized by qualities of immanent or affective compassion. This focus on compassion, as opposed to empathy (which is perhaps much more popular in the discourse around education and literature) is intentional. Consistent with the productiveness of desiring forces, I am distinguishing here between what is often the more limited, more passive, and sometimes dangerous limitations of empathy, with the broader, more active and more erotically engrained concept of compassion. While the former is constrained or subjugated to a relationality with ingroup members, the latter is more expansive in both range and effect as it crosses all borders.

As Lawrence Grossberg emphasizes, speaking of the entire field of 'cultural studies' in which literary studies is often positioned,

It starts with an assumption of relationality, which it shares with other projects and formations, but it takes relationality to imply, or more accurately, to be equivalent to, the apparently more radical claim of contextuality: that the identity, significance, and effects of any practice or event (including cultural practices and events) are defined only by the complex set of relations that surround, interpenetrate, and shape it, and make it what it is. No element can be isolated from its relations, although those relationships can be changed, and are constantly changing. Any event can only be understood relationally, as a condensation of multiple determinations and effects. (2010, 20)

In suggesting that this focus is one which addresses itself to the question of "how one might live," May emphasizes that we do not live alone and that thinking and learning differently must take into account our surroundings: "The challenge facing the thought of difference is not only to think the vital difference that is the unfolding of being but also to think the political world in which that thought takes place"(2005, 16). In other words, the question is not simply how one might live, but, 'how one might live among others, including the nonhuman and the inhuman?' I would suggest that it is the persistence of the individualist image of thought in education that demands attention to a pedagogy of disturbance which is centered in a collective image of the body. Unfortunately, as David Savat and Greg Thompson argue in their own work, "the ethic of critique of individualism that is at the heart of their project is rarely embraced" (2015, 278), a reminder of just how engrained this 'common-sense' image of thought remains.

From such a perspective, responses to how or why literature matters are clearly dependent on and largely determined within a wider ecology to which it is exposed ... what Spinoza refers to as an ethology. As with other concepts, an immanent accounting for relationships takes on a much more profound level of understanding which recognizes difference, the flow of desire and heterogenous affects at the molecular level. With this in mind, it is interesting that Smith and Protevi suggest that: "In considering *Anti-Oedipus*, we should first discuss its performative effect, which attempts to 'force us to think,' that is, to fight against a tendency to cliché" (2018). In terms of affect and non-representational thinking, perhaps more than anything else they wrote, this work provides the perfect example of an experiment in their philosophy.

Building on the previous chapters, which largely focused on Deleuze's solo work, the political philosophy of Deleuze and Guattari is, not surprisingly, focused on micropolitics. In contrast to the tradition of political studies, with its focus on the world, the state and the individual as basic units of consideration, all clearly delineated and representational, a micropolitics considers the molecular forces at work to create the unconscious prior to but conditioning the actualizations of individuals and groups. May explains that whereas 'traditional' political thought "can only reflect upon the identities it sees as eternal: the state, the nation, the economy, the military, and behind them all, the individual" (2005, 129), a micropolitics assumes "a world of difference." In this case, "the individual, the state, the economy would be particular actualizations of a difference that need not be actualized in these particular ways, or that may be actualized in these ways but in many different ones as well (2005, 129). A politics of immanent difference not only affirms the possibility of change but allows us to accept change as inevitable and something which educators in particular must bear in mind.

Likewise, Williams, (2016, 153) suggests that unlike traditional political analysis which centres on conflicting positions and perspectives, including left and right positions on the spectrum, distribution of finite resources and, "representation of majority and minority voices," the 'lens of micropolitics,' recognizes that "difference or conflict is prior to these traditional approaches; it is a condition for them" (2016, 153). Examples such as those Williams offers – "a crumbling sweatshop, in which fleeing workers are confronted by locked fire doors" or "destitute migrants living in vast camps on the borders of our nations, alongside debates about true and false belonging" (153) – require an understanding that extends beyond common discourse which, as mentioned already, is typically characterized by the dogmatic image of thought and mired in rigid categorizations of identity and representation. For Deleuze and Guattari, the focus of political thought must include closer analyses of forces, affects and connections that work at the level of the virtual if we are to understand the *differences* or conflicts at the macro level.

A politics of immanence as provoked by the work of Deleuze and Guattari is, as May points out, in stark contrast to the dominant image of politics framed within the Western paradigm of

liberal thinking. Hence, while in the previous section I emphasized a departure from the representational and transcendental images of thought and learning, this same tension arises once again in the political realm. Though liberal politics may be an advance over previous forms³ it is, as May argues, “precisely the dogmatic image translated into political terms” (120), particularly in its focus on identities and representation. May continues:

No wonder the threat to politics is so often called anarchy, by which is meant chaos, by which is meant instability and disorder. Politics is a matter of stability, of the stable representation of given individual interests by means of a government that considers and balances those interests in the public realm. (2005,120)

Though not often stated so explicitly, a government committed to liberal foundations is committed to a notion of the individual which, within the Spinoza inspired ontology of Deleuze and Guattari (not to mention much of post-modern thought), is largely fictional. But not only is the individual front and centre in liberalism, it is an individual of a given identity that is addressed in policies covering a range of issues, from who is represented and who can vote to who does or doesn't belong in my community or in my circle of friends. Identity becomes central both for individuals or groups who speak on behalf of others appealing for specific rights and privileges on the basis of their identities as well as for the government who imposes identity boundaries in the granting of certain rights and privileges. Such, for example, is the case with Canada's existing *Indian Act* and the many new categories of identity initiated and maintained as the legacy of colonization. So long as everyone fits perfectly in the boxes defined by legislated and legal frameworks, there is relative stability, but only until such time as an outlier is either identified by others or themselves as not fitting or being 'recognized' by designated categories.

The political as we observe it unfolding in the news, in conflict zones here and abroad, and in school hallways, are all, according to the theories introduced so far, productions or actualizations of the micro prior to the macro: at the virtual and pre-subjective level of the

³ Though this, too, is debatable, as Deleuze and Guattari make clear in a later passage of ATP that suggests certain so-called primitive forms sought to ward of 'state' formation (ATP, 357-359).

extended body. But cause and effect are always entangled and never determinate. And as 'conflict' unfolds in the actual, the forces are in continuous movement in the virtual. Or as Colebrook states, "Thinking is desire, an approach to what is other that is also affected by what is other. In striving to enhance itself all life engages with what is other than itself, and each engagement produces a singular relation, altering knower and known" (Colebrook, 2008a, 36).

Such entanglement is perhaps why there is a necessary back and forth movement in these discussions between the micro and the macro. Micro because without it there is no way of understanding the forces that construct the macro. And macro because there seems no other way of conveying the crucial importance of the micro without references to implications in what appears in the actual world surrounding us as students, teachers and members of the human species. Foremost of these is the concern of belonging and 'us'- 'them' divisions across the political spectrum. As Albrecht-Crane and Slack explain,

The social space of the classroom is a rich and complex arena in which much more happens than is generally acknowledged. What happens in the classroom, its 'thisness', often exceeds what is perceived as the 'task at hand' and engulfs teachers and students in spaces of 'affect' in ways that matter in the politics of everyday life. This is not just a space of learning but a political space where social beings interact with implications in larger political and cultural struggles. (2007, 214)

In response to the question, "What might living together consist of?" May suggests that "Deleuze and Guattari's machinic political approach allows us to open that question from different angles, to see different connections being made at different levels"(2005, 132). Against the common concerns of most liberal democracies, "Rather than taking it for granted that there are particular individuals with particular needs or lacks that the engagement in politics seeks to fill, political living might consist in the creation of connections among and within various actualized levels of difference" (2005, 132). As such, Deleuze and Guattari's political philosophy is very much a philosophy of affirmation, albeit not without a focus on wrestling against certain forces of inertia, repression and resistance as will soon become clear. Considered from the perspective of affirmation and building on earlier discussions of affective relations, the political question becomes "What connections might we form?" (133), which is

not, of course, limited to those which are human. This begins to address the notion of relationality at the heart of a political consideration of education and literature, but also, from a micro level, the issues of social justice, equity and conflict already raised. Notably, May reminds us that, from a micropolitical perspective, there is no longer an I:

the “we” of the questions is not a given we. It can be a group. It can be an individual. It can be an ecosystem or a pre-individual part or a cross-section within an environment or a geographical slice. What makes it a “we” is not the stability of an identity. It is the participation in the formation of connections. (2005, 133)

The ‘we’ that May proposes infers the heterogenous multiplicities that come together, through various ‘arrangements’ to comprise the virtual. This extended body, as suggested previously, is referenced throughout Deleuze and Guattari’s collaborative work through their conceptualization of the assemblage. Ultimately, my goal in this section is to explore how the disturbance of the political is a disturbance of the assemblage. For if there is a why behind the inclusion of literature in the curriculum, the answer, I believe, lies here.

Literature as Machine

Though some have suggested that the concept of assemblage, developed in *A Thousand Plateaus* replaces that of ‘desiring machines’ from *Anti-Oedipus* (Bryant, 2009), considering how often the two are still widely used, and sometimes combined as in references to machinic assemblages, there is at least some connotational value in considering them as similar but separate. I begin then, with a brief discussion of ‘machines,’ which I deem especially pertinent to my own preference, following their lead, to refer to the book as a literary machine.

As John Krejsler explains, “the theoretical concept of the machine signifies a fluent and flexible device that, in a very real sense, is defined by the relationships that it is able to create and maintain, at any given time” (2016, 1481). Like the assemblage, “the machine creates, and is simultaneously created as, an expression of the material elements (artifacts, architecture, bodies, actions, and passions) and collective expressive elements (characters, symbols, declarations, new terminology, and concepts) that it is able to effectively seize” (1481). Unlike a mechanism or even an organism, the machine “has no final or bounded form; it is pure

production in and for itself without governing intention” (Colebrook, 2002b, 122). In Deleuze and Guattari’s own words,

A machine may be defined as a system of interruptions or breaks (coupures). These breaks should in no way be considered as a separation from reality; rather, they operate along lines that vary according to whatever aspect of them we are considering. Every machine, in the first place, is related to a continual material flow (hyle) that it cuts into. (AO, 36)

The examples they provide often include, likely intentionally, those which Freud incorporated into the system of psychoanalysis. The breast, the mouth, the anus all serve as examples of machines which function, as they say, “like a ham-slicing machine, removing portions from the associative flow” (AO, 36). But as a system, machines are plugged into other machines often in both serial and parallel, or partial, formations, such as the maternal image of the mouth to the breast, but also to “air or sound” (36).

May suggests that liberal political theory’s reliance on the individual, “forces [analysis] to approach politics mechanistically” limited to “the relations of individuals to society” (123). In contrast, drawing from Deleuze and Guattari’s definition of machines, to think politics machinically, “is to consider the relation of individuals to society” (124). Ultimately, what distinguishes the ‘assemblage’ as so foundational to a political consideration of education is also what distinguishes Deleuze and Guattari’s political thought from theories such as liberalism is that it allows for a much wider and more immanent consideration of relationships that precede the individual and can incorporate reality and movements at the micro level that precede that language of representation and identity.

While individuals and identities in the liberal tradition are ‘pre-given,’ including the specific interests by which they announce themselves, machinic thinking considers the various components – machines – that precede and comprise the ‘individual’ that is actualized as a subject figure. May argues that “If the individual is the central political concept of the dogmatic image of thought, then the machine can stand as a central political concept of the new form of thought Deleuze develops” (125). He also points to three characteristics of Deleuze’s ‘general ontology’ which he believes are imported into their collective work. The first is that, as opposed

to mechanisms “machines are mobile producers of connections. They are not reducible to any one set of connections, any particular identity” (125). Machines are therefore always subject to rewiring or being connected in different ways to create different flows, products or functions. One of the examples Colebrook builds on, borrowing from *Anti-Oedipus* (9), is the bicycle, which, though usually ‘represented’ as a mode of transportation and therefore limiting our ability to imagine otherwise, if we connected it to the machine of the human body it could just as easily work as a cement mixer, a generator or any number of possibilities not yet imagined because we’ve learned to only see it as one thing: “we could imagine different connections producing different machines. The cycle becomes an art object when placed in a gallery; the human body becomes an ‘artist’ when connected with a paintbrush.” (2002a, 56).

This leads directly to the second characteristic, that machines “are not reducible to their actual connections” and that “there is a virtuality to machines that inheres in any set of actual connections and that allows them to connect in other and often novel ways” (125). It is the virtual nature of connections that often drive the imagination, interpretation, and ultimate use of the object. How an actualized machine is considered depends on the many other machines to which it is connected. A red corvette might be a sign of great power, great freedom, great exhilaration. Or it might just as easily be viewed as capitalists excess, a killing machine, and considerable conflict. Likewise, considered as a machine with various virtual connections, a work of literature might produce feelings of disgust, of awe, of confusion or ... of compassion... as it connects to different memories and different social ideas in different students which produce vastly different affective reactions. What signs will shock and cause problems and thinking is always dependent on the other machines connected in the encounter.

Finally, related to this is the third characteristic which insists that machines be considered through their immanent connections and flows: “There is no such thing as a machine outside of its connections. It is within their connections, and perhaps sometimes through them, that machines are capable of producing other connections” (126). Once again, we might imagine numerous examples within the context of education. From just beyond the institution, we can

imagine the kinds of connections that were necessary (or not) in producing the so-called 'educated graduate,' starting with the machines of the state, the curriculum, the teachers, the parents, other students, multiple classrooms, screens, advertising...and of course the literature to which they've been exposed. All of which connect in different ways both plugging into and producing representations of 'successful' or 'unsuccessful' students, recognizing that notions of success might be the first to be challenged by non-dogmatic images of thought.

Literature and the Assemblage

Considering how the concept of assemblage largely evolves from that of the machine and machinic connections. In fact, Deleuze himself, when asked if there was any unifying idea to ATP, suggests that "it is the idea of an assemblage (which replaces the idea of desiring machines)" (TRoM, 177). It should not, then, be surprising that many of the characteristics overlap.

As an arrangement of machines, the assemblage encompasses an arrangement of such flows or productivity, all of which work together to produce. In the case of the human organism, this includes not only the physical body, but also the unconscious and expressions of subjectivity that further produce flows, including affect, back into the assemblage. An assemblage, he says, "is first and foremost what keeps very heterogeneous elements together: e.g., a sound, a gesture, a position, etc., both natural and artificial elements" (TRoM, 179). But compared to the more singular notion of the machine, as a system or constellation of parts, and the variations of explanation throughout their work, the concept of the assemblage is far from being straightforward.

To view the world, human, unhuman and nonhuman, through the perspective of the assemblage is to view it not only relationally, but as intertwined collectives, in which individual organisms are never 'individual' but integrated into a virtual body that encompasses both content and expression – "the only assemblages are machinic assemblages of desire and

collective assemblages of enunciation” (ATP, 22). These might include not only physical bodies, but ideas, cultural patterns, and of course art / literature:

In the unconscious there are only populations, groups, and machines. When we posit in one case an involuntariness of the social and technical machines, in the other case an unconscious of the desiring-machines, it is a question of a necessary relationship between inextricably linked forces. (AO, 283)

From my own (collective) perspective within education, Deleuze and Guattari’s conceptualizations of assemblage largely contribute to what they will call the furnace of the unconscious, and ultimately the process they refer to as ‘becoming.’ The political in education begins with a reconsideration of our understanding of the body and with it, how we conceptualize subject, subjectivity and identity grounded in a relationship with not only other bodies within the assemblage but also with bodies outside the assemblage, a source of difference and *a life*. Bignall, in addressing the political force of Deleuze and Guattari’s work, explains that ‘a social encounter,’ and by these we might include encounters with literature,

can only be adequately understood with reference to the complex natures of the bodies involved in the meeting... an assemblage of components bound into a coherent form...always shifting....A body is, then, a ‘composition of relations between parts’ (Deleuze 1990: 218–9), where some of these relations are internal to the body, and some are external relations with other bodies. (2010a, 83)

Here she alludes to what Deleuze and Guattari refer to as the two sides of the assemblage, or the two sides of the assemblage of desire – the side of organized or stratified machines, both desiring and social, and the side facing what they call the plane of immanence or the outside: “in which desire lacks nothing and therefore cannot be linked to any external or transcendent criterion” (ATP, 157).

Deleuze and Guattari also describe it as comprised of two axes. The first, the ‘horizontal axis’ consists of the two elements mentioned already: content and expression, both of which can be further classified in terms of form and substance: “On the one hand it is a machinic assemblage of bodies, of actions and passions, an intermingling of bodies reacting to one another; on the other hand it is a collective assemblage of enunciation, of acts and statements, of incorporeal transformations attributed to bodies” (ATP, 88). Elsewhere they add “bodies, things, or objects

that enter physical systems, organisms, and organizations” (ATP, 143) as content and “indexes, icons, or symbols that enter regimes or semiotic systems” (143) as expressions. The vertical axis, meanwhile, consists of “both territorial sides, or reterritorialized sides, which stabilize it, and cutting edges of deterritorialization, which carry it away” (ATP, 88).

Interestingly, the example they provide is from literature, suggesting that “No one is better than Kafka at differentiating the two axes of the assemblage and making them function together” (88). In terms of content, his work provides a “*machinic assemblage* of bodies, of actions and passions, an intermingling of bodies reacting to one another.” These bodies include, “the ship-machine, the hotel-machine, the circus-machine, the castle-machine, the court-machine, each with its own intermingled pieces, gears, processes, and bodies contained in one another or bursting out of containment” (ATP, 88) and “childhood, village-life, love, bureaucracy” (89). Likewise, in terms of expression or the ‘collective assemblage of enunciation,’ of acts and statements, of incorporeal transformations attributed to bodies” we encounter ‘regimes of signs’ that have become normalized under various social formations, which from Kafka include, “acts, death sentences and judgments, proceedings, ‘law’ ... a discourse of submission to order-words; a discourse of discussion, claims, accusation, and defense” (ATP, 88). In moving to the vertical axis, “what is compared or combined of the two aspects, what always inserts one into the other, are the sequenced or conjugated degrees of deterritorialization, and the operations of reterritorialization that stabilize the aggregate at a given moment” (88).

Understood as a particular, albeit fluid, arrangement of organisms, ideas – the assemblage is then approached cartographically as a map, with the two axes charting out what they call the “tetravalence of the assemblage” (89), not only the product of the assemblage but the flows produced by the cumulative effect of the desiring-machines that comprise it.

As with other concepts, the assemblage is also the focus of some debate as to its meaning and more importantly its implications, though addressing the issues is beyond the scope of this project and can be readily found elsewhere (Phillips, 2006; Kennedy et. al., 2013; Buchanan,

2013, 2015, 2017, 2021; Nail, 2017). Arguably the common denominator of these discussions defines the assemblage as a kind of ‘arrangement,’ what many believe is the most appropriate translation of the French, ‘agencement.’ Perhaps the most apt description of the assemblage comes from Deleuze himself who submits that,

In assemblages you find states of things, bodies, various combinations of bodies, hodgepodes; but you also find utterances, modes of expression, and whole regimes of signs. The relations between the two are pretty complex. For example, a society is defined not by productive forces and ideology, but by "hodgepodes" and "verdicts." Hodgepodes are combinations of interpenetrating bodies. These combinations are well-known and accepted (incest, for example, is a forbidden combination). Verdicts are collective utterances, that is, instantaneous and incorporeal transformations which have currency in a society (for example, "from now on you are no longer a child" ...). (TRoM, 177)

Considering this degree of complexity, rather than focus on the distinctions between content and expression, or their associated forms and substances, I will instead briefly outline the qualities I believe are most critical in my own application of the concept surrounding the encounter with literature. Of these, the two most important are often used somewhat synonymously with assemblage: the assemblage as multiplicity and the assemblage as rhizome.

Assemblage as Multiplicity

Deleuze and Guattari point out that an assemblage is an “increase in the dimensions of a multiplicity that necessarily changes in nature as it expands its connections” (ATP, 8). A few pages later they state that “an assemblage, in its multiplicity, necessarily acts on semiotic flows, material flows, and social flows simultaneously” (ATP, 22).

As Colebrook explains, “what lies behind the world of relations is not an actual substance (say, colourless objects or blank substance without qualities) but pure virtual difference” (2002b, 58-59). She proceeds to offer what I find to be a useful example to help illustrate the concept of multiplicity, distinguishing between extensive (what we think of when we use the term multiple) and intensive multiplicities. If we consider a collection of red objects, changing quantity by removing one or more objects does not affect the quality, nature or *identity* of

redness. However, in contrast to this example of *extensive multiplicity*, for which addition or subtraction merely shifts the number of “already differentiated” items, we can turn to an example of *intensive multiplicity*, in which the objects are exposed to “a multiplicity of dynamic forces, say the light that makes up a perception of red” (59), then adding or subtracting “the amount or speed of light” then the colour changes: “The addition or subtraction of light would not give us the same red”(59). A change in quantity, in this case, actually changes the quality, nature or identity – “what this is a set or multiplicity *of*.” With this in mind, we recognize that each additional machine plugged into the assemblage, shifts not only the characteristics of the assemblage but whatever flows are cut off or added. Encountering a book, for example, changes the quality of forces interacting in their influence on the virtual body.

And while this illustration seems innocuous enough, the second example Colebrook offers brings us much closer to the question of belonging or openness to difference that hovers over my own work. Instead of a group of red objects, she asks us to consider a group of people such as the British or for that matter, any group that gathers under a presumed identity. To the extent that the group identifies by a clearly calculable or determinable label or designation, for example citizenship, the identity does not shift with added members. On the other hand, what most British or Canadians understand as a national identity, however nebulous it may be, is generally considered as either strengthened or weakened with new arrivals, depending on the group’s attitudes towards difference. From the perspective of an ‘us’ group, defined within carefully pruned borders, the sense of identity is often viewed as threatened by ‘them’ or anyone ‘outside’ the group. Colebrook refers to an “anxiety of mutation,” projected by the prospect of “including ‘asylum seekers’ as members of Britain,” fearing that the majoritarian ‘we’ “may no longer have a standard of Britishness” (60). Closer to home, similar language has been used repeatedly, as in the proposal tabled by member of parliament, Kellie Lietch, to “screen potential immigrants for ‘anti-Canadian values’” (in Smith, 2016). And though it was rejected, it was widely discussed and praised by more than a few ‘Canadians.’

We might say that assemblage's stability or stagnation is largely determined by its attachment to the transcendent identities it clings to, making it relatively resistant to encounters with the outside and the forces of immanence. As Colebrook suggests, the difference between the two groups follows Deleuze and Guattari's designation of subject and subjugated groups, which, as will be discussed, become important designations of collective configurations. With reference to literature, it is perhaps this same *anxiety of mutation* that accompanies protests in favour of book banning. As a threat to stability, especially one based on the fragility of false premises or multiple layers of social enforcement, literature paradoxically offers both the threat of and the potential for a kind of emancipation from restrictive boundaries of life.

Literature as Rhizome

The association of assemblages within rhizomes is equally direct. Drawing from the biological models of tubers and couchgrass, the assemblage, like the rhizome "has no beginning or end; it is always in the middle, between things, interbeing, intermezzo" (ATP, 25). Contrasted to the tree, which "imposes the verb 'to be' ... the fabric of the rhizome is the conjunction, 'and...and... and...'" This conjunction carries enough force to shake and uproot the verb 'to be'" (ATP, 25). In other words, as rhizome, the assemblage can add new elements from any one of its components. When flows are plugged or frozen at one location, new possibilities arise elsewhere.

As closely associated as they are, the assemblage assumes the 'principle characteristics' of the rhizome: Principles 1 and 2, "connection and heterogeneity," means that "any point of a rhizome can be connected to anything other, and must be. This is very different from the tree or root, which plots a point, fixes an order" (ATP, 7). As a result, the rhizome "ceaselessly establishes connections between semiotic chains, organizations of power, and circumstances relative to the arts, sciences, and social struggles" (7). Principle 3, "multiplicity," as already discussed, means that it "is reducible neither to the One nor the multiple" (ATP, 21). Or put differently, "An assemblage is precisely this increase in the dimensions of a multiplicity that

necessarily changes in nature as it expands its connections. There are no points or positions in a rhizome, such as those found in a structure, tree, or root. There are only lines” (ATP, 8).

Principle 4, asignifying rupture, explains how “A rhizome may be broken, shattered at a given spot, but it will start up again on one of its old lines, or on new lines” (9), as with the example they offer of an ant colony or couchgrass. Principles 5 and 6, cartography and decalcomania, insist that “a rhizome is not amenable to any structural or generative model. It is a stranger to any idea of genetic axis or deep structure” (12). Again, in contrast to the tree or arboreal structure which is ‘rooted’ in a certain genealogy that shapes each new growth with its original DNA, “infinitely reproducible principles of tracing,” the rhizome extends without point of reference forward or backward: “Where are you going? Where are you coming from? What are you heading for? These are totally useless questions” (ATP, 25). As they suggest, “what distinguishes the map,” which captures the cartography of the rhizome, “from the tracing is that it is entirely oriented toward an experimentation in contact with the real” (12). One of the ‘most important’ qualities of the rhizome /assemblage, and critical to any prospects of education, is that “it always has multiple entryways” (12).

Hence the consideration here of the assemblage directly implicates how the book might be considered in the classroom and how this new perspective is a dramatic shift from how the book is more traditionally discussed. As Deleuze and Guattari explain,

There is no longer a tripartite division between a field of reality (the world) and a field of representation (the book) and a field of subjectivity (the author). Rather, an assemblage establishes connections between certain multiplicities drawn from each of these orders (ATP, 23).

Considering that one of the exemplars Deleuze and Guattari draw upon, the work of Kafka, is literary in nature, and that it is the assemblage to which they devote an entire text, there is already precedence for considering how literature might be approached as a tool in what they call schizoanalysis or the critical in what Deleuze later refers to as the critical-clinical production of literature. As Ian Buchanan exclaims, “We have to stop thinking of the concept of the assemblage as a way of describing a thing or situation and instead see it for what it was always

intended to be: a way of analysing a thing or situation” (2017, 472-473). Reminding us that concepts for Deleuze and Guattari are intended to “bring about a new way of seeing something,” Buchanan contends that from their perspective, “the critical analytic question is always: given a specific situation, what kind of assemblage would be required to produce it?” (2017, 473)/ Which as will be developed later, goes hand in hand with the question behind the analytical or critical tool of schizoanalysis. But as I wish to show, analysis is only one aspect of how assemblages might be applied in education. The other pertains to the clinical, or the potential contribution (and threat) of the book to the healthy body and healthy social... a people yet to come.

In this work, I have also chosen to follow Buchanan’s lead in understanding the assemblage less in terms of meaning and more in terms of how it can be used. In my case, this translates to considering how the assemblage can be put to work in shifting considerations of literature and classroom practices in education. And more specifically, how the book might disturb assemblages that are overly defined or ‘coded’ by social regimes that prove unhealthy in their resistance to difference. “Ideally,” Graham Livesey explains, an assemblage “is innovative and productive. The result of a productive assemblage is a new means of expression, a new territorial/spatial organisation, a new institution, a new behaviour, or a new realisation. The assemblage is destined to produce a new reality, by making numerous, often unexpected, connections” (2010, 19). With this in mind, I turn next to the political nature of the body and the obstacles that potentially stand in the way of the ideal Livesey, following Deleuze and Guattari, creates for us.

Desire and the Unconscious

To understand the assemblage, how it works, and how it might be disturbed in order to shift actualizations of becoming, it is necessary to consider how desire works within the assemblage. As Deleuze and Guattari proclaim, “Desire is always assembled; it is what the assemblage determines it to be.” (ATP, 229). Elsewhere, Deleuze reverses the order, stating that “To desire is to construct an assemblage” (in Olsson, 2009, 149). In other words, desire and the assemblage have a reciprocal relationship, perhaps similar to that of affect ... which perhaps should not be surprising as desire is often referred to as an affect as, for example, when Deleuze declares that “Desire is wholly a part of a functioning heterogeneous assemblage. It is a process, as opposed to a structure or a genesis. It is an affect, as opposed to a feeling.... As opposed to a subjectivity, it is an event, not a thing or a person” (TRoM, 130). This is perhaps easier to understand when we recognize that human subjectivity is also constructed through the assemblage on which each organism is but an extension. Understood in terms of “the factory” model of the unconscious (TRoM, 175), Deleuze explains,

Artaud said something really beautiful in this regard. He said the body, and especially the ailing body, is like an overheated factory. So, no more theatre. Saying the unconscious "produces" means that it's a kind of mechanism that produces other mechanisms...Desiring consists in interruptions, letting certain flows through, making withdrawals from those flows, cutting the chains that become attached to the flows.” (DIOT, 232)

Building on this notion of a factory that both produces desire and is itself constituted by desire, Deleuze adds that with Guattari, they “began with the assumption that desire could be understood only as a category of production... Desire produces....’it functions like a mechanism, produces little machines, establishing connections among things” (DIOT, 232-233).

Importantly, the subjectivities which are produced are also capable of contributing to the assemblage from which they emerge. The assemblage does not exist outside the desire that moves to create and modify its connections. And the subject itself becomes another desiring-machine. As Deleuze and Guattari put it, desire and machine “remain in an extrinsic relationship, either because desire appears as an effect determined by a system of mechanical

causes, or because the machine is itself a system of means in terms of the aims of desire” (AO, 284). Colebrook explains that such an understanding of the components or entities of life as machines “allows us to begin with functions and connections before we imagine any produced orders, purposes, wholes or ends” (2002b, xxi). Understanding the human organism as machinic we recognize it as connected to various inputs and outputs and as a machine, it can in turn be plugged into other social bodies or individual organisms and so on. Colebrook continues, stating that, “A desiring machine is therefore the outcome of any series of connections: the mouth that connects with a breast, the wasp that connects with an orchid, an eye that perceives a flock of birds, or a child’s body that connects with a trainset” (xxi). She also points to one of the most significant distinctions between this understanding of desire and that derived from the psychoanalytic tradition – desire as affirmative and connecting rather than desire as lack:

Desire is connection, not the overcoming of loss or separation; we desire, not because we lack or need, but because life is a process of striving and self-enhancement. Desire is a process of increasing expansion, connection and creation. Desire is ‘machinic’ precisely because it does not originate from closed organisms or selves; it is the productive process of life that produces organisms and selves. (2002b, xxi)

Importantly, however, we must remember that desire is never understood as individual; much of what passes for our striving, inclinations or hopes are themselves products of the assemblage and prone, as we will see, to the capture of our desire as investments in existing social machines. As Deleuze and Guattari contend, “There are no internal drives in desire, only assemblages” (ATP, 229), a recognition restated even more emphatically later when they state that assemblages are “compositions of desire. Desire has nothing to do with a natural or spontaneous determination; there is no desire but assembling, assembled desire. The rationality, the efficiency, of an assemblage does not exist without the passions the assemblage brings into play, without the desires that constitute it as much as it constitutes them” (ATP, 399). Understood in terms of immanence and the assemblage, “drives are simply the desiring-machines themselves” (AO, 35).

Nietzsche offers the hypothetical scenario of walking through the market one day and noticing someone laughing at us. What this signifies is largely determined, he argues, by which drive

“happens at that moment to be at its height in us” (in Smith, 2011a, 127). However we react, “a drive has gratified itself, whether it be the drive to annoyance, or to combativeness or to reflection or to benevolence” (127). According to this doctrine of ‘perspectivism’ the drive that is satisfied or has “seized the event as its prey” might ask “Why precisely this one? Because, thirsty and hungry, it was lying in wait” (127). In other words, as Smith points out, it is the drive that ‘interprets’ rather than the ego or the subject. Our reactions are ‘driven’ largely, if not entirely, by the factory of the unconscious, which in turn is fueled by the assemblage to which the ‘subject’ is connected. But it is never a simple cause and effect relationship. As multiplicities, the unconscious is constituted by ““a vast confusion of contradictory drives” (Nietzsche, cited in Smith, 128) that may even conflict with each other, as “Every drive is a kind of lust to rule” and “each one has its perspective that it would like to compel all the other drives to accept as a norm” (127). Here we might imagine a typical dilemma whereby a student wants to go out with friends to a movie but also has a major project due in class, a conflict largely orchestrated by or within the unconscious; our thoughts, our choices and our feelings are but products of the interior competition taking place. An important distinction is also made here between conscious ‘interests’ and unconscious drives or desires. A person may have numerous interests or inclinations and feel they are pursuing these in “a highly rational manner.” But, as Smith continues,

[I]nterest exists as a possibility only within the context of a particular social formation, our capitalist formation. If you are capable of pursuing that interest in a concerted and rational manner, it is first of all because your desire – your drives and impulses – are themselves invested in the social formation that makes that interest possible. Your drives have been constructed, assembled, and arranged in such a manner that your desire is positively invested in the system that allows you to have this particular interest. This is why Deleuze can say that desire as such is always positive. Lack appears only at the level of interest, because the social formation – the infrastructure – in which we have already invested our desire has in turn produced that lack. (2011a, 136)

While at this point Smith refers to the state of Capitalism, likely the most dominant influence, a similar capture of desire occurs in other ‘regimes of signs’ as will be discussed shortly. Importantly, he reminds us that, “When we talk about the ‘I,’ we are simply indicating which drive, at the moment, is sovereign, strongest” (129). Which means that the subjectivity manifested by the thoughts and behaviours of a single organism or person, including their

choices, can not be conflated with the individual, recognizing that 'the' individual does not exist. This does not stop the subject from applying reason in order to get what they want: "Once interests have been defined within the confines of a society, the rational is the way in which people pursue those interests and attempt to realize them" (DIOT, 262–3).

Again, we might consider the many interests generated in students that are, in our neo-liberal environment, now largely related to jobs and income. "But underneath [these]," Deleuze insists, "you find desires, investments of desire that are not to be confused with investments of interest, and on which interests depend for their determination and very distribution: an enormous flow, all kinds of libidinal-unconscious flows that constitute the delirium of this society" (DIOT, 263). Considering the sources of these flows, "reason," he contends, "is always a region carved out of the irrational – it is not sheltered from the irrational at all, but traversed by it and only defined by a particular kind of relationship among irrational factors. Underneath all reason lies delirium and drift" (DIOT, 262), which foreshadows a later conversation on our enslavement to such forces. In themselves they may not be irrational, but from the perspective of the assemblage, their irrationality lies in their ability to hold us hostage to the desires of other desiring machines. Hence, behind or below the actualized subjectivity is the virtual unconscious, wherein, Deleuze and Guattari explain,

[T]here are only populations, groups, and machines. When we posit in one case an involuntariness of the social and technical machines, in the other case an unconscious of the desiring-machines, it is a question of a necessary relationship between inextricably linked forces. Some of these are elementary forces by means of which the unconscious is produced; the others, resultants reacting on the first, statistical aggregates through which the unconscious is represented and already suffers psychic and social repression of its elementary productive forces" (AO, 283)

More succinctly, they conclude that "There are no desiring-machines that exist outside the social machines that they form on a large scale; and no social machines without the desiring machines that inhabit them on a small scale" (AO, 340). As a consequence to our virtual attachment to the assemblage, the creative or affirmative flow of desire is shaped by the social-machines which as Colebrook explains, serve to "produce us as repressed and desiring subjects.

Thus prohibition, force or punishment is productive” (104-105), though perhaps not so positively from the perspective of the organism.

It is clear, then, that the subjectivity of the individual does not stand in isolation outside of the social field and its connections to an infinite number of social machines, both physical and expressive; subjectivity is in continual flux and imbricated in the shifting connections with other entities in any given ecology or context. As Deleuze states, citing Spinoza, "The greater activity is unconscious; consciousness usually only appears when a whole wants to subordinate itself to a superior whole. It is primarily the consciousness of this superior whole, of reality external to the ego" (SPP,21). As with other affects, desire as consciousness is prone to “taking effects for causes (the illusion of final causes)” (20) so that we tend to believe our interests and inclinations lie within the agency of consciousness. The superior whole to which he refers to here appears to correspond to the concept of the assemblage which is often comprised of a vast ‘territory’ of social-machines.

As Caameron Crain illustrates in more concrete terms, “Desire involves a context—a milieu—desire even structures that milieu. I do not simply want an iPhone; I want to be seen and known as a guy with an iPhone. There is a certain fantasy structure at play of which this object forms a part. This fantasy structure is already social in nature” (2013a). The milieu – the surroundings of a particular organism – is understood as preceding the notion of territory to be discussed later, but it is clear there exists a reciprocal relationship between the content and expression of ‘individual’ subjectivities and the assemblage in which they find themselves. Produced within the assemblage, the subjective sense of who ‘I’ am is also determined by the ‘furnace’ of the unconscious. What maintains this identity and sense of self is the relative stability of the arrangement of machines comprising the assemblage of which the subject is but one part. How we think and what we think are, as already stated, largely determined in the virtual space of the assemblage and to the extent that this remain undisturbed, certain habits take hold on our daily behaviours and attitudes. In considering how the social largely determines our subjectivities and behaviour, and that these take on a cumulative effect, Crain suggests that

though largely unconscious in origin: “The desire for an iPhone produces new norms of behavior: taking pictures of dinner at a restaurant or checking my email during it” (2013a). In other words, the subjectivity is formed within the larger assemblage, the ‘superior whole’ which overrides many potential free flowing desires from individual desiring machines or the ‘outside.’ Olsson adds further clarity, drawing on one interview (Boutang, 2004), in which Deleuze explains desire,

as something very concrete and simple. They wanted to contest the idea that you desire something or someone. You always desire in an assemblage. If you desire a dress, you desire in relation to the particular evening out you are going to. You desire in relation to friends or not friends attending the evening, etc. You never desire an object. You always desire in an assemblage of relations.” (2009, 149)

The various social machines – including ideas, media, dominant attitudes, and marketing enticements – penetrate even the most banal of our daily activities... all of which can be traced back to unconscious forces generated within the unconscious but created by and through the larger expanse of the assemblage and the various machines plugged into it. As Crain goes on to ask, importantly,

Is there a real difference between my tiny personal affairs and my politics? These habits form implicit rules governing our behavior—I put the left sock on, then the right. There is no good reason I can think of for this, but it does strike me as the correct way of proceeding. This is perhaps not very interesting, but what of the rules I follow when it comes to dealing with others? Is there a real difference between my tiny personal affairs and my politics?” (2013a).

In other words, though many daily habits may appear rather benign, through processes Marx might have called processes of abstraction, often they are connected to the larger expanse of the assemblage which may not be so innocent, feeding, for example, the voracious appetite of capitalism, which overwhelms the more elementary desiring-machines and their prospects of connecting to ‘a life.’ Deleuze also alludes to the different scales of desire when he explains that, in contrast to psychoanalysis, the unconscious as factory,

isn't playing around all the time with mummy and daddy but with races, tribes, continents, history, and geography, always some social frame. We were trying to find an immanent conception, an immanent way of working with the syntheses of the unconscious, a productivism or constructivism of the unconscious....We weren't trying to

articulate or reconcile different dimensions but trying rather to find a single basis for a production that was at once social and desiring in a logic of flows.(N, 144)

The syntheses Deleuze refers to, offer a significant contribution to how we understand not only the construction of the unconscious, but by inference, the construction of actualized subjectivities. The unconscious, he suggests, “invests and disinvests flows of every kind as they trickle through the social field, and it effects cuts in these flows, stoppages, leaks, and retentions” (DIOT, 194). Put differently, Eugene Holland contends that “the unconscious operates according to a specific set of syntheses to process or constitute experience ... unconscious ‘thought’” (2002, 14).

In order to think through this intersection between the unconscious and the social, the site of the three syntheses, Deleuze and Guattari develop the concept of the ‘body without organs,’ one for which, as Buchanan points out, “there is little to no agreement among Deleuze and Guattari scholars” (2015, 26) regarding its meaning. Like other concepts, it is also referred to differently throughout their work – an ‘egg’ (ATP, 164), a “plane of consistency” (ATP, 72) and a “plane of immanence” (ATP, 254). Following Buchanan’s suggestion, perhaps the best place to start, as with the assemblage, is to consider its use and why it is needed. First used in Deleuze’s *The Logic of Sense* (1990), the concept is borrowed from a Antonin Artaud play in which the speaker states, “When you will have made him a body without organs, then you will have delivered him from all his automatic reactions and restored him to his true freedom” (1947, 18). This allusion captures the spirit of much of Deleuze and Guattari’s work, whether it be the struggle against ‘common sense’ and the dogmatic image of thought, or the notion of capture, enslavement or rigidity explored through much of their micropolitics.

My own interpretation is that the BwO operates in many ways as a kind of interface between the body of the assemblage, the individual organism or its unconscious furnace, and the outside chaos of dis[organized] life: “desiring-production is situated at the limits of social production; the decoded flows, at the limits of the codes and the territorialities; the body without organs, at the limits of the socius” (AO, 169-170). And though the concept of desiring-machines is later ‘given up’ for “unintentionally draw[ing] interpretations of the force of

sexuality” which is only “one flux among many” (DII, 101), the concept of the BwO remains central to their second volume which largely replaces machines with the concept of assemblages. There it is developed further as, for example, when they describe it as “permeated by unformed, unstable matters, by flows in all directions, by free intensities or nomadic singularities, by mad or transitory particles” (ATP, 40). And later as “a plane upon which everything is laid out, and which is like the intersection of all forms, the machine of all functions; its dimensions, however, increase with those of the multiplicities of individualities it cuts across. It is a fixed plane, upon which things are distinguished from one another only by speed and slowness” (254).

The Three Syntheses

Imagining, then, the BwO as central to the three syntheses, it is used to help explain the construction of the unconscious. As Deleuze and Guattari explain, “Desire is the set of passive syntheses that engineer partial objects, flows, and bodies, and that function as units of production. The real is the end product, the result of the passive syntheses of desire as autoproduction of the unconscious” (AO, 26). The notion of syntheses, which as Colebrook explains derives from Kant and Hume, addresses the “need to connect our perceptions into spatial and temporal continuities; we order the world causally and logically” (2002b, 106). But with each organism and each subjectivity a product of its own unique syntheses, it isn’t, as she points out, simply one world that “is the effect of a process of synthesis” but rather “worlds resulting from all the different syntheses that make up life” besides which we imagine “some pre-synthesised, disorganised or chaotic origin or plane from which synthesis emerged” (106). As well, she clarifies elsewhere, “there is not a subject who synthesises. Rather, there are syntheses from which subjects are formed; these subjects are not persons but points of relative stability resulting from connection” (2010, 80). Again, a suggestion that the syntheses occur on the BwO that fuels the furnace.

Taken together, each of the syntheses contributes a specific role to the ‘production process’ or what appears to be a kind of cycle of continuous reproduction: “production,” “recording” and “consumption” (AO, 4). Of special importance to what constitutes a central question in their work, that of enslavement, is the implication that, without interference or the intervention from the outside, the process continues in a kind of neurotic holding pattern, the subject contained within to the desiring powers of the socius. The significant corollary for education would be that without contact with the outside (including outside the assemblage and habitus of a stable socius or milieu), there can be no learning. Owing much of my grasp of these complex processes to Holland, heavily cited below, I have chosen to elaborate more on these processes because they are so critical to establishing an understanding of the kinds of social tensions and us vs. them divisions which this thesis is intended to address.

Adrian Parr summarizes the three syntheses as follows: “The connective synthesis is the productive dimension of libidinal energies, affects, and forces; the disjunctive synthesis refers to breaks occurring in the flow of these energies and their subsequent recording; and finally the conjunctive synthesis of consumption produces a subject or subjectivity” (2008, 5).

The Connective Synthesis

Deleuze and Guattari describe the first, the connective synthesis, as fundamentally productive:

The productive synthesis, the production of production, is inherently connective in nature: "and . . ." "and then . . ." This is because there is always a flow-producing machine, and another machine connected to it that interrupts or draws off part of this flow (the breast—the mouth). And because the first machine is in turn connected to another whose flow it interrupts or partially drains off, the binary series is linear in every direction. Desire constantly couples continuous flows and partial objects that are by nature fragmentary and fragmented. Desire causes the current to flow, itself flows in turn, and breaks the flows. (AO, 5)

Holland outlines three ‘essential’ features of the connective synthesis highlighted in *Anti-Oedipus*. The first is that connection is generated through desires drives or investments:

“connections are made so as to tap into a source of energy and procure a ‘charge,’ whether

physiological, erotic, or both” (2002, 26). The second feature is that connections are always with ‘part-objects’ “not whole persons or organs understood as belonging to whole persons. If an infant’s mouth connects to a mother’s breast while at the same time its eye scans her face, the synthesis of production makes only those two connections” (Holland, 2002, 26). Colebrook offers a useful elaboration suggesting that desire refers to:

the different ways in which life becomes or produces relations... What something is is its flow of desire, and such forces produce diverging and multiple relations. A body might be produced through numerous ‘desiring relations’ each one referencing a different semiotic status: The same body can be ‘female’, ‘lesbian’, ‘mother’, ‘human’, ‘citizen’ and so on. These are not terms imposed on a body; a body becomes what it is only through these relations. (2002b, xv-xvi)

Finally, the third feature is that the synthesis is “multiple, heterogeneous, and continual: an eye scans a head of hair, and then sees a face, and then a breast, and then a knee; a mouth connects to a breast, to some air, and then to a finger; a finger connects to a lock of hair, and then to a mouth, and so on” (Holland, 2002, 26). Guattari suggests that it is the “heterogeneity of the components converging to produce subjectivity” that help to explain the wide range of subjectivities, “rather than a universalizing and reductionist homogenization of subjectivity” (1996, 194). And though as we will see, this does not prevent large groups from conforming under connections to similar social forces of desire, it also provides some hope for deviations from the norm. Deleuze and Guattari also associate this heterogeneity with the rhizome suggesting that, “Producing is always something “grafted onto” the product; and for that reason desiring-production is production of production, just as every machine is a machine connected to another machine” (AO, 6). Against the hope for divergence, it is important to remember that these singular events of connection, however, are never isolated from the social in which they are immersed. As a consequence, as Colebrook points out, “Social machines extend and organise these ‘partial’ investments into organised institutions, such as ‘motherhood’, ‘the family’ or culture” (2002a, 82). At the same time, striving to “preserve and enhance itself”, she adds, life “does so by connecting with other desires. These connections and productions eventually form social wholes” (2002a, 91).

The Disjunctive Synthesis

Between *a life* and the social, the BwO faces multiple flows of desire, but with the latter dominating, as Deleuze and Guattari observe, “The full body without organs is the unproductive, the sterile, the unengendered, the unconsumable” (AO, 8). Hence the necessity of the second synthesis, the disjunctive, which acts in some ways to ensure the potential of a continued relation of the assemblage to life which, as stated earlier, is equated to the flow of difference. The disjunctive works both in terms of anti-production, allowing connections to break, and recording, maintaining a memory of connections, providing what Holland refers to as “the functioning of pleasure, memory and signs in the psyche” (2002, 25). Colebrook returns to the example of the infant’s mouth, “that has experienced pleasure at the breast” and as a machine, “comes to desire or anticipate the breast. In this expectation desire can produce an image or ‘investment’” (2002a, 82). In serving the ‘recording’ function, the disjunctive synthesis allows for the possibility of repetition which as we might guess, can either be a repetition of difference, life, or a repetition of sameness.

Hence the two directions disjunction can take the organism. As Holland explains, difference can be “betrayed and distorted by operations... that result in identity” or “within a materialist ontology of difference, what gets repeated is not the same, but different.” (27). Here he relates disjunction the influence of Freud’s ‘pleasure principle:’ “the compulsion to repeat is what makes pleasure a principle of psychic life: we take pleasure in what we have previously found to be pleasurable” (2002, 27). But in contrast to Freud’s association of such repetition with the death instinct, in which pleasure “succumbs to stasis, fixation, neurosis” (28), repetition of difference “frees pleasure from mechanical repetition and a strictly linear temporality” (28). In one direction, repetition of the same can result in a “static neurotic form of pleasure fixed on the past” which Holland associates with Deleuze and Guattari’s revision of Freud’s ‘death instinct,’ as the more a body clings to a certain habit or way of being in the world, the closer the body comes to a kind of death, cut off from the forces of life. In another direction, repetition can be of pure difference, as discussed earlier, “tak[ing] pleasure in variation, ramification,

improvisation” (28) capable of countering the numbing effects of habit and repetition of representation. It is only through the disjunctive that the BwO can provide “a counter-force to the connective synthesis which would otherwise lock the organism into instinctual or habitual patterns of connection” (28).

The second function of the disjunctive, the ability to trace recordings of “networks of relations among connections” (28) provides what we might think of as memory or “signs of organ-machine connections that enable or oblige us to repeat previous modes of desiring-satisfaction, albeit with greater or lesser degrees of freedom of variation within repetition” (29). In what will later be referred to as codes that will serve to shape or direct our investments, Holland explains that, “forming a system of relations, these signs bind or synthesize time [though not necessarily chronological], enabling us to relate or compare one satisfaction to another, and to take pleasure not necessarily in experiencing the new in terms of the old (as Freud would have it) but simply in experiencing one thing in relation to something else, instead” (29). As Deleuze and Guattari suggest,

All sorts of functional questions thus arise: What flow to break? Where to interrupt it? How and by what means? What place should be left for other producers or antiproducers (the place of one's little brother, for instance)? Should one, or should one not, suffocate from what one eats, swallow air, shit with one's mouth? (AO, 38)

To which Holland adds, “Which of the many codes organizing desire tend to prevail? Why do any specific codes have to prevail over others at all?” (30). As codes are recorded, the BwO is gradually shaped or organized into a ‘grid’ of data (AO, 38). Holland compares it to a kind of ‘tabula rasa’ [or what Deleuze might call “larval” that is produced through the interplay of the first two syntheses – “the course of psychic development by the transformation of energies of connection into energies of recording,” the result of which, depending on the nature of the various codings and signs of relational networks, can be either healthy or unhealthy.

“Emerging as a transformation of connective energy,” Holland explains, the disjunctive synthesis takes place on the BwO “at the point when an identity between the process of desiring-production and a finished product has been achieved” (32). Continuing with the

example of the mouth and breast, the connection is 'broken' at the point of "nourishment or satisfaction," the so-called product, which is then 'registered' or recorded on the BwO as a 'sign' of satisfaction, triggering the infants release of the breast. in search for something different. At which time the mouth "may lapse into quiescence or become some other organ altogether: an organ for expelling instead of ingesting liquid, for example, if the infant proceeds to burp or vomit; or an organ for smiling; or an organ for expelling a flow of air instead of liquid, if the child sighs happily, or starts to cry or coo or babble" (32). It is possible as well that satiation may not be reached but the mouth nevertheless releases for other reasons, including distraction in the 'interest' of other connections: "suspend[ing] one organ-machine connection, but only for the sake of another, in an open-ended series." Importantly, for Deleuze and Guattari, this understanding of the syntheses allows us to avoid the reduction of such dynamics to purely 'instinctual' determinism, and opens the path to expansion of the assemblage: "The senses and organs can operate productively... creatively... only on condition that they are freed from pre-established or instinctual connections and modes of satisfaction... to produce the body-without-organs ...on which objects of drives and instincts register so as to multiply and differentiate" (32). The 'healthy' or 'active' BwO is one which is free to 'actively' open itself to the outside flow of difference. As Deleuze and Guattari explain there is a legitimate and immanent process of disjunction that is "affirmative, nonrestrictive, and inclusive," and "still affirms the disjointed terms... throughout their entire distance, without restricting one by the other or excluding the other from the one, is perhaps the greatest paradox. 'Either ... or . . . or,' instead of 'either/or.'" (AO, 76). "What is essential," Holland adds, "is that even while anti-production interrupts or suspends existing productive connections on the body-without-organs, it at the same time registers their diverse possibilities, and ends up multiplying the relations among them to infinity.... 'either...or...or...'" (2002, 31-32).

In contrast to the inclusive function of disjunction, as suggested earlier, in other directions the synthesis can be unhealthy and exclusive in its functioning – what they call illegitimate and transcendent in its function. Dangers arise at the extremes of either too much or too little connection, one in which repetition fixates on the same, producing unshakable habits and

neuroses, and the other where disjunction breaks down all together. In both cases, the BwO is left in a precarious and unhealthy state, but one which becomes the subject of the process of schizoanalysis to be discussed later. When it is transcendent, the synthesis becomes “exclusive, restrictive, and negative” and fuels the “reign of the ‘either/or’” (AO, 75), characterizing an “Oedipal recording” (AO, 76) at which point we become so “molded by Oedipus that we find it hard to imagine another use” (76). In this case, alluding to their concept of molarity vs molecularity, “exclusions can arise only as a function of inhibitors and repressers that eventually determine the support and firmly define a specific, personal subject” (AO, 38-39). In their second volume, this is referred to as “the cancerous BwO of a fascist inside us” (ATP, 163). When connections are too little, Holland explains, “Just as the connective energy of desiring-production can succumb to fixation, the disjunctive or repulsive energy of anti-production can lead to total breakdown” (32), which is ultimately described in terms of a kind of repression or habituated ‘denial.’ In the extreme, “anti-production can prevent the formation of any organ-machine connections whatsoever, thereby bringing about complete withdrawal,” into a state of “Catatonia” (33), the catatonic BwO or what they refer to as “the empty BwO of a drug addict, paranoiac, or hypochondriac” (ATP, 163).

The Conjunctive Synthesis

In some discussions, these ultimate consequences are considered part of the third synthesis, the conjunctive, which Holland explains, refers to the “formation of subjectivity” (2002, 25). Considering the variations and permutations of both the connective and disjunctive syntheses, it is not surprising that “the interplay of the forces of production and anti-production generate a wide range of familiar personality-types or forms of subjectivity” (33). What is registered or recorded on the BwO, with all of the distortions, illusions and fragmented associations in memory, “appears to be the source of what gets recognized in the constitution of the subject in conjunctive syntheses” (34). The BwO, and its “networks of relations,” generates “an indefinite series of constellations or states of intense experience, each of which gets recognized and consummated....by a subject of that experience” (35), a process described previously as actualization.

To the extent that the syntheses repeat the same, or fixate on certain connections, the subject's identity might be understood to be more stable, habitual, or rigid. Likewise, to the extent that the syntheses repeat difference, and become more inclusive, improvisational, spontaneous in operation, the subject enters a state of continual becoming and 'a life' is allowed to flow through the organism, steadily expanding their assemblage and shifting the thinking and behaving of their subjectivity. The latter, Holland describes as "mobile personality-structures which remain closer to the continual, open-ended, indefinite nature of the syntheses and therefore enjoy or suffer experience with much greater intensity"(35) helping to consummate "a perpetually renewed "nomadic" subject always different from itself, a kind of "permanent revolution" of psychic life" (36). Or as Deleuze and Guattari exclaim, a machine that "form[s] a new alliance between the desiring-machines and the body without organs so as to give birth to a new humanity or a glorious organism" (AO, 17).

Subject Formation and the Regimes of Signs

Both of the previous sections, affect and thinking, have emphasized the process of individuation, the formation of the human subject that thinks from the perspective of “I am” as a production from pre-subjective, preconscious, pre-individual forces of the immanent domain. As Colebrook suggests, “we need to explain just how something like the modern subject or individual is differentiated from this plane of immanence, and then how this subject elevates itself to be the origin of all difference: man as the origin of thought, language and representation” (2002b, 81). The explanation of the three syntheses on the BwO provides a sense of how the human organism and its subjectivity connects to the social. What remains for exploration is a fuller understanding of the specific nature of the social and the traces it leaves on the BwO. As Colebrook illustrates more concretely,

Life is desire. When a plant takes in light and moisture it becomes a plant through its relation to these other forces; this is one flow of desire. When a human body connects with another body it becomes a child in relation to a parent, or it becomes a mother in relation to a child; this is another flow of desire. When bodies connect and become tribes, societies or nations, they also produce new relations and flows of desire. (2002b, xvi)

While on one hand desiring-production and social-production are both machines, they have two different regimes of operation; “social-production is purely and simply desiring-production itself under determinate conditions” (AO, 29). In other words, there are flows going in both directions; the desiring-machine contributes to the production of the social-machine, and organizations of social-machines contribute to the production of the desiring-machine (Holland, 2002, 56). As Deleuze and Guattari insist, in their reciprocal affects on each other, “a social form of production exercises an essential repression of desiring-production, and also that desiring-production – “real” desire – is potentially capable of demolishing the social form” (AO, 116). But how then do we explain the dominance of certain kinds of subjectivities and groups of subjectivities? As Goodchild clarifies,

Given that desire is a plane of immanent relations, then it is shaped by the actual relations, conventions, and meanings that exist in society. Similarly, all knowledge is shaped by the social formations in which it is given. The set of immanent relations that

compose a given social formation actually determine the kinds of things of which one can be conscious at any particular moment. For this reason, desire is the social unconscious: it constructs and conditions consciousness, so that images are merely products of the social relations in which one is immersed. (1996, 5)

To this sense of the overwhelming force of the social, we might attach Colebrook's comment that "the notion of the person, ego or individual is the historical outcome of the increasing organisation, or territorialisation, of life" (2002b, 81). In *Anti-Oedipus*, Deleuze and Guattari propose a history of desire, insisting that "even the most repressive and the most deadly forms of social reproduction are produced by desire within the organization that is the consequence of such production under various conditions that we must analyze" (AO, 29). It follows then, that each moment in history is largely determined by the forces of the assemblage to which the human organism is connected which in turn is determined by the social (and economic) structures which shape the various social-machines:

We think the material or machinic aspect of an assemblage relates not to the production of goods but rather to a precise state of intermingling of bodies in a society, including all the attractions and repulsions, sympathies and antipathies, alterations, amalgamations, penetrations, and expansions that affect bodies of all kinds in their relations to one another. (ATP, 90)

Deleuze conceptualizes forces of desire as a product of various machines, each working as part of the larger body of the assemblage of machines. Within such a multiplicity, forces of desire combine, collide and are continually shifting the nature of the assemblage based on additions and deletions of connections to new or old machines as per the three syntheses just described. Given that individuals, drives and desiring machines are "always arranged and assembled by the social formation" in which the organism finds itself, Smith suggests that "one of the aims of *Anti-Oedipus* is to construct a typology of social formations – primitive territorial societies, States, capitalism" (2011, 132). Returning to the concept of the BwO, Deleuze explains that it "is only defined by zones of intensity, thresholds, degrees and fluxes. This body is as biological as it is collective and political. It is on this body that assemblages are made and come apart... it varies (the body-without-organs of feudalism is not the same as that of capitalism)" (TRoM, 130). More specifically, Deleuze and Guattari suggest that "The social machine or socius may be

the body of the Earth, the body of the Despot, the body of Money” (AO, 33), what in their second volume are referred to as regimes of signs. In each case, investments or productive flows of each desiring machine are quickly coded, and prone to being over-powered by the dominant social regimes of the moment. For the purposes of this work, a brief outline of the characteristics offered for each would be sufficient to allow readers to imagine how each model continues to play out today, along with additional regimes which were suggested in their second volume.

Primitive Societies

The first model is associated with “primitive societies which have no fixed, central State apparatus and no global power mechanisms or specialized political institutions” (ATP, 209). Organized through connections with the earth, including earth-related mythologies, it is described as a “primitive, savage unity of desire and production” (AO, 140). In terms of segmentarity, a concept to be discussed in more detail later, their structures are fluid and largely characterized by “outgrowths, detachments, and mergings.... based on lineages and their varying situations and relations, and an itinerant territoriality based on local, overlapping divisions” (AO, 250). No doubt they have certain Indigenous cultures in mind, as they add that “codes and territories, clan lineages and tribal territorialities, form a fabric of relatively supple segmentarity (ATP, 209). In spite of the association with the primitive and earth cultures, it is possible, I believe, to relate such tribal social forms to the many levels of tribalism that exist today in schools, from the various amorphous clique’s that informally organize in hallways and lunch rooms, to the larger ‘groups’ such as sub or niche cultures, movements, and even gang structures that arise across urban terrains, often in direct defiance of the other dominant regimes. *Us versus them* divisions often begin at this level, to which any play-ground supervisor might attest, as do early notions of identity and social ‘boundaries’ with varying degrees of rigidity and permeability.

Despotic States

The second historical development in social structure is associated with what they call the Despot in which “The wheels of the territorial lineage machine subsist but are no longer anything more than the working parts of the State machine. The objects, the organs, the persons, and the groups retain at least a part of their intrinsic coding, but these coded flows of the former regime find themselves overcoded by the transcendent unity” (AO, 196). As they explain, from the “nonsignifying territorial signs” associated with the earth, the ‘signifier in the first instance’ and the ‘first deterritorialized flow,’ is ‘superimposed’ as “a plane of subordination on their plane of immanent connotation... the despotic sign having replaced the territorial sign, having crossed the threshold of deterritorialization” (AO, 206).

In considering the flow of desire as a connective energy or power, Deleuze and Guattari employ the concept of territorialization which is often realized through codification (another concept) of desire under specific social conditions. Offering the example of feudalism, Deleuze describes it as an assemblage “that inaugurates new relationships with animals (the horse), with land, with deterritorialization (the knight riding away, the Crusades), with women (courtly love and chivalry) ...etc.” (TRoM, 124). Assemblages such as this, he contends, can be “pinpointed historically” within which “desire circulates in this heterogeneous assemblage, in this kind of symbiosis: desire is one with a determined assemblage, a co-function,” though he also admits that “an assemblage of desire will include power arrangements (for example, feudal powers), but these must be located among the different components of the assemblage” (TRoM, 125).

At this point it is also worth drawing attention to their concept of territory which they suggest is defined by “ the emergence of matters of expression (qualities)” (ATP, 315). Territory, they explain, “is the first assemblage, the first thing to constitute an assemblage; the assemblage is fundamentally territorial” (ATP, 323), though arguably these comments are intended to refer to a specific kind of assemblage brought together under a specific social territory.

Conceptualizations of territorialization, deterritorialization and reterritorialization, Holland

suggests, “presuppose and reinforce the notice of a ‘common essence...of desire and labor,’ referring without distinction to the detachment and reattachment of the energies of ‘production in general’ (including ‘consumption’) to objects of investment of all kinds, whether conventionally considered ‘psychological’ or ‘economic.’” (2002,20). In terms of its effect (and affects) on subjectivities and groups, in schools, it is clear that ‘us’ versus ‘them’ divisions, both under the spell of these first two regimes, are established as both content and expression by territories and codes. As Deleuze and Guattari explain,

[T]erritory is first of all the critical distance between two beings of the same species: Mark your distance. What is mine is first of all my distance; I possess only distances. Don't anybody touch me, I growl if anyone enters my territory, I put up placards. Critical distance is a relation based on matters of expression. It is a question of keeping at a distance the forces of chaos knocking at the door. (ATP, 319-320)

The forces of chaos include competing appeals to desire, including those of *a life*, but the degree to which *a life* cannot enter or cannot compete reflects the impenetrable dominance of ruling territories. “Desire,” in the so-called despotic regime, “no longer dares to desire, having become a desire of desire, a desire of the despot's desire... The body no longer allows itself to be engraved like the earth, but prostrates itself before the engravings of the despot, the region beyond the earth, the new full body” (AO, 206). In other words, the BwO is now filled by connections to the social machine(s) of the despot according to a hierarchy, often enforced and bound, as Deleuze notes, by power: how “all organizations, all the systems Michel [Foucault] calls biopower, in effect reterritorialize the body” (TRoM, 131). While Deleuze insists that power does not have ‘primacy’ over desire, power arrangements such as those identified within certain social environments, have a ‘repressive effect’ in “stamp[ing] out... the tips of assemblages of desire” (TRoM, 126). In other words, the rhizomatic buds of *a life* or other possible investments that might expand the body or open it to new networks of connection. I would suggest that the despotic, in our current ecology has a firm hold on the institution of education, with its multiple levels of hierarchy from the classroom under the control of the teacher, to the school, to the District and the State. As Sara Ahmed suggests, “When things become institutional, they recede. To institutionalize x is for x to become routine or ordinary such that x becomes part of the background for those who are part of an institution” (2012, 21).

With respect to codification, Jason Read explains that Deleuze and Guattari, drawing heavily from Marx, refer to 'codes' as "tradition, or prescriptions and rules bearing on the production and distribution of goods, prestige and desire" (2008, 142). As desiring-machines, human organisms are connected within the assemblage, the power or pull of social machines draw them into existing codes which are, as Read explains, "immediately related to the past, to an inscription of memory, 'this is how things are done, how they have always been done.'"

Recalling the disjunctive synthesis referred to earlier, "the codes become part of the 'inorganic body' of the individual in precapitalist modes of production, that is conditions of production and reproduction of subjectivity that constitute a kind of second nature" (142). In this respect, the process of coding, in this case largely associated with the more negative and exclusive use of the disjunctive, appears to go hand-in-hand with the process of territorialisation, both dependent on the ability of the social machine to capture investments of desire by individual organisms or desiring machines.

In *Anti-Oedipus*, coding is described as largely determined by the nature of the established, dominant or majoritarian political or social environments such as those found in, I would argue, both the tribal and despotic regimes. The social machine "undertakes a variety of interventions: flows are set apart, elements are detached from a chain, and portions of the tasks to be performed are distributed. Coding the flows implies all these operations" (AO, 141). Hence each of the models Deleuze and Guattari describe, "global system[s] of desire and destiny," work by "organize[ing] the productions of production, the productions of recording, and the productions of consumption" (142). These machines tend to be all-encompassing in their ability to capture desire of individual desiring machines: "Flows of women and children, flows of herds and of seed, sperm flows, flows of shit, menstrual flows: nothing must escape coding" (142). With "men for its parts" along with the machines which accompany them, "the social machine fashions a memory without which there would be no synergy of man and his (technical) machines" (AO, 141).

Though desire can be repressed in the subject, through the codings and territorializations described, we no longer need to consider desire from the perspective of lack. At the level of affection and even consciousness, though it can appear as a craving or lack, repression is a direct result of the social. In fact, as Deleuze and Guattari emphasize, “the prime function incumbent upon the socius, has always been to codify the flows of desire, to inscribe them, to record them, to see to it that no flow exists that is not properly dammed up, channeled, regulated” (AO, 33), such that every social machine, regardless the regime, depends on capturing the desire, the investment of desiring machines of individual bodies and it is this process, described also in the three syntheses, that results in the repressive residue on the BwO, ultimately actualized in the thoughts and behaviours of the human organism. As Colebrook explains, “The very pleasures of a society—what we eat, how we move, what we wear, the commodities we desire, the very desire for commodities as such—are politically coded. It is the desire for the image and affect itself, and not what it means, that is political” (2002a, 46).

In one of his many seminars, Deleuze provides a particularly clear and concrete example of the force of coding in society. I include it here in full because of its particular resonance with education:

What is it that moves over the body of a society? It is always flows, and a person is always a cutting off of a flow. A person is always a point of departure for the production of a flow, a point of destination for the reception of a flow, a flow of any kind; or, better yet, an interception of many flows. If a person has hair, this hair can move through many stages: the hairstyle of a young girl is not the same as that of a married woman, it is not the same as that of a widow: there is a whole hairstyle code. A person, insofar as she styles her hair, typically presents herself as an interceptor in relation to flows of hair that exceed her and exceed her case and these flows of hair are themselves coded according to very different codes: widow code, young girl code, married woman code, etc. This is ultimately the essential problem of coding and of the territorialization which is always coding flows with it, as a fundamental means of operation: marking persons (because persons are situated at the interception and at the cutting off of flows, they exist at the points where flows are cut off. (1971a)

I have chosen purposely to include the entire passage, believing it to be key to a fuller recognition of just how the concepts of territory and coding not only relate to the axis of

content and expression but also to the earlier concerns of 'common sense,' representation and identity. Though generated in the furnace of the unconscious, the 'marking of persons' is, as any teacher can quickly confirm, fully actualized in the *us* and *them* attitudes observed from very young ages, and often reinforced by even the most innocent of school yard games.

On one hand, though the tribal *socius* may have characterized a time before feudal lords and kingdoms arose in 'kinship structures,' it is easy to see these same regimes of signs at work today. In considering the qualities used to describe the most 'primitive' of social structures – "the alliances derived from the lines of filiation and their relationships," qualities of "honors, responsibilities, privileges," and "inequalities in the conditions of the system" (AO, 187), such a description might well apply to any number of collectives and alliances at work today. In a recent book, Sebastian Junger identifies what he calls 'tribes' of belonging (2016), which in schools may include those 'identified' through race or cultural boundaries, socio-economic boundaries, or gender and sexual orientation boundaries, not to mention any number of the nationalist movements around the globe. It is not surprising that, though the "apparatus of repression varies," this primitive regime of signs and codes, "at the moment they are acting on the flows of desire with a maximum of vigilance and extension, binding them in a system of cruelty" are capable, Deleuze and Guattari claim, of "maintain[ing] an infinitely greater affinity with desiring-machines than does the capitalist axiomatic" (AO, 184). Though less ostensibly economic in nature, as compared to the regimes they describe, there remains a certain economy of values shared and protected that circulate in every social environment, with those that revolve around grades and future employment being the most obvious for students.

Likewise, on the other hand, the despotic regime and its more overt systems of hierarchies of power and authority serves to circumscribe all aspects of life including communities and housing, employment and of course school. It is also not difficult to find today such divisive figures as Donald Trump, Benjamin Netanyahu and closer to home, Jason Kenney who represent a kind of top-down neo-liberal regime with fascist tendencies around which people's loyalties seem to fluctuate, though their successful elections speak for themselves. Similarly,

though her research may be otherwise questionable, there is something that rings intuitive in Ruby Payne's recognition of patterns or differences of thinking and behaviour that arise in populations she categorizes as acculturated into 'generational poverty' who, unlike those exposed to situational poverty, have been in poverty "for two generations or longer" (2005, 10), admitting that such observations are based on patterns with clear exceptions. Furthermore, even though individuals may experience considerable increases in income at some point in their lives, they retain "the hidden rules of the class in which he/she was raised" including "patterns of thought, social interaction, cognitive strategies, etc." (11). Keith Payne (2017) offers further confirmation of the distinctive shifts actualized behaviours arising from the degrees of inequity defining the surrounding socius of various populations. Adding further complexity to sub-cultures territorialized by the socius of poverty, we might add many intersections such as the direct trauma experienced by refugees or the intergenerational trauma that no doubt further codes individuals descending from Indigenous colonized roots and elsewhere from histories of slavery, both of which are further complicated by experiences of racism, linguistic biases, sexism, homophobia, ableism, and various other affective forces of prejudice and discrimination.

The Axiomatics of Capitalism

Though Deleuze and Guattari consider coding and 'overcoding' central to the first two formations of society respectively, I would argue that in the context of schools, they become even more prominent in the marketing mechanisms of the final social regime: capitalism. Much more complex than the others, capitalism, as Steven Shaviro, suggests, "defines the very situation in which we live. It is the milieu that all our thoughts and actions presuppose, the environment to which they all refer, the context in relation to which they alone have meaning" (2008). Unlike the first two social models, in its requisite demand for continual growth, not only is there no central signifier, besides the more abstract element of money, capitalism continually deterritorializes and, as Holland states, "reterritorializes or 'axiomatizes' desire, re-ordering flows through capitalist relations" (1998, p. 68). It is also, "the only social machine that is

constructed on the basis of decoded flows” (AO, 139), no matter how much these may be quickly reterritorialized with new codes. Unlike the earlier pre-capitalist models, capitalism is operationalized through what is called the ‘axiomatic’, which, as Alberto Toscano suggests, organizes or ‘orders’ the various machinery of the socius “whose nature need not be specified... treat[ing] their objects as purely functional” (in Parr, 2010, 22). In considering “flows (and their cuts or breaks) as the ‘basic constituents’ of what was earlier described as ‘transcendental materialism,’ “an axiomatic system differs from systems of coding and overcoding by its capacity to operate directly on decoded flows” (22). As Goodchild clarifies further,

[O]ne of the most frequent operations of capital is to create temporary relations between workers and sites of production that irrevocably separate workers from their previous environment. Everything becomes mobile: images, consumer products, and people are cut off from their conditions of production and circulate around the globe, resting in juxtaposition with others of entirely different origins, before attaining an ultimate egalitarian status in the garbage dump, old age or oblivion. (1996, 3)

Clearly, the concepts of codes, coding and decoding are associated closely, as the label suggests, with the varying regimes of signs, and both produce and are produced by systems of representation investing and disinvesting of ‘fixed’ meaning (Holland, 2002, 20). However, in contrast to other regimes, Capitalism differs in that rather than being dependent on certain values identified and propagated by systems of representation, it follows the flow of money. Meaning is therefore more abstracted:

[T]he capitalist machine, insofar as it was built on the ruins of a despotic State more or less far removed in time, finds itself in a totally new situation: it is faced with the task of decoding and deterritorializing the flows... unlike previous social machines, the capitalist machine is incapable of providing a code that will apply to the whole of the social field. By substituting money for the very notion of a code, it has created an axiomatic of abstract quantities that keeps moving further and further in the direction of the deterritorialization of the socius. (AO, 33)

On the surface, capitalism appears appealing in its ability to free desire. In contrast to territorialization, which as Holland suggests, “programs desire to valorize certain organs and objects at the expense of others,” the process of deterritorialization, so long as it lasts, refers to “the free-flowing, relatively unfixed, form of desire Deleuze and Guattari call schizophrenia”

(2002, 19). As well, such deterritorialization also refers to “the process of freeing desire from established organs and objects: one of the principle aims of schizoanalysis.” At the same time, however, in the historical transition to capitalism, it refers to “the freeing of labor-power from specific means of production” such as in the historical case of peasants ‘banished’ or ‘freed’ ... from common land when it was enclosed for sheep-grazing” and who simultaneously found work in urban factories, “their labor-power was thereby re-attached or ‘reterritorialized’ onto new means of production” (19). We quickly understand why, as Holland also points out, the “fundamental mechanism” of what Deleuze and Guattari refer to as the ‘axiomatization,’ “operates by conjoining deterritorialized resources and appropriating the surplus arising from their reterritorializing conjunction” (19). Importantly, as Deleuze and Guattari emphasize, the movement of deterritorialization “is exorcised through factitious and artificial reterritorializations. Capitalism is constructed on the ruins of the territorial and the despotic, the mythic and the tragic representations, but it re-establishes them in its own service and in another form, as images of capital” (AO, 303).

As Holland observes, “were it not for the inconvenience of having human workers, managers, and consumers, capitalism might do very nicely without any meanings whatsoever. The belief in any general meaning under these conditions is hopelessly nostalgic and obsolete – or ‘paranoid.’” (2002, 20). It is the requirement for consumers, and those of particular interest here who are both young consumers and future labourers, that demands the continuation of codifications and artificial, contrived and delusional associations with values, often in the form of advertizing both implicit and explicit at all levels of social media and social relations.

It is, in my opinion, important to consider that all three models of the socius continue to operate across the social landscape. And though Deleuze and Guattari do not appear to speak explicitly about the nature of a colonial society in these terms, it would not be a stretch to consider the Canadian context as but a more obvious case where not only do the three regimes coexist, but they continue to clash, as for example in the lines of resistance over land claims against capitalist claims for extraction rights. As Alberto Toscano explains, to the extent that

capitalism's "mode of operation can entirely bypass subjective belief or the coding of human behaviour" (2010, 23), we experience a shift from the dynamics of the first two regimes. From the characteristics of what, in following Foucault, might be called disciplinary societies, which operate in a kind of Orwellian, big brother' fear of being caught as deviating from the norm, capitalism moves us towards what Deleuze refers to as a society of control where control is exercised in a more abstract and global manner through notions of economic competition and 'getting ahead.'

But since the first two regimes never entirely disappear, as Toscano explains, "not only do flows continue to evade and even overpower the axiomatic, but the global and non-qualified subjectivity of capital never attains absolute deterritorialisation" (2010, 23). More specific to the context of education, Krejsler also argues that in terms of the social machines impacting the construction of student or educational assemblages, both the disciplinary society and what Deleuze conceptualizes as the 'control-society' are at work:

the school machine takes on different forms, depending on the local contexts it encounters, and the desires that are available to be led. Some schools are more easily remolded when the machine activates elements of the disciplinary school regime that resonate with already existing concepts and practices of teaching, pupils, and teachers. Other learning contexts readily let themselves territorialize through post-disciplinary discourses and practices eluding lifelong learning and employability, as the points of subjectivation of bodies and minds are continuously tickled with promises of self-realization and dream careers. (2016, 1481)

The apparent innocence of early games in the schoolyard builds steadily into the competitive rules of engagement characterizing secondary and post-secondary institutions. It is, I believe, the competitive element emphasized and reinforced by capitalism that lies at the heart of much of the social conflict and the 'us' versus 'them' mentality that is nurtured in schools. As Deleuze explains, the "abandonment of all university research" and the incursion of 'perpetual training' follows in the wake of "the introduction of the 'corporation' at all levels of schooling" (PSC, 7). Acknowledging how schooling has already adopted a business model, mirroring that of the surrounding territory, and operationalized through its emphasis on competition, assessment and codification of success and competencies, Deleuze describes more fully the machine that

drives the subjectivization of students and the ethos of individualism no matter how delusional it may be:

Many young people strangely boast of being 'motivated'; they re-request apprenticeships and permanent training. It's up to them to discover what they're being made to serve, just as their elders discovered, not without difficulty, the telos of the disciplines. The coils of a serpent are more complex than the burrows of a molehill. (PSC, 7)

And as Postma adds, “neoliberal forms of education produce subjectivities characterized by consumerism, isolated and possessive individualism and competitiveness essential to the reproduction of the neoliberal order” (2016, 311).

The descriptions Deleuze and Guattari offer of complete immersion into the social machines of capitalism are some of the most dramatic or most affective in their entire oeuvre. For example, they describe the body's experience in terms of affects and affections, alluding to the paradox of 'joy' as quite the opposite of the joyful affects that increase the body's capacity:

A violence without purpose, a joy, a pure joy in feeling oneself a wheel in the machine, traversed by flows, broken by schizzes. Placing oneself in a position where one is thus traversed, broken, fucked by the socius, looking for the right place where, according to the aims and the interests assigned to us, one feels something moving that has neither an interest nor a purpose. (AO, 346-347)

In other words, what may appear to be liberating and 'rational' turns out to be not quite so. As Deleuze explains elsewhere,

Everything is rational in capitalism, except capital or capitalism itself. The stock market is certainly rational; one can understand it, study it, the capitalists know how to use it, and yet it is completely delirious, it's mad. It is in this sense that we say: the rational is always the rationality of an irrational. (in Chaosophy, 2009, 35-36)

And in perhaps the most damning of passages, Deleuze and Guattari, alluding to underlying questions of self-enslavement that inspire their project, summarize as follows:

Everyone in his class and his person receives something from this power [of the capitalist machine], or is excluded from it, insofar as the great flow is converted into incomes, incomes of wages or of enterprises that define aims or spheres of interest, selections, detachments, and portions.... We see the most disadvantaged, the most excluded members of society invest with passion the system that oppresses them, and where they always find an interest, since it is here that they search for and measure it. Interest always comes after. (AO, 346)

In considering the three syntheses discussed earlier in terms of the nature of connections produced within the three social formations described here, all of which arguably operate simultaneously in the contemporary world we live in and in different spaces and periods of subjective experience, the conjunctive synthesis appears, as Deleuze and Guattari suggest, to have two very different tendencies. As a result of the actions of the social machines, the body experiences a kind of delirium, “the general matrix of every unconscious social investment” in which, “every unconscious investment mobilizes a delirious interplay of disinvestments, of counterinvestments, of overinvestments” (AO, 279). This, they suggest, reaches its height in the society immersed in the dynamics of capitalism in which the delirium is pulled to one of two poles, already implied in previous comments: the paranoid and the schizophrenic, which in turn refer to the “two major types of social investment: segregative and nomadic” (AO, 279). The ‘problem’ with delirium, Deleuze suggests, lies in the “extraordinary transitions” between the two: “the one is a reactionary pole, so to speak, a fascist pole of the type: ‘I am a superior race,’ which shows up in every paranoid delirium; and the other is a revolutionary pole: like Rimbaud, when he says: ‘I am an inferior race, always and forever.’” (DIOT, 235).

Referring to the former, Dirk Postma explains how fascism or paranoia reflects “the desire for the power to suppress diversifying desires and to reproduce the same through isolated subjectivity” (2016, 317). This is consistent with the growing resistance found in social conservatism and exclusionary practices around the world. Social psychologist, Jonathan Haidt, for example, identifies what he calls the 5 core conservative values: 1) harm/care, 2) fairness/reciprocity; 3) in-group loyalty; 4) authority/respect; and 5) purity/sancity which, interestingly contrast those of more liberal mindsets which appear to focus only on the first two of these (Haidt, 2008). But not just conservative minded people are prone to paranoiac tendencies. Most of us resist letting go of our attachments, the recognition of which grounds many of the world’s great religious philosophies. Openness is scary and we like the comfort of closed systems and closed societies. As Eric Fromm argued, humans would rather choose to escape freedom than embrace it (1969). Likewise, in the existentialism of Sarte, the anxieties and anguish that come from the freedom to choose are often the source of nausea or angst,

just too much to withstand... Hence, when Deleuze and Guattari suggest that the default body is that of the paranoid, it is perhaps this tendency to which they refer: a disposition that chooses determination, closure, certainty, fixity, including the preference for clear categories, clear representations and clear identities: we are much more comfortable in the homey warmth of "I know who I am" than the airy exterior of undiscovered difference.

Associated with the codings or signs of the first two regimes described above, we can easily identify these same tendencies in the divisiveness manifested in both provincial and school environments. As Deleuze and Guattari explain, the paranoiac or fascisizing type, "invests the formation of central sovereignty; overinvests it by making it the final eternal cause for all the other social forms of history; counterinvests the enclaves or the periphery; and disinvests every free "figure" of desire." (AO, 279). Somewhat shocking, given that over four decades having passed since this text was first published, their declaration of the paranoiac sentiment might just as well have been written amid the racial and environmental conflicts of 2020: "yes, I am your kind, and I belong to the superior race and class" (279). As Holland points out, representation is "not just a distortion of desire but the principal means of repressing desire and of betraying its authentic schizophrenic form" (2002, 21-22). In schools, it is not a stretch to suggest that representation and identity are at the centre of current discourse surrounding explicit and implicit acts of racism, homophobia and sexism. If paranoia refers, as Holland explains, to "what is archaic in capitalism, the resuscitation of obsolete, or traditional, belief-centered modes of social organization," then reviewing the regimes of signs just discussed, it is easy to imagine the various 'tribal' and 'despotic' social formations that might exist in the students' world.

On the other hand, the schizophrenic pole, as central to capitalism's demand for continual growth, may as mentioned earlier, 'appear' at first to be most desirable and closest to the ideal of an open BwO. However, as Deleuze and Guattari argue, "Capitalism with all its flows, may dispatch itself straight to the moon: we really haven't seen anything yet!" (AO, 34). And certainly, from the perspective of liberation from the despot's shackles, it would seem a

positive step: as they suggest, capitalism may have always “haunted all forms of society.... their terrifying nightmare, it is the dread they feel of a flow that would elude their codes” (AO, 140). However, against these appeals, they are also quick to add that schizophrenia, in its most negative sense, is the “characteristic malady, the malady of our era,” explaining that “capitalism, through its process of production, produces an awesome schizophrenic accumulation of energy or charge, against which it brings all its vast powers of repression to bear, but which nonetheless continues to act as capitalism's limit” (AO, 34). Without the ability to create or recreate connections, the schizophrenic, struggles to live and flourish: The schizorevolutionary “follows the lines of escape of desire; breaches the wall and causes flows to move; assembles its machines and its groups-in-fusion in the enclaves or at the periphery—proceeding in an inverse fashion from that of the other pole: I am not your kind, I belong eternally to the inferior race, I am a beast, a black.” (AO, 279). Capitalism, Postma adds, “operates on the basis of an insatiable lack which it promises to fulfil through the consumption of commodities” (317). For Deleuze and Guattari, desire is both generated and repressed by the social machines of capitalism and it is “in this way,” Postma concludes, that “the productive force of desire is captured in a spiral of pre-existing lacks and satisfactions,” resulting in a “permanent danger for desires to be distorted and derailed” (317). Ultimately, Ceciel Meiborg and Sjoerd Van Tuinen observe that it is also the paradox of joy mentioned earlier under affect on which capitalism can depend:

[C]apitalism could not exist if it did not also inspire joy, love, courage, and perhaps even beatitude. Fordism already compensated for fear by installing a hope for more consumption. Today we witness ‘the spectacle of the happily dominated’ of the managerial class, the flex worker, the citizen-consumer, the bean-roasting hipster, the homo economicus, and the self-managed team (2016, 14).

Capitalism continues to thrive, in wealthier countries at least, because of the continued lure of consumerism, the ‘American dream,’ and the myths of progress, individualism and triumph. And while for certain dispositions the schizophrenic is driven by ego-fueled ambition chasing the proverbial carrot, for others the schizophrenic is simply a search for escape. We are reminded here of the more maladaptive exclusive (disjunctive) synthesis at work: “the revolutionary knows that escape is revolutionary—withdrawal, freaks—provided one sweeps

away the social cover on leaving or causes a piece of the system to get lost in the shuffle” (AO, 277). Once again, we can easily find examples of such movements not only in the classrooms and hallways of schools, but in many of the heroes of disestablishmentarianism young people often adore. In their most positive expressions of the schizophrenic tendencies, these are the students who express a kind of revolutionary spirit and are quick to criticize and decode the fascist signs surrounding them. On the other hand, they all too often leave to exist as loners which in the worst-case scenarios, become either violently reactive or suicidal, without any concrete attempts or means of changing the system they so abhor. One can think of a long line of celebrity musicians who perhaps fit these qualities both in life and in their early deaths: Jim Morrison, Kurt Cobain, Elliot Smith, Chris Cornell to name but a few with large followings of young listeners. Caught in the constant movement – delirium – between the two poles, the student is either accepted or rejected, in power or without power, on the ‘right’ path or on no path at all. Living as they do at the intersections of competing and overlapping regimes of signs, they become especially prone to the worst affects of both sides of the spectrum. When the first two regimes are at work through systems of ‘authority,’ whether tribal or hierarchical, then territorializations and codifications become primary and often enticing sources of identities which, for many, serve as survival blankets. In the positive sense, these become markers of imagined or real belonging. In the more negative, they can also become markers of not fitting an identity and a sense of not belonging.

The Problem of Self-Enslavement

We are perhaps now in a position to address what Deleuze and Guattari suggest is “the fundamental problem of political philosophy” (AO, 29) as well as “the most profound” (AO, 345), which “is still precisely the one that Spinoza saw so clearly, and that Wilhelm Reich rediscovered: ‘Why do men fight for their servitude as stubbornly as though it were their salvation?’... after centuries of exploitation, why do people still tolerate being humiliated and enslaved, to such a point, indeed, that they actually want humiliation and slavery not only for others but for themselves?” (AO, 29)

To the extent that subjectivities are “defined in terms of modern territorialities” (AO, 35), they are caught or enslaved within a set of expectations, habits, codes. As they exclaim early in *Anti-Oedipus*, “Desiring-machines make us an organism; but at the very heart of this production, within the very production of this production, the body suffers from being organized in this way, from not having some other sort of organization, or no organization at all” (AO, 8). Consistent with Deleuze’s focus on breaking away from the dogmatic image of thought and representational thinking, their collaborative work is equally concerned with how the social machinery work to repress generative flows of desire that might otherwise connect with the outside... with difference: “Desire can never be deceived. Interests can be deceived, unrecognized, or betrayed, but not desire” (AO, 257).

Calling him the “true founder of a materialist psychiatry,” Deleuze and Guattari suggest that Wilhelm Reich, was “the first to raise the problem of the relationship between desire and the social field” (AO, 118). Returning to his provocations throughout their work, they not only reframe his questions, but expand on its reach with their own conceptualizations:

How does one explain that desire devotes itself to operations that are not failures of recognition, but rather perfectly reactionary unconscious investments? And what does Reich mean when he speaks of ‘traditional bonds’? The latter also belong to the historical process and bring us back to the modern functions of the State...defined by processes of decoding and deterritorialization. But what they deterritorialize with one hand, they reterritorialize with the other. These neoter-ritorialities are often artificial, residual, archaic; but they are archaisms having a perfectly current function, our modern way of ‘imbricating,’ of sectioning off, of reintroducing code fragments, resuscitating old codes, inventing pseudo codes or jargons. (AO, 257)

Reich failed, however, because he did not “sufficiently formulate the concept of desiring-production” and therefore “did not succeed in determining the insertion of desire into the economic infrastructure itself, the insertion of the drives into social production” (118-119). Given the centrality of Reich’s question in their work, it is no wonder they have gone to such lengths to explain the force of social production on the unconscious. As Holland explains, they devoted so much effort to how “institutions of human reproduction vary historically,” because to assume that human nature or instinct were universal would amount “to justifying in advance total resignation to any and all forms of social oppression” (2002, 10). And while Reich’s

question appears to be limited to the earlier forms of society, particularly the forces behind more paranoiac subject formations, it is clear that Deleuze and Guattari are just as concerned if not more-so, with the repressions instilled under capitalism:

[De]sire represses itself in the great capitalist aggregate. Repressing desire, not only for others but in oneself, being the cop for others and for oneself—that is what arouses, and it is not ideology, it is economy. Capitalism garners and possesses the force of the aim and the interest (power), but it feels a disinterested love for the absurd and nonpossessed force of the machine. Oh, to be sure, it is not for himself or his children that the capitalist works, but for the immortality of the system. (AO, 346)

Goodchild explains that while there are “innumerable powers that operate in society to prevent desire, multiplicity, and creation from coming into existence,” these are not, as we might suspect, in the form of obstacles, but rather “by interposing themselves so that other relations come into play” (1996, 5), not so unlike the infant’s mouth being distracted by clown dancing in the corner of the room, though in the case of regimes of signs, the diversions are largely created for other interests within the network of social machines: “Desire is 'repressed' by another desire when its immanence and consistency is disrupted. A power-formation is composed of immanent relations, but constructed in such a way as to preserve a part of itself” (5). The social-machines of the corporation, the state, or the school district have interests that work to capture those of individual organisms. And while desire moves according to social investments, “power,” Goodchild concludes, “operates through the construction of a certain kind of meaning that organizes social relations, shaping desire, the unconscious, and ultimately consciousness. (1996, 5)

Subject Groups and Subjected/Subjugated Groups

Of particular significance here, and in the context of education, is the dynamics of groups or collectives and how these same elements of enslavement, as with the affections of crowds discussed earlier, are especially powerful as in the case of group think, mob mentality or what Nietzsche not-so-lovingly referred to as the *herd*. As Deleuze and Guattari explain, the reciprocal and entirely integrated nature of the individual and group are defined by the ‘fantasies’ or two ‘regimes’ of group and individual. The two are distinguished, they argue, by

how “the social production of ‘goods’ imposes its rule on desire” (AO, 63). On the one hand, it could presumably operate “through the intermediary of an ego whose fictional unity is guaranteed by the goods themselves,” in which case the interests and underlying drives or investments are mutually aligned in the deceit of pleasure. Or on the other hand, “the desiring-production of affects imposes its rule on institutions whose elements are no longer anything but drives” (63), in which case it is an entire group that buys into the fantasy. But recognizing how the individual is produced in the furnace of the unconscious immersed in the social, there is ultimately no such thing as *individual* fantasy. Their conclusion is that “there are two types of groups, subject-groups and subjugated groups” (AO, 64), the latter sometimes referred to as ‘subjected’ groups.

This distinction, I would suggest, forms a picture of many of the social dynamics we observe in the world around us: “perpetually shifting, a subject-group always being threatened with subjugation, a subjugated group capable in certain cases of being forced to take on a revolutionary role” (AO, 64). Unfortunately, now, and likely throughout history, the former subjugated groups far out-number those who exist, even momentarily, as subject groups. So much so that I would suggest the subject-group is more hypothetical than real, and that if we consider multiple aspects of daily life, everyone is likely a participant of at least one or more subjugated groups with which they ‘identify’. Recalling Colebrook’s example of assemblage as multiplicity, if we consider a population of people within a country’s borders, “subjugated groups are governed by an identity of units, so that we can understand being British, for example, as a condition for entering the group. There is an identity that precedes and underlies the assemblage, group or multiplicity” (2002b, 60). This is, as she illustrates, what we often think of in terms of nationalism though it can equally be observed in any group where there is a belief in some kind of common character, trait or quality with which they explicitly or implicitly ‘identify’ and which defines the border between an ‘us’ and a ‘them.’ On the other hand, the ‘subject’ group “transforms with each alteration of force; what a member *is* would also alter with each transformation” (60-61) and is “defined not by how many members are in the group but by the nature of the grouping” (61), again referring to the nature of multiplicity.

As May points out, “It is not difficult to find subjected groups engaged in politics. Turn on the television. The talking heads will offer subjected group talk to anyone willing to listen. There is always an us and a them” (2005, 150). It is central to the axiomatics of capitalism and in particular its further development into a neo-liberal global system where, as Deleuze explains,

This is no longer a capitalism for production but for the product, which is to say, for being sold or marketed.... the factory has given way to the corporation. The family, the school, the army, the factory are no longer the distinct analogical spaces that converge towards an owner—state or private power—but coded figures—deformable and transformable—of a single corporation that now has only stockholders” (PSC, 6).

And in the process, he suggests, “The numerical language of control is made of codes that mark access to information, or reject it. We no longer find ourselves dealing with the mass/individual pair. Individuals have become “dividuals,” and masses, samples, data, markets, or ‘banks.’” (PSC, 4). Not individuals but groups are categorized according to what they can offer in terms of capital, whether that be finances, knowledge, or access.

It is, as I have implied throughout, the subjugated group formation and the impacts of schooling on such groups that is of particular interest to me in this present work. Though as a teacher I still, from time to time, refer to the encounter between a student and a text, or a teacher and a student, what is implicated and what matters most are the corresponding forces of the social, particularly through the collective enunciations of the text, and the heterogenous and socially formed unconscious of the organism within the larger assemblage.

I also believe that as much as schools serve to generate future subjected groups ready and willing to join the machinery of capitalism, they are also potentially sources of revolutionary or subject groups that can shift the assemblage in a way that opens it to the outside...*a life*. As Deleuze and Guattari note, this would imply

a group whose libidinal investments are themselves revolutionary, it causes desire to penetrate into the social field, and subordinates the socius or the forms of power to desiring-production; productive of desire and a desire that produces... it opposes real coefficients of transversality to the symbolic determinations of subjugation, coefficients without a hierarchy or a group superego. (AO, 348-349)

Though forever vulnerable to subordination by the repressive affects of social codes, subjugated groups can, I believe, be affected by learning in a way that gives them a better chance than they would otherwise have of breaking away from such codes. And as naïve, rosy, and perhaps futile as this may sound, it is a premise on which much of this work is grounded. Again, the focus here, against the predominant investment in the codings of individualism, is to consider how certain pedagogical practices might serve to disturb the desiring push and pull of social-machines in a way that might loosen or counter-actualize the claims of repression and disrupt the borders around the territories. When Maurizio Lazzarato emphasizes, following *Anti-Oedipus*, that desire “is always born from the outside, from an encounter, a coupling or an assemblage” he alludes to the collective nature of both the unconscious desire and that in which desire invests itself: “it is the assemblage and not the individuated subject that make someone or something desirable. We never desire a someone alone or something alone but worlds and possibles” (2017, 53). It is the potential for education, and the literary encounter to disturb the assemblage, even if it is simply as a rhizomatic appendage of another world or another possible into the imaginary, that we might find some sliver of optimism in the opportunities to which the learning encounter might avail us.

As Mark Seem explains in the introduction to *Anti-Oedipus*, “There can be no revolutionary actions... where the relations between people and groups are relations of exclusion and segregation. Groups must multiply and connect in ever new ways, freeing up territorialities for the construction of new social arrangements.” Given education’s role in producing and reproducing the society of which it is part, the classroom can serve as either a place where the various codifications work their repressive powers or, more optimistically, it can potentially provide a means to weaken or at the very least to ‘disturb’ what William Blake so famously called ‘mind-forged manacles’ and open bodies to new connections. Subject-groups, Deleuze and Guattari contend, “are continually deriving from subjugated groups through a rupture of the latter: they mobilize desire, and always cut its flows again further on, overcoming the limit, bringing the social machines back to the elementary forces of desire that form them” (AO, 349).

Though what they might imply as elementary forces is already alluded to with the conceptualization of the three syntheses, the constructive forces and resistances in the evolution of an assemblage is more fully developed in their second volume as they expand on a number of important concepts that also, perhaps, speak more directly to what a pedagogy of disturbance might or should entail.

Stratification

Having this understanding of desire, particularly with respect to connection and the social construction of subjects and groups, before proceeding to the possibilities of disturbance or rupture through the introduction of the literary machine, it is necessary to look more closely at the characteristics of the assemblage that speak to the forces of stability and therefore where we might find opportunities of transformation, albeit at a miniscule or ‘molecular’ level. To begin with, Deleuze and Guattari make a distinction between the geography of the map, which is capable of sustaining the multiplicity of the assemblage or rhizome, and the arborescence of a tracing, which ‘manages’ the multiplicity by flattening it, dulling it and making it recognizable or representable. Hence, a cartography or geographic understanding of the virtual and the unconscious recognizes both the ways in which becoming is ossified into being, as well as its potential for movement and shifts towards becoming. While coding and territorialization refer to forces that define boundaries around identifiable or representational modes of being and expression, stratification speaks to the degree of stability or rigidity of such traits. This is mirrored in the distinction between the map/rhizome and tracing/tree as intended not as a dualism, but rather to highlight the fluidity between one tendency and the other. Life flows in both directions and though it may appear that there is a deference here towards change, there are times when settlement is necessary for survival, just as there are aspects of life in which habit proves desirable:

Does not a multiplicity have strata upon which unifications and totalizations, massifications, mimetic mechanisms, signifying power takeovers, and subjective attributions take root? Do not even lines of flight, due to their eventual divergence, reproduce the very formations their function it was to dismantle or outflank? But the opposite is also true.” (ATP, 13)

Deleuze and Guattari imagine, through the persona of Doctor Challenger, a return to the concept of the BwO but this time through the analogous historical ‘stratification’ of the earth. They begin with a kind of geological primordial image, stating bluntly that “the Earth—the Deterritorialized, the Glacial, the giant Molecule—is a body without organs... permeated by unformed, unstable matters, by flows in all directions, by free intensities or nomadic

singularities, by mad or transitory particles” (ATP 40). At the same time, this same body is subject to “inevitable phenomenon that is beneficial in many respects and unfortunate in many others: stratification” (ATP, 40). Strata, as the narrative continues, “are Layers, Belts. They consist of giving form to matters, of imprisoning intensities or locking singularities into systems of resonance and redundancy, of producing upon the body of the earth molecules large and small and organizing them into molar aggregates” (ATP, 40).

In his book *Foucault*, the namesake for whom he attributes the origin of the concept of strata, Deleuze defines them as “historical formations,” somewhat associated with the previous discussion of social formations but extending to the beginning of time. Continuing with the geological analogy, like a riverbed, strata are “‘sedimentary beds’ they are made from things and words, from seeing and speaking, from the visible and the sayable, from bands of visibility and fields of readability, from contents and expressions” (F, 47). Strata “operate by coding and territorialization upon the earth; they proceed simultaneously by code and by territoriality.” (ATP, 40). In my reading of this concept, strata refer to layers of codes and territories of varying degrees of stability which, over, time can settle into rigid states of being.

In the process, the BwO “thickens at the level of strata” (ATP, 40). It is easy at this point to become bogged down in terminology and their complex and shifting descriptions of the metaphysics of the body, but my simplified interpretation points to an image of the assemblage as mirroring that of a river, at the bottom, fully sedimented and stable, is what they will refer to as the *molar*: “‘folding’ that sets up a stable functional structure and effects the passage from sediment to sedimentary rock” (ATP, 41). Moving upward, the body is subject to the currents of multiple flows, gradually becoming more supple or fluid, and to the degree it touches the surface, a point at which it faces the *outside*, it becomes fully *molecular*. Referring to the two extremes, they contend that “each articulation has a corresponding type of segmentarity or multiplicity: one type is supple, more molecular, and merely ordered; the other is more rigid, molar, and organized” (ATP, 41), the latter which they further relate to the “phenomena of centering, unification, totalization, integration, hierarchization, and finalization” (ATP, 41). As

an aside, what strikes me about this analogy is how well it matches what we know of brain development, with sedimentation pointing to the literal myelin sheaths that develop over repeated use around neural pathways in a way that reinforces habitual responses to the world.

It is worth pointing out that the concepts of the assemblage and the BwO appear to be used in very similar ways, perhaps because the assemblage's interface or dynamic centre is the BwO. The assemblage is imagined as having two sides, as already mentioned, one facing various strata, including the individual organism, and the other facing the plane of consistency, the outside, or a dis-organ-ized chaos: "one side of the assemblage of desire, the side facing the strata, organisms, State, family... " and the other "Tao side of destratification that draws a plane of consistency proper to desire" (ATP, 157). Likewise, they describe the BwO similarly "swing[ing] between two poles, the surfaces of stratification into which it is recoiled, on which it submits to the judgment, and the plane of consistency in which it unfurls and opens to experimentation" (ATP, 159) and later as "always swinging between the surfaces that stratify it and the plane that sets it free" (ATP, 161).

Of particular importance to this work are the three substrata facing the BwO, which together coalesce to establish and fix human identity, subject to the tensions created by "perpetual and violent combat between the plane of consistency, which frees the BwO, cutting across and dismantling all of the strata, and the surfaces of stratification that block it or make it recoil" (ATP, 159). These 'three great strata' are "the ones that most directly bind us: the organism, signifiante, and subjectification." Elaborating, they suggest that as a 'human' organism,

You will be organized, you will be an organism, you will articulate your body—otherwise you're just depraved. You will be signifier and signified, interpreter and interpreted—otherwise you're just a deviant. You will be a subject, nailed down as one, a subject of the enunciation recoiled into a subject of the statement—otherwise you're just a tramp.
(ATP, 159)

Referring once again to the concept of the BwO, we are reminded that the organism is not the body, but simply "a stratum on the BwO" (ATP, 159). The dominant expressions of representation and values that circulate through codifications impose transcendent images of thought – *judgements of God* that act to uproot the body "from its immanence and makes it an

organism, a signification, a subject" (159). The stratification of the BwO corresponds to a "a phenomenon of accumulation, coagulation, and sedimentation that, in order to extract useful labor from the BwO, imposes upon it forms, functions, bonds, dominant and hierarchized organizations, organized transcendences" (159). Against the strata, Deleuze and Guattari identify the potential for softening these forms of sedimentation, what they call the possibility of 'disarticulation' as properties of the other face of the BwO, the plane of consistency. In the process, they highlight "experimentation as the operation on that plane (no signifier, never interpret!), and nomadism as the movement (keep moving, even in place, never stop moving, motionless voyage, desubjectification)" (159).

In his introduction to ATP, Massumi explains that he follows "the increasingly common practice of importing *signifiance* and *interpretance* into English without modification" which he contends "refer respectively to the syntagmatic and paradigmatic processes of language as a 'signifying regime of signs' as "borrowed from Benveniste ('signifying capacity' and 'interpretative capacity.'" (ATP, xviii). Along with interpretation, Deleuze and Guattari suggest that signifiance is one of "the two diseases of the earth or the skin, in other words, humankind's fundamental neurosis" (114). Signifiance is also ultimately interconnected with subjectivity: "No signifiance, no subjectification" (22).

As strata, both signifiance and subjectivity are logically identified as centres of "Arborescent systems [that] are hierarchical systems...central automata like organized memories" (ATP, 16). It is no wonder, considering the power of relations and forces of affect associated with certain hierarchies, that Deleuze and Guattari return repeatedly to these images of structured and interpreted experience, relating them to issues of racism, sexism, class, etc. and as strata, signifiance and subjectivity are planted firmly with hierarchies sedimented over time through the codings of social structures. It is this process of stratification that produces recognitions or interpretations of identity, and the *us* and *them* at the centre of social divisions and conflict. As they state, "all individuated enunciation remains trapped within the dominant significations, all signifying desire is associated with dominated subjects" (ATP, 23).

As a form of expression, Deleuze and Guattari suggest that signifiante “characterizes one regime, which is not even the most interesting or modern or contemporary one, but is perhaps only more pernicious, cancerous, and despotic than the others, and more steeped in illusion than they” (ATP, 68). Later they add that, intrinsic to language, and clearly associated with the conceptualization of the historical regimes of signs discussed earlier,

There is no signifiante independent of dominant significations, nor is there subjectification independent of an established order of subjection. Both depend on the nature and transmission of order-words in a given social field.... There is no individual enunciation. There is not even a subject of enunciation. Yet relatively few linguists have analyzed the necessarily social character of enunciation. (ATP, 79-80)

In other words, subjects are made subject and directed as subjects through the intrinsic qualities and signifiers of the dominant language. This, too, will be of special importance to my own work, particularly in addressing issues of colonization and the value of minor becomings: “The notion of collective assemblage of enunciation takes on primary importance since it is what must account for the social character” (80).

Deleuze and Guattari also emphasize the concept of faciality as associated with subjectification and the imposition of identity. As Deleuze suggests, in facilitating the work of the social machines of a given civilization, the ‘face’ is used to “to produce, to ‘overcode’ the whole body and head” (DII, 18). In many ways, everything we do in the classroom – from the very structure of ‘schooling’ in the West with its focus on assessment and competition to the very selection of materials and literary texts – reflect and contribute to the stratum of signifiante and subjectivity. As Deleuze and Guattari explain, “The strata are bonds, pincers. “Tie me up if you wish.” We are continually stratified. But who is this we that is not me, for the subject no less than the organism belongs to and depends on a stratum?” (ATP, 159). Or as they point out more concretely,

a child, woman, mother, man, father, boss, teacher, police officer, does not speak a general language but one whose signifying traits are indexed to specific faciality traits. Faces are not basically individual; they define zones of frequency or probability, delimit a field that neutralizes in advance any expressions or connections unamenable to the appropriate significations. (ATP, 168)

Faciality therefore speaks most directly to issues of prejudice, discrimination and racism, based on signification arising representations, which significantly, literature can either reinforce or disrupt.

Together, these three substrata, the organism, signifiante and subjectivity – generate both stability and, unfortunately, inflexibility. As Cameron Reid explains,

[T]he body is confined not only to its bio-mechanical frame, but is reduced to what it signifies (i.e., the interpretations or representations we may have of it—e.g., we ask: ‘what is it?’ or ‘what does it mean?’). The body is also restricted to structures of value and import, and ultimately subjected to some type of identity or essential attribute that only further shuts down its materio-semiotic capacities to engender sensation, to bifurcate, and to become-other. (2010, 105)

It is this level of stratification that helps to explain how many student bodies find themselves struggling, consciously or unconsciously, with a sense of not being who others expect them to be or not finding an identity which readily fits. These are the bodily experiences Ahmed refers to “of becoming very alienated from worlds that become not just given but reproduced insistently, not admitting you to be the body that you feel yourself to be” (2014, 105).

Building further on their conceptualization of the assemblage, and “Inherent to all the strata composing us” (ATP, 208), Deleuze and Guattari describe the rhizome as containing, “lines of segmentarity, according to which it is stratified, territorialized, organized, signified, attributed, etc., “(ATP, 9). Elaborating in a chapter devoted to the concept, they emphasize that “We are segmented from all around and in every direction. The human being is a segmentary animal” (ATP, 208). As an indicator of how human lives are patterned or organized spatially, temporally and socially, as products and components of social machines, they describe three different types of segmentation: binary, “following the great major dualist oppositions: social classes, but also men-women, adults-children, and so on” (208), circular, “in ever larger circles...my affairs, my neighborhood's affairs, my city's, my country's, the world's” and linear, “a straight line or a number of straight lines, of which each segment represents an episode or ‘proceeding’: as soon as we finish one proceeding we begin another, forever proceduring or procedured, in the family, in school, in the army, on the job. School tells us, ‘You’re not at home anymore’; the army tells us, ‘You’re not in school anymore’...” (ATP, 209) It is important to recognize that as

characteristics of the strata, segments – including binary, linear, and circular – are “bound up with one another, even cross over into each other, changing according to the point of view” (ATP, 209). As with all strata, these lines are characterized by degrees of sedimentation or rigidity. As products of forces already discussed, and in particular those of territory and codification (including the work of order words), these can form subjective attachments to identity and habit that are difficult if not impossible for many to move beyond. As Deleuze states, “each time, from one segment to the next, they speak to us, saying: ' Now you're not a baby any more' ; and at school , 'You're not at home now' ; and in the army, 'You're not at school now'”(DII, 124).

Stratification, like geological formations, works through gradual sedimentation. Starting with free molecular particles in the stream, to slightly more settled but still relatively supple or moveable, the mud floor, to the rigid molar lines of the rock bed. This is how Deleuze and Guattari view the process of subjectification and group formation occurring. Starting with free floating particles to gradual settlements of rigidity, depending on speed and slowness, duration, repetition, these processes help to explain the formation of habit in language, representation, actions that often characterize expressions of subjectivity in the organism. Though chronologically the types are described as proceeding, similar to the flows of a river, from free-flowing particles (lines of flight) to particulate or molecular to molar lines of hardened sedimentation, it is easier, following the examples provided by Deleuze and Guattari, to describe them from most to least stable.

The Molar: Rigid Lines of Stratification and Segmentarity

Considering their power to generate conflict and solidify boundaries between ‘us’ and ‘them,’ molar lines such as those which function within assemblages as ‘binary machines’ are the same lines that are captured by codification into representational thinking. They limit the possibilities of thought, imagination and action beyond the categorizations and labels already established. As May points out, “What makes these lines rigid is not what they contain but what people think they contain...They are infused with the dogmatic image of thought” (2005, 135). Molar

lines are often revealed in the views of the most extreme positions of race or gender debates with people on either side struggling to see beyond the representations they have 'learned' to embrace. Perspectives commonly hinge on tidy slogans and pre-set interpretations, and points of reference depleted of complexities, nuance and context and incapable of acknowledging, let alone addressing differences that don't fit the received images of thought. "The difficulty for political thought action," May adds, "is to grasp that more" (135-136).

In further fleshing out this conceptualization of the molar lines, Deleuze suggests a number of associated 'characteristics' that signal their presence. For example, molar segments "depend on binary machines...of social classes, of sexes, man-woman; of ages, child-adult; of races, black-white; of sectors, public-private; of subjectivations, ours-not ours." Perhaps related to notions of intersectionality introduced by Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989, 1991), he also acknowledges that these segments are "all the more complex for cutting across each other, or colliding against each other, confronting each other, and they cut us up in all sorts of directions" (DII,128). In other words, one can be identified as mother, poor, student, black and queer, with each of these segments potentially acting to reinforce the implications of others.

Related to the regimes of signs discussed earlier, Deleuze adds that molar lines or segments "also imply devices of power, which vary greatly among themselves, each fixing the code and the territory of the corresponding segment" (DII, 128). It is especially interesting to note how Deleuze himself describes each machine or 'device of power' as "a code-territory complex (do not approach my territory, it is I who give the orders here...)" (DII, 129). Here Deleuze discusses the place of the "apparatus of the State' which works as a 'concrete assemblage' that "realizes the machine of overcoding of a society" or the "social field," contending that "This machine in its turn is thus not the State itself, it is the abstract machine which organizes the dominant utterances and the established order of a society, the dominant languages and knowledge, conformist actions and feelings, the segments which prevail over the others" which, in constructing molar lines, works towards "homogenization of different segments"(DII, 129). Here, Deleuze includes as well 'forms of knowledge,' informatics, and human sciences as pulled

into service of the state. In sum, when examining any the sedimentation of the molar line, “one must distinguish the devices of power which code the diverse segments, the abstract machine which overcodes them and regulates their relationships and the apparatus of the State which realizes this machine” (129). In one of his few explicit references to education, Deleuze observes that certain patterns of conformity that emerge from the ‘plane of organization’ arise from “The education of the subject” (129). In other words, education under the various regimes of signs discussed earlier, is very effective in fulfilling its reproductive function, even as the contents and expressions that are produced may gradually shift according to the nature of the social environments as for example from disciplinary to control societies. Deleuze and Guattari point to the degree to which rigid lines ‘pervade’ and often ‘prevail’ in our lives:

Not only are the great molar aggregates segmented (States, institutions, classes), but so are people as elements of an aggregate, as are feelings as relations between people; they are segmented, not in such a way as to disturb or disperse, but on the contrary to ensure and control the identity of each agency, including personal identity. The fiancé can say to the young woman, even though there are differences between our segments, we have the same tastes and we are alike. I am a man, you are a woman; you are a telegraphist, I am a grocer; you count words, I weigh things; our segments fit together, conjugate. Conjugality. A whole interplay of well-determined, well-planned territories. (ATP, 195)

We are reminded once again of the representational nature [and function] of molar lines, which relative to the molecularity of what is there, but outside our ability to perceive and/or represent, help to deepen the proverbial lines in the sand across which many contemporary conflicts take place, often centred as they are on identity politics and majoritarian politics. But not only are they a source of conflict, but they also serve to limit possibilities of what can be imagined or created. As Albrecht-Crane and Slack suggest, "Reading the classroom in terms of pre-established identity affiliations reduces the ability to see what bodies can do, reduces, in fact, what bodies do. What 'happens' in the classroom is diminished, its 'thisness' violated" (2007, 105).

Similarly, we might imagine that reading a text in terms of what Reid calls, stratigraphic criticism (2010, 105), cuts the book in similar ways by all manner of interpretive and social

dispositions that limit what spills over or lies between the proverbial lines. The moment we are directed to see something in the text, that tends to be all we look for and all we ever see, missing the opportunity to engage with the outside of thought.

The Molecular: Supple Lines of Stratification and Segmentarity

This recognition of the outside brings us to what Deleuze and Guattari refer to as supple or molecular lines. Like the song, “Little Boxes” by Malvina Reynolds, while the social tries to fit everything into tiny categorical ‘boxes’ with recognizable labels, there is always excess or leakage.... entities and qualities, contents and expressions that don’t fit the boxes society builds for them. As Deleuze and Guattari explain, referring to what they call molecular lines, “Instead of a rigid line composed of well-determined segments, telegraphy now forms a supple flow marked by *quanta* that are like so many little segmentations-in-progress grasped at the moment of their birth, as on a moonbeam, or on an intensive scale” (ATP, 195). In contrast to the macropolitics of molar ‘well-determined aggregates or elements,’ micropolitics “concern flows and particles eluding those classes, sexes, and persons” (195). Or as Deleuze explains elsewhere, molecular lines which “trace out little modifications...make detours [and] sketch out rises and falls” (DII, 124). Admitting that ‘line’ may not even be the best choice for molecular flows, they refer to “molecular, or microeconomics, micropolitics” as less to do with size or ‘smallness’ but rather “the nature of its ‘mass’ —the quantum flow as opposed to the molar segmented line” (ATP, 217). Much like we might imagine a phase change from solid to liquid, say the flow of a stream across sandstone, levels of stratification “are constantly interfering, reacting upon each other, introducing into each other either a current of suppleness or a point of rigidity” (ATP, 195).

And though they ascertain that one is not necessarily better than the other, I would argue that the institution of education, with its reliance on molar categorization for its many systems of counting and accounting, leans too heavily on the molar. Often serving efficiency over effectiveness, much of the emphasis in education today is targeted at processes of selection

and service to economics. But even if we acknowledge its necessity in some contexts, unless the institution learns to attend to uncertain, ambiguous or malleable flows of life – the non-represented or inarticulate ‘thisness’ that cannot be otherwise defined or constrained except through measures of power and oppression, it remains incapable of extending much further than the deposits of facts and pre-established, pre-coded representations of the surrounding world. As already discussed, such education not only reinforces the molarity surrounding subjugated groups, deepening divisions already established in society, and reducing our ability to address the problems facing the planet.

Lines of Flight: Molecular Lines of Change or Escape

With enough softening, molecular lines can approach close enough to the surface to make another phase change possible. This line, as Deleuze suggests, “is even more strange: as if something carried us away, across our segments, but also across our thresholds, towards a destination which is unknown, not foreseeable, not pre-existent... it is the line of gravity or velocity, the line of flight and of the greatest gradient...(DII, 125). Molecular lines become molecular lines of flight and, following the analogy of the river, deterritorialization occurs to an uncertain *destination*, until which point these lines establish a new geographic landing site, reterritorialization takes place, and the process of sedimentation begins again. Lines of flight, as the name implies, are sometimes described in terms of escape:

From the viewpoint of micropolitics, a society is defined by its lines of flight, which are molecular. There is always something that flows or flees, that escapes the binary organizations, the resonance apparatus, and the overcoding machine: things that are attributed to a "change in values," the youth, women, the mad, etc. May 1968 in France was molecular, making what led up to it all the more imperceptible from the viewpoint of macropolitics. (ATP, 216)

Recognizing the flow of molecular lines, we begin to question the limits of molar lines – identities such as white, male, heterosexual; values such as good, competent, successful; and institutions such as school, marriage, nation -- and begin to look for “what escapes from them and within them”(May, 2005, 128). It is important, as May emphasizes, that “what Deleuze calls a line of flight is not a leap into another realm; it is a production within the realm of that from

which it takes flight” (128). In other words, rather than impose a transcendental image of what should be, as in numerous other transformative theories, the emphasis here remains on immanence. As Deleuze states,

We set against this fascism of power active, positive lines of flight, because these lines open up desire, desire's machines, and the organization of a social field of desire: it's not a matter of escaping 'personally,' from oneself, but of allowing something to escape, like bursting a pipe or a boil. Opening up flows beneath the social codes that seek to channel and block them. Desire never resists oppression, however local and tiny the resistance, without the challenge being communicated to the capitalist system as a whole and playing its part in bursting it open. (N, 19)

Ironically, the school is becoming more and more a place designed to stifle the immanent and creative forces rather than allow space for them to flourish, forcing bodies to contract into territories and molar formations of acceptable conformity. In recognizing the need for such environments, Deleuze and Guattari also make the distinction, conceptually, between striated and smooth spaces or “nomad space and sedentary space – the space in which the war machine develops, and the space instituted by the State apparatus” (474). As Tamboukou adds, “Striated spaces are hierarchical, rule-intensive, strictly bounded and confining, whereas smooth spaces are open, dynamic and allow for transformations to occur” (2008, 360). In my own district, as of 2014 the programming of ‘career pathways’ has taken hold of the imaginary of school leadership and through them, the signifying machine has further reinforced investments in life as competition and careers. Added to these and fueling such school programs are the surrounding social machines of a society largely under the spell of capitalism and neo-liberal marketing. As Kjesler points out,

Each individual node consists of the complex permutations among – in this case – the school machine, gender machine, individualizing machine, family machine, modernizing machine, and all the other order machines, from which a gradually rigidifying individual node borrows, and lends molecules to, over time. In consequence, we are all under threat from the gradual stratifying ossification to which the workings of habit and routine subject us... The challenge of the Deleuzian concept of the machine enables us to visualize what we normally call ‘individual subjectivity’ as so many effects of the workings of pulsating order machines that work on, and penetrate a body, mind, and thoughts over time. (1481-2)

While Deleuze and Guattari are quick to point out the relative dangers of each of the lines mentioned, they also imply a challenge to educators to not necessarily eschew all forms of molarity, but to become sensitive to possibilities of entrapment, oppression, and stagnation and continue seeking ways to soften the edges. In other words, to create space for lines to take flight should the need or the creative urge arise. Once again, as an English teacher, I consider this the primary work of art and literature, particularly in the service of igniting the unconscious imagination and open it to other possible worlds and becomings.

What happens when literature is encountered will largely depend on the nature of each organism's assemblage and their stratifying ligatures. Many students and teachers will share similar reactions due to their common sources of subjugation and reactions to social machines which they have in common. But many reactions will also be unique, to the extent that the classroom space is smooth enough to allow them to actualize freely. But as Deleuze and Guattari remind us, lines of flight, "never consist in running away from the world but rather in causing runoffs, as when you drill a hole in a pipe; there is no social system that does not leak from all directions, even if it makes its segments increasingly rigid in order to seal the lines of flight" (ATP, 204). Change is always, in the case of these movements, at the micro or molecular level. And "it is on lines of flight that new weapons are invented, to be turned against the heavy arms of the State" (204). These new weapons, which would include what they refer to as 'war machines' can and often do appear in the form of the arts, which challenge norms of representation, identity and imposed pathways of 'success. The lines of flight, fueled by immanent flows of desire, offer a source of optimism that, where molarity becomes oppressive to certain bodies, there is the potential for opening new space. As they state, "Good or bad, politics and its judgments are always molar, but it is the molecular and its assessment that makes it or breaks it" (222).

Education as Becoming

Ultimately, it is also the molecular lines of flight escaping the stratified body that constitute what Deleuze and Guattari refer to as becoming (as opposed to 'being'). Arguably, along with

the conceptualization of pure difference, the focus on becoming constitutes what might be considered the ultimate *raison d'être* of a micropolitics of education, despite the uncertainty that defines it.

In applying this theory to education, Albrecht-Crane and Slack describe lines of flight as “instantiations of desire, the primal force upon which society is built” (2007, 102). Importantly they point to this process as “the nexus of change...[where] molecular lines of flight form the 'field of immanence', the terrain upon which life comes to be” (102). Similarly, O’Sullivan points out that the conceptualization and acknowledgement of the concept of *becoming* is a kind of critique of philosophies and, I would add, pedagogies of *being*, recognizing that while “‘Being’ is static and fixes identities for all time, becomings are fluid and dynamic. Representation is all to do with Being” (2006, 56). In the context of the classroom, for all intents and purposes, we might equate the term becoming with learning at the molecular level as without becoming there is no change in being, and with no change in being, we might question if any learning has actually taken place.

Recognitions of lines of stratification, along with the syntheses of desire and territorializing forces of social machines, deepen our understanding of and sensitivity to the degrees of rigidity of the assemblage. As Kylie Message reminds us, it is the BwO which ultimately determines the conditioning of the virtual unconscious: “the BwO exists within stratified fields of organisation at the same time as it offers an alternative mode of being or experience (becoming)” (in Parr, 2010, 38). This description is consistent with the previous image of the BwO as a kind of hub or interface for the entire assemblage, having both an outer and inner face, with the former open to the ‘outside’ or chaosmos and the latter facing the stratified fields of the social and the organ[ized] body. Message adds that,

although the BwO is a process that is directed toward a course of continual becoming, it cannot break away entirely from the system that it desires escape from. While it seeks a mode of articulation that is free from the binding tropes of subjectification and signification, it must play a delicate game of maintaining some reference to these systems of stratification, or else risk obliteration or reterritorialisation back into these systems. (in Parr, 2010, 38)

Of special significance to the questions at the heart of this work, are the implications for ‘identity politics’ or ‘politics of recognition’ in social justice discourse. In this regard, Trish Garner points to the process of becoming as “involving movement from stable, ‘molar’ entity to indeterminable, ‘molecular’ nonidentity” (2014, 30). Though such becomings are quickly captured and territorialized, often with some new name or extension of an old, it is telling that no matter how many identities are named, there will always be some quality that doesn’t fit. Such an observation helps us to understand the ‘sense’ of not belonging experienced by many students surrounded by a system and curriculum which is designed for or dominated by other bodies. The continuous flow of becoming also recognizes that no matter how many new names or letters are added (consider for example LGBTQ2S++), there will always be a residue outside a border that can never contain the totality. This issue will be discussed more extensively in a later section.

The need for belonging, as previously mentioned, is at the heart of most of the social conflicts of today, many of which work to solidify molarities rather than loosen them. A study by Maciel Hernández et. al. investigated why so many young Mexican Americans embraced their heritage while at the same time, ironically, they were being bullied for their race and culture of cultural identity. As it turned out, several of those interviewed claimed they did not have such an attachment to their identities until they started to be bullied. The identities, as it turned out, were able to provide a source of belonging – a home – when their schools did not. As Grossberg points out, citing Paul Gilroy as a source,

[Y]ou don’t get rid of black people by getting rid of race. You get rid of racism and you reconstruct the ecology of belonging. It looks like a different modality of belonging because it won’t be built upon notions of individuated identity, difference, and negativity... seeing the relations between the ontological, the affective, and the conjunctural is key here...not in a Kantian but a Deleuzean sense. (2010, 325)

Recognizing the potential for different actualizations through ‘dominant machines,’ ‘regimes,’ and ‘structures of affect,’ Grossberg asks whether we need “to live belonging as identity” (324)? Considering how “identity is always bound up necessarily with difference and negativity,” are there not other “modern ways of belong[ing]?” (324, 325). If we can imagine a hypothetical world where differences would be allowed to flow freely, where everyone would be recognized and accepted as ‘different’ in the sense of multiplicities steadily shifting in terms of pure

difference, would there still be a need for identitarian or comparative differences to denote social distance and subjugated groups? Would this be a world where encounters with the other would be accompanied by flows of positive affect, in a way which mutually enhances everyone's capacities? Would this be a world where compassion flows as an openness to the complexity of the multiplicities each body's unique assemblage? Grossberg continues by making an implicit connection to Deleuze's notion of fabulation of a people yet to come:

There always has to be a way both to accept the reality that people live identity but also that there's always the potential for the actualization of other imaginations, of other ways of belonging, of identification, of community. And if you cannot theorize such possibilities, if you cannot see the present articulation as only one actuality among many virtual realities, then I do not think you can do the analytic and political work of understanding how one can move into another set of articulations (2010, 325)

A similar spirit of concern and optimism is shared by Nathan Widder who observes that "We have the political and social lives and values that we ought to have given the micropolitics that constitute us, and if we wish to move our politics beyond what it is at its most spiteful, vindictive, and reactionary, we must begin here" (2012, x). To the extent that education is capable of affecting assemblages, it is capable of opening up new becomings which could potentially be less spiteful, vindictive, or reactionary. As Widder concludes, it is only through a micropolitics such as that proposed in the work of Deleuze and Guattari that "a political and ethical pluralism [can] be truly affirmed and realized" (x).

It is important as well to recognize that becoming is by definition a movement away from what might be called majoritarian being. Within the context of education, Roy describes becoming as

mak[ing] small ruptures in our everyday habits of thought and start[ing] minor dissident flows and not grand "signifying breaks," for grand gestures start their own totalizing movement, and are easily captured. Instead, small ruptures are often imperceptible, and allow flows that are not easily detected or captured by majoritarian discourses. (2003, 31)

Here, Roy alludes to the related concept of becoming minor, which as Deleuze and Guattari emphasize, is really the only kind of becoming. It is also, I would add, the first shift away from an identity-based socius and subjectivity. Deleuze explains that in contrast to the major, "a homogeneous and constant system," the minority refers to not only any of a number of sub-

systems but to the process of becoming-minor: “The problem is never in gaining the majority, or even in putting in place a new constant. There is no becoming majority, majority is not a becoming” (cited in Braidotti, 1991, 108).

In their consideration of becoming-minor, Deleuze and Guattari also examine becoming-woman, becoming-child, becoming-animal, becoming inhuman, becoming-imperceptible – all of which demand a shift away from common-sense and dominant, homogenizing forces that serve to freeze being. It is a process that requires us to relinquish the molding of the transcendent by opening ourselves to the immanent: “We are not in the world, we become with the world... We become universes. Becoming animal, plant, molecular, becoming zero” (WIP, 169). In contrast to becoming-minor, they suggest that the majority “implies a constant, of expression or content, serving as a standard measure by which to evaluate it... [and] assumes a state of power and domination, not the other way around” (ATP, 105). Becoming-woman, which “all becomings begin with and pass through” (ATP, 277), is a movement towards breaking down binaries, whereby ‘woman’ is no longer defined against man, nor by “imitating or assuming the female form” but rather, by “emitting particles that enter the relation of movement and rest, or the zone of proximity, of a microfemininity, in other words, that produce in us a molecular woman [and] a molecular women's politics that slips into molar confrontations, and passes under or through them” (ATP, 275, 276). Here, too, they speak of a molecular, “capable of crossing and impregnating an entire social field, of contaminating men” (276).

All of which highlights, as Taguchi points out, the importance for recognized identities to consider “the molecular as resistance to social norms and normative ways of thinking and understanding. It constitutes a possibility of becoming otherwise, in trying out practices that move away from the power-production of such norms” (2013, 1109). Norms, for example, that might be readily associated with what Deleuze describes as “the standard constituted by any American or European white-Christian-male-adult-city-dweller of today” (in Braidotti, 1991, 115). Once again, this is about freeing desire against the forces of too-strict containment in the socius. It is not, however, about becoming something else, or something definable; rather, it is

a movement away from something rather than towards something. As Deleuze clarifies, “It’s not a question of being this or that sort of human, but of becoming inhuman, of a universal animal becoming... unravelling your body’s organization, exploring this or that zone of bodily intensity, with everyone discovering their own particular zones, and the groups, populations and species that inhabit them” (N, 11).

My interest in becoming, as a conceivable but by no means guaranteed outcome of a pedagogy of disturbance, is in connection to student encounters with a ‘minor literature.’ What would constitute an experiment with a minor politics of troubling fixed being, fixed prejudices, and fixed images of allegiances and alliances. A minor literature, as a minor politics or becoming minor, does not imply something lesser or lower in stature. Rather minor or a minor-politics refers to that which is not represented by dominant or majority representations. Nor, as Deleuze and Guattari clarify in reference to Kafka, does it “come from a minor language; it is rather that which a minority constructs within a major language” (K, 16). A construction which they associate with three immanent qualities: 1. it employs “language affected by a high coefficient of deterritorialization;” 2. “everything is political;” 3. “everything takes on a collective value” (K, 16, 17). These characteristics are inextricably integrated and for both writer and reader create the possibility of becoming under the weight of a majoritarian system of norms, values or expectations.

A minor literature is, I believe, deserving of special attention in any education system, such as the one in which I work, largely constructed of, by and for the majority, represented by dominant epistemologies of knowing and dominant ontologies of ‘being.’ “In continuous becomings,” Krejsler argues, “the individual body-mind-thought node plugs into semantic and material elements that channel specific desires. This is the fuel that drives the processes of becoming a teacher, student, rebellious or docile, and so forth” (2016, 1482). These nodes might include, though are certainly not limited to, a minor literature encountered in the classroom.

To say that education serves a political function is to state the obvious. Throughout its modern history, education has been conceptualized, operationalized, and reformed according to varying visions and revisions of whatever function it is expected to serve. Against both disciplinary and control structures, there is an obligation here to take up Wallin's challenge to relaunch "educational thinking from under the tyrannies of instrumentality and the freezing of life's becomings in the image of immutable psychological, social, and epistemological truths" (2012, 149). Applied to a *pedagogy of disturbance*, recognizing the role of the assemblage is integral to the prospect of a micropolitics of becoming, a constitutive determinant of learning. Not only does a more considered recognition of the body as inextricably connected to the social deepen our understanding of the ontological and ethical heart of education, but more specifically, it offers a way to think about literature as a literary machine plugged into the existing assemblage and as a potential disturbance helping to loosen the rigid structures that restrict movements of desire, subsequently both limiting and stratifying being within unjustifiable and un[reasonable] ingroup and outgroup boundaries.

Chapter 5: Agency and Putting the Forces to Work

In his brick of a book, *Behave: the biology of humans at our best and worst*, Robert Sapolsky observes that “Our brains form Us/Them dichotomies ... with astonishing speed,” compelling him to ask the questions, “How malleable are ‘Us’ and ‘Them’ categories?” and “Is there hope that human clannishness and xenophobia can be vanquished so that Hollywood-extra chimps and gorillas break bread together?” (2017, 387), alluding to the *Planet of the Apes* films.

Considering a neuroscience perspective highlights two key concerns to which I have alluded previously. The first refers to the habituation of thinking and behaviour, a concern woven throughout the theoretical work of Deleuze and Guattari, as well as that of Spinoza, Nietzsche and Bergson and many others. The second is related specifically to what I have argued is one of the dominant global crises of our time, the growing divisions between subjugated groups based largely on identity and representation and the dwindling survival of subject groups residing in open or smooth spaces of universal belonging. More specifically, the neuroscience of learning and education, as exemplified by Sapolsky, is exploring how it is possible to break dangerous and often ‘life’-threatening habits that appear to correspond to heavily myelinated neural pathways, a challenge that many feel, including psychologists and social scientists, is central to addressing the difficult task of breaking down ingroup/outgroup walls, particularly when these are built around biologically irrational prejudices, as in the example of racism. This is echoed in the previous discussion which explored the nature of heavily sedimented, stratified or molarities limiting the expansion of the assemblage in directions open to difference, liberated desire and becoming.

As Sapolsky’s questions suggest, there are clearly intersecting philosophical interests and even compatibilities of theory shared between these fields. On one hand, neuroscience seeks biological understanding not only through the imagery of MRI scanners, but also the relatively new but steadily growing science around brain plasticity and the roles of neurotransmitters and chemicals such as oxytocin (the love hormone) and dopamine (the happy hormone) (with

obvious parallels to Deleuze and Guattari's proposals of the three syntheses and social machines) in the construction and reinforcement of neuropathways through the process of myelination. Though the science is still far from being able to determine specific pathways of causality, there is enough data to draw several rather obvious conclusions: material changes in the brain correspond to educational choices in the classroom, classroom motivation can be charged by affect, and certain habits are more difficult to change than others. Science, for example, has already demonstrated that the speed at which messages/reactions move along myelinated pathways is many times faster than new, non-myelinated ones, that repetition helps the process of myelination, and that lack of use leads to pruning of unnecessary pathways. The point here is that the theoretical premises laid out in the earlier sections, as abstract as they are, have realized significant support in recent empirical studies. More importantly, however, is that while far from definitive answers, these fields all continue to struggle with the question I wish to address in this section: how much agency, especially as educators, do we have in shifting thinking and behaviour?

What does this mean for teachers and students in a classroom? With constant reminders of the indeterminate nature of differentiation and shifts in thinking being orchestrated in the pre-conscious, pre-personal and pre-lingual furnace of the unconscious, what remains available to the pedagogical choices of teachers that are subject to the same furnace of desire as the students? As May concludes, "Although the future is an actualization of difference, this actualization is constrained by the structure of a particular virtuality" (2005, 115). As emphasized earlier, what differentials form and how they impact the virtual cannot be predicted in advance. What choices are left once we accept the dominant role of the social and unconscious virtual in the very construction of conscious thought. Aside from theorizing unconscious, non-human, or object-oriented notions of agency such as described by Bryant (2011), is there pedagogical agency remaining within its more typical connotation as associated with conscious choice?

The stakes are especially high in what we accept as the answer, for without any scope of agency available to classroom instruction – a pedagogy of disturbance – there would seem nothing left to justify the teacher’s existence at all. No less so than the questions of freedom and determinism that have shadowed us throughout history. What do we have control over? What can we do that will or will not make a difference in the unfolding trajectories of students, communities, or ecologies (human and more-than-human)? How might we assist in creating a space for becoming? How might we set in motion transformation towards more ethical possibilities of life?

Considered from a different angle, how can we create enough disturbance to suspend or restrict the freefall flow of capitalist neo-liberal affect? As jagodzinski asks,

How then to jam or resist the microtemporal domain of sensation; that is, the transcendental sensibility that the capitalist neurological machine manufactures...How then to alter the plasticity of the brain creatively so that it attunes itself differently from capitalism’s particular clamor heard on numerous television shows that perpetually monitor an endless cycle of financial and the stock market graphs – a blend of economic mysticism with free market libertarianism? (2017c)

Perhaps the single greatest challenge of embracing the theoretical underpinnings adopted from Deleuze and Guattari is finding an entry point for classroom teachers. Considering Foucault’s claim that their ‘major enemy’ is fascism – “the fascism in us all, in our heads and in our everyday behavior, the fascism that causes us to love power, to desire the very thing that dominates and exploits us” (AO, Xiii), how can we as educator’s not wonder what we can do to lessen the hold of such enslavement. One that is perhaps nowhere more apparent than in the classroom, which Krejsler rather alarmingly draws to our attention in a rather dire summation of what educators face:

In our daily practices, our thoughts, minds, and bodies are usually so caught by routine and habit that often, we do not sense the myriad impulses, cracks, and fractures that always already surround us in a virtual sense....Much thinking and working within the conceptual constraints of the dominant school machine tend to make us continuously reproduce rituals that often do not joyfully appreciate the potentiality of other possible entanglements, that is, the potentials that are immanently there in the cracks, hopes, and dreams among the kids, the outside worlds and the worlds within as virtual non-actualized potential (e.g. Davies & Gannon, 2009).” (2016, 1476)

Notably, in such bleakness, there is also a challenge latent in Krejsler's words: to lapse into a kind of nihilism and do nothing is to overlook the possibilities that exist, whether they be those described as the immanent potentials, countering the forces of micro-fascism, or 'attuning' the body to various social enslavements.

Rather than targeting specific goals or cognitive theories of cause and affect, there is room, I believe, to work within the scope of a kind of soft determinism, a more passive, heavily qualified and conditional agency, that remains available to the conscious mind even within the unconscious determinism which characterizes much of this work. This is perhaps more a leap of faith than a fully confident stance, but one which rests on the absolute morass of the alternative, which would suggest teachers have no place at all in education and students themselves have no way out of the 'pincers' of strata awaiting them. As Sean Bowden points out, if we conceive of 'agency' as those who read Deleuze believing that "the capacity to 'make new, to transform, change, disrupt, differ and so on' – belongs only to the realm of 'virtual creations'" (2015, 61), then there is limited scope of options available to teachers in terms of creating the conditions for certain actualized differences in perception or behaviour. For this camp, "actual creatures such as human beings are merely passive results, products or conduits" (61). Hence, if we are to continue to show up at work each day, unless we somehow choose to perpetrate a charade of disingenuous purpose, we must assume what we do matters. A leap of faith which, though possibly distorted by delusion or desire, find some alignment with our own intuitions and experience in the classroom, as does my own. How can we not but make more informed decisions with what we now understand about the complexity of our collective assemblages?

How I respond to the world after reading Deleuze and Guattari is significantly different than how I responded prior to such exposure. How I respond to the world after reading particular works of literature, such as those few examples I discuss later, is different in both quality and reception than before such encounters. And though my initial encounter with Deleuze and Guattari, or any work of literature, may have been predetermined at some level within the

unconscious, there remains, intuitively, a sense that what I choose to do with the resulting actualized impact of such encounters on my subjectivity remains in some small part under my control. And while there may be no way of ensuring success, whatever that may be, there is at the very least a kind of counter-actualization, a softening of edges, and in the process an unlearning that might open space for difference.

This is perhaps what Kressler has in mind when he ‘suggests’ a ‘theoretical labour’ that

aim[s] at extending the capacity to think, and possibly perform, differently what are inherently non-stable entities that we currently call ‘the professional teacher,’ ‘student,’ and ‘school.’... it constructively troubles the spell of stratified entities that tend to ossify in their taken-for-granted actuality in daily school life, keeping in mind, however, the important caveat that not all practices are in need of being performed differently.” (2016, 1476)

While many scholars may judge me as naïve in this position on agency, I do not feel it is unsupported. Goodchild, for example, contends that, “at the heart of Deleuze and Guattari's combined thought lies an exploration of the possibilities of human relation, and their role in the reconstruction of subjectivity, society, and environment” (1996, 2). Similarly, in paying tribute to Deleuze, Adrian Parr, one of his best known interlocutors, defends his proposal of transcendental empiricism as “offer[ing] a critical tool when it comes to shifting the dial from the nihilism of despair to the richness of experience” (2015). Here she implies the practical potential in this work, particularly in addressing the general malaise of apathy that blankets many sectors of society, but especially our youth. Elaborating further, she infers not only to Deleuze and Guattari’s micropolitics of becoming, but a clear prospect of agency:

Instead of using universals such as individual rights to assess how life is practiced, Deleuze invites us to creatively engage with actually existing conditions adequate to the production of real differences: for example, differences that generate an outside to the axiomatic of capital and the violent affects of capital’s movement; differences that come from a consideration for how agency works; experimental and untimely differences that break apart mechanisms of capture; differences that operate as a revolutionary force on the outskirts of history. Problematizing is the form of transcendental empiricism because it calls into question habitual ways of thinking and acting. (2015)

Added to this, and perhaps of considerably more weight, are those statements by Deleuze and Guattari themselves, which on numerous occasions make mention of the spirit of revolutionary movement. For example, in one of the clearest statements on the topic, Guattari explains that,

We have to try and think a little about the meaning of revolution. This term is now so broken and worn out, and has been dragged through so many places, that it's necessary to go back to a basic, albeit elementary, definition. A revolution is something of the nature of a process, a change that makes it impossible to go back to the same point . . . a repetition that changes something, a repetition that brings about the irreversible. A process that produces history, taking us away from a repetition of the same attitudes and the same significances. Therefore, by definition, a revolution cannot be programmed, because what is programmed is always the déjà-là. Revolutions, like history, always bring surprises. By nature they are always unpredictable. That doesn't prevent one from working for revolution, as long as one understands 'working for revolution' as working for the unpredictable. (MRB, 258-259)

Thus, even within the constraints which they place on the unconscious, those which serve to enslave organisms to the social machinery of disciplinary societies as well as societies of control, there is still a sense in Guattari's words that given what is at stake, we have to try. I take solace in Guattari's last words here, that none of this prevents us as teachers from working for revolution, so long as we carry with us the humbling recognition that none of what happens next is entirely predictable. In what follows, I wish to draw on the three previous sections to explore the possibilities of agency that might yield certain pragmatic opportunities for educators and students. Though these do not constitute a methodology per se, they provide insights that serve to inform my orientation towards a pedagogy of disturbance. In the interests of this proposal, following Deleuze's own allusion to the critical and clinical in essays collected into his final volume (ECC), agentic intervention tends to fall under the diagnostic-analytical or the more therapeutic-experimental, both of which inevitably overlap in their implications and practice by informing each other. Analysis by itself would ultimately be impotent were it not intertwined with the more active move toward some notion of health, opening up to future possibilities... a people yet to come. As Smith explains,

The 'Good' or healthy life . . . is an overflowing and ascending form of existence, a mode of life that is able to transform itself depending on the forces it encounters, always increasing the power to live, always opening up new possibilities of life, and must be evaluated not only critically but also clinically. (ECC, xv)

Adequate Knowledge and Agreeable Relations

The transcendental empiricism of Deleuze focuses our attention first and foremost on the body, recognizing that the reactions we ‘feel’ or think in response to an encounter, including that of a text, are not to be taken in a causal sense, but rather as signs or symptoms of something more complex. As he states,

Nietzsche knows that the hour has arrived: ‘We are in the phase of the modesty of consciousness.’ To recall consciousness to its necessary modesty is to take it for what it is: a symptom, and nothing but a symptom, of a deeper transformation, a symptom of the activity of forces wholly other than spiritual... Consciousness is never self-consciousness, but the consciousness of an ego in relation to the self that is not conscious. It is not the master's consciousness, but the slave's consciousness in relation to a master who does not have to be conscious himself. (1977, 80)

Deleuze credits Spinoza for “open[ing] up a new way for philosophy of the sciences,” but in the process, alerting us to the fact that, “we neither know what a body is capable of, which forces are its own, nor what these forces hold in store for us” (Deleuze, 1977, 80). What amounts to a modest agency, begins, by definition, with our conscious recognition and questioning of our affections as signs or indicators of forces operating in the unconscious. More specific to the issue of agency, we might read this affective gap as a more profound understanding of what Rollo May points to as the key to freedom:

[T]he patient moves toward freedom and responsibility in his living as he becomes more conscious of the deterministic experiences in his life... As he becomes more conscious of the infinite deterministic forces in his life, he becomes more free...Freedom is thus not the opposite to determinism. Freedom is the individual's capacity to know that he is the determined one, to pause between stimulus and response and thus to throw his weight, however slight it may be, on the side of one particular response among several (1963, 103).

This speaks to the kind of narrow and conditioned agency which Deleuze and Spinoza speaks to in making the case of inching our way toward more agreeable affective relations which conceivably increase our body’s capacity to affect and be affected. Recalling my primary concern in this work as centred on the conflicts and tensions which emerge out of *us vs them* divisions, I am especially struck by Aurelia Armstrong’s comment that Spinoza takes up the

challenge of “individuals who, insofar as they are subject to passions..., tend to oppose and limit one another’s rights/ powers and reduce these powers to a minimum” (1997, 49). Which leads to Deleuze question of how they “come to meet one another in relations that are compatible, and so form a reasonable association” (EX, 265). And though we cannot access the unconscious nor the extended body of the assemblage, recognizing that affections must arise from somewhere, we can make inferences of causality which, depending on their accuracy, can lead to more informed responses to address potentially deleterious connections. If only it were so simple.

Inadequate Knowledge

The problem is that while inferences are often made quickly, they are rarely made accurately. “Consciousness,” Deleuze states, “is completely immersed in the unconscious.... we are only conscious of the ideas that express the effect of external bodies on our own, ideas of affections” (SPP, 59). Accepting the infinite connections that contribute to the unconscious, it is impossible to check the veracity of any theory of causality. Drawing on Spinoza, Deleuze emphasizes, “that consciousness is by nature the locus of an illusion. Its nature is such that it registers effects, but it knows nothing of causes” (SPP, 19). This recalls earlier discussions of the nature of affect: “we experience joy when a body encounters ours and enters into composition with it, and sadness when, on the contrary, a body or an idea threaten our own coherence” (SPP,19). But as I have argued, it is difficult to discern sad affections from the sadness to which Deleuze refers here. As well, determining which body or encounter is the actual cause of our sadness, considering the heterogenous nature of forces and the multiplicities generated within the unconscious, is to no small degree prone to confusion or error.

Deleuze, following Spinoza, distinguishes between three kinds of knowledge, two of which will be addressed here as they apply to the classroom: inadequate and adequate knowledge (TKK, 2003). ‘Inadequate knowledge,’ is, as already implied, the most common, the most reactive and the most passive state of conscious awareness. As Deleuze emphasizes, “the conditions under

which we know things and are conscious of ourselves condemn us to have only inadequate ideas, ideas that are confused and mutilated, effects separated from their real causes... condemned to undergo effects, [humans] are slaves of everything," (SPP, 19, 20). In other words, our conscious mind is ripe for distortions and illusions, "since it only takes in effects" and consciousness tends naturally to "satisfy its ignorance taking effects for causes (the illusion of final causes), it will construe the effect of a body on our body as the final cause of its own actions" (SPP, 20).

How does inadequate knowledge translate into daily life? For one thing, it helps to explain some of the sources of deep division and conflict; when we experience pain or anguish, it is not surprising that, consciously or unconsciously, we reactively place blame (causality) on the 'other,' identified outsiders of different race, gender, class or belief. A tendency which may be further exacerbated with personal and intergenerational trauma. Bignall suggests that inadequate knowledge often arises with little resistance and little consideration of reasoned response: "caused by the passive affections a body undergoes when other bodies impact upon it; these ideas are inadequate because they are cognizant only of what the body suffers and remain ignorant of bodily powers of action and active capacity, which describe 'what the body can do'" (2010a, 84-85). In other words, often encouraged by group associations, social media and propaganda machines with special interests in redirecting our attention, we are primed to attach blame on available scapegoats, which in our current climate is anyone that might be blamed for *us* not having a job, economic decline, or simply feelings of vulnerability or uncertainty. Unfortunately, these distorted conclusions of causality fall prey to easy solutions offered by fascist-leaning leaders. It was arguably what allowed for an easy sell to pre-WW II Germans reeling with skyrocketing inflation and food shortages and likewise, it is arguably the primary strategy employed by current figures such as Donald Trump and Boris Johnson who point their fingers at immigrant refugee populations, 'bleeding heart liberals' and other 'outsiders' in our midst in order to stir up support for their respective campaigns. As Connolly concludes, "There is reason to believe that conscious judgments of many about race, gender, sexuality, violence, and/or ecology stand in some tension with affect-imbued tendencies that

nudge us in different directions. It is, among other things, those latter dimensions that right-wing activists seek to tap and activate” (2011, 795).

This is exacerbated by our concomitant resistance to abandoning the comfort of deeply entrenched, often socially and familially reinforced, representations – both in terms of values and prejudices. As Deleuze observed, it is also characteristic for “inadequate ideas to be signs that call for interpretations by the imagination, and not expressions amenable to explications by the lively intellect” (SPP,107). This implies that reactionary statements of blame or cause are extended through our imaginations and interpretations which are already inclined to follow dominant representations – often as faciality – or other social codings, such as racial slurs, discussed earlier.

No doubt, such representations are generated and sedimented by the speed and movement of self-selected social media feeds that employ affect to reinforce what we either already believe or what others want us to believe. Speed is an especially important factor as it heightens the power of the affect and leaves little to no smooth space for reconsideration. As Connolly further explains,

The radical expansion of the mass media adds urgency to this issue. Media mixtures of noise, rhythm, image, concept, and music touch the infrasensible register as they also convey conscious judgments. That register, again, precedes, augments, or intensifies the others in something like the way the subaudible vibrations of organ music in fuse the composition of moods without themselves being felt. If there is never a vacuum on the infrasensible register of subjective and intersubjective life—indeed, thinking, perception, and emotion would hardly be possible if there were—then it is important for egalitarians and pluralists who care about the future to intervene productively in media politics. (2011, 795-796).

Deleuze describes active affections as those “that can be completely explained by the nature of the affected body” (EX, 219) whereby human organisms, also referred to as ‘existing modes,’ “do not exist by virtue of their own nature; their existence is composed of extensive parts that are determined and affected from outside, ad infinitum” (219). But if the organism or existing mode is affected by such an infinite number of heterogenous forces and “modes external to it,”

and it “undergoes changes that are not explained by its own nature alone,” then it would seem that achieving active affections is impossible.

Adequate Knowledge

Searching for ways out of the apparent impasse of what he calls affective determinism, Kristensen points to what he sees as a concern shared by both Spinoza and Deleuze of “how to get hold of our power of acting, that is, to act from our own nature” (2016, 20). Providing a response to this apparent dead end, Deleuze builds on Spinoza’s concept adequate knowledge through which Deleuze infers some limited sense of agency: “what is surprising is that men sometimes manage to understand truth, sometimes manage to understand one another, sometimes manage to free themselves from what fetters them” (EX:149). Opening the doors to the possibility of a more conscious access to awareness.

As he warns, however, “even supposing that a mode manages to produce active affections, while it exists it cannot eliminate all its passions, but can at best bring it about that its passions occupy only a small part of itself” (EX,219), implying that though slim, there is some possibility for movement. Considering the complexity of the assemblage and the infinite relations existing between the unconscious of the organism and other physical bodies, ideas, and memories, Deleuze concludes that knowledge “can only [ever] be adequate” (TKK,5).

These restrictions aside, Deleuze, following Spinoza, clear opens the doors to moving beyond ‘inadequate knowledge,’ establishing what Aurelia Armstrong refers to more explicitly as “the theme of agency in Spinoza” (1997, 97). This, Armstrong suggests, is pursued through two practices: “the passage from passive modes of existence to active or reasonable forms of life, and the process of formation of composite bodies” (1997, 49-50). The ‘empiricist’ perspective, as Armstrong further elaborates,

...is nowhere more apparent than in Spinoza’s characterization of agency as something to be attained, as the product of a practical activity in relation to both mind and body coincident with the effort on the part of individuals to increase their powers of acting

and understanding ... How can they increase their powers of acting and thinking to the point where they come into full possession of these powers?" (1997, 49)

Reason, as it is used here and by Spinoza himself, seems to point to the more analytical engagement directed at understanding, while increasing powers of acting and formation of composite bodies ultimately requires direct encounters with other bodies. The first practice is consistent with the process that Deleuze refers to directly as 'inquiry' or 'reflection. As he explains,

It is this positive kernel of the inadequate idea in consciousness that can serve as a regulative principle for a knowledge of the unconscious, that is, for an inquiry concerning what a body can do, for a determination of causes and for the forming of common notions. So once we have attained adequate ideas, we connect effects to their true causes, and consciousness, having become a reflection of adequate ideas, is capable of overcoming its illusions, forming clear and distinct ideas of the affections and affects it experiences (V, 4) (SPP,60)

It is at this point that this discussion of knowledge appears to intersect with Deleuze's earlier exploration of Proust's apprenticeship of signs. In both cases, the pragmatic application in the classroom might be realized as a kind of cognitive search that, out of necessity, must turn its attention to a heightened awareness of the physical body's affections. As an alternative to certain *cognitive approaches*, jagodzinski develops the concept of 'refleXion' to distinguish and re[vision] the more passive notion of reflection, adding a level of intensity and focus which highlights "the necessity to turn to an unconscious self that is informed by self-refleXion, where the X marks the spot for unconscious molecular subjectivity of the affective inhuman" (2008, 31). I adopt the concept here (though perhaps not entirely in line with jagodzinski's initial intention) to pry open the distortions of conscious thoughts and presumed 'knowledge.' Deleuze's reading of Spinoza speaks to a source of agency opened up through the process of refleXion, wherein the expanded X differentiates the process as one which focuses on the intersection between the virtual and the actual, a multiplicity of forces acting in the virtual unconscious and one or more affections recognized at the level of consciousness. This reconceptualization of reflection meets Deleuze's increased demands for 'concepts' that refuse to freeze their breadth of application to simple representation.

As educators, we must see ourselves in the potential role of interveners or mediators who at the very least, create time and smooth space and encourage students to pursue their own apprenticeship with patience. Through reflexion, as affections and causes are investigated more thoroughly, and questions of joy and sadness are scrutinized more contemplatively, inadequate knowledge is potentially shifted along a blurry continuum towards knowledge which is adequate.

In introducing the concept of adequate knowledge, Deleuze refers to a “knowledge of relations, of their composition and of their decomposition (TKK, 4). This kind of knowledge, he explains, moves beyond affections or “affects of encounters between parts,” to understanding “the manner in which my characteristic relations are composed with those of other things, and the manner in which my characteristic relations and other relations decompose themselves... It is opposed to a knowledge that is content to react, since this is a knowledge that raises itself to the comprehension of causes.” (TKK, 5). As Deleuze states elsewhere, “once we have attained adequate ideas, we connect effects to their true causes, and consciousness, having become a reflection of adequate ideas, is capable of overcoming its illusions, forming clear and distinct ideas of the affections and affects it experiences” (SPP, 60). It is adequate knowledge that most coheres with what psychologists might refer to as self-awareness, self-regulation or impulse control, though none of these necessarily include the requisite acknowledgement of the workings of the unconscious, assemblage and connections made within the virtual. We might also find corollaries in certain Eastern philosophies, such as Buddhism with even its iconography depicting attachments as ropes of ignorance that must be severed with swords of wisdom that understands the chains of attachment and suffering constituted by illusions of causality and deference to a distorted ego. For Deleuze, as Bignall explains, “self-awareness initially involves understanding how one is formed through constitutive relationships” (2010a, 85). Either way, such a process is understood as a difficult undertaking and one that is never complete.

And while we may never attain a satisfactory level of adequate knowledge, accepting that in many cases we will be left pursuing our understanding of causality (as for example so often

occurs in trauma), we might still hope to attenuate our reactionary impulses, recognizing by reason alone the fallibility of inadequate knowledge. As well, we might, with patience, relax the fixation we have on certain targets by a process of eliminating judgements we ascertain as erroneous. In the absence of adequate knowledge, practically speaking these might constitute the first steps toward dampening the most dangerous of passions as fueled by fear, anger, or hate, and in certain cases, even empathy.

As but one brief and somewhat skeletal example, Susan Ruddick offers an anecdote she ascribes to Deleuze of a young child, playing in the water, who is knocked down by a wave. With inadequate knowledge, the child strikes out with anger, judging the wave as bad. However, in moving to adequate knowledge the child begins to understand the nature of the wave and “the possibility (or lack of possibility) of becoming active with it.... Becoming active is a state of becoming, not being” (2010, 30). In other words, as the child enters into the apprenticeship of signs, not unlike the example Deleuze employs of learning to swim, the child begins to learn how the body of water interacts with his own body and by shifting the terms of the relationship from fighting against the water to working with the water’s singular points of contact, the antagonism is eliminated. We can easily imagine the scene in allegorical terms as mirroring many human conflicts, where one party might either avoid or attack ‘others’ on the basis of an inadequate understanding in which differences are misconstrued as threats. With a more adequate understanding of causality we might ‘become’ more ‘active’ in our behaviour, working with relations with otherness rather than against them.

Turning then to the more active aspect of agency, the empirical pursuit of adequate knowledge involves ‘intentionally’ selecting encounters with other bodies. These of course can be informed by adequate knowledge or used experimentally to generate adequate knowledge. According to Bignall, “reflective self-concept” – self-awareness or adequate knowledge – “develops into a reflexive practice of self-formation” (2010a, 85):

The mind develops knowledge of how the body can increasingly engage the kinds of relationships that maximise active affections. In doing so, a body increases its power to experience joyful affections, since the active relations the body chooses are naturally

those that increase its existential capacities (the conatus of a body entails that it chooses relations that preserve or increase its powers), and hence are experienced as joy. (85)

But what does it mean to actively engage? As Deleuze emphasizes, “We do not know what this power is, nor how we may acquire or discover it. And we will certainly never know this, if we do not concretely try to become active” (EX, 226). In other words, with each new encounter, there is a potential for an increase in knowledge and with an increase in adequate knowledge, each successive encounter is chosen more selectively. Though it is possible that experience itself will build such knowledge, with so many other directions which desire takes us, there seems no guarantee. In my mind, once again I think probability can be increased within the spaces created within education environments. Bignall suggest that “in striving to understand bodily compositions,” potentially through reflexion, “the mind ‘thinks the body’ in terms of its affective relations” (2010a, 85). By this, we might imagine that having moved beyond passive reception of affections and impulsive identification of causality, in considering the assemblage as a whole, the mind “transforms the body into a self-aware being that is increasingly capable of discerning which relations are compatible and enhance active capacities, thus bringing about joy, and which relations are experienced passively by the body, imposing upon the body and thus occasioning a feeling of sadness” (85).

Thus, recalling the earlier discussion of sad and joyful affects and the affections to which they might be associated, it is clear that only with the discernment or wisdom that accompanies adequate knowledge are we able to build a capacity to distinguish sad affections which paradoxically might be actualized from joyful affects and those sad or joyful affections which might in fact be incompatible or disagreeable in so far as they actualize from sad and incapacitating or destructive affects which reduce a body’s power to act: those which inevitably contract the possibilities for encountering *a life*. This, however, may be more aspirational than practical, as determining whether an encounter has been ‘joyful in expanding our worlds our being,’ or destructive, may be so challenging as to be insurmountable for most of us. As Ruddick emphasizes,

Spinoza argues that the motivation for a rational evaluation of our associations stems from the desire to reproduce joyful encounters and avoid painful ones. But the desire to avoid painful encounters might well lead us to steer clear of associations whose discomfort arises, in fact, from a social field that reinforces racism, sexism, class bias or other forms of oppression. How, then, do we traverse the uncomfortable divide presented by difference as alterity? (2010, 26)

Recalling the earlier discussions on thought and learning through signs, it is not just any encounter that will open possibilities for change, but rather one of 'discord' or disturbance. Deleuze repeatedly warns us that "thought emerges through the violence of the encounter, not recognition or joy, but when one is forced to think" (DR, 36). In so far as he so often equates affections with signs and signs with the kind of violence that creates problems within the virtual and potentially events of actualized disturbance – we begin to appreciate the potential obstacles to achieving adequate knowledge. At the same time, there seems a kind of contradiction between Deleuze's insistence on not knowing in advance what signs will grab us with the notion of active affections, active power and active engagement. The paradox might be resolved only through a long and arduous journey of reflection and experimentation, with the emphasis on chance referring to the likelihood that most subjectivities never reach the state of adequate knowledge or that the probability of them having the patience and temperament for such a journey is so very slim.

Towards Agreeable Relations

In his distinction between the slave or 'weak man' and the 'strong, free man,' Deleuze suggests that the former is "recognized by his sad passions, by [passive] affections based on sadness which diminish his power of action" while the latter is "recognized by his joyful passions, by affections that increase his power of action" (EX, 262). In terms of agency, Deleuze argues that,

We must, it seems, distinguish two stages of reason or freedom: increasing our power of action by striving to experience a maximum of joyful passive affections; and thence passing on to a final stage in which our power of action has so increased that it becomes capable of producing affections that are themselves active (262)

But as Deleuze also points out, the movement from passive sad affections or passions (of inadequate knowledge) – conceivably characterizing subjectivities seeming repulsed by or incapable of encounters with otherness – and active joyful passions (adequate knowledge) – characterizing those subjectivities capable of more expansive encounters with different, though agreeable relations – largely “remains mysterious” (262). With his increased active power, he suggests, the “reasonable, strong and free” man,

begins by doing all in his power to experience joyful passions. He then strives to extricate himself from chance encounters and the concatenation of sad passions, to organize good encounters, combine his relation with relations that combine directly with it, unite with what agrees in nature with him, and form a reasonable association between men; all this in such a way as to be affected with joy [towards] forming a totality of compatible relations. (EX, 262)

The movement from inadequate to adequate knowledge and active joy is clearly not something achieved in an instant. Deleuze describes “reason, strength and freedom,” drawing from Spinoza, as a “development, a formative process, a culture. Nobody is born free, nobody is born reasonable” (EX, 262). As already suggested, there is a clear implication for education as a potential site for this development and a role for teachers to play in creating space for the refeXion and the encounters which, even though initially undesirable to students based on the passions of inadequate knowledge, ultimately support an important formative process of becoming active. But while a teacher or guide might create space and opportunity, as he also reminds us, “nobody can undergo for us the slow learning of what agrees with our nature, the slow effort of discovering our joys” (262). There is a hope that over the course of childhood to maturity, the transformation takes place, as childhood is described in terms of “impotence and slavery, a state of foolishness” (263) during which “we are never more cut off from our power of action” (263).

Joy, compatibility, and agreement are therefore linked. As Deleuze cautions, when two bodies come together in an encounter, to varying degrees they either combine, as in a connection, in a way that “form[s] a more powerful whole” or, in the other direction, one “decomposes the other, destroying the cohesion of its parts... according to complex laws” (SPP, 19). How agreement or disagreement manifests in the body, at a molecular level, is difficult to discern

with any kind of accuracy. As well, it clearly differs according to the nature and assemblage of each body. To the extent that we realize such compatibility we attain what Deleuze, following Spinoza, also refers to as common notions: “When we encounter a body that agrees with our own, when we experience a joyful passive affection, we are induced to form the idea of what is common to that body and our own” (EX, 282). Presumably, as with adequate knowledge, common notions can also be accessed by consciousness as elsewhere he emphasizes that “common notions are an Art... organizing good encounters, composing relations, forming powers, experimenting” (PSS:119), which he also refers to as ‘the practical function’ of Spinoza’s *Ethics*. In other words, in the encounter with an agreeable body, not only are affections bound to be joyful, but something about the encounter motivates us to try to understand what makes the two bodies compatible...to identify ‘common notions.’ As Ruddick suggests, “It is through this interplay that we move from a passive experience of joy to an active understanding of the nature of the associations that empower” (2010, 26). The danger, once again, lies in the difficulty in discerning adequate knowledge and genuine increases in affect, because so many relations are distorted by illusion and desire’s creations of inclinations away from our body’s best interest. Also somewhat paradoxically, Deleuze points out that even in the case of sadness, “when a very universal common notion makes us understand a disagreement, a feeling of active joy again flows from this: an active joy always follows from what we understand (EX, 286). In other words, it is the becoming active, through an understanding or adequate knowledge of relations, that is linked to the joy or increased capacity to act: “even if we begin from a sad passion, the basic pattern of the earlier scheme is retained: sadness; forming a common notion; active joy flowing from it” (EX, 286).

Echoing earlier comments, this sense of ‘agreeable’ does not, as Bignall points out, mean agreeable in terms of similarity: rather, finding agreement is achieved “not by eliminating actual difference and privileging identity, but in the context of the actual diversity of bodies that express Being in infinitely multiple ways” (2010a, 88-89). According to the theories discussed so far, it is encounters outside of a body’s territories or milieus which are most likely to produce becomings. Recalling issues described earlier with disjunctive synthesis, repetition

of the same connection or set of connections, the comfort of the known, the in-group, or the habitual, inevitably leads to a kind of dulling, denial and even death of what constitutes 'life.' To stick with the 'familiar,' is to curtail learning which equates to curtailing expansion and life.

Stated in terms of the relevant political and educational questions, Ruddrick asks "what might compel us to form emancipatory collaborations across perceived differences, and what might prevent us?" (2010, 30). Or as Armstrong states in a similar inquiry, "how agreements can be produced, how powers can be combined and how relations between powers can be organized in such a way that these powers aid rather than restrain one another, add to rather than subtract from one another" (Armstrong, 49-50). We might assume that by achieving a minimum degree of adequate knowledge, we might be more willing to make connections across differences we would otherwise avoid. But, as Ruddick points out, in order to achieve adequate understanding, we have to enter such relations to begin with, and that "painful encounters are not interrogated so much as avoided. (30)" And what may initially be experienced as painful, might in the long run be exactly the machinic connection to compel future expansion – growth – assemblages into new territories. In the case of literature, it is sometimes the case that a student will complain bitterly throughout the process of reading a certain selection, preventing them from ever getting to the point of consciously acknowledging its value in their life as opening up new lines of experimentation, new lines of inquiry, new lines of connection. And yet, often it has occurred that some students do reach a level of awareness that in spite of their memories of a high school encounter with a book they detested, they have come to realize just how important it has become. In truth, were it not for the latter, many teachers would naturally steer away from works which they know will require considerable encouragement on their part to get students to the point at which they will read them.

As Deleuze contends, "We are not going to think unless as we are forced to go where the forces which give food for thought are, where the forces that make thought something active and affirmative are made use of" (NP, 110). For Deleuze, inspired by Nietzsche, this means opening ourselves to difficult encounters, far from what some might interpret as 'agreeable:' "It is up to

us to go to extreme places, to extreme times, where the highest and the deepest truths live and rise up. The places of thought are the tropical zones frequented by the tropical man, not temperate zones or the moral, methodical or moderate man” (110). Ruddick interprets this alternative as an invitation for us “to fashion alliances that are unforeseen, that might surprise us? ... If we attempt to think the modalities that might shape a new political subject -- either in theory or practice -- we must remain open to interrogating the bases of our fears of (or indifferences to) alterity, open to discomfort that is the ‘dark precursor’ to a new political imaginary” (2010, 23).

Chance encounters, then, can potentially lead to either joy or sadness, though as discussed earlier, this is not to be interpreted literally as joyful or sad emotions. But if we accept Ruddick’s interpretation of Deleuze and Spinoza, the “the refusal of the inadequate idea emerges not through an act of will, the desire of the sage to ‘overcome error’, but as a product of encounter” (2010, 36), then our goal in education must be to increase the probabilities that students will accept our invitation to such encounters. And though we have no way of knowing for sure which encounters will affect becoming, we can at the very least make informed choices. As already noted, the texts explored here are more likely to lead to affections of sorrow and discomfort. Yet, on the basis of my own experiments, previous experiments with students, and the understanding I now bring to this work, I rather optimistically (naïvely?) believe they have a greater than average potential to offer the kind of agreement or joyful affect that will open up channels of compassion and expansion of assemblages to new flows and connections of desire. This may, I argue, be why many students can cry, but at the same time cherish an experience of reading, without being able to put their finger on why.

As Goodchild clarifies,

Knowledge is no longer a question of being able to repeat the main points of as many books as possible in a library, nor is it a question of being able to criticize their weaknesses and failings; knowledge is more like the capacity to direct oneself, through encounters with others, towards the most interesting and profound books in that library. Only through this knowledge can one awaken desire. (1996, 4-5)

And with this consideration of desire, I turn to the second agentic proposal I find in the collaborative work of Deleuze and Guattari typically found in discussions of schizoanalysis.

Schizoanalysis and Construction of a Body Without Organs

When Braidotti observes that “We are seeing parallel but different social pathologies: what is it about the xenophobic neo-nationalists, in the UK as in the EU, and now also in the USA, that makes them unable to provide what Spinoza would call an adequate understanding of their condition?” (2017, 187), she implies, correctly I believe, that not everyone is capable of the kind of contemplative reflexion adequate knowledge requires. And though she refers to more extremist positions, I would argue the same holds for the vast majority of humans. It is of some relief, then, that that Deleuze and Guattari offer a second agential trajectory, which targets the unconscious rather than the conscious as a site of analysis and action.

Emerging from their collaborative work, and though overlapping in places, largely derived from a different constellation of concepts, this second trajectory is generally referred to under the umbrella of schizoanalysis, which as John Protevi suggests, speaks most directly to their theories of micropolitics. As with the potential for adequate knowledge, here schizoanalysis also encompasses both a process of analysis and an engaged experimental practice.

Through the persona of Professor Challenger, Deleuze and Guattari propose “a discipline he referred to by various names: rhizomatics, stratoanalysis, schizoanalysis, nomadology, micropolitics, pragmatics, the science of multiplicities” (ATP, 43). Elsewhere, in considering the varying lines of segmentation that precedes but largely directs individuation, Deleuze repeats a similar list with added terms, “What we call by different names - schizoanalysis, micro-politics, pragmatics, diagrammatism, rhizomatics, cartography - has no other object than the study of these lines, in groups or as individuals” (DII, 125).

However, as the number of associated terms suggests, Buchanan is quite justified in referring to it as an ‘incomplete project,’ announcing that “There is no straightforward way to say what schizoanalysis is. The problem is not so much that the question is not answered by Deleuze and Guattari or that it is somehow unanswerable; rather the problem is that it has several answers”

(2013, 163). The following are but a few of the more succinct definitions they offer at various points in their work:

- *To overturn the theater of representation into the order of desiring-production: this is the whole task of schizoanalysis* (AO, 271)
- *That is what the completion of the process is: not a promised and a pre-existing land, but a world created in the process of its tendency, its coming undone, its deterritorialization.* (AO, 322)
- *The first positive task consists of discovering in a subject the nature, formation or the functioning of his desiring-machines, independently of any interpretations. What do you put into these machines, what is the output, how does it work, what are your nonhuman sexes?’* (AO: 322)
- *Schizoanalysis has one single aim—to get revolutionary, artistic, and analytic machines working as parts, cogs, of one another. Again, if you take délire, we see it as having two poles, a fascist paranoid pole and a schizo-revolutionary pole. That's what we're interested in: revolutionary schisis as opposed to the despotic signifier* (N, 24)
- *[S]chizoanalysis attains a nonfigurative and nonsymbolic unconscious, a pure abstract figural dimension ("abstract" in the sense of abstract painting), flows-schizzes or real-desire, apprehended below the minimum conditions of identity.* (AO, 351)
- *The task of schizoanalysis is that of learning what a subject's desiring-machines are, how they work, with what syntheses, what bursts of energy in the machine, what constituent misfires, with what flows, what chains and what becomings in each case. Moreover, this positive task cannot be separated from indispensable destructions, the destruction of the molar aggregates, the structures and representations that prevent the machine from functioning.* (AO, 338)

Indeed, Deleuze expresses a view, not long after the publication of *Anti-Oedipus*, that they ‘renounced the use of the term’ (DIOT, 278), along with other terms such as ‘desiring-machine’.

As he explains:

It's awful, if we use [such terms], we're caught in the trap. We don't know very well what they mean, we no longer believe in the words; when we use a word, we want to say, if this word doesn't agree with you, find another, there's always a way. We don't know very well what they mean, we no longer believe in the words ... we need to focus less on what the term schizoanalysis means, and more on what it does, especially in terms of how it functions in relation to other concepts (278).

In other words, it appears that certain concepts are in danger of becoming like the concepts from which they want to distance themselves, bound to representation and specific images of thought, rather than living in an unfixed space and capable of prying open new flows of difference. The lack of clarity with respect to schizoanalysis, as Buchanan also points out, may

have been intentional, showing how Deleuze was likely “unwilling to provide any kind of ‘formula’ or ‘model’ that would enable us to simply ‘do’ schizoanalysis as a tick-box exercise,” preferring instead a “quite deliberate strategy of providing multiple answers to the questions their work raises” (163). Likewise, Savat and Thompson’s response, echoing Buchanan’s, is to “focus less on what the term schizoanalysis means, and more on what it does, especially in terms of how it functions in relation to other concepts” (2015, 281).

With this in mind, accepting that in spite of Deleuze’s comments there is still value in the conceptualizations of schizoanalysis they offer, I follow the path many scholars have taken, adapting certain elements or principles of schizoanalysis to suit my own needs. With the many chapters related to the topic of schizoanalysis either directly or indirectly in their own work, combined with the considerable number of secondary sources, what I offer here is only a brief and likely incomplete synthesis in deference to my interests in education. As well, I have been selective in gleaning only what I have found relevant to my own work which, under the auspices of schizoanalysis, informs the kind of analysis that might be best suited for the work in schools by both student and teachers. What I draw from the various discussions of schizoanalysis is no doubt an adaptation and application of a number of ideas raised under the concept of schizoanalysis within the literature classroom, simultaneously of the teacher, the institutions, the students for themselves, characters within literary texts, and the texts as rhizomatic additions to the assemblage.

Addressing schizoanalysis firstly as a kind of analysis, as apparent in the term itself, what interests me is the mapping of desires and interests. Critically, Deleuze and Guattari remind us that this is not about interpretation, echoing similar comments regarding the distortions of inadequate knowledge:

[O]ne can never, as in an interpretation, read the repressed through and in the repression, since the latter is constantly inducing a false image of the thing it represses: illegitimate and transcendent uses of the syntheses according to which the unconscious can no longer operate in accordance with its own constituent machines, but merely "represent" what a repressive apparatus gives it to represent... it gives rise to the

inevitable illusions (including the structure and the signifier) by means of which the conscious makes of the unconscious an image consonant with its wishes" (AO, 339)

Through a process of both personal and social investigation, we might proceed by identifying as many real, implied or sometimes inferred connections evidenced in the various assemblages. As Deleuze explains, "In the most diverse fields, one has to consider the component parts of assemblages, the nature of the lines, the mode of Life, the mode of utterance" (TRoM, 178). What are the various social machines at work? Where do intensities lie in memory? To where or to what do our interests attend? What are the dominant images or representations on which we fixate or with which we identify?

Similarly, Deleuze and Guattari emphasize the importance of the lines of stratification, coming as near as they ever do to a methodical approach in suggesting the following:

You can begin with the rigid segmentarity, it's the easiest, it's pre-given; and then you can look at how and to what extent it is crosscut by a supple segmentarity, a kind of rhizome surrounding its roots. Then you can look at how the line of flight enters in. And alliances and battles. But it is also possible to begin with the line of flight: perhaps this is the primary line, with its absolute deterritorialization. (ATP, 204-205)

There is, I believe, enough clarity in these passages to offer educators certain rudimentary principles that are suggestive of practical analysis in the concrete and abstract elements of institutional environments and classrooms. The distinctions between *us* and *them*, along with their sedimented boundaries and territories, begin with the molar lines. Just as indicators of molecular lines of flight might be evidenced by locating spaces of least and greatest belonging. Or, as Colebrook suggests, through a kind of apprenticeship, attending to what moves us (somewhat resonant with the earlier discussion of agreeable relations):

Imagination, rather, describes an "apparatus" that induces subjects to suffer a nearly endemic "slave-like subjectivity" precisely insofar as they regard themselves to be free, or undetermined. Without attention to what moves them to think and act, to their constraint and lack of freedom, subjects cannot modify their situation, or hope to become freer (2002a, 735)

Significantly, in the case of the literature classroom, there is an added layer of complexity as we must consider the availability of multiple interconnected analyses. One considering the text itself; another, the assemblage of the student's world; and still another which considers the

nature of the student's reactions to particular scenes or elements during the process of reading. Together, these allow for kind of back and forth analysis, with different diagrams informing each other. Where are the common points of intersection and where are the points of conflict or discomfort? Each observation suggesting a new path of inquiry. For example, the student might ask, what identities, values and images appear favoured or rejected in the text? Which identities, values or images stand out in my own life? Where do I least feel I belong? How do I identify myself? Which groups do I most feel I belong or don't belong? What are my life's ambitions? What repulses or disturbs me in this text? What angers me in or about this selection? What characters do I connect with? What scenes stand out for me? Why did I react the way I did when character X did what she did?

Bignall contends that "schizoanalytic philosophy unearths a power of delirium to liberate *a life*. Their method is pragmatic, problematizing and political because it locates paths of release from entrenched and powerful structures, which constrain possibilities for diversifying existence and limit the creative potential for innovation" (2015, 122). Schizo[analysis] achieves a certain degree of insight into the edges of our being and becoming. Or as Deleuze explains, "the analysis of assemblages, broken down into their component parts, opens up the way to a general logic: Guattari and I have only begun, and completing this logic will undoubtedly occupy us in the future. Guattari calls it 'diagrammarism'" (TRoM, 177). It is this logic, an approach to mapping, diagrammarism or rhizomatics, that also inspires the more physically active and experimental practice of schizoanalysis. As Deleuze and Guattari suggest, "Schizoanalysis, or pragmatics, has no other meaning: Make a rhizome. But you don't know what you can make a rhizome with, you don't know which subterranean stem is effectively going to make a rhizome, or enter a becoming, people your desert. So experiment" (ATP, 251).

Paralleling the previous discussion of adequate knowledge and common notions as gradually increasing the probability of more agreeable future encounters, here the mapping of machines, lines and flows helps to inform the active creation of the unconscious. And as with adequate knowledge, there is no necessary order as to which comes first, the experiment or the analysis.

In what we might construe as a nod to agency, Deleuze himself uses the word 'construct' when he states that "at the same time it is fully a plane of immanence, and yet it has to be constructed" (SPP, 123). A comment which is reinforced by Guattari who not only hints at a certain degree of agency, but in comparison to psychoanalysis which considers the unconscious as "already there," suggests that schizoanalysis remains open to the "question of constructing an unconscious" (1996, 206). As Buchanan observes, they "place a great premium on self-knowledge - but rather than asking us to get to know our inner self, they require us to come to know how that inner self was constituted" (2008, 121).

Citing Deleuze, Olsson (2009, 151) reminds us of the repressive though comforting grasp of social systems, particularly in the ready source of belonging they offer: "to inhabit a territory is not just about living at a particular geographical place. It is about inhabiting one's habits and manners in ways of speaking and acting. It is the creation of an environment that could be called 'chez soi' (at my place)" (2009, 151-152). In my reading of this work, a single human organism might inhabit multiple territories depending on which molar lines and which segments of these lines defines or striates their assemblage. For example, while in the presence of their families, they might inhabit the territories most defined by habits adopted from parents or siblings, including traditions and beliefs. At school, however, there are very different codifications at play, and the influence of peer pressure, school expectations and social expectations might all draw different investments. And through all of these, there are various forms of deterritorialization either happening or possible, many which are enabled through the axiomatic of capitalism. In a dangerously simplistic sense this gives credence to the adage that we become those with whom we hang around. Or existentially, we become that which we do; micropolitically, we are created as subjects in the assemblage which we inhabit. Desire of the social machines drown out the possibility of other desires, including of *a life* breaking through. And in so far as desiring machines are ingrained within social machines, it appears that in most cases, assemblages choose us more so that we choose our assemblages. Herein lies the potential for schizoanalysis to influence change. If we shift the assemblage, we might shift our subjectivities and begin the transition from subjugated groups to active subject groups.

The approach Deleuze and Guattari suggest has to do with constructing the BwO. Disturbing the BwO to create movement towards deterritorialization and open up possibilities of becoming. As Olsson adds, “To reterritorialize implies to form and inhabit a new territory. We live and act in one territory but from time to time we deterritorialize our current territory and start producing another one” (152). Deleuze and Guattari emphasize that “the issue is never to reduce the unconscious or to interpret it or to make it signify according to a tree model. The issue is to *produce the unconscious*, and with it new statements, different desires: the rhizome is precisely this production of the unconscious” (ATP, 18). A sentiment I understand as never settling for simply analysis, but as was the case with adequate knowledge, being willing to take concrete steps to experiment.

For Deleuze and Guattari, this means building a new BwO. In one of their most often quoted passages, one which deserves including in its entirety, they explain ‘how it should be done:’

Lodge yourself on a stratum, experiment with the opportunities it offers, find an advantageous place on it, find potential movements of deterritorialization, possible lines of flight, experience them, produce flow conjunctions here and there, try out continuums of intensities segment by segment, have a small plot of new land at all times. It is through a meticulous relation with the strata that one succeeds in freeing lines of flight, causing conjugated flows to pass and escape and bringing forth continuous intensities for a BwO. Connect, conjugate, continue: a whole "diagram," as opposed to still signifying and subjective programs. We are in a social formation; first see how it is stratified for us and in us and at the place where we are; then descend from the strata to the deeper assemblage within which we are held; gently tip the assemblage, making it pass over to the side of the plane of consistency. It is only there that the BwO reveals itself for what it is: connection of desires, conjunction of flows, continuum of intensities. You have constructed your own little machine, ready when needed to be plugged into other collective machines. (ATP, 161)

Though remaining somewhat abstract in terms of agency, I find that returning to the questions they ask earlier in *Anti-Oedipus* are especially informative of the process they describe here, “Given a certain effect, what machine is capable of producing it? And given a certain machine, what can it be used for?” (AO, 3). Arising from the [schizo]analysis of the assemblage, what machine can be added to potentially disturb or disrupt its enslavement? Though again recalling

that until we experiment, we have no way of knowing for sure what will unfold in the subjective becoming of the organism.

Approached from a different angle, Guattari associates the construction of one's subjectivity with the continuing process of making new connections: "The only acceptable finality of human activity is the production of a subjectivity that is auto-enriching its relation to the world in a continuous fashion" (C, 21). Furthermore, as he suggests elsewhere, what is important here is not just a "confrontation with new material of expression" but ultimately "the constitution of complexes of subjectivation: multiple exchanges between individual-group-machine" (C, 7), suggesting the necessity of both repetition and difference in similar and differing experiences. As was the case with 'common notions,' against the weight of molar habituation, it is the nurturing of added thickness or expanded multiplicities which increase the possibility of "recomposing their existential corporeality, to get out of their repetitive impasses and, in a certain way, to resingularise themselves" (C,7). This possibility of essentially remaking one's self is not, as he reminds us, simply a matter of consciously choosing a new subjectivity but rather through a kind of experimentation with one's assemblage to allow something new to emerge. Michael Levan, concludes that it is "by way of *variation* (or more specifically, continuous variation) that Deleuze hopes to render the familiar strange and find the phenomenon of process anew with all of the wonder and awe it deserves" (2007, 55).

Necessary Cautions

Importantly, given its unpredictability, experimentation does not come without risks. To start with, as already mentioned, one can not necessarily know in advance where it will lead. And though lines of flight are often described in positive terms, new becomings can either lead to what they refer to as breaking through or breaking down. While the schizo is open to rhizomatic becomings and displays interest or curiosity in abundance, it is possible to go too far. As Aden Evens observed, it is in their attending to the dangers which marks one of the distinctions between *Anti-Oedipus* and *A Thousand Plateaus* (1999, 235). While the former is

more enthusiastic about launching an assault on molar constraints, the latter “demands tactical considerations, choosing the right resistance, conserving ammunition for that moment when it will be most effective. Experiment, but maintain enough perspective to ensure that you will still be around to experiment some more tomorrow” (1999:235). From a pragmatic point of view, identifying certain dangers or traps might be even easier to understand in concrete terms than mapping the desires and desiring-machines of the assemblage. And for the purpose of the high school classroom, likely safer and more immediately approachable than the immediate jump to creating one’s own BwO, though the latter is still the primary inspiration.

Recalling the three substrata of the BwO, Deleuze and Guattari offer a similar caution, albeit softened by the recognition that, “dismantling the organism is no more difficult than dismantling the other two strata, significance and subjectification” (160). However, just as inadequate knowledge is difficult to overcome, they add that “significance clings to the soul just as the organism clings to the body, and it is not easy to get rid of either.” (160). So how do we ‘unhook’ ourselves from these strata which “nail us down to a dominant reality”? Continuing, they explain that,

Tearing the conscious away from the subject in order to make it a means of exploration, tearing the unconscious away from significance and interpretation in order to make it a veritable production: this is assuredly no more or less difficult than tearing the body away from the organism. Caution is the art common to all three; if in dismantling the organism there are times one courts death, in slipping away from significance and subjection one courts falsehood, illusion and hallucination and psychic death (ATP, 160)

Though encouraging the creation for oneself a BwO, they remind us as well that there are many ways of ‘botching’ it:

[E]ither one fails to produce it, or one produces it more or less, but nothing is produced on it, intensities do not pass or are blocked. This is because the BwO is always swinging between the surfaces that stratify it and the plane that sets it free. If you free it with too violent an action, if you blow apart the strata without taking precautions, then instead of drawing the plane you will be killed, plunged into a black hole, or even dragged toward catastrophe (ATP, 161).

In fact, in an apparent reversal of their initial enthusiasm, they suggest that “staying stratified—organized, signified, subjected—is not the worst that can happen; the worst that can happen is

if you throw the strata into demented or suicidal collapse, which brings them back down on us heavier than ever” (161). In the process of experimenting or building a BwO, they insist that,

You have to keep enough of the organism for it to reform each dawn; and you have to keep small supplies of signifiacnce and subjectification, if only to turn them against their own systems when the circumstances demand it, when things, persons, even situations, force you to; and you have to keep small rations of subjectivity in sufficient quantity to enable you to respond to the dominant reality. Mimic the strata. You don't reach the BwO, and its plane of consistency, by wildly destratifying. (ATP, 160)

In other words, to function in the world we need to keep one foot in the reality we have already constructed or in which we position ourselves. It does not help us to break so far away that we can no longer communicate or no longer create or maintain relationships. This would be one symptom of the breakdown. And complete isolation... and loneliness. There can be no revolutionary force on an island of one.

Elsewhere they elaborate on the risks by emphasizing that the study of the ‘dangers’ of the three lines – molar, molecular and flight – also comprises “the object of pragmatics or schizoanalysis” (ATP, 227), suggesting that considerations of concern are as important as prospects of becoming. At which point they enter into an elaborate account of the four dangers. The first of these, fear, speaks to the comfort of rigid molar lines, home, habit, and identities ... all of which imply a justifiable inertia in our lives. The fear of change:

We are always afraid of losing. Our security, the great molar organization that sustains us, the arborescences we cling to, the binary machines that give us a well-defined status, the resonances we enter into, the system of overcoding that dominates us—we desire all that... We flee from flight, rigidify our segments, give ourselves over to binary logic; the harder they have been to us on one segment, the harder we will be on another. (ATP, 227)

In many ways, this is characteristic of many conservative subjectivities, both social and political. It is also, unfortunately, an attitude often evidenced and created by school environments which operate under systemically and structurally imposed threats of failure. Such fear, as many in the profession have no doubt witnessed, results in a general dulling of any desire or inclinations to risk taking and a shift of attention away from the actual learning itself. More germane to my own project are the various groupings that are formed for the purposes of safety and belonging:

[W]e reterritorialize on anything available; the only segmentarity we know is molar, at the level of the large-scale aggregates we belong to, as well as at the level of the little groups we get into, as well as at the level of what goes on in our most intimate and private recesses. Everything is involved: modes of perception, kinds of actions, ways of moving, life-styles, semiotic regimes. A man comes home and says, "Is the grub ready?", and the wife answers, "What a scowl! Are you in a bad mood?": two rigid segments in confrontation. The more rigid the segmentarity, the more reassuring it is for us (ATP, 227).

Such fear is the fertile soil of division -- us vs them – and clearly defined demarcations of belonging which, at the same time, contributes to paranoia. It is no wonder so many students struggle with the fear of being judged, of not quite fitting in, and with making numerous sacrifices and compromises to either be noticed or to remain safe and unnoticed.

Next to fear is the danger associated with the second line – the molecular – which they refer to as ‘clarity.’ Offering as but one example the case of Castenada who achieves lucidity with certain drugs, clarity refers to the recognition of spaces, voids or holes in what may have ‘appeared’ whole or solid: “where just before we saw end points of clear-cut segments, now there are indistinct fringes, encroachments, overlappings, migrations, acts of segmentation that no longer coincide with the rigid segmentarity. Everything now appears supple, with holes in fullness, nebulas in forms, and flutter in lines. Everything has the clarity of the microscope” (228). But such clarity also poses certain risks of microfascisms created by “reproducing in miniature the affections, the affectations, of the rigid,” and working to the extreme against the stability of the molar to emerge as “marginal reterritorializations even worse than the others” (228). But unlike the tyranny of the molar, these microfascisms can “crystallize into a macrofascism, but may also float along the supple line on their own account and suffuse every little cell” like viruses. Such that in contrast to the paranoia that can characterize molar lines, we become “trapped in a thousand little monomanias, self-evident truths, and clarities that gush from every black hole and no longer form a system... giving any and everybody the mission of self-appointed judge, dispenser of justice, policeman, neighborhood SS man” (228). Such a system of “petty insecurities” creates a condition “even more disturbing than the certitudes of the first line” (228). Here, too, we can find examples in schools. Though there are many reasons students might distance themselves from others, we can occasionally see

evidence of microfascisms found in the severity of those who express a kind of extreme cynicism, anger, or resentment, often against surrounding cliques and folds of belonging, but without any interest in resolution. While on one hand, these might be students or teachers who have had the courage and momentum to avoid groupthink, in the worst cases, these are individuals or groups adept at fashioning narratives that are spiteful and even hateful of the masses. One might think of many famous or infamous celebrities (e.g., as much as I appreciate his music, I would include certain singers like Kurt Cobain) as well as religious and cult leaders, conspiracy theorists and the current phenomenon of incels (involuntary celibates) who are capable of perpetrating violence against otherwise innocent bystanders.

Moving to the third danger, Deleuze and Guattari identify it with a power or (*pouvoir*) which operates on both molar and molecular lines, stretching “from the rigid segments with their overcoding and resonance to the fine segmentations with their diffusion and interactions, and back again” (229). Though their meaning is not so easy to decipher, they explain that “the man of power will always want to stop the lines of flight,” the methods he employs, out of a condition of ‘impotence’ is where the greatest dangers lie. They describe it as swallowing or “trap[ping] and stabiliz[ing] the mutation machine in the overcoding machine” (229), allowing the overcoding machine, perhaps the state apparatus or institutional apparatus, to ‘contain’ the ‘microscopic lines’ within a ‘closed vessel’. One can only imagine examples of what Deleuze and Guattari might be getting at here, but within education, it might equate to the role of school authorities who appear to create space or accommodation for new and vital energies, but limited by the boundaries and missions of the institution. Thus, it gives the appearance of ‘freedom’ and often dulls the edge of dissension but without ever relinquishing structures of control. At a state or institutional level, this fits the characteristics of what many feel is the shadow side of ‘diversity.’ While many institutions are quick to embrace and celebrate diversity, for some, such as Sarah Ahmed, it is simply a distraction from the real issues of equity and racism underneath. While it is easy for schools and school boards to check off boxes for diversity, it is difficult to get at issues which require more radical changes, and which are often constrained by the dominant structures of capitalism and disciplinary units of control.

Finally, the fourth danger is what they call 'the great Disgust' which 'interests' Deleuze and Guattari the most as it answers their question, "Why is the line of flight a war one risks coming back from defeated, destroyed, after having destroyed everything one could?" (229). It is the sense we get from the passage they share from Fitzgerald and his apparent break down in which they describe: "the line of flight crossing the wall, getting out of the black holes, but instead of connecting with other lines and each time augmenting its valence, turning to destruction, abolition pure and simple, the passion of abolition... Like suicide, double suicide, a way out that turns the line of flight into a line of death" (ATP, 229). Ethically, this points to the greatest danger of a pedagogy of disturbance, and one to which I will return in my final section devoted to ethical considerations. They suggest the example of drugs [or alcohol] that can both offer a way to loosen up molecular lines from molar, but at the same time, "the causal line, or the line of flight, of drugs is constantly being segmentarized under the most rigid of forms, that of dependency, the hit and the dose, the dealer" (ATP, 284). As they explain further,

[D]eterritorializations remain relative, compensated for by the most abject re-territorializations, so that the imperceptible and perception continually pursue or run after each other without ever truly coupling. Instead of holes in the world allowing the world lines themselves to run off, the lines of flight coil and start to swirl in black holes; to each addict a hole, group or individual, like a snail. Down, instead of high. (284-285).

In other words, lines of flight run the risk of never producing anything, but rather of spinning off to nothing. Though this is hopefully less likely to happen with respect to literature, it is possible that we have all encountered a work of art such as literature that has so troubled us as to take us to a dark place that lingers long after the encounter. And while I have experienced just such effects with respect to certain books on my own (one of which is included in the works explored here), not only do I still consider myself fortunate or healthier for the experience, I believe that such encounters are much more safely experienced with a teacher and peers providing encouragement and support. As Albrecht-Crane and Slack contend, "Understanding the work of the most potent of the four dangers, 'the great Disgust', makes it possible to appreciate the full range of the affective dimension in the classroom and appreciate its implications in larger political and cultural struggles" and "even though, fundamentally, lines of flight are directed

against those forces that bind and territorialize desire, they carry the danger of destruction”(2007, 106). And one, I would add, which ought to be minded carefully.

While continuing to support the practice of experimentation, which is in fact the only way one truly allows life to live, the conclusion we draw from their many warnings is simply this: proceed with caution and senses wide open. Opening up flows of affirmative desire, breaking the sedimentation of molar lines, does not provide any assurance that possible shifts or deterritorializations will continue. But as Roy notes in the case of capitalism: “Only a careful experimentation, knowing the risks, and finding or inventing new terrain in which the released forces could be distributed will make an endeavor such as this successful (2003, 32).

Recognizing the potential dangers, when it comes to the suggestion of building a BwO through the process of destratification, Deleuze and Guattari suggest we proceed in baby steps: “the art of dosages, since overdose is a danger” and not with a “sledgehammer” but with a “a very fine file” (ATP, 160). Aware of the dangers, they remind us that “dismantling the organism has never meant killing yourself, but rather opening the body to connections that presuppose an entire assemblage, circuits, conjunctions, levels and thresholds, passages and distributions of intensity, and territories and deterritorializations measured with the craft of a surveyor” (160).

Considering that the prospect of success is fraught with indeterminacy and danger, we might ask whether the risk is worth the effort. Here I agree with Aden Evens when he states rather emphatically, “Experiment ... we can extract from *A Thousand Plateaus* at least this small maxim. Never mind that it is too vague; heed not for a moment the dangers of dissolution, crack up, and death; ignore the apparent impossibility of success” (1999:234). Perhaps even more telling, however, is Deleuze’s own response: “The breakthrough and the breakdown are two different moments. It would be irresponsible to turn a blind eye to the danger of collapse in such endeavors. But they're worth it” (DIOT, 240). The ideal state may in fact be some point of cautious moderation, which for Braidotti, is found in nomadic thought, what we might call a healthy schizophrenic body. “Nomadic thought,” she argues, citing Virginia Woolf, “affirms that ‘I am rooted but I flow’” (2017, 174), and she therefore encourages us to recognize the intersections between mobility, multiple identities, and ethical belonging and accountability.

Literature as Experimentation: War Machines, Fabulations and Rhizomes

In asking what potential sources of agency remain available to the teacher, the answer is notably complex. While there may be other avenues of choice or deliberation available, this work draws on the two lines of inquiry introduced above: the first devoted to affections, adequate knowledge and affective relations, and the second following the principles of schizoanalysis and the forces within and beyond the assemblage which might serve to construct the unconscious. While both have a purely analytical practice, they also share a strong implication of either prior or simultaneous experimentation. The former leads to the agency of encounter, the latter to the agency of rhizomatic construction of the BwO. In both cases, for the purposes of this thesis, the primary encounter – a rhizomatic disturbance of the assemblage – is in the introduction of the literary text. What distinguishes it from much of the previous scholarship regarding literature is that the focus here is not limited to the analysis or schizoanalysis of literature in itself, but rather, the pedagogy surrounding literature in the context of education. The question at the heart of these experiments is quite simply, what can or does the work of literature do? Or rather, what does it do to students in the event of learning? In drawing from the two lines of inquiry into agency, as already stated what makes this particularly complex as a pedagogical process is that it requires multiple layers of consideration: a simultaneous affective analysis and schizoanalysis of literature, students and the institution of education today.

Text As War Machine

Within the neo-liberal shift in literature education, the most prominent being the movement from English Language *Arts* to more instrumentalist or functionalist literacy instruction, we must consider deeply the question introduced earlier: what is English Language Arts, through literature, capable of doing within various ecologies of education? As Deleuze and Guattari contend: “the work of art is itself a desiring machine. The artist stores up his treasure so as to create an immediate explosion, and that is why, to his (sic) way of thinking, destructions can never take place as rapidly as they ought to” (AO, 32).

Deleuze's own sense of revolutionary work, which he shares with Guattari, ultimately comes down to a micropolitics of change, largely built around the conscious understanding gained through an affective reflexion and schizoanalysis. As he emphasizes, "desire is revolutionary by nature because it builds desiring-machines which, when they are inserted into the social field, are capable of derailing something, displacing the social fabric" (DIOT, 233). For myself, the end I have in mind is, as I believe it to be for Deleuze, paradoxically an opening: *to new relations and to compassionate becomings*.

Against the rigid molarity of the disciplinary society and the mechanisms of societies of control with their patterns of catch-release-catch, the literary work is capable, as a rhizomatic extension to the assemblage, of performing the revolutionary role of what Deleuze and Guattari conceptualize as the war machine. Though it can be 'appropriated' by state power, the war machine is conceptualized by Deleuze and Guattari as "irreducible to the State apparatus, to be outside its sovereignty and prior to its law: it comes from elsewhere" (ATP, 352). Comparing the war machine operated by the state to a game of chess, they describe its more regulated construction as "an institutionalized, regulated, coded war" (353). This is in contrast to the game of Go, which is "war without battle lines, with neither confrontation nor retreat, without battles even: pure strategy, whereas chess is a semiology" (353). In order to avoid confusing the two, they suggest that "It is necessary to reach the point of conceiving the war machine as itself a pure form of exteriority, whereas the State apparatus constitutes the form of interiority we habitually take as a model, or according to which we are in the habit of thinking" (354).

Though they devote an entire plateau to this concept in *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze, in one of his later interviews, defines war machines most succinctly as "linear arrangements constructed along lines of flight" (N, 33). As such,

[T]he aim of war machines isn't war at all but a very special kind of space, smooth space, which they establish, occupy, and extend. Nomadism is precisely this combination of war-machine and smooth space. We try to show how and in what circumstances war-machines aim at war (when state apparatuses take over a war-machine that's initially

no part of them). War-machines tend much more to be revolutionary, or artistic, rather than military (N, 33).

In one of his final papers, devoted to societies of control, Deleuze challenges us, observing that “There is no need to fear or hope, but only to look for new weapons” (PSC, 4). One new weapon, in my mind, is to be found in the English classroom as a carefully chosen work of literature. As O’Sullivan explains, art possesses the potential to “destabilize social-production” which he describes as “a breakdown of the machine’s institutional function.” It operates as “a kind of schizophrenia, which, for Deleuze and Guattari, involves the scrambling of existing codes – or the setting up of autonomous codes that operate independently of any social coding.... art practice functions as a kind of blockage in the smooth running of larger institutional, and indeed global, coding machines.” (2006, 24-25). At the level of individual subjectivities, though easily extended to subjugated groups, Roy suggests that experimentation, “on ourselves as rhizomes or collectivities” provides an opportunity and space to “challenge the inner authority of our selective procedures and boundary constructs that exclude other ways of looking at schooling than the representational” (2003, 88). It is to this role of disturbing both the dominant fascisms of our ecology but also the micro-fascisms we have internalized as habitual ways of seeing and being, our molar authorities, that literature as war machine is directed. Not, as in majoritarian writing or state adopted machines, a means to reinforce striated space.

To the extent that literature “place[s] thought in an immediate relation with the outside, with the forces of the outside”, we as educators have the opportunity “to make thought a war machine” (ATP, 376-7). This was perhaps what Charles Stivale, one of the early theorists of Deleuze and Guattari, has in mind in suggesting that schizoanalysis demonstrates how “particular instances of literary discourse constitute ‘desiring machines’ which break through the constraints of capitalist appropriations and thereby function as revolutionary investments of desire capable of exploding the fundamental structures of capitalist society” (1980, 46).

Similarly, Paul Patton argues that,

Given that its primary object is not war, even though as we shall see below it maintains a necessary synthetic relation to war by virtue of its antipathy to the striated space of

apparatuses of capture, it might be preferable to think of this type of assemblage not as a war-machine but as a machine of metamorphosis. A metamorphosis machine would then be one that does not simply support the repetition of the same but rather engenders the production of something altogether different. (2000, 110)

To choose the text is to choose the experience – literary machine – that the student will encounter. As a war machine it is capable of shifting subjectivities, producing what Deleuze, citing Guattari, describes as “a schizoid flow drawing in all sorts of things” (N, 14). Operating as a kind of war machine it troubles not only the state apparatus, but the Capitalist and neo-liberal machinery that drives it, as well as the multiple social milieus that further sediment the molar lines aligning subjectivities to the will of dominant regimes of signs.

Text as Fabulation

The literary machine is also exemplary of a concept which Deleuze adapts and significantly revises from Bergson, that of literature as fabulation. As Bogue points out, Deleuze’s adoption of fabulation from Bergson is somewhat ironic as he does so by reversing its application (2006, 202). Bergson considered fabulation as the power of story or myth to maintain the stability of closed societies, helping to overcome the “the autonomy of individuals in human societies ... [that] threatens to dissolve social bonds entirely” (203). It is the “general sense of obligation towards others [that] ensures social cohesion” (203), which, as Bergson argues, is necessary to defend against others. Fabulation is thus employed to bolster the sense of *us vs. them* by employing myth, story and even religion to ensure that the love of those with whom one lives is prioritized against outsiders. As Bergson contends, the ‘essential characteristic’ of closed societies is, “to include at each moment a certain number of individuals, and to exclude others” (Bergson in Bogue, 204). In Bergson’s philosophy, fabulation is a kind of mythmaking which serves the purpose of strengthening or locking in closed societies. Anyone who has studied various conflicts around the world, particularly those emerging over contested borders or contested identities, will no doubt find numerous examples of stories, myths, or non-secular dogma, that are propagated through the affective contagion of various sub-group affiliations, including sports fans, religious congregations or nationalist movements that serve to heighten ingroup allegiance. One need only walk the halls of a typical highschool or university to hear the

whispers of abjection from the cliques and clubs generated by mythologies of the inferior other. Notably, one might also consider the nationalist education curricula and the bias embedded in one-sided narratives of national heroes, battles, historical achievements etc. Not only do these serve to bolster the affective fervor of pride, but at the same time, they contribute to distrust or even animosity to 'others' from outside these identity-bound 'territories.' Fabulation in Bergson's application would appear to promote rather than dissolve the stickiness of representational common-sense thinking. And its modus-operandi within closed societies is not unlike Althusser's apparatuses of interpolation, or capitalist and neo-liberal propaganda that taps into either fear or pride to ensure a compliant workforce and undeterred loyalty to brands and nations.

Employed within the context of a closed society, one comprised of subjected or subjugated groups – static, coded, sedimented – the concept of fabulation would be anathema to Deleuze and Guattari's vision of revolutionary or subject groups. As Bogue concludes, "A love of all humanity, therefore, cannot develop directly out of a love of family and city (or nation), for such a universal love presumes the existence of an 'open society', one whose constitutive principle would be qualitatively different from that of closed societies" (204).

With respect to literature, Bogue also notes Bergson's generally dismissive attitude towards many writers who simply adopt, rework, and regurgitate "ready-made concepts and words, which have been supplied by society" but which "largely add nothing new to the stock of language or its expressive possibilities" (2006, 207). Bogue contrasts these to the writers Bergson believed were rare but "who genuinely create, by contrast, work from a generative, unique emotion that impels the expression of the ineffable, that pushes the writer 'to forge words, to create ideas', 'to do violence to words, to strain the elements of language', and if successful, to fashion 'a thought capable of taking on a new aspect for each new generation'" (207). In making such a distinction, Bergson insinuates a body of fiction or art which expresses or enunciates little that would constitute art in Deleuze's conceptualization of fabulation as well

as one that seems to premise it. It is perhaps here, then, that Deleuze intuits from Bergson a contrasting role for fabulation that fosters an open society.

Rather than focusing on the fabulation that serves the closed society, it is in the fiction associated with the so-called 'rare writers' that serves as fabulation towards an opening to the new. Supporting this alternative focus for fabulation, Bergson also distinguished between emotion which "is the effect of a representation and which is added to it" (2006, 208) – infra-intellectual emotion – and emotion which "precedes representation" – supra-intellectual emotion, somewhat paralleling Deleuze's distinction between affection and affect. It is also the latter which Bergson believes characterizes true artwork as a force of "*élan vital*, the force of *natura naturans* that creates the new" (208), making possible "a new social and moral order" (208), a notion that is perhaps similar to lines of flight grounded in the passive vitality of *a life*, and which targets what Deleuze introduces as 'a people yet to come.' It is through its capacity to fabulate that certain literature, literature as art, has a unique role in potentially opening subjectivities from the closed societies of *us vs them*. Contrasting Bergson's conceptualization, for Deleuze fabulation works as a "practice of a minor people engaged in a process of self-invention" (2006, 212), and thereby "challenges the received truths of the dominant social order, and in this regard it 'falsifies'" (213). On the other hand, "it also produces its own truths through its inventions, and in this sense it manifests the creative 'power of the false'" (213). As I read it, fabulation operates as a kind of war machine which has the potential, so long as it avoids being coopted by the state, to counteract the desiring forces of the dominant regimes of signs and does so in part by disturbing or disrupting dominant narratives and dominant forms of representational language and striations of the body. Bogue interprets Deleuze as considering "the fabulative function [as] the function proper to art, which projects into the world images so intense that they take on a life of their own" (2006, 217). And rather than reinforcing the dominant mythologies which compel a population to yield their loyalty to their group or nation, "Deleuze's fabulation has its source in the event, which is both a disorienting shock and a leap toward the future" (220). In my own reading of this material, I would suggest that the fabulative power of literature can easily fulfill either function; history is full of

examples of literature and other arts, of outstanding quality, that has been created and/or utilized for the purposes of propaganda. The difference lies in Deleuze's distinction between the root or arboreal book and the rhizome book, the latter being most likely to serve the function of fabulation and to produce and expand affective relations in opening borders of the body's assemblage to the outside.

Text as Rhizome

To elaborate on the earlier discussion of rhizomes, Deleuze and Guattari contend that "Schizoanalysis, or pragmatics, has no other meaning: Make a rhizome" (ATP, 251). But given the complexity of assemblage and the resistances embedded within territorialized regimes, as with thought from the outside, we never know what connections can or will be made. As they continue, "you don't know what you can make a rhizome with, you don't know which subterranean stem is effectively going to make a rhizome, or enter a becoming, people your desert. So experiment" (251). One response to their challenge is the answer provided here, and notably the one they themselves imply by opening their first plateau on the rhizome, with the example of the 'the book.' Here, the authors distinguish the rhizome-book from two other types: the root book and the radical or fascicular book. However, to simplify I will speak of only the two extremes...the rhizome and root books: "the book as assemblage with the outside, against the book as image of the world" (ATP, 23).

Beginning with the former, the rhizome book works "as assemblage with the outside, against the book as image of the world" (ATP, 23), and is in contact with or thinks through the non-representational, the chaotic, or the unthought that is the outside. Quoting Kafka, "Those things which occur to me, occur to me not from the root up but rather only from somewhere about their middle. Let someone then attempt to seize them, let someone attempt to seize a blade of grass and hold fast to it when it begins to grow only from the middle." (Kafka, cited in ATP, 23). Art draws upon the rhizomes 'principle of connectivity' which O'Sullivan suggests "implies a contact, and movement, between different milieus and registers, between areas that are usually thought of as distinct and discrete" (2006, 17), what Deleuze and Guattari would call

transversal connections. "Such a smearing is creative," O'Sullivan adds, and it "can produce surprising compatibilities and novel synthesis.... a key modality of creativity in general" (17). It is also, I would add, a key modality of actualizing and living life. Such connections, which point to one of the most important educational value of the arts, "leads to a less one-dimensional and straitjacketed existence. Connections and alliances can be made between different people, different objects and different practices, which in itself allows for more flexibility, more fluidity (17). Recalling the micropolitics of desire, lines of flight and becoming, as O'Sullivan states, "Thinking art rhizomatically might then involve foregrounding those art works that have a specifically affective function, or simply foregrounding the affective character of all art (its power to effect us on a molecular level, to makes us become other)" (19-20).

In contrast, describing the root book Deleuze and Guattari point out that,

The tree is already the image of the world, or the root the image of the world-tree. This is the classical book, as noble, signifying, and subjective organic interiority (the strata of the book). The book imitates the world, as art imitates nature: by procedures specific to it that accomplish what nature cannot or can no longer do. The law of the book is the law of reflection. (ATP, 5)

As such, one might imagine the kind of book they have in mind. One that not only mirrors the world but is rooted in comfortable connections to the world and coded according to the most popular ideals of that world, either directly or by reinforcing popular fantasies and images of the ideals propagated by traditions, media, and everyday conversations. This is also a book that Bergson might have viewed as furthering a fabulation for closed societies. Such texts would include pulp fiction, fan fiction, and genre fiction.... books that cater to the demands of a market seeking confirmation of popularized beliefs and attitudes, and promoting the predominant codifications of the territory, which publishers know they can sell, and which reflect Deleuze and Guattari's earlier statement: "The Oedipal form of literature is its commodity form." [AO, 134.]. Also implied here, in the interests of education, is a cautionary insight for teachers who might be inclined to cater to the demands of their students' 'taste' where taste is predicated on habit – "I like this kind of book." Far too often we hear of teachers or education leaders choosing books which are 'relevant' to students, interpreted to mean books which are arboreally rooted rooted in popularity and fashion. It is worth remembering,

however, that though the rhizome and root books they describe are extremes, they clarify that this is not an either-or debate. Every work operates as a combination, though it is when or where they operate rhizomatically that they take the body to the edge. Recalling their warning that in building a BwO, we must not leave the organism, subjectivity and signifiacnce behind completely, so too, the work of literature must retain some connection to the socius and the organism in order for lines of flight to break through.

Informed Text Selection

In summation of this section, if education has any agency, it perhaps begins with the process of text selection, always recognized as experimentation. In the three concepts addressed in this section – the war machine, fabulation, and the rhizome-book – we as teachers can perhaps infer certain guiding principles that can be used for the purpose of text selection in the classroom, a task rarely given the attention it deserves. It is also one which is far more demanding than is generally acknowledged, requiring us to seek a book “as assemblage with the outside, against the book as image of the world” (*ATP*, 23). In other words, against a root book or one grounded in the known. Though an impossible and perhaps unwarranted expectation for its entirety, such a book “has no image, no signification, no subjectivity” (23). As they make clear, the extent to which experience as experimentation yields certain learning, we might expect to see assemblages shift, expanding through rhizomatic growth and inclusion of new – more diverse – sources of difference as readers connect to the human and non-human aspects of literature to which they are exposed. In this way, the form of narrative students encounter in the classroom can both open new and close old connections (synapses) as aspects of the book linger in the reader’s life accompanying and fueling shifting subjectivities. The book becomes not only a source of new forces acting on the body of the reader, but a part of the body’s assemblage.

O’Sullivan, following Deleuze and Guattari, considers art, as I see literature, as providing an educational function too important to leave to such passive insouciance. Not unlike the earlier discussion of text as war machine, he challenges us to view art somewhat more subversively:

We might see one of the roles of art as being an entry point on/into this smooth space, a line of flight from representational habits of being and thought on/into the multiplicity of the world. Aesthetics would name the 'science' of 'seeing beyond' our habitual tendency to individuate on a recognisable and reassuring molar level. Art might name the mechanism of reindividuating at a different level, precisely the constitution of new composites, new assemblages. (2006, 29)

From what has already been said, to state the obvious, not all texts are equal in terms of their 'educational' or 'difference-generating' value to the classroom. Regardless how 'neutral' a teacher may try to be, there is always a selection process, even if that selection is to abdicate one's role to choose. And though no teacher would be so arrogant as to suggest they are the best to judge such selections, by virtue of a presumably greater number and more diverse experiments with literary encounters, they should be in a better position than most students. That alone, I believe, obligates them to share their experience, including their failures, with students. However, though their interests are largely determined by their own assemblages, many nodes of each unique assemblage are shared with others in the same community. Furthermore, with the philosophy of Deleuze and Guattari now very much a part of my own and how I live just about every aspect of my life, how can I not apply what has affected me so much to a more informed selection of works for my students. And in the absence of active selection, there is, at the bare minimum, an opportunity to discuss critiques of books least likely to expand their worlds (assemblages).

That said, it is worth reiterating once again that there is no way of knowing for sure what a body will do, or what a text will do in a student's encounter with it. Guattari, for example, emphasizes that "the machinic production of subjectivity can work for the better as for the worse. At best, it is creation - the invention of new universes of reference; and at its worst, it is the mind-numbing mass mediatization to which billions of individuals today are condemned" (1996, 194). Phrased with different emphases, Colebrook suggests that machines such as literature become "ways in which desire organises and extends its investments" and may "work positively, when intensities and affects are multiplied to produce further possibilities for experience" (2002a, 94). On the other hand, as already mentioned with respect to experimenting with the BwO, literature can also work "negatively and transcendently, where

affects and intensities are read as signs or symbols of some underlying subject or human essence” (94). In such cases, fiction operates as an aid to closed societies, by further reinforcing segmented narratives and ways of living and thinking. This would result in a failed experiment of the worst kind, resulting in contraction, disconnection and hatred of those across whatever border identities we might imagine.

Given the indeterminacy that accompanies every encounter, it is still, nevertheless, possible to increase the odds in favour of more successful experiments and more fruitful rhizomatic connections. Or as O’Sullivan suggests, unlearning of habit through disconnections:

For committed artists [and presumably committed teachers] questions of strategy become important here. Does this object work for this milieu? Does this milieu demand a different object? Where to drop the pebble? Or again, how to smuggle in the dangerous object? How to provide camouflage, to dissimulate, the dynamite? We might call this a reverse strategy to the principle of connectivity... a strategy of anti-connectivity, of deviation, disjunction and disruption” (2006, 26).

Hence the choice of the text – object – requires sensitivity to the context, recognizing that every confrontation is a new experiment with the object and assemblage to which it relates. Every class has its own dynamics and every student has their own set of interests and desires which constitute their capacity and receptivity to be affected by a text.

Informed by the theoretical considerations above, however, we have a greater probability of steering away from works of literature more likely to be ‘consumed’ as comfort food of representation and instead encourage works that are more likely to soften the molar excesses of majoritarian fixations, bias, and prejudices.

As already suggested, the literary machine of choice is by definition, likely to be more rhizomatic than arboreal. As well, it is also more likely to be minor than major in its nature. Typically, the texts Deleuze and Guattari champion are those most likely to affect movement beyond mere representation and opinion. Deleuze, for example, explains,

What we find in great English and American novelists is a gift, rare among the French, for intensities, flows, machine-books, tool-books, schizo-books... Is it our fault that Lawrence, Miller, Kerouac, Burroughs, Artaud, and Beckett know more about schizophrenia than psychiatrists and psychoanalysts? (N, 23)

Notably, the texts that Deleuze and Guattari hold up as examples of ‘great writers’ are more suitable for post-secondary settings. In choosing examples of texts to work with high school students, and to which I refer in this dissertation, I am mindful of the balance that needs to be considered. Too rhizomatic and I risk losing students as the connection to the text breaks down in frustration, leaving no site of attachment to the body. Too little and it lapses into conformity with the body’s existing striations, comfortable and lacking in challenge, problem generation, or disturbance. In some ways constructing a BwO or experimenting with encounters is reminiscent of Vygotsky, whereby a balance is drawn between rhizome and root qualities to situate learning within a *zone of proximity*, one which no doubt differs for each individual organism.

Not surprisingly, there is ethically much at stake in the selection of texts. Following Probyn’s inquiry as to “what types of ethical bodies the intermingling of sex and eating might produce” (2005, 73), I come to similar questions with respect to literature: What bodies and subjectivities might new encounters with literature create? What choices can be made by the teacher to increase the likelihood that these be healthy bodies rather than frozen or depleted.... Or worse yet, destructive bodies? There is some solace in the recognition that experimenting within the classroom provides a kind of cushion that certain learning, particularly that which challenges foundational molar formations, is most safely carried out. In spite of the risks, as already argued earlier, for any learning to take place, there needs to be enough affective disturbance at the molecular level to initiate or repeat pure difference in the process of problem generation and actualized becoming as shifts in subjectivity. Deleuze looks to the powers of art to provoke: “literature would not be based on representing or expressing some common world-view or shared experience, literature should shock, shatter and provoke experience” (11). And as a ‘shock to thought,’ the degree of learning potentially available can be equated with the measure of the literature that fuels it. As Deleuze and Guattari insisted near the end of *Anti-Oedipus*,

the value of art is no longer measured except in terms of decoded and deterritorialized flows ... It is here that art accedes to its authentic modernity, which simply consists in liberating what was present in art from its beginnings, but was hidden underneath aims and objects, even if aesthetic, and underneath recodings or axiomatics: the pure process

that never ceases to reach fulfilment as it proceeds – art as ‘experimentation’. (AO 370–71)

As O’Sullivan adds, we might, through experience and experiment, “see certain kinds of art as not producing an aesthetic effect at all, or producing a *weak* aesthetic effect along with a *strong* signifying effect” (O’Sullivan, 2006, 23). Surely as teachers we can aspire to better than nothing. A weak aesthetic in this case is tantamount to an unlikeliness of any change, any lines of flight, or any becoming.

In concluding this section, I have argued here for an informed experimentation. Just as it has been noted earlier that affect can and has been colonized in capitalism for both marketing and political ends – entertainment, distraction, affection addiction – books chosen without caution can serve the same masters. Or they can be selected in the ‘potential’ service to affecting ‘a life’ and a more open society. This is not an end or goal in the way we might speak of teleological outcomes, but rather a form of resistance or counter-actualization aimed at interrupting heavily coded, stratified and habitual pathways of thought and action, largely evidenced by the divisions in populations according to representational models of recognition and identification. It is with this in mind that I now turn to the heart of my work, considering literature and its role in inciting the kind of ‘discord’ which might affect change through a pedagogy of disturbance.

Chapter 6: Approaching Literature through a Pedagogy of Disturbance

Mostly we read books and set them aside, or hurl them from us with great force, and pass on. Yet sometimes there is a small residue that has an effect. The reason for this is the always unexpected and unpredictable intervention of that rare and sneaky phenomenon, love. One may read and like or admire or respect a book and yet remain entirely unchanged by its contents, but love gets under one's guard and shakes things up, for such is its sneaky nature. When a reader falls in love with a book, it leaves its essence inside him, like radioactive fallout in an arable field, and after that there are certain crops that will no longer grow in him, while other, stranger, more fantastic growths may occasionally be produced.

(Salman Rushdie, 2005)

In an effort to pull the theoretical foundations of this project together, in this section I wish to elaborate on the questions that arise when regarding literature's potential within the context of a *pedagogy of disturbance*. Following the discussion of agency related to text selection, in this section I move on to possible principles and opportunities associated with the reading encounter itself.

The Critical and the Clinical

Recalling Nietzsche's conceptualization of the writer/text as physician, symptomatologist, and therapist, Deleuze elaborates on what either the writer or the work of literature as physician might mean, pointing to "three different medical acts: symptomology, or the study of signs; etiology, or the search for causes; and therapeutics, or the search for and application of a treatment" (DIOT, 132). At a purely semantic level, the distinctions he makes between the critical and the clinical in the title of his last collection of essays remain somewhat ambiguous. That said, consistent with the previous section, I am choosing here to consider them in terms of the diagnostic and curative functions of literature. Considering the analogy of a portrait drawing, Deleuze states: "The work of art exhibits symptoms, as do the body or the soul, albeit in a very different way. In this sense, the artist or writer can be a great symptomologist, just like the best doctor" (132); a case he makes not only for Sade and Masoch, but also better known

authors such as Samuel Beckett, whose work he suggests is “an extraordinary portrait of symptoms: it's not just about identifying an illness, but about the world as symptom, and the artist as symptomologist” (132). Later in the same text, he clarifies that, “symptom here means events, drops, encounters, aggressions... The world can be treated as a symptom and searched for signs of disease, signs of life, signs of a cure, signs of health” (140). As presented in the earlier section of this dissertation, affects ‘sensed’ by the author are embedded materially in the work itself, and are therefore passed through encounters with readers, and in turn work materially on their embodied assemblages.

A consideration of affect demands questions about the conditions behind the encounter but also a fuller account of the nature of experience itself. While no doubt there is meaning the artist/writer has ‘intentionally’ (or so they believe) imbued into their art; we might ask as well, what affect has the writer unconsciously ‘bled’ into their art? What affect and affections belie that which exceeds and occasionally contradicts the overt ‘meaning’ in the work? To what degree does the impact of this encounter result from the reader’s previous experiences and fragments of memory and how much on the text itself? Can these be distinguished? And how much and what kind of impacts register in the affections or awareness of the reader or teacher in the classroom? The artist, as Deleuze adds, “is not outside the symptoms, but makes a work of art from them, which sometimes serves to precipitate them, and sometimes to transform them (DIOT, 140).” It is the creative precipitation and transformation of the symptoms which in turn works at all levels of consciousness, but perhaps most significantly, aesthetically on the unconscious.

Daniel W. Smith describes Deleuze’s critical and clinical ‘project’ as featuring three components: “(1) the function of the proper name; (2) the nonpersonal “multiplicity” or “assemblage” designated by the name; and (3) the active “lines of flight” of which these multiplicities are constituted” (ECC, li). The first two he appears to associate with the symptomatological, suggesting that “writers are like clinicians or diagnosticians who isolate a particular ‘possibility of life,’ a certain way of being or mode of existence” (li), with the proper

name of the writer designating not an individual person, but rather the “constellation of signs and symptoms that are grouped together in the work itself” (li). Here, Smith explicitly associates the critical with “The literary technique and style of the writer” and the clinical to the corresponding “creation of a differential table of vital signs” (li), citing beckettism, proustism and kafkaism as examples of such clinical labels.

But regardless how blurred the conceptualizations of critical and clinical may seem, I believe they are still helpful, particularly in thinking of material implications of writing and therefore reading, and the educational potential of the latter as curative with respect to social sickness. As Smith adds, “The deeper philosophical question concerns the conditions that make possible this production of new modes of existence, that is, the ontological principle of Life as a *nonorganic and impersonal power*” (ECC, li, emphasis added). Put differently, Bogue suggests: “The writer for Deleuze is a Nietzschean physician of culture, both a symptomatologist who reads culture’s signs of sickness and health, and a therapist whose remedies promote new possibilities for life” (2003, 2), implying similar attributions of the critical and the clinical. Elsewhere, Bogue adds that the symptomatologist offers “a diagnostic critique of forces, events, memories and documents that shape the present; an articulation of untold, erased and forgotten events; and a reconfiguration of the past that discloses present junctures of potential transformation” (Bogue, 2010, p. 10).

Though some might condemn me for weighing optimism above risk, I believe the therapeutic or curative quality of reading points to the possibilities of increasing the health of the organism and socius by opening it to affective relationships and affective becomings. If we recall from the previous section that that the books of particular interest here are characterized as minor literature through their collective enunciation, then in this regard, we no longer think of the ‘patient’ as individual, nor subject, but rather in terms of the social. Bogue suggests that literature “shares philosophy’s end of diagnosing culture’s illnesses and inventing possible cures” (2010, 6). But these cures, while in part affecting subjective actualizations in behaviour and thought, are most intensely directed at the political in terms of opening the assemblage to

new connections and, in addressing another quality of minor literature, as O'Sullivan states, working "to pave the way for a community – sometimes a nation – yet to come" (2009, 247). Though there is always the danger that subsequent (though not directly consequential) lines of flight can lead to catastrophe, as already discussed, with careful preparation and careful selection we can increase the odds against such harm, no differently than we ought to do with any material encounter in education. It is worth recalling Smith's aspiration that in attending not just to symptomatology but also to the healthy body, we anticipate an active body as possessing some capacity to "transform itself" through encounters and thereby "increasing the power to live, always opening up new possibilities of life" (ECC, xv).

Though perhaps still necessary in many political regimes, rather than settling for more neo-liberal instrumentalist defences of literature based on potential economic advantage, Colebrook argues that by "serv[ing] some everyday function: making us better managers or communicators" (which indeed it may also do), "we fail to see that the purpose or force of art and philosophy goes beyond what life is to what it might become" (2002a, 14). For both Smith and Colebrook, among others, the key concern is whether or not an encounter can expand life. If, as Deleuze himself states, "The world is the set of symptoms whose illness merges with man. Literature then appears as an enterprise of health" (ECC,3). He proceeds by suggesting numerous authors whose work may touch the vitality of life even though they may be physically sick themselves. What they write may ultimately be "sufficient to liberate life wherever it is imprisoned by and within man, by and within organisms and genera" (ECC: 3), a statement that may in fact characterize the author, the book or the reader. Important as well is a reminder of what is meant here by the term 'life' recalling that when Deleuze and Guattari refer to it, it is not limited to an individual or subjective notion of life, or even human. As Colebrook states, for them life or 'Life' refers to "an open and creative whole of proliferating connections" (2002a, 5). Consequently, as Colebrook insists, "If we want to know what something (such as art, science or philosophy) is, then we can ask how it serves life." (13)

That said, though we may venture an answer to this question in hindsight, we are never in a position to know apriori what literature 'is,' or will be in terms of its service to *a life*. And even if we were to rely on prior experience, as I have with the texts which follow, considering shifts in the unconscious work at the molecular level rather than the molar, it may be years before shifts become actualized transformations in thought and behaviour. What we are left with, is a set of questions with no guaranteed answers, but which increase the probability that a text will serve life rather than diminish it by decreasing capacities to receive affect. Colebrook argues that

Reading a work as art or as philosophy requires that we see its specific force, or its capacity for rupturing life. We may never encounter a pure work of art or philosophy, but we can strive to distinguish and maximise artistic, philosophical and scientific tendencies within any text. We can distinguish these tendencies not by looking at what a work is but at what it achieves or does. (2002a, 12)

Her words remind us not only that very few if any works will meet the standards of pure art, as suggested by a theorization of the outside (and if they did, it is unlikely the audience would tolerate such pure groundlessness), but also as important as text selection might be, we cannot ignore the nature and outcomes of the reading process – what we do with the text once it has been selected. To the extent that we are capable of applying whatever agency we have, we must try to maximize a work's potential to serve a life. In the classroom, this means creating conditions for generative events of learning, while minimizing conditions that might result in negative affect – paralysis or collapse.

Put simply, responding to the critical and the clinical, we are left with the following questions: What is literature capable of doing? What processes of reading are most likely to increase the capacity of literature to do its work? How might we as educators approach the assignment or process of reading to increase its potential to break through rather than break down?

What Can Literature Do?

For Deleuze and Guattari, “The great aesthetic figures of thought and the novel but also of painting, sculpture, and music produce affects that surpass ordinary affections and perceptions, just as concepts go beyond everyday opinions” (WIP, 65). In other words, what distinguishes all art comes down to two primary powers: the generation of new ways of thinking through the creation of concepts and the generation of new ways of becoming through the material affects/effects on the body with the latter pointing to both impacts on the individual organism and subjectivity, as well as the social and political.

Concepts

With respect to the first power, returning to the section devoted to thinking and learning, we recall that literature serves a particular function in its capacity to generate thought and, more specifically, to stimulate the philosophical creation of concepts that can be further used to facilitate thought. Relating it to the service of life, as Colebrook eloquently puts it, “the philosophical ability to think this concept will help us to live our lives in a more joyful and affirmative manner. Because philosophy allows the transformation of life, it is a power, not an academic discipline” (2002a, 13). Notably, it is primarily for the purpose of concept creation and development that Deleuze and Guattari employ literature throughout their oeuvre, sometimes building further on ideas attributed to other philosophers, scientists, and cultural theorists, but also, developing many of their concepts, including many already discussed and put to work in this thesis such as a ‘minor literature.’ As Bogue points out, “The purpose of [Deleuze’s] analyses is to think alongside the work of art, not to explain it or to stand in for it, but to create a philosophical analog that invites the reader to imagine the work in a new way that necessarily entails a new understanding of the world (1997, 115). And as dynamic ‘tools’ for thinking, they have been employed in virtually every imagined discipline, including education, where I consider their value as allowing us to rethink not only our purpose as educators, but our materials, methods and ethics as they align to a reconsideration of ‘a life,’ as opposed to the more individualist oriented ‘the life,’ or ‘my life.’

As Colebrook contends, Deleuze associates concepts with “responses to problems” and suggests they respond to the particular question: “why does thinking limit itself to banal and puerile cases?” (2002a, 25). Specifically, she argues, Deleuze creates the concept of literature as “allow[ing] us to think of a way of stretching language to its limits” and philosophy as “a capacity to think differently... allow[ing] us to think against the normal or recognised cases of thinking” (25). Applying this to education, every well-chosen work, either through coincidence or careful selection, has the potential to offer different ways of thinking about education, learning and life, assuming we accept the three as related. Though my personal project might be best described as evoking the power of the literary machine, it perhaps differs from others who have focused on literature in their work in that my focus here is less on the text itself and more on the text put to work as connected to various pedagogical assemblages: the students’, the teachers’, and institution’s, as well as other ideas or texts that serve to further intensify a specific work’s...work. For each of the exemplar texts I will be discussing, I have attempted to introduce or re[vision] concepts which might be given new vitality in the interests of *a life* and in the interests of an evolving pedagogy of disturbance. While no doubt they pale in comparison to the level of innovation, elaboration and application exemplified by Deleuze and Guattari, they are concepts that could just as easily emerge from and apply to either students or educators, and hopefully will serve to think and live teaching differently.

Material Effects on Body and Assemblage

What can literature do? If one answer points to thinking and concepts, the other, I believe, points to the question: how do we liberate ‘a life’ within assemblages of semiotic and molar containment? This I see as a consideration of the second primary function of literature which pertains to a work’s material effects on the bodies/assemblages of readers. And so far as learning is understood as more than recital of ‘facts,’ it is the material effects which measure the educational value of literature in the long term. My interest here is therefore not limited to how these selections exemplify or generate concepts, but also how the texts impact the body at the virtual and preconscious level of the furnace. Though thinking differently, particularly as

related to philosophical practice, may be the primary motive behind literature's capacity to generate concepts, educationally, literature also has the potential to disturb the body into new trajectories of becoming, beyond the majoritarian containment of life and beyond the representational borders defined by various configurations of *us* and *them*. This speaks to what O'Sullivan calls the affective function or affective character of art/literature: "its power to effect us on a molecular level, to makes us become other" (2006, 20). In other words, to consider the material effects of literature is to consider the work of forces, including desire, and how material shifts in the body are shaped by a minor literature's capacity to counter-actualize dominant territorializing forces and loosen molar fixations. As the text 'plugs' into the body, molecular changes are potentially set in motion. As Bogue explains, "What artists do is to extract percepts from perceptions, affects from affections, and give them material embodiment, either by realizing sensation within the material they manipulate or by making the material pass into sensation" (1997, 112).

Colebrook likewise implicates literature's material impact when she argues that this, "would not be based on representing or expressing some common world-view or shared experience; literature should shock, shatter and provoke experience" (2002b, 11). In this case, her words speak directly to *how* the material impact of the book is experienced at the conscious level as affections, quasi-caused by the forces of affects on the virtual assemblage. As Bruce Baugh argues, counter to many theories and methods employed knowingly or unknowingly in classrooms, Deleuze is not interested in either making connections between the text and author or the text and readers (as in reader response theories). Instead, both writing and reading, as material affects on the author's body, affects embedded in the text, and affects that impact the reader's body, are related to potential lines of flight "away from the familiar and the known, an act of 'deterritorialization.' The aim of literature is not to help us get our bearings or to find ourselves, but to lose our bearings and our 'selves,' to get lost" (2009, 132).

Framing this within the political implications of literature, and within the proposed conceptualization of a minor literature, we begin to see that lines of flight are, by definition, at

odds with the dominance of majoritarian fixations or moldings of life. Bogue considers Deleuze's essay, 'Literature and Life' (ECC) as an extension of and in some ways a revisioning of earlier discussions of a minor literature, where 'becoming other' is the first element of literature mentioned (2010, 8). This he suggests, "entails a passage between categories, modes of existence and discrete entities such that stable elements are set in metamorphic disequilibrium" (9). In insisting literature "is delirium," Deleuze also makes a clear link between the fabulating function and the material effects of literature, particularly with regard to its curative function:

Health as literature, as writing, consists in inventing a people who are missing. It is the task of the fabulating function to invent a people...The ultimate aim of literature is to set free, in the delirium, this creation of a health or this invention of a people, that is, a possibility of life. (ECC, 4)

It is worth recalling the distinction made earlier between Bergsonian fabulation which, as Bogue explains, "has the political function of perpetuating a closed, static society" (2007, 106) and Deleuze's adoption which "promotes the invention of a people and the formation of new modes of social interaction" (106). Unlike the former, Deleuze recognizes fabulation's capacity to "break historical continuities and disrupt conventional narratives" and generate "untimely visions, becomings and powers that are dynamic but unspecified in their narrative possibilities" (2007, 105). The educational value that derives from the works I will discuss shortly might then be examined in terms of their ability to contribute to these becomings and visions and resist or disrupt the multiple sources of closure that have arguably been territorialized and institutionalized in many of the practices now mandated in schools. Closures which ultimately reinforce divisions and take us farther rather than closer to the necessary agreements needed to challenge the current global environmental and humanitarian crises we face.

Processes of Reading: Limiting or Freeing Literature to Work?

Method and Interpretation: Reading for Signification

In his essay, *Letter to a Harsh Critic*, presumably in response to a vitriolic attack from philosopher Michel Cressole, Deleuze suggests there are “two ways of reading a book” (N, 7). The first of these assumes the manner which is often associated with traditional literary theories or methods:

[You] see it as a box with something inside and start looking for what it signifies, and then if you're even more perverse or depraved you set off after signifiers. And you treat the next book like a box contained in the first or containing it. And you annotate and interpret and question, and write a book about the book, and so on and on. (N,7-8)

It is not difficult to imagine the kind of reading he implies here. This interpretive approach to literature is how most of us were taught to read throughout school and how most students continue to be taught at both secondary and post-secondary levels. Daniel Coffeen refers to it in somewhat more generous terms as ‘exemplary reading,’ which he suggests is characterized by ‘arborescent mechanics.’ (2016, 8):

[T]he way we make sense of things is rarely to engage the things. We don't confront the things before us as something different; we confront them as something we already know... Exemplary reading, whether seeking basis in biography, ideology, theory, history, or ourselves, avoids the difference and newness and downright oddity of the things we experience. To make sense we look backwards to the already known rather than looking to what's in front of us and wondering: What new world flourishes here? (Coffeen, 2016, 14)

For Deleuze, the history of sense making is characterized by a history of comparisons. We make sense by comparing one thing to another. With literature it is often ourselves to which we make the comparison and determine how such and such a character or behaviour fits with our own experience or our observations of others. How easy does it fit into representative models or categories we have of the world. Pointing to the example of a person standing in front of a Picasso painting, struggling to make meaning, Coffeen asks, ‘What do they do?’ and suggests that for most viewers, either out of intimidation or conditioning, they simply turn away from the painting or look elsewhere for answers, including the explanatory placard beside the

painting. Speaking to our habitual way of responding to challenging works of art, what we might guess are the most disruptive of representation, he asks,

Why do we do this? Why do we reach for something else, something we imagine as bigger or more prestigious, more controlling – an expert, genre, ideology, history – to make sense of this thing we have right here in front of us? What’s wrong with us, or with the art, that we need something else to understand it – and even enjoy it? (2016, 11)

The metaphor of the cookie cutter seems especially appropriate here. When we read, typically we look for ways to contain what we read in that which we already know. In other words, we fit the new into previous understandings or previous images of thought, what Deleuze refers to as dogmatic images of thought or representational knowledge. We pick out whatever matches the signifiers we have in mind, including those that sift through the filters of specific perspectives, categories, histories, interpretive lenses, or biographical details. These become the cutters or molds into which we can more easily shape, contain, or represent our reading.

This is not necessarily to dismiss exemplary or interpretive reading. As Coffeen suggests, there may be occasions when this type of reading has a place. As he states, certain interpretive lenses can help reveal and fill in the blind-spots of others. And they can occasionally serve to create conditions of ‘ah ha’ moments of recognition. Continuing, he argues that,

These kinds of reading can be powerful, useful, illuminating, even revolutionary as hegemonic categories such as patriarchy and capitalism come crumbling down – or at least are shaken. This is how we take on those big ideas that dictate how we think and feel and act. Thinking of the world as categories and their children, if you will, is a common and effective way of making sense of the world. (2016, 9-10)

It might also be argued that even the concepts Deleuze and Guattari develop and use occasionally slide into this process of reading, though typically they are much more innovative in their applications. But while such interpretative approaches may provide insight, and even generate their own affective forces that might stem from sudden discovery or realization, for the most part, what passes for interpretation in the classroom today risks both reduction and stagnation in the cognitive, never entering the unconscious in the way that a direct encounter with the work of art might. Too often these interpretive lenses become the topic of conversation, with the work itself only peripheral.

As implied by Deleuze's tone in the passage above, both he and Guattari share a deep cynicism of most methods of interpretation with much of their work explicitly resisting such 'methodological,' critical or generalized approaches to literature (Colebrook, 2002a, 7; Tynan, 2012, 12-14; Haines, 2015, 529). As Deleuze states, "What we're after certainly isn't any return to Freud or return to Marx. Nor any theory of reading" (N, 22). Consistent with his work in *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze and later Guattari are adamantly opposed to processes which effectively deny the flow of life, particularly in the interests of reductionist boundaries of identity and common sense. In their criticism of psychoanalysis, for example, they point to 'interpretosis,' along with signifiante, as "the two diseases of the earth or the skin, in other words, humankind's fundamental neurosis" (ATP, 114). Method understood as the dogmatic image of thought points to the anathema of Deleuze's transcendental empiricism by defaulting learning, philosophy and thinking to transcendent models of thinking and intolerance of error. This includes positivist, dialectic and numerous paint-by-number-find-a-theme interpretive methods that are implicit in much of what characterizes literary criticism today. In the process, inarticulable affections, the excess and non-representational of thought are either ignored, dismissed, or rejected. Such methods fail to consider what Todd May describes as "the way language [and in particular literary language] overflows itself, always doing more than it can say" (2005, 114). In other words, there develops an inarticulable something that cannot be contained within the familiar or habitual of language. To the degree that this happens, we might assume that pure difference, rather than difference by comparison, is at work. As Deleuze and Guattari state, a 'method' "is the striated space of the cogitatio universalis and draws a path that must be followed from one point to another" (ATP, 377). Thought, as they understand it, derives in, "smooth space that it must occupy without counting, and for which there is no possible method, no conceivable reproduction, but only relays, intermezzos, resurgences" (ATP, 377).

By reading through the lens of theory, by comparison or by any other transcendent standard of judgment or quest, we step away from the immanent aesthetic capacity of a text. Anything in 'excess' to what is being hunted is set aside, in a process which in the language of hermeneutics

might be called bracketing. Thomas Reid refers to such processes of ‘stratigraphic’ modes of criticism, or ‘organizational structures’ which defer to ‘regimes of signification’ in the “efforts of many critics (and many schools of criticism) to impose various settlements and stabilities on the book, various forms of semiotic containment and control” (2010, 105). To reduce any approach to a ‘method’ that can simply be picked up and applied is to risk the same kind of structuralist cookie cutting that Deleuze and Guattari rail against in the opening of *Anti-Oedipus*. The more we define what we are looking for, either representationally or conceptually, the more likely we will find it. What Jason Wallin has referred to as hermeneutic cheating (2013, 41), apriori applying a pre-establish interpretive structure such as psychoanalysis, feminism, historicism or Marxism, is to read under the shadow of the transcendental and to impose representational thought where it may or may not fit and thereby blocking the flow of immanent understandings. As Deleuze explains,

When you invoke something transcendent you arrest movement, introducing interpretations instead of experimenting...interpretation is in fact always carried out with reference to something that is supposed to be missing. Unity is precisely what’s missing from multiplicity, just as the subject’s what’s missing from events...[but whatever the case] it’s only ever abstractions [posed from] a transcendent viewpoint. (N, 146)

Applications of literary theory, transcendental ideas, values, or various other interpretive lenses applied in “the ongoing stratification of the book,” Reid argues, operate to impose “a set of sanctioned critical values, those that not only standardize or regulate critical encounters with the book (i.e., how books are interpreted, evaluated, represented)” (2010, 107). As a result, these processes that ‘guide’ or intervene in the more spontaneous reading of the book, just as those so often employed in the classroom serve to “dematerialize the book, and hence its capacity to vary, to affect and be affected, to function as a being of sensation, to remain open to external forces and ultimately go critical” (107). In other words, the more one’s experience of reading is fragmented or stratified by transcendental or pedagogical instructions, questions or expectations, the more the smooth space of the encounter is eroded or filtered into common sense images of thought. In order to allow literature to work, as a ‘war machine’, as a revolutionary counter-actualizing machine or as an ‘educating machine’, it must be allowed to

work without the intervention or imposition of external frameworks of interpretation or meaning. The literary machine must be given time and space to work, which is something that, perhaps out of fear of chaos or discomfiting silence, few teachers (or institutions) are willing to sustain. As Deleuze and Guattari remind us, to take up literature as representative in any way, whether that be in terms of identified ideologies or as mirroring and reinforcing certain codes and models of accepted socializations, is to either predetermine its meaning or to force its meaning into acceptable boxes:

How poorly the problem of literature is put, starting from the ideology that it bears, or from the co-option of it by a social order. People are co-opted, not works, which will always come to awake a sleeping youth, and which never cease extending their flame. As for ideology, it is the most confused notion because it keeps us from seizing the relationship of the literary machine with a field of production. (AO, 133).

As a central practice and curricular outcome, this process of interpretation, reducing a work to what it signifies or ‘what it is about’, characterizes many English classrooms today. And it is one reinforced by the demands of and preparation for the standardized testing which still require a minimum of one major ‘critical-analytical’ essay, with questions generally targeting assigned themes, such as “What do these texts suggest to you about the interplay between satisfaction and regret in an individual’s life?” (Alberta Education, 7, 2020). Prompts such as this one serve to narrow the reader’s vision of the text, forcing them to scour it for signifiers that match the prescribed topic. For Deleuze, to read a book this first way is to read it through ‘common sense,’ relating it to something in the world of representation, of accepted images of thought that fit a requisite category or theme. And while classroom environments can be more open-ended, there is almost always a conditioned or habituated expectation from both teacher and student that the reader will be able to say what the text ‘is about.’

This process of reading, requiring students to extract from a work the known and the digestible, often situates and confines literature within the dominant or majoritarian social models – and ideologies – of the day. This alludes to another common question that is asked of students: ‘how does the text reflect the world?’ or ‘what does it say or reveal about the world?’ Such approaches imply literature is fundamentally mimetic, a mirroring or representation of

something in the world. It is an assumption that Deleuze and Guattari associate with the tree book, as noted by Coffeen above, with its roots in the known world and its trunk and branches reproducing various views and perspectives of that world. This would not be nearly so damaging were a list of answers not already anticipated, complete with standards of suitability or correctness, as so many teachers (and students) are unconsciously acclimatized to an institution of methods, instructions, and easy-to-follow lesson plans. And it is often further perpetuated as teachers generously share what they have prepared, so that 'model' lessons can circulate in schools and now the internet for decades.

Reid lists a number of 'totalizing' approaches to reading that in my mind, limit the concept building and affective capacity of literature; these include diminishing its 'pragmatic and productive capacities,' and reducing or 'flattening' difference "to the various features or functions they have in common with other similarly categorized or classified things" (2010, 58). These 'methods' belong to a history of theories or frameworks of literary criticism saturated with what Reid (2010, 39) refers to as 'transcendental orientations,' that severely dull or inhibit the book's capacities to compel novel becomings. No doubt many teachers will identify with most of the practices he lists, as many are still widely employed, including reductions of the literary selection to "what it denotes or possibly signifies," "what it symbolizes, alludes to or allegorizes," "the representational logic of its critical audience," "the chastisements of various factions within the critical community," "how the book itself conforms to certain standards or ideals (e.g., aesthetic, social, moral, or otherwise)" and "how it might simply be ranked or positioned (e.g., canonically, generically, historically)" (Reid, 2010, 11-12). To these we might add the aforementioned ways that the power of the literature is deadened through screens or filters of classroom assignments, lists of questions, essay topics, and/or exam expectations. Exacerbating the harm that such processes of reading can do, we should also consider the potential detrimental impact of writing as a form of response, often operating hand-in-hand with the reading expectations created by the kinds of exams mentioned above. Writing essays or 'themes' serves to further freeze the reductions or residues of reading into tiny nuggets of digestible and recognizable discoveries that fit the questions asked. At best, when no specific

topic is assigned, these can potentially lead to discoveries of personal insight, such as those alluded to by Coffeen earlier. But as Wolfgang Iser so eloquently observed, such processes are typically removed from the 'aesthetic' experience or encounter from the text and in the process of forcing the roundness or fullness of that experience into the square hole of representational language, the force of the aesthetic is lost. Though we are inclined to ask the question, what does it mean? this is precisely the practice Iser, echoing Deleuze and Guattari, warns against: stop looking to 'find' meaning in a text and start experiencing its effects. Iser makes this clear in stating that, "Meaning is no longer an object to be defined, but it is an effect to be experienced" (10). As a result of our insistence on the centrality of meaning in the English classroom, and the continued expectations of its filtration and convergence into essay form, literature is often recalled or discussed by students or teachers, not in terms of affections or notable signs of disturbance or joy, but vicariously through the memory of the most recent essay that was either written or read on the topic. Often, brief and superficial summations or trite slogans are used as shorthand interpretations. For example, Hamlet is either erroneously or simplistically abridged to a play revolving around the so-called tragic flaw, frequently summed up as his inaction. This is perhaps what Colebrook means when she argues that "literary reading is directed not to meaning but the putting into meaning" and that once written, presented, or articulated somehow in representational language, "the literary object circulates—is quoted, copied, repeated and re-read...it lives on only because its life is not self-present" (2014, 42). Interpretive responses such as the essay too often and too prematurely serve to terminate and supplant the affective relations one might have with the text in the direct aesthetic encounter with difference itself. By resorting to the comfort and safety of interpretive methods, not only do we bypass the more difficult challenge of wrestling in thought and body with affective and nonrepresentational excess, but we strain and constrain literature to what we already know... channeling difference into 'common sense' rather than allowing the work of pure difference and access to the outside edge where learning is possible.

Intensive Reading

As Jagodzinski reminds us, “It is not epistemology that is chased after in the last instance, but a becoming-other in relation to A Life itself” (2017, 7). This has helped to identify the primary impetus for my own rethinking of English pedagogy from one grounded in methods and interpretation to that which meets Deleuze and Guattari’s challenge to educators. The role of the literary text, as an art object, has the potential to either reinforce representation, or generate actual problems through its capacity to disturb. As O’Sullivan states, art can create “a break in our habitual sense of self and in our habitual responses to the world ... art might be involved in enabling these ‘new’ kinds of relations with the world” (2006, 27). This requires a very different approach to reading than the interpretative processes described above. One which, in order to open the classroom to a life, must strive to remain attuned to the immanent in the literary encounter. As Colebrook summarizes,

Literature is the power of fiction itself: not making a claim about what the world is, but about the imagination of a possible world. Art is not about representation, concepts or judgement; art is the power to think in terms that are not so much cognitive and intellectual as affective (to do with feeling and sensible experience). We are not reading a work as artistic or literary if we read it for its representation of the world or its presentation of theories. (2002a, 12).

If, as I have suggested, our interest is ultimately educational in intent and political in impact, then in so far as we see learning as a process of liberating forces of desire and affect and breaking the bonds that limit encounters with *a life*, then we need to consider the ‘other’ way that Deleuze suggests we read, as he proceeds with his *Letter to the Harsh Critic*,

[Seeing] the book as a little non-signifying machine and the only question is "Does it work, and how does it work?" How does it work for you? If it doesn't work, if nothing comes through, you try another book. (N, 8)

Here he reminds us of the book’s capacity to question, serve and open the assemblage to *a life*, but also that the nature of the encounter is experimental, offering no guarantee of something educational or transformational coming through. Adding that unlike the first way, “there’s nothing to explain, nothing to understand, nothing to interpret. It’s like plugging in to an electric circuit” (N, 8), he highlights his primary focus on affect and its machinic and rhizomatic qualities when appended to the assemblage. As he suggests,

This second way of reading's quite different from the first, because it relates a book directly to what's Outside. A book is a little cog in much more complicated external machinery. Writing is one flow among others, with no special place in relation to the others, that comes into relations of current, countercurrent, and eddy with other flows—flows of shit, sperm, words, action, eroticism, money, politics, and so on. (N, 8).

Reading in this way means reading immanently. Following the example mentioned earlier of the patron observing the Picasso painting, Coffeen points out that “that painting brings all kinds of sensations and affects that don’t need to be mediated by some art historian” (2016, 10). The challenge, however, is how to create a smooth space free from striating forces of mediation. A space that remains open to the immanent process that might unfold in a body’s encounter with an object. As he explains,

Whatever they see, they see and that seeing nudges them this way or that... You look at that Picasso painting, you read Joyce’s Ulysses, and something happens. The question is what value do you give that sense? How do you make sense of that sense? (2016, 11)

Returning to the analogy of the cookie cutter introduced earlier, anyone who has actually rolled out cookie dough and used a cookie cutter knows that once the mold is used, there is all the excess dough around it. In the same way, when we try to approach reading this way, there is always excess. That which doesn’t fit any mold, whether that be one defined by theory, theme or simply language of articulation, is likely a sense of the nonrepresentational and rather than avoiding it, educationally this is where we must focus our attention. For Deleuze, it is precisely in this excess where opportunities for learning exist. Where we enter the threshold of the new, outside our zone of ready comprehension. These are the sensations of disturbance that potentially force us to think. And rather than allowing the exercises within the traditional classroom to tame or dull it, we must instead open up space to let them work on us?

The closer we can maintain the gap between the ‘stimuli of the encounter and the processing of the response, the less likely we will be to freeze the encounter into words and representation. While many teachers, including myself, are apt to have students discuss a work as soon as they complete the reading, such mediation of ‘opinion’ and language are more likely to rob the encounter of its aesthetic power rather than enrich it. To read intensely is to sit

mindfully in the unrest of our affections, particularly those that result from the frustration of unknowing. Aligned with Deleuze's intensive reading, Coffeen argues,

Rather than wallowing in our habit and selves and our quest for sameness, we can confront things on their terms and engage with their difference. This is a different way of making sense, what I call immanent reading: reading a text – whatever that text may be -- on terms immanent to it and the very act of reading it" (2016, 16).

Similarly, O'Sullivan suggests that to read literature is "to position the rhizome as a new way to think art in general, a turn from transcendence to a kind of 'thinking immanence'" (2004, 14). To do so requires us to both be sensitive to or aware of the affections of discomfort and be willing to follow them as signs of something untapped. As Colebrook puts it more elegantly, "one inhabits a text: set up shop, follow its movements, trace its steps and discover it as a field of singularities," which she clarifies as "effects that cannot be subordinated to some pre-given identity of meaning" (2000, 3). The question remains, however, as to what this looks like when the 'thought' itself is largely unconscious, and what surfaces is non-representational until we force it into language where it can be communicated to others. Until this happens, as O'Sullivan suggests, affections are all we have to go by as immanent manifestations of signs:

the sign becomes an intensity, a trigger point for movement. Reading, if this is still a relevant term, is reading in order to be moved, to be 'set in motion'. Indeed, the tensor can be understood as precisely the affective side of the sign. Understanding art practice rhizomatically then entails attending to what we might call its performative aspect, what it does and what it makes us do, as well as to its 'knowledge producing' aspects (2006, 20).

Such an understanding of the encounter dramatically shifts approach to reading, though it by no means precludes the possibility of false or empty signs, such as those characterizing pulp fiction or what Jagodzinski refers to as 'designer capitalism,' which, in contrast to art is predestinated to be sensationalist in order to increase consumption and capture markets. Nevertheless, to the degree that a text can be considered a work of art, reading immanently or intensively means to enter into an aesthetic relationship with the text. Instead of rushing into or relying on discourses and interpretations about 'what the book says,' the process of reading focusses on what a book does, signaled perhaps through a more mindful or reflexive attention to the affections arising in conscious awareness. But we must also realize that much of the work of literature takes place in the virtual plane of immanence, in contact with the Outside, and

receptive of the forces of 'a life.' Massumi, for example, describes such as encounters as follows:

The thinking-perceiving body moves out to its outer most edge, where it meets another body and draws it into an interaction in the course of which it locks onto that body's affects (capacities for acting and being acted upon) and translates them into a form that is functional for it (qualities it can recall). A set of affects, a portion of the object's essential dynamism, is drawn in, transferred into the substance of the thinking-perceiving body. From there it enters new circuits of causality. (1992, 36)

These new circuits of causality interact with the multiplicity of other forces circulating in the unconscious and which may or may not lead to perceptible actualizations of difference at the same time as the encounter with the text is experienced.

One might imagine that the more the book takes on the qualities of art, the more likely it is to bring us into contact with the Outside and force us to think, but considering every reader is subject to a unique virtual assemblage, we might expect that what constitutes 'the outside' for one might be different than what will for another. And in the extreme, the most challenging works of art may be experienced as pure noise or chaos – all is Outside. Recalling the earlier discussion of building a body without organs, "You have to keep enough of the organism for it to reform each dawn" (ATP, 160), as without some limited accessibility to the articulable, the reader rejects the encounter, out of pure frustration. As an aside, this is also a reason why the texts I have chosen here may appear as literature 'lite' compared to those alluded to by Deleuze and Guattari. Helping to alleviate this concern, is the realization that the book is never considered in isolation of the rest of the assemblage, including other experiences or objects of consideration. As Deleuze concludes in his letter,

This intensive way of reading, in contact with what's outside the book, as a flow meeting other flows, one machine among others, as a series of experiments for each reader in the midst of events that have nothing to do with books, as tearing the book into pieces, getting it to interact with other things, absolutely anything ... is reading with love. That's exactly how you read the book (N, 8-9)

The thin slice of the *Outside* which might break through in the reader's encounter is, as Deleuze says, reflected off other 'events' or 'other things,' which speaks to the possibilities of disturbance with respect to whatever these *other things* might be. Deleuze also infers a similar

process of interaction – allowing a book to work on something external to the book, when he speaks of machining in reference to Nietzsche who “posits it quite clearly: if you want to know what I mean, find the force that gives what I say meaning, and a new meaning if need be. Hook the text up to this force. In this way, there are no problems of interpretation for Nietzsche, there are only problems of machining: to machine Nietzsche's text, to find out which actual external force will get something through, like a current of energy” (DIOT, 256).

Reid suggests the process of “machining the book” means, the “coupling of heterogeneous components between the book and its outside; or rather, it involves feeding the book various raw materials—the —absolutely anything” (2010, 31). The task of the teacher is arguably to keep the book open, avoiding a natural tendency to overcode or rely on external interpretation, while at the same time maximizing opportunities and methods of plugging it in –machining it in meaningful ways – to disturb otherwise sedimented or habituated perspectives. Put differently, “drawing on the capacity of the book to make or produce things, to generate outputs” (31), to machine a book is “to palpate difference, or to induce becomings in and through the book” (reference, 179). In this way, the book’s capacity to effect readers is potentially timeless in that no matter when the book is read, it can be machined to shift the lens on any number of objects of inquiry, including the expectations placed on the readers by the social machines surrounding them, such as the school itself. It can also be untimely in that it may inadvertently disrupt the perceived stability or benevolence of the reader’s world. And it may be untimely in a way that Deleuze most anticipates it will be, as signs draw the reader’s attention without prior warning. In summary, as I understand these two processes of reading, both are arguably interpretive depending on how one defines interpretation. On one hand, the traditional or methodological approach focuses on signification and in the process, is completed with a kind of closure, awaiting the next criticism to challenge its conclusions. In contrast, intensive reading is generative in its approach, opening or allowing the text itself to do its work through the body, with a focus on problems actualized as affections, signs and ultimate questions of why and of what consequence in thinking, acting and becoming in the world.

How Does Literature Work in Intensive Reading?

In order to further delve into how literature works on the body through the process of intensive reading, it is perhaps helpful to briefly explore the qualities or aspects of literature that potentially generate the intensities or disturbances the reader experiences.

It is important to also recognize that what constitutes ‘art’ can include the product of an encounter, the object of an encounter, and the encounter itself. “Art,” O’Sullivan summarizes, “is this complex event that brings about the possibility of something new” (2006, 2). Or as Deleuze and Guattari explain,

It should be said of all art that, in relation to the percepts or visions they give us, artists are presenters of affects, the inventors and creators of affects. They not only create them in their work, they give them to us and make us become with them, they draw us into the compound. (WIP, 175)

In other words, the writer unconsciously conveys affects as part of the created text and those affects are in turn conveyed to us as readers. But the question inevitably arises: where in the text do we find the affects?

Of course, we can only speculate on what in a text will be more or less likely to yield affects. And how such affects may be associated with the nonrepresentational. Reflection on what in literature either contains or conveys the forces of affect will always be hypothetical and likely variant from reader to reader. As Blanchot warns, “If reflection, imposing as it is, approaches literature, literature becomes a caustic force, capable of destroying the very capacity in itself and in reflection to be imposing” (1995, 302). In other words, any ‘reflection’ on such elements is removed from the moment of the event itself, in the midst of reading, and therefore always suffers the dilution of distance. The more we reflect on some aspect of the literature, the more we risk numbing it of its force when encountered. Consistent with earlier comments about method, while we might speak in generalities about aspects of literature which may be responsible for affecting the reader, knowing that the forces of difference enter at the point of assemblage, not only are we removed from any notion of direct causality, but we can never

quite put our finger on what combination of elements, words, syntax, images or scenes will serve to jolt or electrify any given reader. We can only guess.

What seems clear, at least to me, is that art, as suggested previously, assumes certain qualities that connect the conceptualizations of a minor literature with those of fabulation. As Bogue suggests, fabulation works “by creating hallucinatory fictions – vivid, haunting images that imitate perception and induce action, and thereby counteract the operations of judgment and reason. Fabulation, then, emerges in the shock of an event, a vertiginous moment of disorientation in which images bypass reason and work directly on the senses to induce action” (2007, 95). In its capacity to bypass reason, as Deleuze insists, “A work of art is not an instrument of communication. A work of art has nothing to do with communication. A work of art does not contain the least bit of information.” (TRoM, 322).

It is also important to recall that not every part of every literary or artistic work contains the qualities of art that meets Deleuze’s standard here. As already mentioned, reading most works of literature in high school means acknowledging one part that lies on the stratum of the known or recognizable and one part touching the Outside. This is where the experiment lies. Colebrook offers a helpful clarification in suggesting: “Art may well have meanings or messages but what makes it art is not its content but its affect, the sensible force or style through which it produces content” (2002a, 24-25). Put differently, it appears that there are sections or components or aspects of every selection which does the ‘work’ of art. Though the literature examined here might still communicate, the art within the text exists in response to and generation of the uncommunicable. If one wish merely to communicate, as students will quickly point out, then they can just say it. Such purposes are better served by the expository texts of non-art and those likely found in other disciplines.

If it were not for its ability to open us to the in-between of life, to the ineffable qualities of affect that define art’s aesthetic impact on us – confusing, ambiguous, shocking though they may be – there would be no reason for us to seek it out. There would be no reason to go

beyond the expository prose of the economics or psychology text. And there would, as argued earlier, be no justification for literature in school. When we choose to read a work of literature or art, intentionally or unintentionally we are expecting something much more than we would get from these other texts. We expect our senses and feelings (as affections) to be charged with something beyond the limits of language and representation. And if we really think about it, we expect to be troubled or confused to some degree. Learning from art, recalling Deleuze and Guattari's statement relating to philosophy cited earlier, is not about knowledge or truth, but about the "interesting, the remarkable, and the important" (WIP, 82).

Style

One answer to the question of what makes literature interesting, remarkable and important lies in Deleuze and Guattari's conceptualization of style. It is not just that literature defamiliarizes or that certain formalist elements such as punctuation or diction are foregrounded that distinguishes their understanding from other formalist proposals, but how they explain the emergence of style. The emergence of style is grounded in the unconscious virtual relationship to an Outside, to 'a life.' When O'Sullivan asks, "What is that thing that constitutes art 'beyond' its existence as brute matter?" he posits an answer: "style. It is style that organises matter. Style that takes lived perceptions and affects into the realm of art" (O'Sullivan, 2006, 53). In their exploration of affects -- "nonhuman becomings" or "strange becomings" common to "all the arts," Deleuze and Guattari ask specifically about the transformation of the artist's life experience into a work of art: "What terror haunts Van Gogh's head, caught in a becoming sunflower?" (WIP, 170). Regardless of artistic medium, the answer comes back to an intersecting concern: "style is needed—the writer's syntax, the musician's modes and rhythms, the painter's lines and colors—to raise lived perceptions to the percept and lived affections to the affect" (170).

Returning to the concept of the symptomatologist, if, like Van Gogh, the writer is responsive to symptoms, then the text itself embodies these in its materiality; its style corresponds to an actualization of the virtual processing of affects, problems and becomings of the writer. It is

arguably style which in turn generates the affects, differences, or non-representational intensities that impact the reader and help to initiate new becomings in thinking and acting. But what, then, is style? Carsten Meiner contends that style in this sense is not simply an identifiable idiosyncrasy of an author, a deviation from some hypothetical norm (1998, 157), in which case it would defer to difference by comparison. Rather, style emerges from the actualization or differentiation of pure difference. In empirical terms, Meiner suggests: “Deleuze's effort to define style as a destabilization of syntax from within the limits of language seems to be the principal line in his work” (1998, 160). Building on a discussion of Spinoza's style, Deleuze notes: “it takes all three wings [concepts, percepts and affects] nothing less, to form a style, a bird of fire” (N, 166). Whether this is true of style in literature as art is not entirely certain, but as he says elsewhere, there is a connection between the style observed as syntax or language against language, no doubt inspired by Blanchot, and a kind of embedded existential excess related to a lifestyle. As Meiner later contends: “Style as a modality of life rather than a syntactic destabilization adds an existential aspect to the notion of style” (161). Deleuze himself states: “Style, in a great writer, is always a style of life too, *not anything at all personal*, but inventing a possibility of life, a way of existing” (N, 100, added emphasis). The writer ‘lives’ life and expands in life *through* the art.

If, as Deleuze asserts, one writes “to bring things to life, to free life from where it's trapped” (N, 141), then in so far as the life we have been discussing, the life that cannot be represented, exists Outside the containment of language and dogmatic images of thought. It makes sense that:

The language for doing that can't be a homogeneous system, it's something unstable, always heterogeneous, in which style carves differences of potential between which things can pass, come to pass, a spark can flash and break out of language itself, to make us see and think what was lying in the shadow around the words, things we were hardly aware existed. (N, 141).

In terms of the most frequently associated characteristics of such instability and straining of language, we think of foregrounded altercations in syntax, punctuation, diction or sentence structure. In the service of becoming, Deleuze suggests: “There are no straight lines, neither in things nor in language. Syntax is the set of necessary detours that are created in each case to

reveal the life in things” (ECC, 2). It is primarily differences in syntax that Deleuze and Guattari use to qualify minor literature, the deterritorialization of language serves to generate minor becomings. In returning to the concept in his final collection of essays, Deleuze notes once again: “The literature of a minority is not defined by a local language” but rather “by a treatment to which it subjects the major language” (ECC, 55). To make language ‘tremble’ or “to make the language itself stutter in this manner, at the deepest level of style is a creative process that runs through all great works” (ECC, 55). Later he adds to these descriptors ‘stammering,’ ‘stuttering,’ and, in the process of creation, language that is “pushed to its limit, to music or silence” (55). Great authors, Deleuze and Guattari suggest, are capable of causing flows “to circulate, flows that split asunder” signifiers, and flows that “nourish a revolutionary machine on the horizon” (AO, 133). This, they go on to argue, “is what style is, or rather the absence of style – asyntactic, agrammatical: the moment when language is no longer defined by what it says, even less by what makes it a signifying thing, but by what causes it to move, to flow, and to explode-desire.” [133.] As such, style is understood as both generated by movement and in turn capable of generating or stimulating movement. Which, as empirical studies in foregrounding reveal, often result in the reader slowing down or pausing (Miall and Kuiken, 1994, 2002; Miall, 2006, 2008), this being responsible for disrupting the comfortable or easy consumption of text, and of surface or non-intensive reading.

Building on these qualities, if we consider those elements of literature that limit its easy digestion or smooth assimilation into the familiar or recognizable, then style might be understood as including other elements of literature, beyond grammatical idiosyncrasies. Particularly in the case of literature at the level of secondary school, many of which are less extreme in terms of syntax and language than those Deleuze often cites, we might speculate on other ways that affect is generated. Deleuze himself appears to imply these other considerations when he explains:

Style is a set of variations in language, a modulation, and a straining of one's whole language toward something outside it. Philosophy's like a novel: you have to ask 'What's going to happen?,' 'What's happened?' Except the characters are concepts, and the settings, the scenes, are space-times. (N, 140-141).

There is clearly an insinuation here of broader considerations of text characteristics, including characterization, time-space considerations, scenes and imagery, which also contribute to the work of style.

Characterization

Characterization in literature seems especially noteworthy, as it is through the voices or depictions of characters that literature either reinforces molar fixations or loosens them. As they are most commonly understood and examined, Colebrook observes, characters are viewed as “a general human form which novelists then describe in its varying forms, adding nuances and particulars,” in which case we would conceive of literature as “represent[ing] the vast array of human life” (2002a, 83). Such characters appeal to ‘common sense,’ including readily available stereotypes which slide comfortably into the identifiable. To this, Colebrooke contrasts characterization which coheres with the previous discussion of style, “begin[ning] from affect, diverse experiences that have no prior ground and that go to make up characters who are incongruous collections of ‘intensities’” (2002a, 83). In this view, characters defy expectations and support the fabulation of the work in generating ‘visions’ and expand possibilities for or of a people yet to come. As Deleuze and Guattari state, “a great novelist is above all an artist who invents unknown or unrecognized affects and brings them to light as the becoming of his characters” (WIP, 174). Likewise, Colebrook states even more emphatically that “Literature, if it is worthy of the name, is not the representation of a human life that we all share and recognise; it is the creation of affects that open other worlds. In the case of the novel these affects are opened up from the possible world of another character’s” (2002a, 83-84).

Deleuze and Guattari describe such becoming as coinciding with the point at which characters enter into relationship with elements of their assemblage. For example, Ahab, in Melville’s *Moby Dick* is described as having “perceptions of the sea, but only because he has entered into a relationship with Moby Dick that makes him a becoming-whale and forms a compound of sensations that no longer needs anyone: ocean” (169). Similarly, the character of Mrs. Dalloway from Virginia Woolf “perceives the town – but because she has passed into the town like ‘a

knife through everything' and becomes imperceptible herself" (169). In both cases, affects are equated with "these nonhuman becomings of man" (169). How the reader's own pre-subjective becoming is 'affected' by the becoming of the character is of course difficult, if not impossible, to predict or to observe. Nevertheless, as unreliable as self-reports may be, many former students have conveyed an awareness, sometimes after considerable time has passed, of how their perceptions of the world, their sensitivities, and their judgements have shifted in ways they attribute, at least partially, to their encounter with a particular work of literature, and in the case of some of the works included here, because of a specific character.

Even in relatively conventional works such as those of Charles Dickens, Colebrook suggests that characters "can give us a sense of the human as the production of life and difference" (2002a, 83). Though Dickens often wrote for the rather pedestrian purpose of serial publications in local newspapers, as Colebrook observes, he "composes characters from quirky phrases, strange body tics, irrational desires and affections and highly partial histories" (83). As actualizations of virtual difference, she explains that like any of us, "characters are the diverse events and histories that compose them... nothing more than our contracted habits and contemplations" (83). Remembering that the quality of art that defines art emerges from the plane of immanence, and that such art works as symptomatology, as Colebrook reminds us, then we might expect that "the other person is not just like us, with a few character differences. The other is another possible world of differences" (2002a, 83). Rather than offering us characters with whom we can identify, art offers us characters who might potentially bring us a fabulated vision of health.

Narrative, Time, Space

Similar to characterizations, the sense of space and time in literature can also produce certain affective impacts on the reader. Bogue recognizes Deleuze's eschewal of conventional narrative for similar reasons and the aforementioned treatment of characterization, preferring instead narrative or story that thwarts expectations and opens up possibilities for difference. For this reason, Bogue prefers the term fabulation, which captures the disturbances of affect in non-

conventional narrative elements, stating that it “allows one to conceive of storytelling simultaneously as a way of engaging and articulating real and material problems – and hence as a way of getting at truths of a certain sort, of countering lies and insisting on historical facts that have been denied, buried or distorted – *and* as a means of inventing new possibilities for construing the world and its future development” (2010, 13). In so far as space and time is intrinsic to the narrative, narrative/fabulation is of considerable importance to Deleuze, especially in his conceptualization of the movement image and time image developed in his *Cinema* books. Though I might be condemned for applying his work on cinema to the written text considering how frame changes in film operate very differently than time and space transitions in narratives, I still contend there are interesting points of overlapping application. Narrative in cinema, largely because of technological intervention and mediation on what and how we receive images and sounds, relates either chronologically in the movement image or non-linear sequences of fragmentation in the time-image where time is scrambled, condensed, expanded and split – yielding the time of aeon – in a way that does not match any sense of standard chronology. Details – frames – pass across the screen so rapidly that the eyes do not or can not adjust to each image before it is gone. One might consider, for example, how details in literature are also placed before the reader’s focus of attention, and how shifts in space and time occur in the narrative in ways that can disorient the reader. And while writers do not have access to the technology of film, time and space can still be jarred through juxtapositions, backflashes, foreshadows, dream sequences and many other forms of fragmentation that work, like punctuation perhaps, to extend narration beyond signification.

In contrast to the more popular and arboreal works of fiction described earlier, literature as art tends to build rhizomatically with indeterminate or non-existing endings. Understood as a potential source of signs, the narrative unfolds in starts and stops with chance or unpredictable encounters of the unexpected. These qualities can also defy readers’ attempts to default to or reference previous experience, codings and representations of majoritarian social dynamics. Similar to Brecht’s theories of epic theatre, but perhaps without the intentional denial of

emotional responses, a work of literature as art is sometimes nearly impossible to read without necessary pauses or stops as the affective intensity builds to unmanageable degrees.

Signs

A final piece in this short exploration of how works of literature operate immanently, the consideration of signs, a topic already discussed at some length earlier. Recalling the earlier discussion of an apprenticeship in signs as initiated by chance and shock, I understand signs as those elements in the novel that coalesce the affective force of the Outside and that might *pierce* the consciousness of the reader as affections. Signs might be considered as the direct result of style in literature; they help to explain why style, particularly in the way it slows or pauses reading, invites learning. It is the disorienting impact of style that grabs the reader, forces thought and invites learning. Deleuze argues, drawing an analogy to an apprenticeship in carpentry: “One becomes a carpenter only by becoming sensitive to the signs of wood, a physician by becoming sensitive to the signs of disease...Everything that teaches us something emits signs; every act of learning is an interpretation of signs” (PS, 4). It is worth remembering that interpretation as an apprenticeship in signs and as part of intensive reading is very different than interpretation in reading for signification. It also differs from more traditional methods of ‘close readings,’ not only because it does not seek the closure of signifiers, but because, while close reading and traditional approaches to analyses seek to understand how an element works to create meaning in a work, signs lead us to question how they are conditioned in the virtual, what symptoms it reveals, and how it might shift thinking and becoming in different directions. If signs are, as Bogue states, “enfolded differences that impinge on thought and force thought to unfold those differences” (2004, 332), then we might anticipate moments of foregrounding to coincide with “chance moments that defy common sense and choose the interpreter rather than themselves being freely chosen as objects of interpretation” (332). In other words, unlike close reading and other approaches to interpretation in which the reader intentionally, and often with theory or lens in hand, scours a work for matches, the interpretation or apprenticeship in signs is driven by an immanent process of intensive reading. The sign disrupts or disturbs the reader and in the event of that disturbance, and however long

it may linger as a residue of the encounter, the reader is compelled to sit with the disturbance as difference unfolds virtually.

Here, too, it is worth recalling the process of reflexion encompassing a movement from inadequate to adequate knowledge. In following the search or entering into the apprenticeship of signs, it is possible, as Williams work on the process sign implies, of understanding not simply what triggers a reaction, but why. Though causality should always be suspect, the attempt to move from inadequate to adequate knowledge allows the reader to dig into potential blindspots in their own dispositions and reactions. What might be the cause of discomfort, unsettlement or shock? As Bogue explains, an object such as a sign, is “an internalized difference pointing toward something other than itself” (2004, 333). Thinking through the sign is not about resolving the problem.

[T]he thought of difference is itself a thought of problems, and learning, rather than occupying the gap between non-knowledge and knowledge, is the process whereby thought explores the domain of problems.... Problems must be evaluated not according to their ‘resolvability,’ as often happens in philosophy, but according to their importance, their ability to generate new questions and the solutions related to those questions. (Bogue, 2004, 333-334)

As Bogue stresses, following Deleuze, while the subject is involved, signs cannot “merely [become] a matter of subjective association” (2004, 332). This is a notable distinction to certain forms of reader response theories where connections are made to a reader’s experience. As Bogue continues: “The problem here is that with subjective associations, anything goes. Any object may be associated with any other object, in which case signs are merely symptoms of their interpreters” (332). In contrast, the sign as Deleuze explores it in reading Proust, is a symptom of something beyond the object that triggers its effect on the reader: “What Marcel must finally learn is that the truth of signs is neither in the objects that emit them nor in the subjects who interpret them, but in the differences that are immanent in objects and subjects alike” (232). As Baugh also argues, while earlier theorists such as Barthes and Foucault already announced the death of the author, Deleuze implies a death of the reader, we still tend “to look to literature to find the truth of the reader” (2009, 132). While reader response theory tends to ask the question ‘what does the book mean to me?’ or ‘what does the book tell me about

myself,' Baugh, following Deleuze, asks, "What if, indeed, there were another way to read, which did not lead us back into ourselves (or into some 'human condition' we share with everyone else), but away from ourselves, into the unknown? (132)

If style or stuttering speaks to a minor literature's deterritorialization of language, then the resulting disturbance enters the reader's conscious awareness, quasi-causally, as the affections they experience. And because causality is never direct, it is style, understood here as not simply syntactic but inclusive of narrative, temporal, character elements, that must be understood not as the causes themselves but rather, signs of something more. Reiterating a Deleuze's statement cited earlier: "There is always the violence of a sign that forces us into the search, that robs us of peace" (PS, 15). It is clear that the affects generated by textual components, the affects that are unconsciously materially woven into the text by the author, are key to the immanent impact of the text or the 'literary machine' within the encounter. In other words, how, textual elements – the style or aesthetics core to the text – are indirectly generative of affections and signs that beckon readers' responses.

Finally, considering the aims of this present work, focused not simply on literature but on the educational potential of literature, signs are significant at three levels: the signs that characters appear drawn to within the text or narration; the signs in the text to which the teacher is drawn as points of question or discussion, and the signs in the text to which each individual student is drawn. And while these may and often do overlap, because of the nature of signs, there is no reason why they should, other than through their connection to or disruption of a shared territory, milieu or majoritarian regime of signs . As Deleuze discusses in his work on Proust, signs at first appear to be those that challenge the central character, Marcel, through his Search. But through his discussion, Deleuze's words appear to apply both to the character within the novel as well as to the reader who encounters the novel. In other words, the reader is impacted by 'signs' as they read, and these may or may not be the same as those 'signs' that appear to grab ahold of the character(s) within the work itself.

The ebbs and flows of the reader's attention might be mapped according to the signs emitted from the book. And though there is a blurred line between a reader's interpretation, for example, of a character's struggles in a conflict, and the reader's own struggle with the character, the focus of intensive reading must ultimately shift to how the character encounters become the reader's, recognizing that they work as signs not of a fictional world, but of a life that is pre-subjective and pre-personal. The prospect of learning is created through the antagonism of virtual problems generated, quasi-causally, by the literature. It is not, for example, what an object may or may not mean to a character, but rather how his reactions, relations, and recognitions act on us, and do something to us as readers. How they enunciate non-representational sensations that cause us to pause. And how, in constituting virtual problems, as Williams says of process signs, they "allow us to discover the truth of worlds, but since there are many different worlds there are also different systems and types of sign for each world..." (2016, 123).

Worthiness of the Event and the Potential Role of the Teacher

My argument here has been that effect literature as art offers a direct assault on representational thinking and dogmatic images of thought, the already processed and directed in paint-by-number education. The sign, as Williams suggests, is “something that snaps us out of the received images governing our thoughts” (2016, 126), and because of this, literature challenges students with an education through an apprenticeship in sign-disturbances. But at the same time, teachers can perhaps offer support in preparing students – in Deleuze’s terms to become worthy of the event – the disturbance – and compel students, perhaps by a shared unsettling, to take up the challenge. As Deleuze explains, “to become worthy of what happens to us” is “to will and release the event, to become the offspring of one's own events, and thereby to be reborn, to have one more birth, and to break with one's carnal birth” (LS, 149-150). In other words, to shift the trajectory of how we are shaped by an assemblage defined by boundaries, territories, codes – common sense. But it is no small challenge for teachers and students in the classroom. As O’Sullivan reminds us, to read a work of art this way means relaxing or forcing ourselves to step out of the habits we’ve developed and open ourselves to the art: “This world of affects, this universe of forces, is our own world seen without the spectacles of habitual subjectivity” (2006, 50).

When we consider the educational experiences to which most students have been accustomed or conditioned, it is not surprising that for many, immanent or intensive reading will not come naturally. As Deleuze observes, “To be sensitive to signs, to consider the world as an object to be deciphered, is doubtless a gift. But this gift risks remaining buried in us if we do not make the necessary encounters, and these encounters would remain ineffective if we failed to overcome certain stock notions” (PS, 26-27). This includes, perhaps, the reader’s passive reactions based on inadequate knowledge and a tendency to quickly attribute causality to affective reactions to the text. As Deleuze observes, the first of the stock notions is “to attribute to the object the signs it bears. Everything encourages us to do so: perception, passion, intelligence, even self-esteem” (27). Rather than accept the apprenticeship, attending to the more complex nature of causality and the embodiment of discomfort and follow the lines of

flight, students are more likely to reflexively alleviate any felt discord. In drawing attention to the potential dangers encountered through schizoanalysis. Deleuze and Guattari imply that while a text may succeed in instigating lines of flight, the revolutionary impulse is subject to immediate capture, whereby movement is reterritorialized not in novel becomings, but in the familiar. In practical terms this means dismissing or rerouting the shock to thought onto 'safe' territory, and quickly reassigning familiar codes to the unfamiliar and thereby taming or dulling any loose affections, or what Coffeen calls, "domesticating the wildness of things" (2016, 16)

Deleuze and Guattari sum up the challenge as follows: "We must first experience the violent effect of a sign, and the mind must be "forced" to seek the sign's meaning" (PS, 23). The violence -- or shock -- generated by signs, Bogue suggests, force thought, "to deal with experiences that disrupt the common, coordinated functioning of the senses and faculties" (2004, 337), but as he elaborates elsewhere, "an event is an encounter, and the essence of learning, as well as thinking, resides in encounters" (2013, 33). Though shock or violence might initiate thought, as discussed earlier, "it is also important to do something with such violence, actively to become worthy of the encounters that occur" (33). To the extent that signs are associated with the creation of problems, students' willingness to follow the path of discomfort or affective disturbance becomes a measure of their willingness to learn. In other words, recalling Deleuze's example of learning to swim, one must be willing, ready or able to immerse oneself in an "alien element" (337), which is generative of problems, with their system of differential relations, if learning as becoming is to take place.

Recognizing these challenges as intrinsic to a pedagogy of disturbance, the teacher appears to have a definite role in the classroom. Arguably, as discussed earlier, their first responsibility lies in the selection of the text-experiment, one that cannot be negated by being avoided or ignored. Bogue points out that "in his courses, Deleuze provides encounters for his students, events of which they then must become worthy" (2013, 33). Taken seriously, this not only includes considering the elements of rhizome, fabulation and minor literature already discussed, but in deference to intensive reading, also considering its potential for disturbance in

this time and place. A teacher not only knows their students, but is hopefully aware of the changing context surrounding their insular domain of the classroom: the dominant and trending habits of behaviour and territorial codings beyond the door in the so-called 'real' world. The challenge, as O'Sullivan states it, is "how to remove these spectacles [of habitual subjectivity], which are not really spectacles at all but the very condition of our subjectivity?" For both teachers and students: "how, indeed, to side step our selves? (2006, 50). In consideration of Deleuze and Guattari's micropolitics, we might ask, for example, how our selection and approach to literature in schools helps to loosen the hold of dominant flows of desire and dominant subjectivities, and particularly those fed by the capitalist, neo-liberal, and despotic regimes of signs that characterize the current ecology of schools. This is perhaps, at least in part, what Deleuze might have had in mind when he challenges us to get the literary machine "to interact with other things, absolutely anything." (N, 9). What he refers to as reading with love. To think of the book in terms of a literary machine connected to the reader as part of a larger assemblage that is both impacted by and in turn impacts the social. Contemplating the micropolitics of reading, a pedagogy of disturbance works against the habitual and territorialized molarity of assumed identities, including those that divide *us* and *them*. Furthermore, in addition to text selection, the teacher is both ethically and pedagogically responsible for supporting students' intensive reading and their apprenticeship in signs. This means the teacher is responsible for creating conditions – smooth spaces – which increase the possibilities of learning, by avoiding the temptation of striating interjections and defaulting to interpretive and assessment practices, including their own, which disrupt intensive reading. This includes premature and prolonged talking about the text which, as Suzanne Freeman argues, serves to "kill books with kindness and confabulation" (2005, 142). Though the context about which she speaks are book groups, the implications are the same: We risk "discuss[ing] them to death." As she elaborates:

In your luckiest moments of reading, it seems to me, what you find is something to keep quiet about. You find something to hoard. You come upon one of those inexplicable places in a book that touches you so deeply you don't even have the words to say why. And you should not have to. (2005, 142)

Deleuze proposes a *paideia* or culture of training in the reception of violence that is specific to a practice which improves conditions for 'chance' to take hold. In what might conceivably offer a defense for a pedagogy of disturbance, "culture" he contends, "is an involuntary adventure, the movement of learning which links a sensibility, a memory and then a thought, with all the cruelties and violence necessary, as Nietzsche said, precisely in order to 'train a "nation of thinkers", or to 'provide a training for the mind'" (DR, 165-166). There is a role as well in nurturing patience and persistence in students. Deleuze predicts, 'disappointment' as "a fundamental moment of the search or of apprenticeship: in each realm of signs, we are disappointed when the object does not give us the secret we were expecting" (PS, 34). In the provision of smooth space, the classroom must be a place that prepares students for the initial frustration, sometimes framed in instances of ambiguity or confusion. Understood as an experiment, the focus of reading, and perhaps the role of the teacher, should entail, to the extent that it is possible, conditioning students' worthiness of the event. In nurturing their sensibilities to the affections they might experience, teachers might elevate receptiveness or attunement to how the reading works on them. Lyotard suggests that,

to become open to the 'It happens that' rather than the 'What happens', requires at the very least a high degree of refinement in the perception of small differences ... In order to take on this attitude you have to impoverish your mind, clean it out as much as possible, so that you make it incapable of anticipating the meaning, the 'What' of the 'It happens ...' The secret of such asceticism lies in the power to be able to endure occurrences as 'directly' as possible without the mediation of a 'pre-text.' Thus to encounter the event is like bordering on nothingness. (1988, 18)

The teacher can support intensive reading by prolonging the duration of encounters and navigating past the potentially irrational or premature judgments deriving from less reliable affective relations and fragments of memory driving both conscious and unconscious resistance.

In terms of the role of the teacher, two additional proposals are worth considering. The first is what Bogue describes as master apprentice. While this may sound pretentious or presumptuous, paradoxically it is realized as very much the opposite. Bogue argues that Deleuze's portrait of the teacher as "a humble assistant" in the case of Proust, "is strategic, in

that Deleuze is countering the orthodox image of the teacher as all-powerful master, the one who knows, the one who poses the questions and already possesses all the answers" (22). As Deleuze himself states, "according to this infantile prejudice, the master sets a problem, our task is to solve it, and the result is accredited true or false by a powerful authority...[the] grotesque image of culture that we find in examinations and government referenda as well as in newspaper competitions" (DR, 158). Based on first-hand accounts from students, Bogue suggests that Deleuze himself provides a model of a teacher who, with great humility, approaches the text 'with' the students, and as a student. Deleuze emphasizes that, "we learn nothing from those who say: 'Do as I do'. Our only teachers [*maîtres*] are those who tell us to 'do with me' and are able to emit signs to be developed in heterogeneity rather than propose gestures for us to reproduce" (DR, 23). In other words, teachers model their own apprenticeship and, in the process, contribute to the problematization and intensity of sign. At the same time, they dissuade habitual dismissals and reterritorializations. Levy Bryant suggests that teaching "consists not in coaxing the students to get the 'right answers' (here I have a little less faith in my social science colleagues, who seem to 'teach from the book... but rather to properly formulate problems and questions'" (2007, 4). Likewise, for Bogue, "The teacher as emitter of signs does not provide apprentices with answers, but guides them in the art of discovering problems, an art that can only be mastered by practising it" (2013,31). An art in which the teacher is, as the name suggests, also apprenticing and striving to be worthy of the event of learning.

Returning to Deleuze's insistence on culture or discipline, in lieu of method, Bogue suggests that a "violent training, culture and *paideia*", would "take place in a workshop" where, "the master apprentice offers apprentices encounters with the concepts and problems of great philosophers" (2013, 31) or in this case great literature. This is, he insists, "not a method, but an art, not a programme of study, but a rigorous discipline" (2013, 31). And it is a pedagogical practice. Bogue attributes the apparent success of Deleuze's own seminars to his process of "performing the action of thinking and creating moments of inspiration during which the rehearsal of thought became thought 'in real time'" (2013:29). The teacher, in modeling what

Deleuze refers to as reading with love, demonstrates that the encounter matters. Deleuze implies that Foucault is just such a teacher, arguing that,

when people follow Foucault, when they're fascinated by him, it's because they're doing something with him, in their own work, in their own independent lives. It's not just a question of intellectual understanding or agreement, but of intensity, resonance, musical harmony. Good lectures, after all, are more like a concert than a sermon, like a soloist "accompanied" by everyone else (N, 86).

The second proposal follows the conceptualization of the mediator developed by Michael Levan (date) in which he describes the process of translation in terms of the 'aesthetics of the encounter,' an act of creation whereby translation is understood in terms of "a style of interaction" (52) which in turn "mediates style, effecting transformations and creating possibilities" (56). In reference to his own mediator or '*intercesseur*,' Guattari, Deleuze insists, "I need my mediators to express myself, and they'd never express themselves without me: you're always working in a group, even when you seem to be on your own" (N, 125). Later in this passage he explains how each of them were engaging in falsifying each other: "each of us understands in his own way notions put forward by the other" and "these capacities of falsity to produce truth, that's what mediators are about" (N, 126). In other words, the mediator is potentially that which engages in an interplay of thoughts and ideas and affect. This, too, speaks to the notion of apprenticeship, whereby students and teachers enter into an assemblage of play and creativity, challenging truths and generating new possibilities. In this way, a teacher might fulfill not only a supportive role but an antagonizing role, interjecting a gentle agon, as a way of intensifying and extending the apprentices' search. In so doing, the teacher supports the process of intensive reading with love and participates in a pedagogy of disturbance.

Transitioning to Illustrative Examples:

In concluding this section, then, when I consider the notion of disturbance with respect to literary studies, I envision a role of literature in education that is well outside the normalized approaches currently practiced.

A pedagogy of disturbance, as I understand it, recognizes the writer, the text and the reader as contributing to the clinical and the critical. This includes a symptomatology that is activated through the intensive reading and sensitivity to the disturbance of signs, exposure to emerging problems and questions and more direct reflexion arising from schizoanalysis and/or reflexion. And it considers possibilities of health in terms of lines of flight and a people yet to come. O'Sullivan describes Deleuze and Guattari's text, *A Thousand Plateaus*, as "an attempt to reconfigure the way we think about the world in an affirmative and creative manner... as a box of psychic tools, or strategies, to help us construct our lives differently" (2006, 11). We might approach all works of literature with this in mind, by way of the 'problems' they create, generative of ways to think and live life differently.

In my case, as much as I read these works for what they can 'do' in the encounter with student readers, I am also interested, from a pedagogical perspective, in the concepts they might generate for educators, as they have myself, to think differently about teaching practices and the potential role of English literature for education in general. I also follow O'Sullivan's challenge in striving to give "attention to the pragmatic and constructive nature of Deleuze [and Guattari]'s thought whilst at the same time creatively bringing it into contact with other worlds and always with our own projects and our own lives. If such an encounter ruptures, then it also entails the opening up of new worlds, new territories" (O'Sullivan, 2006, 3).

One either applies the concepts of Deleuze and Guattari as a means of offering different ways of thinking about something – another lens. Or, one can take up the challenge and create new concepts by which to think through problems. In the present study, while I aspire to the latter, in all honesty, what I likely am to achieve is more akin to the hybridity of a both | and. As new windows are opened through the tools and actions of their concepts, different becomings in turn give rise to new concepts. As we encounter literary machines, they have the potential to generate questions: How does this text work on me? How does it problematize my world? How does it disturb?

The question to ask: what does the machine, the literary machine in this case, produce? What intensities does it generate into the assemblage? What affect? What affections? And what concepts? What new capacities for connection?

Reading a text is never a scholarly exercise in search of what is signified, still less a highly textual exercise in search of a signifier. Rather, it is a productive use of the literary machine, a montage of desiring machines, a schizoid exercise that extracts from the text its revolutionary force. (AO, 106)

In the following explorations, I make a distinction between reading as a search for signified and an intensive reading, along side selected concepts from Deleuze and Guattari's oeuvre which help to home in on potential immanent forces of the works. As has been emphasized here, while they do not provide a method, they do provide a clear challenge. And while some may question the approach I take with these works, I have attempted in my own way to imagine, as a teacher and a reader, what a schizoid exercise might be like, with the aim being to extract or amplify a text's revolutionary force. One that, in anticipating resistance from some teachers who do not see a teacher's role as implicated in the political, does not point to a prescribed goal, other than a kind of freeing of habitual thought and creating new openings of becoming.

As impossible, and presumably as undesirable, as it is to completely relinquish our foothold into the world of signification – organism, signifiante, subjectivity included – this is no doubt equally a possible trap when considering the text through the so-called Deleuzian lens or through concepts created by Deleuze and Guattari and one which I have been especially sensitive to in this work. Bogue alludes to line between method and exploration, when he describes his project of developing Deleuze's notion of fabulation "into a properly literary theoretical concept" (2010, 4), which he carefully distinguishes from 'methods' of literary analysis. While each of these 'tools', might, as Bogue suggests, prove useful "as a tool for practical critical analysis" (5), I am also highly sensitive to the superficial employment of such tools and the easy slide into hermeneutic cheating, finding examples in the novels that prove the applicability of the theory. As Bogue, himself, emphasizes: "It would be a weary exercise indeed simply to

construct the fabulation grinder and then crank out uniform sausage as each novel is passed through the rotor blades” (5).

For myself, I prefer to think of the process I am attempting as reading with Deleuze and Guattari. The concepts I borrow are concepts that align with his notion of intensive reading. Rather than applying a literary lens and reading for something, the concepts help give shape and intensity to what emerges from the reading, first as signs – characteristics, characters, scenes that draw my attention and have stuck with me over time – and then as a more intentional inquiry into the schizoanalytical and philosophical potential of the works, the latter unfolding as discussions of becoming and concept creation or revision.

Chapter 7: An Intensive Reading of Catcher in the Rye

As a first selection, J.D. Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye* (CITR) might seem to many as a less than ideal text. While Deleuze notes in an interview regarding *Anti-Oedipus* that what they "find in great English and American novelists is a gift, rare among the French, for intensities, flows, machine-books, tool-books, schizo-books (N, 23). Yet, in contrast to the texts that Deleuze and Guattari speak of – Beckett, Melville, Proust, Kafka, Artaud – many might wonder how this novel can possibly measure up. My contention is that not only do I consider CITR justifiably fitting in to this list, and for all the reasons Deleuze lists, but also because it is a book that continues to be accessible to most secondary students. Some might argue that there is very little that is 'revolutionary' or minoritarian about a text that is not only written by a dead, 'white guy,' but continues to sell thousands of copies, nearly 70 years after its first appearance in 1951.

That said, these arguments fall prey to exactly the kind of doxa that Deleuze wants to avoid. It seems to me that in order to determine the capacity of a novel to disturb or to transform in a revolutionary sense, it is necessary to look beyond the representational baggage that precedes it, including previous criticisms in favour of or against it. In this case, we must look past the novel's comparatively eventful history, including the news stories of its appearance in the hands of homicidal celebrity criminals and biographical details that bias readers one way or another with respect to its author, J.D. Salinger. No doubt many will be aware of the novel's place in the history of American letters and public education. Heralded by many as a minor if not major classic, it continues to appear on lists of 'great books,' 'influential books' or 'books to read before one dies.' And though it has occasionally appeared on high school reading lists, more-often-than not it has instead been popularized through personal student-to-student recommendations. And it has largely maintained a reputation of notoriety, often appearing at the top or near the top of many censored or banned book lists.

To those who feel the novel is only relevant to white male audiences, there is plenty of evidence to the contrary. For example, journalist Emily Wax (2001) shares several comments from students who many would likely not expect to appreciate the novel. Amar Seifeldein, who came from Sudan only three years prior states: "I thought it was a very interesting book, and I could really identify with it because Holden felt lonely...Holden failed classes; he moved around. I could understand that" (2001). Another student from Vietnam, Luan Huynh, chose it as her favourite novel, noting that "It doesn't matter to me that he wasn't from an Asian family" (2001). Having introduced the work to classes comprising of primarily immigrant or refugee students, I had similar experiences, with several going out to find versions in their mother languages. But though positive, some of these responses are also troubling, particularly in relation to the proposed pedagogy of disturbance. My concern is not whether students like it or not, but that if a student justifies the appeal because they can easily identify with the character, it hardly infers a disturbance. Assuming their reasons are accurate (and they may be oversimplified), identification is more likely to confirm an existing world view rather than disrupt it. And, if such were the case, the novel would deserve to be dismissed as 'representational' rather than a work of art that is capable of confounding easy digestion.

It should also be said that there are many who reject it, whose voices perhaps challenge the attention I give it here. Consistent with its history of criticism, those who suggest it not be used in schools argue from widely different bases, and now include many who dismiss it as out of date (Anne Trubeck, 2008; Jessica Roake, 2012; Emily Temple, 2012; Wax, 2001). Trubeck, for example, admits that while CTR "was edgy and controversial when teachers first put it on their syllabi...that was 50 years ago. Today, Salinger's novel lacks the currency or shock value it once had" (2008). But as with all such comments, including my own, these must be taken in context and considered relative to the author's other observations of the novel, such as her assertion that: "There are many tales of adolescent angst out there, and they all, it seems, need a wink to Salinger to claim a place in this genre." Though she continues to praise the book, the fact that she sums it up as 'adolescent angst' suggests she had a very different encounter to it than I did.

Either way, both positive and negative responses to the novel, at least of the sort just shared, can be suspect. There is this danger with any encounter with art: one can either like or dislike a work for the wrong reasons. And I am convinced that many who read the novel both embrace and dismiss it prematurely as their encounters can be either affirmed or rejected as a means to maintain stasis of comfortable habits of thought and being. At least part of the reason for this is its deceptive simplicity, which allows for reflexive and often superficial responses of both positive and negative varieties. But while it is written in easily accessible language, in terms of thought and the nature of its disturbance, it is one of the most complex texts taught in secondary education today and the reading of it tends to be far less intensive and more often guided by superficial biases set up by blurbs and introductions.

Returning to my claim that CTR deserves the consideration that I give it, justified on the basis of its potential force in a minor politics and minor literature for the classroom, I believe it must be considered on its own terms, in the context of intensive reading. This includes its affective capacity to disturb readers, as much today in Alberta as it perhaps did in post-war II America as well as its ability to work on the territorialized prejudices and habits of its educational audiences. Within the pedagogical framework I have proposed, the novel must be considered in terms of how it works immanently rather than through imposed interpretations and historical or cultural mediations and adjudications.

That said, before I proceed, I feel the need to disclose my own position relative to the novel which no-doubted premises this section. Clearly my choice of CTR is a highly personal one. That in itself is no surprise as every selection is consciously or unconsciously a product of one's own assemblage and lines of desire. And my fondness for it is no doubt in part due to how it has worked on and continues to work on me. In saying this I realize that making any claim as to its pedagogical merit becomes suspect, and that I might be accused of projecting my own desires into the classroom. But such is the nature of self-reporting and evidence from personal experience. Simply put, it may not work for others as it has for me.

So be it. I have chosen the novel primarily because of my years of working with it, and it working with me and my students. Of all the works of literature I have encountered as a reader and as a teacher of reading, it is the one that stands out most for me. I remember back when I first read it in university, at the culmination of the novel I felt profoundly depressed. To be honest, I wasn't certain why. And while I continue to struggle for explanations to this day, I know that it was also a strangely affirmative feeling of sadness. Ironically, either regardless of or because of the despair, it has never failed to deliver intensive positive feelings as well. There was a kind of ambiguous clarity in in the tragic centre of the novel that I simply could not articulate. And despite many attempts, I have yet to do so, as it continues to work on me. Every year I teach it, or rather let it teach me, it disturbs me, shakes me, challenges me, and moves me in ways which, because every class is a new assemblage, are never predictable. Perhaps with the force of difference and repetition, it has haunted me since I first encountered it over 40 years ago, like an ache I simply can't seem to forget. With respect to my own reading of it, from which much of what follows is based, very few works of fiction or nonfiction have so thoroughly propelled my growing sense of urgency around education. And when I think of the kind of student who has inspired me to pursue this line of research, Holden Caulfield is always the one troubling my imagination.

But though my initial choice to teach the novel was very personal, I honestly would not have continued to teach it had it not appeared to work as well as it has on or for students (though not all). And by 'work,' I mean in terms of how the novel appears to impact students materially. Though, of course, I can only go by surface affections, from those students who have experienced actualized effects of the novel, many have told me, sometimes years after they first read the novel in my grade 12 class, that it has continued to impact their lives – feelings, observations, receptions. Though as might be expected, they cannot always articulate how; they just believe it has. Admittedly, teaching the novel is never without challenges and I can name very few texts that manage to polarize the classroom as much as CTR: students either love it or hate it, without necessarily being able to explain why. Their difficulty in articulating these 'feelings' perhaps confirms the affective power of the novel to work in the virtual space

of nonrepresentation. It speaks also to Robert Bennett's observation that, "Putting aside the overinflated claims of the novel's most extreme critics and supporters, the diversity and intensity of readers' reactions to *The Catcher in the Rye* suggest that the issues it raises are significant ones" (2009).

Though I pride myself in stretching the canon in the direction of non-canonical, non-Western, non-patriarchal etc., and read virtually everything that comes along that bears any comparison to CTR, I have yet to find any that 'work' the way it does. To find a novel that compares to it is tantamount to finding a novel similar to but different than it, with the comparison likely mired in the representational rather than affective or conceptual criteria. Though it might bear similarities to other works approached through any number of interpretive lenses – New Criticism, Reader Response, Psychoanalytical, Marxist, Feminist – it is through its materiality as art that its challenge is most distinctive. In summarizing my approach here, I am reminded of Ronald Bogue's assessment of Deleuze's writing on literature, which prior to his collaborations with Guattari tends to approach literature as an interpretation of signs and following his collaborations, becomes much more attentive to the sociopolitical work of literature (2013, 287). So too, in what follows, which will operate as a kind of template to the following sections, I will be approaching these works first in terms of the signs which strike me as a reader, and then with respect to how they work politically and educationally in the classroom.

Consequently, while CTR certainly lends itself to interpretive practices of every nature, presenting an array of 'symbols,' motifs, metaphors which tempt a fruitful 'close reading', my approach here is to consider it first in terms of the disruptions and the violent upheavals of signs, and later on through the machinic pulls working through the text, and reflecting on its potential to shift thinking and becomings within the socio-political ecology of the reader and educationally in the classroom. All of which I draw from personal experiments and classroom observations which, though limited to affections and conjecture, might nevertheless provide some small evidence as the book's potential. Read alongside and with the force of certain conceptual considerations introduced by Deleuze and Guattari allows us to both breathe life into it as well as, more importantly, to draw anorganic life from it, through its indeterminacy.

Affections and Signs

How does a work of literature, art based on language which is by definition representational, open up thinking that is nonrepresentational? And how do we begin to explain it when or if it does? This is the central challenge of writing about such works. Drawing from Deleuze and Guattari, we have argued that non-representation is associated with affects and precepts: blocks of sensation that defy ready capture by paraphrasing or interpretive frameworks. It is perhaps because of the complex nature of how signs work on each unique reader that explains why there are so few examples of such readings to be found, academic or otherwise. More often than not, when scholars address the concept of signs with regard to literature, they end up talking about signs, rather than the signs themselves. On more than a few occasions, I have found myself questioning whether what follows will amount to a fool's errand. Nevertheless, accepting the limitations of the manner in which I can discuss the signs that have drawn my attention, in asserting the pedagogical value of this aspect of intensive reading, I feel it would be irresponsible not to try.

As Colebrook explains, "in keeping with empiricism and its aim of immanence (or not presupposing a transcendent condition beyond experience) Deleuze insists that we should not simply accept the existence of a system of signification but should examine how such systems emerge, work and are produced" (2006, 44). This is one way to think about the production of signs. Once aware of certain sensations that are perhaps actualized as feelings or processed further into emotions, we might begin by considering the conditions that produced them. The virtual forces that might be at work. As already mentioned, CTR remains, even after years of engaging with it, an open and indeterminate text that continues to challenge every time I enter into assemblage with it, alone or in the classroom. And though it is always with me in terms of the residual material affects that have no doubt become a part of me, it also continues to generate new energy and new connections every time I open it, either alone or with other readers-students. And it never ceases to cause discomfort.

Here, I am associating these affections of discomfort with what Deleuze refers to as “the violence of a sign that forces us into the search, that robs us of peace” (PS, 15). But in its ability to disturb, which clearly varies in intensity, the sign is merely an indicator of the virtual stirrings of problems in the unconscious. The apprenticeship of signs means, as abstract as it may sound, essentially staying with the problem rather than quickly skimming by it. In doing so, we enter an opportunity for education, recalling Deleuze’s assertion that “learning is essentially concerned with signs” and that “everything that teaches us something emits signs, every act of learning is an interpretation of signs or hieroglyphs” (PS, 4).

Bogue explains that “every sign has something enfolded within it, something 'other,' that must be unfolded if it is to be understood. The interpretation of signs, then, is a matter of 'explicating,' or unfolding ... that which is 'implicated,' or enfolded” (2004, 327-328). From the initial source of discomfort follows the need to search for that which is implicated in the discomfort. This is not, as in the case with conventional close reading of texts, about identifying what is signified or ‘symbolized.’ Deleuze and Guattari are very clear on this point:

Reading a text is never a scholarly exercise in search of what is signified, still less a highly textual exercise in search of a signifier. Rather it is a productive use of the literary machine, a montage of desiring-machines, a schizoid exercise that extracts from the text its revolutionary force. (AO, 106).

Elsewhere Deleuze offers us the slightly more concrete analogies of an apprentice who “becomes a carpenter only by becoming sensitive to the signs of wood,” or, a medical student who becomes “a physician by becoming sensitive to the signs of disease” (PS, 4). In both cases, apprenticeship is likened to attuning or ‘sensitizing’ our senses into interaction with the pedagogical object of choice. What can the wood teach us? What can the body teach us? Under what conditions did this knot or scar possibly appear? And in the case of literature, what can the text teach us? How might we understand and work with the problems underlying the signs? Or in the case of the process sign, what conditions produced this particular reaction to this set of details? Why has it drawn my attention?

In considering an apprenticeship in signs with CITER, I can only speak to those features or details in the text that have struck me personally as ‘interesting, remarkable or important,’ and how these have, over the years, gotten under my skin, so-to-speak. Reading intensively, attentively responding to signs arousing affective responses on our part, recognizes each reading as unique to the organism and expanded body associated with each individual reader encountering the text at a specific time and place. Anne Sauvagnargues explains this reading as a significant departure from one deriving from the dogmatic image of thought. She describes Deleuze’s approach as

a literally constructed clinical experience, the dosage of a case, where a singular experience that is in no way generalizable is singularly mapped literally, and not on a treatise on method where the experience of thought in general would be reflected (traced). It is not as a sovereign employment of a method which would lead by degree to the truth that thought establishes for itself (2018, 15).

In other words, such a reading is not intended to produce consensus among a community of readers, though this does not necessarily imply shared experience will not find commensurabilities with others, nor are unique reactions without merit or value to others. Rather, because each reader brings their own assemblages of heterogenous forces, including memories and associations, it seems intuitive that they will differ in terms of actualized affections and reactions. What follows, then, are but a few examples of signs I have grappled with over the years, and though I share these with students, and we do occasionally wrestle with them together, I also think we need to heed Bogue’s suggestion that, “Genuine teachers, it turns out, are simply emitters of heterogeneous signs that help students encounter other heterogeneous signs...the signs themselves are the teachers (2013, 22).

Recalling Deleuze’s discussion of Proust, he attends to four kinds of signs, each of which he argues, opens different worlds. But in reviewing these categories, there seems no indication that these are necessarily exhaustive of all possible signs or all possible worldings. In turning from Proust to Salinger, we might anticipate both overlaps and differences with respect to these general categories. While certain signs echo the categories identified by Deleuze, not surprisingly others appear unique to this work.

Style of Narration

The book is narrated in first person by the central character, Holden Caulfield, who appears to be speaking directly to the reader. As they may eventually realize (though many do not), Holden is ostensibly telling the story from his residency in some kind of psychiatric institution. With these details blurred, the reader becomes unwittingly positioned as the symptomatologist or diagnostician, ironically mirroring the associations Deleuze makes with writer, artwork and reader.

One of the first things readers notice is the nature of the narrative voice which some might label as stream-of-consciousness, others a sign in itself of illness. Either way, the book immediately begins to unfold in a series of jarring digressions. Scenes, images and ideas often intersect as uncommon or surprising juxtapositions, bringing together strange constellations of details and at the same time disrupting others we might have anticipated in a more linear flow. Or as O’Sullivan suggests of the rhizome, it “fosters transversal connections and communications between heterogeneous locations and events” (2006, 12). In both its content and expression, CTR appears to unfold in very much this manner, with divergent and unexpected connections across time, geographical location and subject matter, with the reader unable to determine neither direction nor conclusion to the multiple lines of dispersion. Holden opens by suggesting that though the listener or reader will “probably want to know is where I was born, and what my lousy childhood was like, and how my parents were occupied and all before they had me, and all that David Copperfield kind of crap” but then immediately adds that he doesn’t “feel like going into it” (ch. 1)⁴. At the risk of stepping out of the immanent space of the novel, which for today’s readers is probably necessary, readers in 1951 would likely have been familiar with Charles Dicken’s Copperfield, a novel that does, indeed, begin with the birth and works chronologically forward. In refusing to narrate his experience ala Copperfield, he is, in effect, refusing to provide an A to B account as he assumes the reader

⁴ **A note on citations: All quotations of the text are taken from an epub edition. For this reason and in consideration of the number of print editions available, I defer to chapter, rather than page references.**

might be wanting, and in doing so, effectively denounces a narrative approach that would more likely characterize the root or arboreal book. One that would be more easily followed representationally and therefore much more digestible. Unfortunately, without familiarity with *Copperfield*, as few high school readers today would be, it is unlikely that they will pick up on other associations the allusion brings to bear on Holden's narrative. For example, the first two pages of *David Copperfield* reveals that he was born with a 'caul,' a protective membrane covering the foetus's head, and that the woman who buys the caul exclaims, "Let us have no meandering" (2008, 2). The juxtaposition of these two openings is perhaps but a curiosity, and though interpretive approaches seeking significance might extend this connection further, it likely does not enter an immanent reading of the text. That said, depending on the background knowledge the reader may have coming into the novel, there is a blurred line as to whether the work of the allusion would be limited to an exercise in signification, or if it would add to the affective consequences of irony that might immediately strike the reader. Ironic primarily in that not only does *CITR* not start from the so-called beginning, but it definitely meanders, both potentially experienced as direct rebukes of *Copperfield* and readers' expectations. And both of which are more characteristic of the rhizome which, as Deleuze and Guattari describe it, "has no beginning or end; it is always in the middle, between things, interbeing, intermezzo" (ATP, 25) and proceeds according to flows of desire rather than a prescribed linearity that aligns with the rootedness of the readers' chronological expectations.

Citing Kaustuv Roy, Wallin suggests that, "insofar as the rhizome might operationalize a style of thinking capable of machining heterodox territories into temporary assemblage, it concomitantly functions as a probe-head or abstract machine for surveying how a life might go once the will-to-representation becomes inadequate for the instantiation of new and less oppressive styles of thinking" (2012b, 150). This is precisely what *CITR* appears to do, and in making certain connections, it produces constellations of signs as refrains of characters, pieces of dialogue, objects, experiences appear differently over the course of the novel, each time with difference. Following James Williams' (2016) description of process signs, many of the passages that now stand out for me at first appear rather innocent and unremarkable. But as

the 'set' of details expands or evolves, each time in a different context, the process sign not only builds but shifts in terms of the characteristics of its affective relations to the reader, eventually reaching a point of genuine disturbance.

Considered with respect to style, conceptualized earlier as a kind of stammering, the novel moves less as a progression than a series of juxtaposed scenes, thoughts and images that generate the overall effect of aimless and often anxious stumbling. Robert McCrum suggests that Salinger's "mesmerizing style" (2010) emerges from outside influences. And while more will be said about Salinger later, there is little question in my mind that the markers of style expressed in the novel, including its meandering unfolding, are an affective product of its author's own bodily assemblage. At this point, however, I wish only to highlight a few elements or features in the text which I sense have worked as signs on myself and my students as readers. Initially, they operate by drawing or grabbing our attention. But as elements of style, they may also contribute to becoming that counter or disturb dominant habits of perceiving and being in the world at this moment of time.

Characterization

As the narrative voice of the novel, the quality of meandering is associated with his character and as such, it is he who often becomes the target of reader's derision, annoyance or frustration. For many, they either love it or hate it and it appears that the reader's conditioned expectations butt up against the writer's or the character's movement according to underlying flows of desire. Such acts of resistance may be anticipated in loiterature, a term coined (as far as I can tell) by Ross Chambers to refer to texts characterized by an apparent stream-of-consciousness and which, as he explains, has the effect of stymieing simple criticism. With its constant breaks, asides, juxtapositions of time and space, loiterature,

disarms criticism itself by presenting a moving target, shifting as its own divided attention constantly shifts... It can't be summarized or reduced to a 'gist', whereas criticism depends, like social order itself, on the possibility of discriminating and hierarchizing, determining what's central and what's peripheral (this is more important than that, the point is such-and-such, the theme is so-and-so." (1999, 9)

As the central voice, Holden is indeed one of literature's great nomadic characters. One who not only physically journeys in a spontaneous, unrooted path, but through constant excursions in focus, is just as nomadic in his thoughts.

As with Marcel in Deleuze's exposition of Proust, Holden, too, enters a kind of apprenticeship in signs which are exposed to the reader through sudden, often jarring and for some readers, 'seemingly' irrelevant observations woven throughout the narrative. Ironically, it is often through such comments, which readers are apt to judge and dismiss as irrelevant, where I argue the affective charge of the book derives. It is possible to think of these easily dismissed scree of thoughts as the excess in the narrative. If what is judged as mattering fits the expectations of other characters and us as readers, the through-line of the anticipated narrative, then these seemingly throw-away observations lie outside that trajectory. The outliers in the plot diagram. And in not fitting anyone's narrative, they point to the nonrepresentational, and to Holden's interest in that which either no one wants to talk about, or which is otherwise inarticulable. What seems most immaterial – not to matter – becomes most material in its capacity to affect the reader. And on occasion, Holden himself, who observes that most people aren't interested in the 'stuff' he cares about.

As with Marcel, the protagonist in Proust, a very similar unfolding takes place through Holden, complete with movements of disappointments and revelations which yields a certain 'rhythm' to the recollection. In this case, in place of a search, as in Proust, Holden wonders and wanders, moving both reflectively and physically. And though there is nothing specific for which Holden seems to be looking (a point for later discussion), there is a certain apprenticeship taking place. His character operates at the level of signs in that his thoughts, vocalized statements, and action which often contradict each other, suggest a kind of underlying problem, as does his steadily worsening health. Having rejected the "David Copperfield crap" Holden proceeds to tell us, the reader, about this "madman stuff" that took place last Christmas. He proceeds in an apparently random fashion, relating a series of memories of what happened a year "before he came out to this crummy place." As the reader eventually finds out, though not until the last

two pages of the book, the place from which Holden is speaking is likely an institution for the mentally ill, and the person to whom he is speaking is likely a therapist. The only earlier clue is provided on page one, "I'll just tell you about this madman stuff that happened to me around last Christmas just before I got pretty run-down and had to come out here and take it easy" (Ch. 1). And though the first-person narrative achieves the level of intimacy it is often associated with, here the subtlety of this reference ostensibly places the reader in the position of confidant and analyst. Recalling the earlier discussion on Deleuze's conceptualization of the critical and the clinical, it is worth reiterating that Salinger, the writer behind the work, "is not a patient but rather a physician, the physician of himself and of the world. The world is the set of symptoms whose illness merges with man" (ECC, 3). We might consider then, that as a product of the writer and a material flow of affect, the character Holden takes the rather ambiguous position of both the physician and the patient who mediates through his narrative the illness or symptoms of the world. And in turn, we as readers are in the position to experience these same flows and as unacknowledged therapists, grapple with Holden's manifestations of symptoms and visions – of dis[ease] or health. It should be clear that this is not a conscious search for signifiers, nor a conscious grappling with symptoms. Rather this process unfolds as we struggle with the unconscious problems triggered by the signs which draw our attention.

As already mentioned, many students emphatically dismiss the novel as 'pointless' and Holden as 'a loser,' or someone 'who doesn't like anything' and for whom 'nothing matters.' Bennett also summarizes several critics who label Holden as "purely negative, vulgar, whining, and cynical" (2009). But as he also suggests, "a more balanced reading of the novel could indicate that there is something more to Holden than his academic failures and adolescent cynicism" (2009). We might expect many of these dismissals and criticisms as born of the resistance to departures from a sedimented value system. Others are due to superficial or lazy reading. But there will be some who are willing to pursue that 'something more' in Holden's character. For those with the patience or endurance, these same reactions betray the work of signs; they grate on the nerves, create a sense of discomfort, and manage to get under the proverbial skin. Not unlike the classical cynics of Ancient Greece, such as Diogenes, as eager as we might be to

dismiss Holden's cynicism, it is perhaps the felt sense that he might not be wrong that most bothers us. It certainly was for me. Holden, I wish to argue, is a Spinozist in the truest, fictional sense. In his sensitivity to the signs surrounding him and his willingness to remain open to them, he assumes the qualities of Deleuze and Guattari's schizophrenic, while at the same time assuming the dangers that go with it. In considering Holden as a force of nonrepresentational affects, it is worth reflecting on what Colebrook says about literature as art:

Deleuze's empiricism implicitly and explicitly makes a clear distinction between what is really literature and what merely circulates as banal popular culture. For Deleuze, literature is not the repetition of already formed generalities. The Mills and Boon romance that I read to confirm the sense and possibility of true love and whose female heroine I recognise as 'just like me' is not literature. Such supposedly literary forms begin from already assumed ideas – the timelessness of love and the norms of human desire. True literature begins from diverse affects or experiences and traces their organisation into characters or persons (2002a, 84).

Holden's past and present encounters condition him and create him as both a subject and a character, while at the same time, our encounters with Holden potentially condition and create us as readers. As his attention is drawn to seemingly unimportant objects of interest, our attention is oriented in the same direction, even though we may struggle more with why. As he grapples with unarticulated problems, we, too, grapple with inarticulable problems.

And though the problems largely circulate in the unconscious, occasionally these are actualized as sensations and questions. Questions that no doubt take us to the heart of indeterminacy, including our own. Given Holden's position as diagnosing, interpreting and producing symptoms, as readers we are forced, at an arm's length distance, to consider closely those signs evidenced by what he notices and how he reacts to them. But we must contend with the contradictions that arise in what or how he says something, what or how he thinks about it internally, and what he actually does physically. How do these constellations of elements contribute to the signs which build to the point that we can no longer dismiss them?

In what follows, I offer but a very few examples from the novel in order to convey the signs that strike me as potentially worth exploring, that stand out in the grain of the wood, so to speak.

What jumps out at Holden? What moves him or discomfits him, however unaware or unconscious he may be of these responses. And what moves us or disturbs us as readers

encountering Holden's narrative. At the same time, I am refraining as much as possible from the temptation to interpret these signs, as not only is it, in Deleuze's conceptualization of signs, impossible to do without deferring to representational thinking, but signs that grab our attention remain largely unique to each reader.

That said, I am hoping that the descriptions which follow can provide some insight into the provocations or disturbances that might be encountered as they infer problems that warrant attention. As Colebrook (2002a) points out with regard to Deleuze, "if we want to understand what thinking is we should not gather examples from everyday life and draw conclusions; we should look at thinking in its most extreme forms (such as art, philosophy, stupidity, madness or ill will)" (15-16). Does Holden present us with thinking in an extreme form? I would suggest yes, as evidenced by not only by how he antagonizes the norms, including those of adolescents, but also by the degree to which he appears to suffer because of it. But his observations and feelings are, as will soon be discussed, extreme in the sense that they are well removed from the typical or normal thoughts of adolescence or any other age. Interestingly, Holden describes himself as a 'madman,' a term he uses repeatedly in the novel, and usually by way of apology to the reader. To suggest that he assumes the role of the artist writer's provocateur fool, idiot, or madman is hardly a stretch. It is also noteworthy, that the only other person he describes as a madman is his little sister, Phoebe, who arguably plays the same role for Holden.

Where do the ducks go in winter?

Though what Deleuze and Guattari have in mind with respect to minor literature's deterritorialization of language is perhaps best exemplified by the examples they draw from works such as those of Beckett. But as already suggested, we might consider stammering or stuttering in ways beyond syntax. As O'Sullivan (2009) suggests, "affective stammering operates as a kind of singularity that in itself counteracts already existing affective/signifying regimes, whilst at the same time, crucially, opening up a gap within these all too familiar series and circuits of knowledge/information. A gap, which we might also configure here as a form of non-communication" (250). As he points out, this serves to disrupt the kind of 'communication' that

Deleuze suggests characterizes societies of control: "Maybe speech and communication have become corrupted. They're thoroughly permeated by money – and not by accident but by their very nature" (N, 175).

Framed this way, stylistically Holden's inability to connect with other adults in the novel often appears in his inclination to say things which challenge both his fictional listeners and Salinger's readers. To spout what some might label as nonsense. Though we can find numerous examples of this, one of the most obvious is his interrogation of taxi drivers regarding where the ducks go in winter. This particular break first disrupts the flow while he is having a farewell visit with his teacher, Mr. Spencer. Though the topic of conversation is focussed on Holden having flunked his class, his internal thoughts jump to a whole other plane of interest:

I was sort of thinking of something else while I shot the bull. I live in New York, and I was thinking about the lagoon in Central Park, down near Central Park South. I was wondering if it would be frozen over when I got home, and if it was, where did the ducks go... I could shoot the old bull to old Spencer and think about those ducks at the same time. It's funny. You don't have to think too hard when you talk to a teacher (Ch. 2).

While the emphasis here is on the ducks, his final thought is also significant in terms of Holden's relationship to schools. And though he appears demeaning to teachers in general, over the course of the novel we see these comments as reflective more of about an incongruity of values than a judgement of individuals. Ostensibly, his investments of desire do not in any way seem to match those expected of and propagated by schooling. Throughout the novel, he seems genuinely unconcerned with his expulsion from Pencey Prep, which is at least the third school in a row he has left. The ducks come up again in conversations, both in earnest and both in apparent disapproval of the taxi drivers involved:

Then I thought of something, all of a sudden. "Hey, listen," I said. "You know those ducks in that lagoon right near Central Park South? That little lake? By any chance, do you happen to know where they go, the ducks, when it gets all frozen over? Do you happen to know, by any chance?" I realized it was only one chance in a million. He turned around and looked at me like I was a madman. "What're ya tryna do, bud?" he said. "Kid me?" (Ch. 9)

And again, several chapters latter with a second taxi driver:

"Hey, Horwitz," I said. "You ever pass by the lagoon in Central Park? Down by Central Park South?" "The what?" "The lagoon. That little lake, like, there. Where the

ducks are. You know." "Yeah, what about it?" "Well, you know the ducks that swim around in it? In the springtime and all? Do you happen to know where they go in the wintertime, by any chance?" "Where who goes?" "The ducks. Do you know, by any chance? I mean does somebody come around in a truck or something and take them away, or do they fly away by themselves--go south or something?" Old Horwitz turned all the way around and looked at me. He was a very impatient-type guy. He wasn't a bad guy, though. "How the hell should I know?" he said. "How the hell should I know a stupid thing like that?"(Ch. 12)

Read as random detours in thought and speech, such passages serve to isolate Holden, and by its third mention, the content and manner of his questions build in intensity and like so many others in the novel, forces the reader to reconsider the seemingly mundane in an entirely new series of thought experiments. As O'Sullivan (2006) points out, the effect of "foregrounding asignification" also works by "opening up a gap into which creativity, understood as the pure past and future anticipations, can enter" is indeed a kind of "freedom from habit" (154). In straying as he does from typical patterns of 'communication,' Holden punches through the common sense of conversation that often confines human interaction in our society, and as we begin to take these more seriously, our own relationship to such questions begins to gnaw at us. As we observe with which signs Holden grapples, what draws his attention or troubles him, we begin to realize that what troubles Holden often troubles us. His immersion in a problem instigates our own, as we wonder what conditions such questions? Are they nonsense? Do they matter and why?

There are numerous other examples of seemingly extraneous details that Holden returns to repeatedly, including the memory of his childhood friend, Jane Gallagher, who "wouldn't take her kings out of the back row" (Ch. 11) when playing checkers, the mummies in the museum, his red hunting cap. All of these come up randomly in conversations, often annoying the person to whom Holden is trying to connect. As Holden says of his attempt to share his observations of Jane with Stradlater, "That kind of stuff doesn't interest most people" (Ch. 4). In a transcendental approach to reading, each of these might easily be addressed through varying interpretive lenses with corresponding symbolism, but through intensive reading, each of them builds, after numerous references, to become signs for Holden as well as for us. They become

more and more pressing on our imagination with each new appearance. We begin to realize that what may initially appear as most ridiculous or *stupid*, are signs of what might be most important.

Signs of Phoniness

Holden's profound cynicism pervades the novel, most often evidenced in his judgements of 'phoniness,' conjugations of which appear no fewer than 50 times. It is often the first thing people will recall of the novel. And while some students find such attacks, even though they are never spoken out loud, particularly offensive, as much as he directs them at others, readers tend to forget that he is quick to make similar judgments of himself, perhaps also associated with his greatest, undeclared fears and the foreboding nature of his decline through the course of the three-day time frame of the novel. Given their prominence throughout the narrative, including self-incriminations, to take the signs of phoniness as a cue as elements which draw our attention if not our derision, we might inquire further into the forces or conditions which compel Holden's contempt for phonies?

A sign of phoniness in CTR is not unlike the worldly sign Deleuze identifies in Proust; it "does not refer to something, it 'stands for' it, claims to be equivalent to its meaning. It anticipates action as it does thought, annuls thought as it does action, and declares itself adequate: whence its stereotyped aspect and its vacuity" (PS, 6). Or as Bogue describes them: "vapid, empty indices of fashion, status, and the ephemeral preoccupations of salons, coteries, and cliques" (2012, 290). In many cases, the people Holden criticizes are notably those he views as having the capacity to create great art but instead have chosen to defer to the preferences of audiences – to what has been coded within the social as worthy. As such, there is no value or substance in such craft beyond the approval of the consumers. In the first page we are introduced to Holden's older brother D.B., and who he describes as someone who "used to be just a regular writer, when he was home," but "now he's out in Hollywood, D.B., being a prostitute. If there's one thing I hate, it's the movies. Don't even mention them to me" (Ch. 1). No doubt, Holden's disgust is intensified by how much he might otherwise love his brother.

In this case, as a sign of phoniness or a worldly sign, it looks like art, acts like art, but is not art. Such signs are empty signifiers, following norms and codes according to the models set by society, the territories of the socius. Performative in nature, they are meaningless in terms of creation or becoming and are generally regurgitations of pleasures already approved and sedimented in the society and for the anticipated audience. This extends to many of the characters and actions that Holden judges as phony. They are empty signs that are flattened by appropriate generalizations or stereotypes widely circulating. A similar example is that of Ernie, the piano player who, like D.B., Holden believes has great talent, but wastes it by simply performing for the audience:

He's a terrific snob and he won't hardly even talk to you unless you're a big shot or a celebrity or something, but he can really play the piano...I certainly like to hear him play, but sometimes you feel like turning his goddam piano over. I think it's because sometimes when he plays, he sounds like the kind of guy that won't talk to you unless you're a big shot. (Ch. 11).

The passage is particularly indicative of what Deleuze suggests of worldly signs for which “the apprentice’s task is to understand why someone is “received” in a certain world, why someone ceases to be so, what signs do the worlds obey, which signs are legislators, and which high priests” (PS, 5). Not surprisingly, those Holden identifies as phony also include many in positions of authority or power, who pose, perform or otherwise reveal themselves in ways which either intentionally or unintentionally win the approval of others. This is an approval that is therefore not only based on deception, but is often conditioned by the same regimes of signs and the same value systems, as propagated by those who seek the approval. Examples in the novel include Holden’s headmaster at a former school, Mr. Hass, who is “the phoniest bastard” he ever met, and one of the reasons he left the school. Holden describes him as the guy who “went around shaking hands with everybody's parents when they drove up to school... charming as hell and all. Except if some boy had little old funny-looking parents” (Ch 2). Likewise with Mr. Ossenberg, for whom a hall at Pencey is named and who “made a pot of dough...start[ing] these undertaking parlors all over the country that you could get members of your family buried for about five bucks apiece” (Ch 3).

A third group of those Holden judges as phony include other students he has encountered, the most influential being his roommate at Pencey, Stradlater, who he admits is “at least a pretty friendly guy” but then also recognizes that “it was partly a phony kind of friendly” (Ch. 3). Here, too, the intensity of the encounter is heightened when Holden discovers and begins to imagine Stradlater on a date with his childhood friend, Jane Gallagher, “in that goddam Ed Banky’s car” (Ch. 4). The more he thinks about it, the more it troubles him: “It made me so nervous I nearly went crazy. I already told you what a sexy bastard Stradlater was” (Ch. 4). To add to his grief, when Stradlater returns back to the dorm, he berates Holden over the essay Holden has generously written for him, ostensibly because he has taken the essay in a direction both unexpected and ultimately rejected by Stradlater. It is likely that Holden takes this reaction much worse than he otherwise might have, because it is not just any essay he writes, but one for which he obviously feels deeply. Left to his own intuition and creative energy, Holden chooses to write about his deceased brother Ally’s baseball glove and the poetry he used to write on it in green ink. Stradlater’s rejection suggests one more example of misconnection. Like the ducks flying south, Holden’s essay exploring his brother’s glove further illustrates his tendency and capacity to stray away from common sense. And once again Holden encounters someone who simply doesn’t care about the things he does. Shifting to the topic of the date, the scene quickly escalates into violence when Holden begins to rail against Stradlater for not even knowing Jane’s first name, yelling “That’s just the trouble with all you morons. You never want to discuss anything. That’s the way you can always tell a moron. They never want to discuss anything intellig...” (Ch. 3), at which point Stradlater slugs him.

A scene with similar dynamics occurs later in the book as Holden meets an old acquaintance, Carl Luce, when the latter answers Holden’s question about his former girlfriend, “I haven’t the faintest idea. For all I know, since you ask, she’s probably the Whore of New Hampshire by this time” (Ch. 19). At which point Holden challenges him, “That isn’t nice. If she was decent enough to let you get sexy with her all the time, you at least shouldn’t talk about her that way” (Ch. 19). Later in the same conversation, Holden admits, “You know what the trouble with me is? I can never get really sexy--I mean really sexy--with a girl I don’t like a lot. I mean I have to

like her a lot. If I don't, I sort of lose my goddam desire for her and all" (Ch. 19). Luce's reaction, not unlike that of Stradlater's, is that the problem is with Holden, whom Luce suggests needs psychoanalysis. The incongruity between Holden's attitude towards people and in particular women and men like Stradlater and Luce once again implicates not only the phoniness Holden despises, but his inability to abide by status quo and consequently to find connection.

In each of these cases, Holden's apprenticeship appears similar to Marcel's in Proust who, as Bogue suggests, entangled with the worldly signs he encounters, struggles "to determine why one person is admitted to a given social circle, why another is snubbed, who belongs to which milieu, what constitutes the tone and relative prestige of a particular coterie, and so on" (2004, 328). Status according to the signs of phoniness appears grounded in artifice and false pretenses, ultimately forcing Holden to keep moving in search of something or someone with whom he can find connection – or agreement in terms of affective relationships – unconditioned by territorialized regimes of signs. Continually butting up against barriers, including memories of judgements imposed by others, Holden struggles to stay true to his own inclinations... but as a line of flight, it is a lonely and precarious choice to leave the proverbial 'fold' of the American way, with the values, career aspirations and accumulations that go with it. More than any other mood that pervades the novel it is the constant reminder of the precarity of life and the precarity of Holden's life that most disturbs at the conscious level. The reader continually asks, is it possible to survive and not be phony? To live life outside the rutted pathways set before us?

But we might also consider that Holden's questions about the ducks, his fixations on phoniness, as well as his visits to the pond in central park and his dream of moving to a cabin in the woods collectively form a process sign that perhaps speaks to an underlying naturalism. One which reminds us that affects, as pre-subjective and pre-human, and as forces embedded in the art itself, are also driven by the passive vitality of 'a life'. It is worth recalling jagodzinski's contention that 'a life' is the "plane of existence, of genesis, the clamour of becoming" and that "this material vitalism or A Life exists everywhere but it is covered over and hidden to ordinary

conditioned perception, as the phenomenology of lived life” (2017, 3). These signs in CTR are conditioned by the immanent or transcendental field which includes human, nonhuman and unhuman forces. Holden’s subjective associations direct our attention not only to the plausible value imported in these environmental and therefore unmasked or non-phony associations, but also to the quasi-causal conditioning behind their actualization as Holden’s verbalized thoughts. In this way, the novel serves the task of art which Colebrook contends is “to dislodge affects from their recognised and expected origins” (2002a, 23).

The affective relations associated with signs of phoniness are heightened further by contrasting encounters with the things to which and people to whom Holden associates with great demonstrable *affection*. For example, his reminiscence of his brother Allie when writing the essay, including his reaction to Allie’s death when he “slept in the garage the night he died” and “broke all the goddam windows with my fist, just for the hell of it” (Ch. 5), serves to intensify the scene in which Stradlater rejects it. The qualities he associates with Allie, and later Phoebe, are juxtaposed against those of Stradlater and the other phonies. As children, they may appear to be signs of innocence, but more importantly, they are also signs of unfiltered or unmasked connection. Interestingly, Little, Brown and Company’s site blurb asserts that, “Perhaps the safest thing we can say about Holden is that he was born in the world not just strongly attracted to beauty but, almost, hopelessly impaled on it” (2019), confirming the elusive nature of Holden’s complexity. As Holden responds to his sister, Phoebe’s challenge to name the things he ‘likes,’ those he thinks of include the Nuns he meets; a boy he remembers from a previous school; James Castle, who is pushed to his death out a dorm window for refusing to “take back something he said about this very conceited boy;” his brother Ally who, though he’s dead, as Phoebe points out, he was “about a thousand times nicer than the people you know that're alive and all” and finally, sitting with Phoebe (Ch. 21).

Also clear is Holden’s deep affection not just for Allie and Phoebe, but for all children, as implied in the title and his admission that what he most wants to be in life is a *Catcher in the*

Rye, after the Robbie Burns song which originally reads as: "If a body meet a body" but which Holden recalls as: "If a body catch a body coming through the Rye." As he explains to Phoebe,

I keep picturing all these little kids playing some game in this big field of rye and all. Thousands of little kids, and nobody's around--nobody big, I mean--except me. And I'm standing on the edge of some crazy cliff. What I have to do, I have to catch everybody if they start to go over the cliff--I mean if they're running and they don't look where they're going I have to come out from somewhere and catch them. That's all I'd do all day. I'd just be the catcher in the rye and all. I know it's crazy, but that's the only thing I'd really like to be. (Ch. 22)

Is the slippage of words from 'meet' to 'catch' an accident? The question as to who catches who, and who meets who, lingers over the course of the novel. But either way, what seems certain is Holden's deep affection for children, a point which will be further explored later. What do these characters whom Holden admires and loves have in common? As a constellation of signs that contrast those of phoniness, they also raise questions regarding underlying interests that do not align with those of the popular culture surrounding Holden. I have yet to meet an adolescent boy who expresses a desire to be a catcher in the rye, which though apparently nonsensical, emphasizes not only Holden's strangeness, but his challenge to social expectations, not to mention, gender expectations. Considered together, his love of children and his rejection of phoniness signal something far more profound than simple teenage angst or alienation, and in doing so, disturb our own habituated frameworks of values and interests.

Signs of Sickness, Loss, and Isolation

Though as already mentioned, most readers will associate their encounter with CTR with his fixation on phonies, for myself the most indelible impressions were those I refer to here as signs of sickness and the pervasive sense of loneliness that haunts Holden throughout the novel. And without exception, it is these that have resulted in not only the most intensive feelings of discomfort, but also the most challenging questions of source.

As the narrative proceeds as one long recollection of three days last Christmas, given the non-linear nature of this retelling it is not surprising that the many digressions unfold as memories within memories. These play on Holden in the same way, perhaps, that memories of the

madeleine play on Marcel in Proust. And too, it is never the object of the memory that matters so much as the signs such memories suggest for both Holden and the reader. As Deleuze says of Proust,

The boot, like the madeleine, causes involuntary memory to intervene: an old sensation tries to superimpose itself, to unite with the present sensation, and extends it over several epochs at once. But it suffices that the present sensation set its "materiality" in opposition to the earlier one for the joy of this superposition to give way to a sentiment of collapse, of irreparable loss, in which the old sensation is pushed back into the depths of lost time...He begins by experiencing the same felicity as in the case of the madeleine, but happiness immediately gives way to the certainty of death and nothingness. (PS, 20)

No less is true for Holden, who strikes us as suffering from a growing melancholy that appears without simple causation. The failed connections or inability to find a humanity he can relate to, besides his younger sister, Phoebe, are shadowed and foreshadowed throughout the novel by implicit displays and explicit mentions of loneliness, depression, sickness and death. All of which contribute to a sense of isolation that throbs with inarticulable pain.

Though near the end of the novel, his former teacher, Mr. Antolini, makes explicit his own fear of Holden's fall, there are numerous hints that something is wrong from the very beginning. These include the single line synopsis of the short story his brother wrote that he especially fond of, called *The Secret Goldfish*: "It was about this little kid that wouldn't let anybody look at his goldfish because he'd bought it with his own money. It killed me." The image of the story, even in one brief line, becomes strangely haunting, and as many students have suggested, it seems to parallel the larger narrative of Holden, as well as Salinger's own biography. Notably, even the throw-away expression which follows the sentence – "It killed me" – becomes strangely repetitive throughout the novel, appearing in one form or another some 40 times. On the very next page we find what feels like a more elaborate image of the boy with the goldfish bowl, only this time it is Holden, by himself, on top of a hill watching the audience watch the school football game. And again, in the final scene as Holden imagines himself living in a cabin:

somewhere out West where it was very pretty and sunny and where nobody'd know me and I'd get a job.... I didn't care what kind of job it was, though. Just so people didn't know me and I didn't know anybody. I thought what I'd do was, I'd pretend I was one of

those deaf-mutes. That way I wouldn't have to have any goddam stupid useless conversations with anybody...Everybody'd think I was just a poor deaf-mute bastard and they'd leave me alone (Ch. 25)

Together, such images encapsulate the sensibility of the entire novel and interjected throughout the novel, they work to produce, for myself at least, an unignorable tension that continually escalates. And disturbs.

Contributing to the accumulation of intensity are several scenes where Holden strangely, and sometimes with dark comedic effect, imagines his own death. More dramatic still is the scene in which the pimp, Maurice, punches Holden in the stomach.

Then I stayed on the floor a fairly long time, sort of the way I did with Stradlater. Only, this time I thought I was dying. I really did. I thought I was drowning or something...When I did finally get up, I had to walk to the bathroom all doubled up...About halfway to the bathroom, I sort of started pretending I had a bullet in my guts. Old 'Maurice' had plugged me. (Ch. 14).

Later, left behind at the bar after having met an old school mate, Carl Luce, Holden begins to imagine his death:

When I was really drunk, I started that stupid business with the bullet in my guts again. I was the only guy at the bar with a bullet in their guts. I kept putting my hand under my jacket, on my stomach and all, to keep the blood from dripping all over the place. I didn't want anybody to know I was even wounded. I was concealing the fact that I was a wounded sonuvabitch. (ch. 20).

Shortly after leaving the bar, he walks into the park, describing it as “getting darker and darker and spookier and spookier” (Ch. 20) with no one else in site. Ostensibly searching for the ducks, he finally sits down at the edge of the pond and thinks once again of his death:

Boy, I was still shivering like a bastard, and the back of my hair, even though I had my hunting hat on, was sort of full of little hunks of ice. That worried me. I thought probably I'd get pneumonia and die. I started picturing millions of jerks coming to my funeral and all. (Ch. 20).

And then again, near the end, he takes it a step further imagining his own tombstone: “it'll say "Holden Caulfield" on it, and then what year I was born and what year I died, and then right under that it'll say "Fuck you." I'm positive, in fact” (Ch. 25).

But while such descriptions might for many readers come across as more humorous, there are others, also spread across the entire narrative, in which Holden's hallucinogenic experiences truly signal something more ominous is unfolding. In the first chapter Holden exclaims: "It was that kind of a crazy afternoon, terrifically cold, and no sun out or anything, and you felt like you were disappearing every time you crossed a road" (Ch. 1). Not only does this echo the kind of sickness or delirium evidenced throughout the novel, but the fear is repeated once again, near the end with much more intensity:

[A]ll of a sudden, something very spooky started happening. Every time I came to the end of a block and stepped off the goddam curb, I had this feeling that I'd never get to the other side of the street. I thought I'd just go down, down, down, and nobody'd ever see me again. Boy, did it scare me. You can't imagine. I started sweating like a bastard--my whole shirt and underwear and everything. (Ch. 25)

What saves him each time is the thought of his dead brother, Allie, frozen in time as a child forever. Continuing, he describes the event further:

Every time I'd get to the end of a block I'd make believe I was talking to my brother Allie. I'd say to him, "Allie, don't let me disappear. Allie, don't let me disappear. Allie, don't let me disappear. Please, Allie." And then when I'd reach the other side of the street without disappearing, I'd thank him. Then it would start all over again as soon as I got to the next corner... (Ch. 25)

Together these contribute to a sign or constellation of signs which linger with associated questions: Is Holden sick? Is he mentally ill? If so, then from what? Who or what is culpable? What would it take to heal him? Or is it a sickness we would want to heal? Harcourt Brace, the initial prospective publisher of the novel, turned it down because one of the executives, Eugene Reynal, complained that "he couldn't figure out whether or not Holden Caulfield was supposed to be crazy" (Menand, 2001). This is potentially the question many readers are left with and perhaps should be left with in their own search that such signs initiate. In terms of a symptomatology, we might also consider these signs for what they reveal. The symptoms revealed in the novel would then be understood as actualizations of the author-physician's unconscious diagnoses of the world. With this in mind, Holden's declining condition can be recognized as a symptom not of his own, but of society's sickness. We might ask: why and how is the rest of the world so dissonant and incompatible with Holden? And even more pressing, what would bring health to this condition?

Schizoanalysis: The Novel as a Political Force

With reference to literary works, schizoanalysis might be understood as a sensibility engaging us with the questions of how it works as a machine rhizomatically plugged into an assemblage, how it might shift the BwO or the assemblage, or how it might set in motion differentials of becoming. Considering the micro-politics or minor-politics of schizoanalysis, following O’Sullivan (2006), we might ask how a book such as CTR begins to fracture the “micro fascisms in everyone’s head; the propensity for hierarchy, fixity and stasis (or simply representation) with which we are all involved, but which, for Deleuze and Guattari, can stifle creative, and we might even say ethical, living” (11).

Building on the affective disturbances discussed previously as signs – schizoanalysis challenges us to reexamine the book as a source of political disturbance, a kind of war machine that has the potential to work at the molecular level to fracture dominant lines of stratification that produce the organism-reader and their actualized subjectivity, including defining boundaries that distance us from them. In this process, we include as part of our inquiry dominating institutions, codes, and identities that are likely to resist movement or dissolution. Here we consider not only the lines of sedimentation that characterize majoritarian territories existing at the time and place the book was written – America sometime between 1941 and 1951 – but also, in so far as it remains as a candidate for use in the classroom, the territories that characterize the ecology in which it is likely to be read today.

Schizoanalysis of the Post-War Context of Publication

Considering first the stratifications of the political and social climate in the forties during which it was written, as much as we might consider the backdrop of Kafka’s writing in the shadow of German fascism, so too we might consider Salinger’s writing against the backdrop of WWII and post-war America. As a minor literature, CTR offers a collective enunciation that challenges the constraining ethos of American cultural expectations, and especially those which are largely represented, coded and sedimented over the course of formal schooling.

Briefly summarized, America had come out of the depression of the 30s at least in part through its participation in WWII. Throughout this period, considering the shifts that took place and the kinds of propaganda employed to support the war efforts and bolster American pride, it is not surprising that the relative bombast of American heroism and the 'American Dream' played an important part in several of the truly great works published during or regarding this period. These include Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* (1949); John Steinbeck's, *Grapes of Wrath* (1939); Tennessee Williams', *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1947); Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man* (1952), and stretching further into the mid-1950s work of the Beat Poets, with Allan Ginsberg's *Howl* (1956) and Jack Kerouac's *On the Road* (1957). As well, of all the works responding in one way or another to the mythology surrounding the American Dream, the one which is perhaps most in conversation with CTR is Sylvia Plath's *The Bell Jar*. Quasi-autobiographical in form, not only does Plath admit to being partly inspired by Salinger, but it shares a similar narrative voice to CTR, focusing on the narrator's experiences in 1953, New York. Like Holden, but perhaps more shocking in that many of the incidents Plath described actually took place, the protagonist Esther Greenwood breaks down further and further over the course of the narrative, but unlike Holden, she reaches a point where she makes several attempts at suicide.

It is not surprising, perhaps, that nearly every one of these works involve signs of fatigue or outright sickness. But amidst the dark residue of a post-war America teeming with shallow and plastic people fixated on promises of success, many of these works, and CTR in particular, also exude a kind of love of life... a yearning for life that perhaps emerges from the outside: a life. In such a context, it is worth recalling Deleuze's reference to literature as "an enterprise of health," and in particular how this might pertain to the creation of CTR. As Deleuze says of writers, they may themselves not "necessarily be in good health" but "he possesses an irresistible and delicate health that stems from what he has seen and heard of things too big for him, too strong for him, suffocating things whose passage exhausts him, while nonetheless giving him the becomings that a dominant and substantial health would render impossible" (ECC, 3).

It is not a stretch to assume the material flows of Salinger's creations as embodying the non-representational excesses of his life experiences, what McCrum suggests are the other "side to the story of the influences on the author's mesmerising style" (2010). Though it is hard to say whether Salinger might have experienced poor physical health, there seems no doubt that he suffered psychological pain. McCrum reminds us that Salinger "was drafted as a GI in 1942, served in the infantry, landed at Utah Beach on D-Day, fought his way through France, saw combat in the Battle of the Bulge, and was one of the first to liberate a Nazi concentration camp... experienc[ing] the reality of the second world war as much, if not more than, many veterans" (2010). There are even photographs of Salinger typing what is believed to be the novel, *CITR*, while on route somewhere in Europe during the war. Yet in spite of this, the novel itself makes almost no mention of the war or the post-war period during which it was written and set. At one point, Holden remembers that "Allie once asked him (DB) wasn't it sort of good that he was in the war because he was a writer and it gave him a lot to write about and all" (Ch. 18), which is ironic considering how little Salinger wrote explicitly about the war. In fact, the only telling sign explicitly revealing any affective residue that might have derived in part from Salinger's own experience is Holden's description of his brother D.B. late in the novel:

My brother D.B. was in the Army for four goddam years. He was in the war, too—he landed on D-Day and all—but I really think he hated the Army worse than the war. I was practically a child at the time, but I remember when he used to come home on furlough and all, all he did was lie on his bed, practically. He once told Allie and I that if he'd had to shoot anybody, he wouldn't've known which direction to shoot in. He said the Army was practically as full of bastards as the Nazis were (Ch. 18).

The mention of his Furlough especially curious given the possible connection to one of Salinger's short stories, *The Last Day of the Last Furlough*, which, as one commentator to McCrum's article points out, "features the character of Sgt. Babe Gladwaller - clearly based on Salinger himself (he gives Gladwaller his own service number) and the story brings out how soldiers can't ever explain their experiences in war to civilians" (2010). It is also worth noting that the same commentator quotes a line from Margaret's (Salinger's daughter) autobiography in which she remembers her father telling her that "you never lose the smell of burning human flesh from your nose no matter how long you live ..." (2010).

Whether or not Salinger experienced what many now would likely diagnose as ‘trauma,’ there is little doubt that he would have encountered forces of affect that far exceeded anything that might have actualized into conscious representational thought. It is impossible to believe such experiences, particularly in the end as he was required to provide detailed accounts of what was found in the concentration camps, would not have left him severely scarred. And it is highly unlikely that the affective residue of his experience would not have somehow actualized into his writing. Citing historian Paul Fussell, it is clear that the soldiers were not only living through their experiences on the battlefield, but this was compounded with an awareness of how the war communicated back home:

"What was it about the war," Fussell writes, "that moved the troops to constant verbal subversion and contempt? It was not just the danger and fear, the boredom and uncertainty and loneliness and deprivation. It was rather the conviction that the optimistic publicity and euphemism had rendered their experience so falsely that it would never be readily communicable." To the troops, the war had been "sanitised and Disneyfied" by the phonies back at HQ." (in McCrum, 2010).

Recognizing these experiences, particularly as inhabited by a writer of Salinger’s sensitivities, provide some insight into the nature of the territorialized American socio-political landscape against which it is written. No doubt the word ‘phoniness,’ as employed in the quotation, will resonate with readers. But considering that America in the 40’s was mired in duplicitous images and propaganda of triumph and government double-speak, it is no wonder we encounter the cynicism we do woven throughout CTR. Likewise with Holden’s attitudes towards the phony representations of success represented in cinema, magazines, sports and of course, education. As Adam Gopnik points out in the *New Yorker*, “The shine of Fitzgerald and the sound of Ring Lardner haunted these pages, but it was Salinger’s readiness to be touched, and to be touching, his hypersensitivity to the smallest sounds and graces of life, which still startles” (2010).

While some might dismiss Holden’s conflicts as no different than any other teenager dealing with rebellious thoughts and angst, this, as I have already argued, would be a rather absurd and unjustified reduction. From a schizoanalytical perspective, if we consider, following Deleuze, the novel as an expression of affective loading in the body, then it is possible to recognize

Holden's actions and movements as shifts against the sedimented prejudices and fantasies propagated in the war and post-war era. As a production-creation of the writer, and as a material flow of affect, Holden presents both symptoms of the world as well as potential sources of health, while we as readers are in the position to experience these same flows and, along with Holden's unacknowledged therapist, grapple with Holden's manifestations of sickness and healing, whether one or the other, or both.

Schizoanalysis in the Context of the Classroom Today

Shifting our territorial focus to 2022, Alberta, Canada, the case for the novel's machinic potential is perhaps even stronger than in 1951 when it was published. Beginning with a broader assessment of social forces, we must ask also what are the pushes and pulls that define majoritarian being for high school readers today? As Rosi Braidotti exclaims, from a European standpoint "The binary oppositions of the Cold War era have been replaced by the all-pervasive paranoia: the constant threat of the imminent disaster. From the environmental catastrophe to the terrorist attack, accidents are imminent and certain to materialise: it is only a question of time" (2010, 42). I would suggest the same holds for us in Alberta, as we deal not only with the evidence of climate catastrophe, but also a world-wide Covid 19 pandemic, and significantly exacerbated divisions across multiple social issues, including racism, sexism, ableism, and classism. All of which sit squarely under the shadow of an ever-strengthening threat of fascism at all levels of society. In addition, we now deal with the rise of neo-liberalism, particularly in our province, and the now ubiquitous presence of Deleuze's notion of the control society. Hence, to read CTR today as familiar teenage angst is to preclude any truly immanent experience of the book and reduce it to cliché without allowing the encounter to work on the body. In the language of science, it is to remain closed to the violence or the disturbance of the encounter. Such resistance, often revealed by dismissals of Holden as a 'loser' or an 'idiot,' and the book as altogether 'pointless,' ignores the dominant or majoritarian values that provide the territorial grounds for such judgements in today's society.

At this point, it is worth recalling Deleuze's challenge that to read intensely includes bringing the book into contact with "what's outside the book, as a flow meeting other flows" (N, 9). In doing so, we acknowledge and attend more specifically to other flows and molar lines of stratification acting on student assemblages. Pedagogically, such distinctions are perhaps what Deleuze intends when suggesting that we get the book "to interact with other things" (N, 9). And while there are many possibilities to consider, the most obvious, in terms of schizoanalysis applied to the classroom, would be one of the territories circumscribing students' worlds against which the book most likely chafes: education. Specifically, as a 'file' against the sedimentation of molar entanglements, the book 'interacts' most profoundly against institutionalized notions of *success* which today, more than ever have been coded into every aspect of formal schooling, including the very *raison d'être* of education.

A relatively consistent image of success saturates just about every aspect of schooling today, from its underlying structure of progression to its disciplinary practices, content selection, class timelines, timetables, and of course award and assessment practices that pit one student against another. And with its steady promotion aligned with economic advantage, directly and indirectly it has managed to drown out many alternative visions of success intrinsic to alternative values, including success as associated with visions of community or social health and vitality. This is most clearly evidenced in both government and institutional rhetoric surrounding notions of 'career pathways,' and the ability to compete on the job market. The social regimes which condition these majoritarian territories of thought and habit are further sedimented through representations and codifications of individualist values and personal 'greatness,' promised as carrots on a dangling in front of students. Consider, for example, Donald Trump's campaign banner, "Make America Great Again" and in Alberta, Premier Kenney's "Alberta Strong and Free." As but one of many examples, we can examine the *Request for Proposals* (RFP) posted by the Kenney government which asks for interested parties to respond to the call for a "comprehensive system review and co-creation" of Alberta's post-secondary system. The RFP begins with the following statement:

Post-secondary education and training are critical to building an Alberta that is open for business and keeps pace with changing industry needs, with talent and a strong

economy that is competitive on the world stage. Education and skill development feeds Alberta's talent pipeline of entrepreneurs, educators, tradespeople, highly qualified personnel, innovators, job creators and community leaders (2020, 4).

As Wallin emphasizes, “the image of thought informed upon formal schooling already presumes how a life should be composed” (2013, 196). And it is perhaps this molarity against which Holden unconsciously rebels and against which the novel whittles away as the proverbial file. It is consistent, I believe, with the ‘problematic’ that fuels Holden’s apprenticeship in signs and his ‘search’ for something beyond the false fronts of a population educated to compliance and cultural hegemony. A search driven by an inarticulable alternative image of thought and life that might emerge from the plane of immanence and the passive vitalism of ‘a life’ rather than one foreshadowed or imposed by the commercial model of education depicted in the early pages of the novel.

As a literary machine, then, CTR can serve as a kind of ‘provocation’ or disturbance to unconscious investments of desire. Actualized, readers and educators might be compelled to consider, Wallin suggests, “how the composition of life might create a maximum coefficient of freedom counterposed to the camel’s dutiful encumbrances” (196). Here he alludes to Deleuze’s reference to Nietzsche’s three metamorphoses in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, in which “The camel is the animal who carries: he carries the weight of established values, the burdens of education, morality, and culture. He carries them into the desert, where he turns into a lion; the lion destroys statues, tramples burdens, and leads the critique of all established values” (PI, 53). Not unlike Holden’s depictions of schooling in post-war America, Wallin observes that the process of education as we typically experience it in Alberta follows the morphology in reverse, with the camel being an image of the endpoint: “The modern school overflows with beasts burdened by the accretions of their lessons, the conferrals of truth, and the dutiful abeyances of ‘public professorship’” (197). By the end of high school, students are supposedly ‘prepared’ for life, and in many cases for specific jobs or pathways of employment confronting them either immediately or after subsequent ‘training’ in post-secondary institutions. As a consequence, such ‘preparation,’ effectively narrows their imaginaries to the point that they no longer see

the range of infinite possibilities in front of them. Rather than continuing to question what their body can do, the graduates I often encounter have already come to harsh conclusions of what they can or can't do based on years of testing, course restrictions, and uncontested hierarchies adopted within the school. The underlying irony in this, as Wallin points out, is that this image of the *camel* is exactly what many both inside and outside the institution of education equate with success: "the beast of burden constitutes a lionised image of educational success" (197). Institutional capital is weighted not in terms of what a body can do, but in the 'credentials' inked on transcripts as having consumed and regurgitated the requisite body of knowledge deemed most worthy by the marketplace. One's worth is more-often-than-not measured by one's ability to dance to someone else's tune. Far removed from the image of becoming emerging from the passive vitalism Deleuze has in mind. Elsewhere, Wallin (2012) suggests that Deleuzian and Guattarian thought can be employed as a "a tool for desedimenting methods of hierarchical categorization and judgment particular to the State inspired model of the modern school) (149). This, I believe, is what the CITR does best, in employing both a style and series of signs that do a kind of violence to the camel.

Holden's clashes with the territorializing forces of formal education are introduced early in the text. On page two, he describes Pencey Prep as a school which "advertise[s] in about a thousand magazines, always showing some hotshot guy on a horse jumping over a fence. Like as if all you ever did at Pencey was play polo all the time. I never even once saw a horse anywhere near the place" (Ch. 1). Education is introduced not as a place of learning, but as a commodity within a marketplace, one which relies on propaganda to attract consumer-students and parents. More notably, however, is what Holden recalls as stated underneath the image of the horse: " 'Since 1888 we have been molding boys into splendid, clear-thinking young men'" (Ch. 1). Occasionally, students will pick up on the paradox within this line, the idea that the process of 'molding' runs counter to the anticipation of 'clear-thinking.' When I ask students to go back to reconsider what it means to them as students, they will often readily embark on their own journeys of reflection. Whether or not it works as a sign to initiate a

deeper search depends on each student's willingness or capacity for such a journey. But in my experience, it is a line that at the very least opens an inquiry into their own education.

Within a process of schizoanalysis, the idea of molding here points to the very process of stratification. It also speaks to the structural assumption underlying the institution of modern education that has had, in spite of the mounting criticisms, remarkable resistance to change, no doubt because of its conservative and neo-liberal supporters. In this assumption we find the popular metaphor of a factory-model of education that 'produces' a certain kind of graduate, ready to hit the road and meet market-place demands. In practice, this also includes processes of socialization that more-often-than-not require that children need to be tamed and adapted to a static image of society and tacit endorsement of norms. The paradox, at least for me, lies in the impossibility of creating clear-thinking graduates through the process of molding. And yet, it is this linear and constraining model of schooling -- a simplistic A to B roadmap that aligns with the majoritarian model of success whereby B is equated, not with an education, but rather a job and career success. Journalist Lucy Clark exclaims, "schools are sausage factories producing students who know how to win at exams rather than think creatively or critically" (2017). Likewise, Yong Zhao, a well-known speaker on the education circuit, also uses the metaphor of sausage making in criticizing the increasing tendency toward conformity in the U.S. education system as it moves closer to the traditional approaches of China (2014, 135); arguing that in stifling the creative elements of education, we limit diversity of thinking within the classroom and in our future graduates.

Such a notion of 'clear thinking,' is tantamount to an education that fosters what Deleuze calls common-sense or dogmatic images of thought. One might ask, what 'thinking' is either ignored, rejected or denied in order to produce the clarity such an education is after. And how much of such excess that is cleansed or trimmed might be the very 'stuff' that students such as Holden might care about. Ironically, it is possible that it is in the excess -- the non-representational -- where students will most likely encounter the *event* of education. Where students are most

likely to unconsciously come into contact with the outside; the uncoded, unterritorialized forces of a life.

With this in mind, it is no wonder that Holden's characterization poses such an affront to 'common sense.' Holden's expulsion from three plus schools simply does not align with the normative behaviour and compliance that many student readers have by now adopted as the only option for success. In posing such challenges to the majoritarian imaginary, his actions and his inactions, along with his constant digressions from a linear path from A to B, no doubt leave many readers frustrated, disappointed, or revolted. But with patience, hopefully also a different way of thinking about education and success.

A Scenic Consideration of Richard Kinsella

Though a fuller schizoanalysis might consider the book in its entirety, and particularly its potential as a literary machine operating in opposition to dominant strata, I am choosing to focus primarily on one scene. There is nothing in particular that makes this scene stand out, and for most readers it likely doesn't. But for myself it is the one which has had the most significant impact on my own thinking about life and education. The scene, as Joe Hughes points out, is one of the distinguishing features of the novel: "whatever fragmentary unity a scene possesses is grounded in the capacity of the scene to displace the reader's attention and desires. It is this capacity of scenes to re-circuit our desire that makes them a relatively clear object for the schizoanalysis of literature" (2015, 71). According to Hughes, the scene is comprised of four parts: an opening which serves to orient the readers' attention, a "climactic incident or 'hinge' which functions as a point of inflection in the curve of our desire," a closing, and the 'dramatic action,' which is conveyed in a "'scenic' mode of showing rather than the telling – which links these three across the time and space of the scene" (73). And while I might argue with Hughes's topography of the scene, I am drawn to his assertion that the "scene is best understood from a schizoanalytic point of view," and that "One of its basic conditions is the radical fluidity of desire; one of its basic functions is to temporarily modulate desire as it pursues yet another line of flight" (73).

The scene I have in mind opens with Holden responding, circuitously, to his former teacher, Antolini's query: "What was the trouble" (ch. 24), a question that grabs the reader's attention, primarily because, coming near the end of the book, many have the same concern: what is Holden's problem? Though perhaps implied, there seems to be no specific reason Holden struggles in school. Holden replies by way of a single recollection: "They had this course you had to take, Oral Expression. That I flunked"(ch. 24). Throughout the passage, the reader is also made aware of Holden's faltering health through his internal voice: "I didn't feel much like going into it. I was still feeling sort of dizzy or something, and I had a helluva headache all of a sudden. I really did." (ch. 24). But in spite of his dis[ease], he proceeds to describe the class as one in which everyone has to get up and give a speech, "spontaneous and all." But then adds: "if the boy digresses at all, you're supposed to yell 'Digression!' at him as fast as you can. It just about drove me crazy. I got an F in it." And when Antolini pushes him on why he failed, he states, in deceptively minimal terms, "'Oh, I don't know. That digression business got on my nerves. I don't know. The trouble with me is, I like it when somebody digresses. It's more interesting and all" (ch. 24). As Antolini presses him on why he doesn't like someone to 'stick to the point,' Holden struggles to articulate his reasons, "'Oh, sure! I like somebody to stick to the point and all. But I don't like them to stick too much to the point. I don't know. I guess I don't like it when somebody sticks to the point all the time'" (ch. 24).

In this short scene, we not only gain possible insight into the flow of Holden's desires, perhaps those that condition his rebellion, but we gain insight to certain lines of flight that possibly characterize the novel as a whole. As Albrecht-Crane and Slack explain, "First, molar lines of institutional learning territorialize, control, and segment space and bodies in ways that establish the binary structures of the classroom. By virtue of molar segmentation, bodies become identifiable in their roles as teacher and students" (2007, 103). Of particular relevance to the stratification of or by schools, the scene with Richard Kinsella offers a central moment in which the play of molar and molecular lines might be examined. As Holden implies, these molar structures relate to the dominant codings of success in the school: "the boys that got the best

marks in Oral Expression were the ones that stuck to the point all the time.” The sanctions of both grades and ridicule help establish the normative standard of excellence to which anyone striving for success will quickly adapt themselves. It is not surprising then, that the pivot point of the scene arises with Holden’s recollection of “this one boy, Richard Kinsella,” who “didn’t stick to the point too much,” despite the fact that his classmates “were always yelling ‘Digression!’ at him.” The scene depicts a rather singular image of defiance, one which playwright Arthur Miller might have ascribed to the tragic hero, declaring that “the need of man to wholly realize himself is the only fixed star, and whatever it is that hedges his nature and lowers it is ripe for attack and examination” (1949). Though the need would be described in different terms in schizoanalysis, the idea is similar. That something drives the individual, in this case a kind of flow of desire somehow freed from capture, conditioning him to move in a direction different from the subjected group earlier. In this case, while not necessarily the same catharsis as Aristotle might have imagined, readers’ affections will no doubt be aroused with the fall of a character who thwarts ‘common sense,’ and subsequently pays the price. As Holden explains, “It was terrible, because in the first place, he was a very nervous guy--I mean he was a very nervous guy--and his lips were always shaking whenever it was his time to make a speech,” emphasizing that such deviance is not achieved without agon. Though everyone “kept yelling ‘Digression!’ at him all the time,” Kinsella seems driven by some internal or unconscious force to deviate from his initial topic of “this farm his father bought in Vermont,” demonstrating that, according to the school code, he was not capable of ‘clear thinking.’ Holden proceeds to describe how, instead of sticking to the point and telling about “what kind of animals and vegetables and stuff grew on the farm and all,” Kinsella started “telling you all about that stuff—then all of a sudden he'd start telling you about this letter his mother got from his uncle, and how his uncle got polio and all when he was forty-two years old, and how he wouldn't let anybody come to see him in the hospital because he didn't want anybody to see him with a brace on.”

The scene with Richard Kinsella illustrates a character perhaps unconsciously doing battle with micro-fascisms instilled by the educational machinery surrounding him. And though he ‘fails’

according to the majoritarian judgements against him, he succeeds in ways that exceed such standards of representational learning. Kinsella's speech clearly doesn't follow a prescribed plan, but instead digresses according to what appears to be an immanent flow of thought, his words actualizing what we might imagine as resulting from virtual affective relations. While cows, chickens and other 'representations' of the farm fade into the background of the mundane, his mind wanders rhizomatically in the direction of what appears to have more affective weight, in a direction which aligns with the intensification of his thought – with what 'matters.' From a virtual site of non-representational struggle, his thoughts actualize in an act of creative resolution as a kind of deterritorializing of language, evidenced by his broken or 'nervous' speech and his shaking of his lips.

As a student who consciously or unconsciously refuses to remain constrained or controlled by the expectations and sanctions of the school and its curriculum, the scene with Kinsella also offers us an example of what Mihály Csíkszentmihályi (2008) calls a state of flow, which I believe has some resonance with Deleuze's line of flight. One can only imagine Kinsella in front of the others, completely oblivious to their disdain, let alone his impending failure, but instead following his own rhizomatic becoming, as words emerge as a kind of spilling over or leaking through the territorial bondage of institutional expectations. From the perspective of schizoanalysis, his act of digression appears as a line out of flight out of the very carefully policed molar lines of acceptable, on-task, on-topic, linear enunciation. As Deleuze reminds us, "There are no straight lines, neither in things nor in language. Syntax is the set of necessary detours that are created in each case to reveal the life in things" (ECC, 2). But in considering molar and molecular lines of stratification, the scene also reveals Holden's own discomfort with the institutional forces of education. As he says of Kinsella, "When his lips sort of quit shaking a little bit, though, I liked his speeches better than anybody else's." And even though he admits the digression "didn't have much to do with the farm," Holden nevertheless embraces it:

It was nice. It's nice when somebody tells you about their uncle. Especially when they start out telling you about their father's farm and then all of a sudden get more interested in their uncle. I mean it's dirty to keep yelling 'Digression!' at him when he's all nice and excited. I don't know. It's hard to explain. (Ch. 24).

Holden's apparent struggle to explain – followed by his internal admission to having “this terrific headache all of a sudden” – is perhaps a further sign of his more extended search, as well as confirmation of the potential importance of this scene. And though reader's today may not have encountered the level of mob-behaviour encouraged by the teacher here, they will still be aware of what may be in store for student who dares deviate from the standard expectations of current curricular outcomes. While readers will likely enter the passage in agreement with the dictates of good public speaking and having to ‘stick to the point,’ Holden's retelling challenges them to reconsider, not just the nature of public speaking, but the nature of violence that characterizes what education does to individuals such as Kinsella.

As Savat and Thompson (2015) describe it, “the purpose of the disciplinary school is to neutralise difference and the power of variation to make individuals, and masses, governable and self-governing as a direct effect of what is actualised through enclosure” (280). As well, the control society hovers over classrooms and households, affecting administrators, teachers and parents, shaping their expectations for student success, without recognizing that the standards and qualifiers of success are largely framed within the neo-liberal, competitive structure of capitalism, which dominated as much in post WWII America as it does today in Alberta. Political-economic engines of both capitalist and disciplinary regimes literally bank on schools to produce – to mold – the kind of well pruned ‘clear-thinking’ products which, as widgets fitting their needs, can be easily shuffled, traded, and transferred as the market demands. What is striking about the passage is that in choosing to ignore the heckling and derision of his teacher and classmates, not only does Kinsella's apparently unplanned and spontaneous digression reveal a kind of vitalism or ‘life’ in his enunciations, actualization of problems clearly circulating in the unconscious regions of his virtual furnace, but his enunciations exhibit the kind of language of a minor literature, political, collective and affirmative – an unscripted ‘event’ of defiance, and learning that challenges the core strata of education. The scene with Kinsella, in all its intensity, is not unlike what Albrecht-Crane and Slack (2007) refer to as chaos, something culturally, professionally and institutionally engrained in teachers to avoid, but which is in fact “the fabric of immanence that makes all creation and life possible [which are]

characterized by excess; that is, by what is left or escapes the territorializing work of the molar lines” (104).

Nathan Snaza (2019) identifies the ‘literacy situation’ as one in which “literacy events emerge in order to reimagine the politics of education as always a question of the prepersonal affective relations that can and do condition the emergence of subjects invested in (by) states, but which can also condition more errant and delinquent events and pleasures” (72). In this regard, one might ask, what conditions generate Kinsella’s immanent refusal to follow the ‘script’? What allowed the singularity of forces within the virtual to lead to the event and actualization of delinquency and errancy, at the very real cost of social ostracism and failure? As Snaza concludes, against the ‘project of humanization and its dehumanizing exhaust’ by which institutions of ‘disciplined knowledge production’ are ‘calibrated,’

[w]hat we need, then, ... are ways of attuning to the more-than-human political situation that, from the perspective of disciplines, become errant, delinquent, and failed. We have to learn to attend more precisely to how we are affected by literacy situations, and to follow those affects into uncertain and uncontrollable relations. (75)

In their rejection of institutionalized definitions of education and learning, both Kinsella and Holden provide a glimpse into what it might mean to attend to the ‘more-than-human political situation,’ which, though institutionally over-shadowed by the fear of chaos, opens to the possibility of learning. This is perhaps what Snaza means by pedagogies or events of refusal, delinquency and errancy all of which I view as informing and complimenting my proposal of a pedagogy of disturbance.

In many ways the scene with Richard Kinsella operates as a microcosm of the entire novel. For it is not just Kinsella who never sticks to the point. In defiance of the kind of ‘clear thinking’ touted by his former school’s motto, Holden narrates his entire story in the same disjointed and spontaneous manner as Kinsella performs his public speech. Not only does Holden’s deliberate delinquency or defiance establish a kind of political resistance, but his stream-of-consciousness narrative, unfolding as a series of digressions, implies, according to Ross Chambers, a kind of social criticism: “it casts serious doubt on the values good citizens hold dear – values like

discipline, method, organization, rationality, productivity, and, above all, work – but it does so in the guise of innocent and, more particularly, insignificant or frivolous entertainment” (1999, 9). From the perspective of normative social expectations, and in this case of schooling regulatory machinery, digression ‘represents’ a failure of self-discipline or a slippage of untamed excess. But as Chambers also points out, while such digression might be “readily condemned, from the point of view of the maintenance of a certain cultural order” we must realize that “cultural order is maintained at the price of human alienation; alienation from what culture defines as natural” (12). While there is, as far as I can tell, no evidence that Ross is aware of Deleuze and Guattari’s theoretical proposals, there is an uncanny intersection here in their respective approaches to aesthetics and an art practice which touches ‘the outside’ of dogmatic images of thought and the social codings and stratification that resist such deviations. Ross’s comments here are especially germane to a schizoanalysis of the text. Digression, which he considers the ‘stock-in-trade’ of loiterature, is a result of the “abandonment of discipline that becomes associated...with the way the body impinges on (or distracts from) the activities of the mind, the unconscious on those of consciousness, and with the way desire interferes with matters that are supposed to have nothing to do with libido” (1999, 12). This same political affect, integral to minor literature, is also highlighted in Deleuze and Guattari’s conceptualization of the rhizome; as they contend, American literature in particular “manifest[s] this rhizomatic direction to an even greater extent; they know how to move between things, establish a logic of the AND, overthrow ontology, do away with foundations, nullify endings and beginnings” (ATP, 25).

As such, reiterating an earlier comment, the style of CTR operates subversively not simply by way of its content, but by way of its style or expression. Drawing from Sarah Ahmed (2010), we might say that affective forces are quasi-determined by our orientation in the world. In other words, the direction in which we are oriented influences that to which our senses attend, and in turn the force and nature of the affects to which we are exposed. Most educators would readily admit that much of their work revolves around this very challenge, orienting students towards the prescribed objective of learning. But what happens when, as in the case of the

narrative flow or style of this novel, the rapid shifts of interest prove to be disorienting, rather than orienting. Not only does this subvert our efforts to focus, but the movement leads to what Guattari might refer to as ‘transversal connections,’ bringing together perceptions and thoughts in ways they would not normally be associated, and ways that are productive or creative of different ways of thinking and becoming. Interestingly, in the same scene describing Kinsella, Antolini asks Holden, admitting beforehand that it is a “faintly stuffy, pedagogical question” whether or not “if someone starts out to tell you about his father's farm, he should stick to his guns, then get around to telling you about his uncle's brace? Or, if his uncle's brace is such a provocative subject, shouldn't he have selected it in the first place as his subject--not the farm?” (Ch. 24). To which Holden replies with continued uncertainty, ““Yes--I don't know. I guess he should. I mean I guess he should've picked his uncle as a subject, instead of the farm, if that interested him most.” And it is at this point where the discussion would normally end. But then he adds a realization which points to the core of what is at stake here for education grounded in disturbance and grounded in immanence:

But what I mean is, lots of time you don't know what interests you most till you start talking about something that doesn't interest you most. I mean you can't help it sometimes. What I think is, you're supposed to leave somebody alone if he's at least being interesting and he's getting all excited about something. I like it when somebody gets excited about something. It's nice.” (Ch. 24)

What Holden is getting at is much more profound than simply a dismissal of Mr. Vinson’s behaviour as a teacher. For readers, it implicates the driving forces of the current schooling edifice: assessment and discipline. In his essay, appropriately titled, *To Have Done with Judgment*, Deleuze argues that judgement “presupposes preexisting criteria (higher values), criteria that preexist for all time (to the infinity of time), so that it can neither apprehend what is new in an existing being nor even sense the creation of a mode of existence? (ECC, 134-135). In describing the teacher, Mr. Vinson’s constant orders to “unify and simplify all the time,” Holden speaks to his distress in reaction to a pedantic reductiveness that serves to destroy productive learning: “Some things you just can't do that to. I mean you can't hardly ever simplify and unify something just because somebody wants you to” (Ch. 24). As the teacher shuts down the event, in the interests of ‘staying focused’ or staying on task they not only stubbornly defend the coded, arboreal boundaries rooted in prescribed ‘plans’ real or

imagined, but they ironically do so at the risk doing violence to the productive desire that makes education possible in the first place!

Though it might be a terrifying thought for teachers, and perhaps a question of when and where rather than if, the moment in which Kinsella appears most intensely connected to something ‘outside,’ is the most critical moment for the teacher to refrain from judgment. Again, this has some similarities to Csíkszentmihályi’s concept of ‘flow:’ “the state in which people are so involved in an activity that nothing else seems to matter; the experience itself is so enjoyable that people will do it even at great cost, for the sheer sake of doing it” (2008, 4). Of particular relevance to the scene with Kinsella is his statement several pages later, in which he argues: “To overcome the anxieties and depressions of contemporary life, individuals must become independent of the social environment to the degree that they no longer respond exclusively in terms of its rewards and punishments” (17). It is clear in this scene that judgment only serves to prematurely terminate a becoming of a possible ‘new mode of existence,’ which Deleuze goes on to describe:

[It] is created vitally, through combat, in the insomnia of sleep, and not without a certain cruelty toward itself: nothing of all this is the result of judgment. Judgment prevents the emergence of any new mode of existence. For the latter creates itself through its own forces, that is, through the forces it is able to harness, and is valid in and of itself inasmuch as it brings the new combination into existence. (ECC, 135)

What Deleuze infers by “a certain cruelty” is not clear here, though we might imagine the event of creation or becoming as a moment of upheaval at the molecular level. It perhaps speaks to the kind of self or subjective sacrifice the artist makes, or for that matter, the person who lives with integrity on the grounds of uncertainty. As the scene with Kinsella also demonstrates, lines of flight are inevitable at the point where the individual organism can no longer contain affirmative desire. The unconscious problem becomes so heated in the virtual, that something either breaks through or breaks down. In Kinsella’s case, that ‘event’ becomes a point of deviance and defiance. He no longer wishes to contain his story within the ‘lines’ of disciplined regulation. And while he doesn’t break down, in breaking through he chooses the school’s mark of failure.

In Holden's case, however, not only does he fail that same speaking class, but over the course of the book, there is a foreboding sense that he actually will break down. The manifestations of illness that build over the course of the novel reflect not just an internal struggle of conscience, but arguably, when considered through schizoanalysis, they point to the material effects of the kind of delirium Deleuze and Guattari describe. Holden finds himself caught between the two poles, the "paranoiac fascisizing ... and the schizorevolutionary" (AO, 277). The first demands that he 'just grows up' and accepts the normative territories placed in front of him, including school. It equates phoniness to the masks of compliance subjects assume under the regulating norms and rules of the territory, associated with the molding – molarizing identities of 'maturity.' The second pole is the more revolutionary and nomadic pull of the schizophrenic, "the lines of escape of desire" (AO, 277), and is evidenced in the constant movement or play of digression throughout the novel. Holden seems driven by an unconscious desire for connection, perhaps unknowingly to something outside, free from the drag or draw of the first pole.

Arguably, it is this delirium, intensified by a series of abortive connections, that moves Holden to the point of breakdown, as he fails to find belonging in a world so heavily ornamented by worldly signs of emptiness. In foreshadowing Holden's 'fall', his former teacher, Mr. Antolini, counsels him:

This fall I think you're riding for - it's a special kind of fall, a horrible kind. The man falling isn't permitted to feel or hear himself hit bottom. He just keeps falling and falling. The whole arrangement's designed for men who, at some time or other in their lives, were looking for something their own environment couldn't supply them with. Or they thought their own environment couldn't supply them with. So they gave up looking. They gave it up before they ever really even got started." (Ch. 24).

And though Holden never 'gives up looking,' Antolini sees dangers that are intrinsic to the schizophrenic, though it's worth recalling that such dangers may be worth the risk. Salinger's characterization of Holden's 'delirium' is impossible to ignore as it escalates to becoming the defining tension of the novel. Similar to the inspiration Deleuze takes from F. Scott Fitzgerald's semi-autobiographical work, *The Crack-up*, Holden teeters on the edge of break-down throughout the novel and arguably, with his final collapse, he succumbs to it, though the crack-up itself appears indefinite.

Esther Pasztory argues that not only is the “idealization of the nomad ... built into poststructuralist literature” but that “Deleuze and Guattari consider the “nomad,” the “schizophrenic,” and the “orphan” as metaphors for people “free” of controlling totalitarian (oedipal) forces” (2005, 38). Whether or not these were intended as metaphors, as a nomadic character, Holden’s movements of defiance, resistance and digression suggest he is unwilling to settle for a status quo confined by the majoritarian images of success and life. It is not surprising that the consequences are so much more significant for him than simply failing another class, as each encounter reminds him again and again just how alone he is. As Deleuze explains, “We know all too well that nomads are unhappy in our regimes: we use any means necessary to pin them down, so they lead a troubled life. (DIOT, 259). Given how much at odds he is with the adults he meets, it is not surprising that readers struggle with the question of ‘what’s wrong with him?’ At the same time, it is also not surprising that so few are willing to flip the question to ask, “what’s wrong with everyone else?”

Becoming Child and A People Yet to Come

Rather than dismissing Holden's cynicism as the ramblings of teen-age angst, I have considered Holden's rejection of schooling, and the novel as a whole, as a continual source of disturbance to my own complacency and participation within the institution of education. Holden's sense of alienation has been, for many years, a motivating force behind my practice as a teacher and each year, as I stand in front of each new class, I find it helpful to keep in mind who my students are. Who among my students finds school as nothing more than an ordeal to survive, a chore to complete as quickly and painlessly as possible? Who among these students would rather be somewhere else? Frequently I encounter young adults, often midway through their high school years, grasping for a reason to continue. And while it might be simple enough to dismiss their plight as part of the experience of growing up, to do so would be an act of denial. There is something much more ominous taking place and the prevalence of disenchantment and alienation become more and more visible every year I teach. Students are no longer 'buying it.' They want out. And if it wasn't for lack of options, and the impending disciplinary and controlling forces of employment requirements, university entrance requirements, provincial regulations, and parental or guardian demands, they likely would be. It is these students that I believe a pedagogy of disturbance, committed to spaces of immanence and restrained judgment, will serve most.

As a minor literature, while few would identify this work as political, the description Robert Porter applies to Kafka holds equally for CTR: "it directly and immediately thinks the political through the movements it charts, the concepts it creates and, consequently, the deterritorializations it brings about" (2009, 2). In the case of CTR, Holden and Kinsella resist the territorializing forces of the dogmatic, the pedantic, and the territorialized institutions which serve to disrupt or curtail becoming. And while both are successful in momentarily deterritorializing desire, the location of reterritorialization is never clear. Colebrook reminds us that characters are themselves assemblages, "a collection of body-parts, gestures, desires and motifs" and therefore each "opens out on to a unique world or becoming, a unique way of

moving through life and connecting with life. The character we encounter is a sign, but not of something that we might know or experience so much as a sign of an entirely different 'line' of experience or becoming (2002a, 107). With this in mind, we might understand the enactments of digression expressed by both Kinsella and Holden constitute signs of an affirmative line of desire rather than deviance for deviance's sake. And as signs, they project different possibilities for life in us as readers who are apt to be captivated by them, perhaps in part through the tension generated as our own tendencies to cheer them on contradict the realization of their deviations from the norms. Norms with which we ourselves are likely compliant.

Playing vs Gaming

Deleuze and Guattari ask, rhetorically, "isn't the destiny of American literature that of crossing limits and frontiers, causing deterritorialized flows of desire to circulate, but also always making these flows transport fascisizing, moralizing, Puritan, and familialist territorialities?" (AO, 277-278). Referring to Jack Kerouac as "the artist possessing the soberest of means who took revolutionary "flight," but who later finds himself immersed in dreams of a Great America, and then in search of his Breton ancestors of the superior race" (277), they fear that moments of deterritorialization often end in recapture, and ultimately to acceptance or compliance to the very forces against which flight was taken. In considering the "oscillations of the unconscious, these underground passages from one type of libidinal investment to the other" (278), as already suggested, may ultimately lead to breakdown as opposed to breakthrough. In the case of Holden, however, unwilling to compromise or give into the paranoid forces surrounding him, he arguably achieves a line of flight with no clear reterritorializing in site. Expanding on this tension, I propose a reimagining of the two poles between which Holden's delirium reverberates.

Signs of Holden's unconscious conflict is evidenced as early as the second page of the novel, with the image of the football game. It is the first of several explicit references to games in the book, all toward which Holden seems drawn, yet to which he is ultimately unwilling to enter as

a participant. While lasting no more than one paragraph the image, as a multiplicity, projects multiple possibilities of affective relations or lines of desire. As Holden explains,

[I]t was the Saturday of the football game with Saxon Hall. The game with Saxon Hall was supposed to be a very big deal around Pencey. It was the last game of the year, and you were supposed to commit suicide or something if old Pencey didn't win. (Ch. 1)

While the content is relatively clear, it is the expression that stands out here, not only highlighted through the tone in which Holden describes the scene, heavily sardonic, but also his physical stance and orientation relative to the content – the game:

I was standing way the hell up on top of Thomsen Hill, right next to this crazy cannon that was in the Revolutionary War and all. You could see the whole field from there, and you could see the two teams bashing each other all over the place. You couldn't see the grandstand too hot, but you could hear them all yelling, deep and terrific on the Pencey side, because practically the whole school except me was there. (Ch. 1)

Though the passage avails itself to various interpretations, here I am simply pointing it out as illustrative of Holden's inbetweenness, and possibly the first signs of delirium. He is neither part of the game, which would mean taking a role as either a player on the field or a 'member' of the home crowd on the bleachers, nor is he completely removed from it as he stands watching alone on the hill. One might think from his language that he despises the game, and yet he makes the choice to watch it, albeit from a distance. The added detail of the crazy 'revolutionary' canon further adds to the affective tones of conflict that colours the passage. Reinforcing this early depiction of tension is a similar reference to games following a mere two paragraphs later. In this second example, Holden recounts his recent experience with the fencing team, which he offers as the reason he was standing on the hill:

The reason... was because I'd just got back from New York with the fencing team. I was the goddam manager of the fencing team. Very big deal. We'd gone in to New York that morning for this fencing meet with McBurney School. Only, we didn't have the meet. I left all the foils and equipment and stuff on the goddam subway... The whole team ostracized me the whole way back on the train. It was pretty funny, in a way. (Ch. 1).

Once again, the tension or signs of delirium are evidenced in the ambivalence generated in contrasting content and expression. Holden's desire for connection is demonstrated in his acceptance of the job of team manager, a glorified waterboy, while his reluctance appears in his refusal to participate as a fencer, let alone to assume the conditions of the relationship, as

he commits what may very well be an act of self and team sabotage. In both cases, Holden's failure, inability, or unwillingness to commit to the game are readily evidenced.

This rejection of the game becomes even more apparent during Holden's farewell discussion with his teacher Mr. Spencer, who asks him about his meeting with the school headmaster, Dr. Thurmer. Reinforcing the headmaster's words, Spencer insists that, "Life is a game that one plays according to the rules" (Ch. 2). In doing so, he echoes the institutional argument still heard in schools today. But while some readers pick up on this line, most read past it, confirming how closely it coheres with the codings they have grown up with. But it is Holden's response that imbues the moment its affective stutters, heightened by the ironic mismatch between Holden's outer expression, "'Yes, sir. I know it is. I know it'" and his inner voice which immediately follows:

Game, my ass. Some game. If you get on the side where all the hot-shots are, then it's a game, all right--I'll admit that. But if you get on the other side, where there aren't any hot-shots, then what's a game about it? Nothing. No game. (Ch. 2).

One of my students once shared his personal realization that while Holden may lie to others, what distinguishes him from the phonies around him, is that he seems capable of lying to everyone but himself. Writer Cory Doctorow observes that, while becoming an adult generally comes with attaining a breadth of 'context' upon which reason can 'work,' "It also means perfecting your ability to rationalize your way into one small compromise after another, accumulating a kind of ethical debt, one whose balance steadily mounts, making it harder to confront head on" (2020). In many ways, this defines Holden's struggle in *CITR*, his inability to compromise himself. For that he appears to suffer undeniable torment. In this world, to 'grow up' is to learn to play the game, to perform according to expectations. But Holden is, as demonstrated repeatedly, seemingly unwilling to play the game. And the only times in the novel when he appears truly at peace in his delirium is when he is with children, and their characteristic spontaneity unadorned by masks of adopted deceit. Life according to a game is ultimately life performed. As actor Gabriel Byrne, citing Eugene O'Neill, declares, "Our tragedy is that we are haunted not just by the masks others wear but by the masks we wear ourselves. We all act all the time. Life makes us necessary deceivers" (2021).

Inverse to the more common or stereotypical tropes of 'coming of age' literature, in CTR entering adulthood is not associated with more awareness or insight, but with less. Defaulting or succumbing to the game of life with its rules and expectations, here adulthood implies a territorialization of the rules: majoritarian expectations, values, and penalties. And it is the game which largely determines and limits the affective nature of encounters and relationships. Adopting the rules of the game also means adopting the conditions and codifications of dominant regimes, which, as Keith Payne convincingly demonstrates in drawing from empirical research, are largely characterized by inequities and social hierarchies that identify winners and losers – the molar striations of us and them: “When everyone is either a superior or a subordinate, the hierarchy constantly highlights differences in status” (2017, 171).

On one hand, games are defined by boundaries, coded norms and rules, with goals often equated with criteria-based judgements of success. To participate or engage in the game is to become a member of a group subjected to unconscious impingements of varying social regimes of signs and to be conditioned by prescribed expectations, outcomes, or values. On the other hand, play, as a re[visioned] concept, unfolds on the plane of immanence, in a mode of pure experimentation and creativity. Play draws from the body's contact to the outside, with a life. To extend the distinction further, not only does the game speak to Deleuze and Guattari's conceptualization of territory, but it also reflects Deleuze's concept of dogmatic thought, something which severely limits the flow of creativity. Herman Hesse, a writer who, like Salinger, was influenced by the Eastern tradition, writes:

"When someone is searching," said Siddhartha, "then it might easily happen that the only thing his eyes still see is that what he searches for, that he is unable to find anything, to let anything enter his mind, because he always thinks of nothing but the object of his search, because he has a goal, because he is obsessed by the goal. Searching means: having a goal. But finding means: being free, being open, having no goal...striving for your goal, there are many things you don't see, which are directly in front of your eyes." (2008)

With this in mind, the common phrase, 'playing the game,' becomes an oxymoron. While game captures desire, play sets it free. Game is restrained and contained by norms and expectations;

play is unbounded. Breaking free from the rules – the operational qualifier of the game – is to land on smooth space, the immanent domain of play.

Returning to earlier discussions, though all segments of life are vulnerable to infringements of games of one sort or another most notably in social interactions, it is predominantly the game of school, of institutionalized education, that is of most concern to me here. Teachers habitually engage in the game whenever they ask questions to which they already know the answers or distribute work sheets and multiple-choice lists which they use to measure standards of so-called 'excellence,' or even when they perform in certain ways in front of administrators to garner favour and advancement. And how often do we hear students complaining about 'filler assignments', 'jumping through hoops', and 'sucking up', all signs that the game has long deviated the prospects of education. From the moment we sit down to make lesson plans, the kind so often required in curriculum courses or by school administrators that demand that every minute be accounted for, every question (and even response) be considered, we as teachers are preparing the game board. Even in choosing texts, few of us would deny considering or even seeking works that we believe students will like, that will lure them into engagement. Under the artifice of the game, rules and socially constructed expectations are used to determine winners and losers, and a focus on final grades and course completion overriding any interest in learning itself.

In challenging the official or state position, Holden establishes himself as an outlaw, forcing readers to come to terms with the disturbance he potentially generates in their own conscious and unconscious world views. While for some, the reaction is immediate, for most it is a challenge they sit with, like an itch that needs to be scratched. These relate to small irritations, at the molecular level, that often endure over time in the virtual. If, as Deleuze and Guattari argue, all becomings are becoming minor, then in opposition to the major, adaptations to the rules of the game, the minor is implicated not simply in Holden's acts of rebellion, but in the qualities of children with whom he has so much affinity. In terms of Holden's delirium, it is the style of movement and expression of children that most resonates with the revolutionary schizophrenic. Considering the manner by which they appear to live on trajectories of pure

immanence, the concept which I believe deserves re[visioning] as associated with this second pole, is that of 'play.' jagodzinski, drawing from Schiller's notion of *spieltrieb* or the play drive, points out that art and politics are inextricably linked, "It is the 'play drive' (*Spieltrieb*), which is capable of constructing the complex of art as well as the complex of life...aesthetic play becomes a transformative work of aestheticization, thereby promising to transform the world into its own sensorium as form subjugates matter" (2010, 32). While common vernacular, game and play are often used interchangeably or side-by-side as in 'playing the game,' emerging from reflections on CTR, I propose a very clear distinction between them. In jagodzinski's association of play to the aesthetic and therefore largely unconscious in its flows of desire, it is distinguished from the more traditional conflation of play and game which reside in the heavily conditioned or territorialized cognitive domain. As he adds, "*Spieltrieb* is creativity itself" and as a force, "it is the place of 'becoming' and not Being" (32).

In distinguishing playing from gaming, we get a sense of the difference between what Holden calls the phonies, those who follow, manipulate, or exploit the rules, and Salinger's characterization of the children Holden encounters. The latter are the unconditional, non-representational conceptualization of play I am after here. The concept of play, as an actualized becoming, arises from a sense of liberated flows of desire emerging on the plane of immanence. Equating it to creative becoming, it is also the difference between Holden's brother DB as a writer of art and the DB Holden condemns as plugged into the Hollywood machine and producing scripts for consumption. Or, between Ernie who 'plays' the piano as an expression of pure flow and Ernie who performs according to audience approval. In contrast to craft or design which are carried out within prescribed boundaries and specified ends, play releases the creative energy at wellspring of art. *Play is in contact with the outside.*

It is perhaps also worth drawing parallels between play and several of the qualities that Csikszentmihali identifies with flow, particularly in their association with creativity. As he states, "it is when we act freely, for the sake of the action itself rather than for ulterior motives, that we learn to become more than what we were" (2008, 42). In one interview, he emphasizes that flow is "being completely involved in an activity for its own sake. The ego falls away. Time

flies. Every action, movement, and thought follows inevitably from the previous one, like playing jazz” (1996). That said, the concept of play reveals what I believe is a contradiction in Csikszentmihali’s contention that flow also requires us to “choose a goal and invest ourselves in it” (42). How is it possible to engage in an activity ‘freely’ and without ‘ulterior motives’ if one already has a specific goal in mind. And how can ego possibly fall away as long as there are goals and competition involved. Here I would argue that it is what allows Kinsella to speak the way he does, as play or flow, disregarding the rules and goals of the classroom game. To abide by the goals set by his teacher would no doubt have interfered with the expression, a collective enunciation of a minor variety, that emerges or becomes something new.

Becoming Child

Liselott Olsson’s study of preschool children adds further to my understanding of play which is free of prescribed goals, while emphasizing spontaneity and actualizations unfolding in smooth space:

[T]he experiences made in the preschools show a very forceful character; forces not connected to rationally thinking individuals seem to produce and shape the movements and experimentation in subjectivity and learning (desiring machines). The assemblage in the preschools is about new ways of acting and talking (machined assemblage and collective assemblage of enunciation). A new kind of learning is entered into where children construct and produce their own questions and problems and where the processes of learning are not predetermined but take shape as they continue. (2009, 148)

Considering the symptomatology of the text, if negative affective relations with adults align with signs of illness, then perhaps it is in visions of becoming child where we might find possibilities of health.

Becoming child is one of the molecular movements that Deleuze and Guattari speak of directly. To the extent to which Holden seems drawn to expressions of childhood that figure prominently throughout the novel and to the qualities or intensities that characterize their vitality, we might speak of Holden as ‘becoming child.’ The question that arises is whether or not a similar molecular becoming is stimulated in the reader, which of course is impossible to

answer. We can only hypothesize such shifts based, in part, on the nature of the reader's encounter with the affective forces of the novel's characterization of Holden's struggle, as well as other qualities of style infused within instances of digression or play.

Recalling Deleuze's allusion to Nietzsche's three metamorphoses, it is perhaps not coincidental that his conclusion resonates with the tendencies observed in CTR: "Finally, the lion must become child, that is, he who represents play and a new beginning creator of new values and new principles of evaluation" (PI, 53). The trajectory of camel to lion to child matches that in CTR, with the exception being that Holden resists becoming camel in his rebellion against the institution of education. A rebellion which, by refusing to participate in a culture of compliance and passive acceptance, leads to a more open, albeit more precarious relationship to the world, one unconsciously inspired by a child-like spontaneity and schizo-like wonder that typically fades from being as child matures to adult. As Anna Hickey-Moody suggests, Deleuze and Guattari consider "the child as generative force is through figuring the child as a vector of affect: an activator of change" as "liv[ing] on an affective level that is lost to most adults" (2013, 273).

Deleuze and Guattari speak fondly about the affections or intensities that characterize children, but in particular, the observation that they have not yet adopted a single way of seeing or thinking the world. They remain immune to the dogmatic representations that seize many adults:

Children are Spinozists.... Children's questions are poorly understood if they are not seen as question-machines; that is why indefinite articles play so important a role in these questions (a belly, a child, a horse, a chair, "how is a person made?"). Spinozism is the becoming-child of the philosopher. (ATP, 256).

This helps to explain, perhaps, Holden's fondness for each of the children he encounters, including his sister, Phoebe. But his affection should not be confused with any desire to become child. As Bogue clarifies, "When discussing 'becoming-child', Deleuze and Guattari stress that they are not talking about imitating children or reviving childhood memories" (2010, 94-95). Instead, in contrasting becoming-child with childhood memory (ATP, 294), they imply that

becoming is an actualization of molecular capacities shifted through encounters with childhood affect and intensities, while childhood memories comprise of the subject's reliance on molar configurations of childhood. At the level of the virtual, pre-subjective, there is no such category as child. Only affects flowing through encounters. For Deleuze, becoming child distinguishes 'a life' from 'the life' of any one child:

Very small children all resemble one another and have hardly any individuality, but they have singularities: a smile, a gesture, a funny face - not subjective qualities. Small children, through all their sufferings and weaknesses, are infused with an immanent life that is pure power and even bliss" (PI, 30).

Becoming child is therefore associated with virtual forces, in contact with a life. It is not about self-becoming or a subject choosing or guiding its own becoming. Colebrook notes that,

There is not a self who affirms its own becoming as a woman, nor a self who writes about animals to uncover animality as such. For there are no terms or points—no human or animal—outside of encounters; and neither term becomes for itself, from itself or without inflection from without. There is no woman as such or animal as such toward which one becomes. (2011b, 29)

Nor is there any evidence that Holden wishes to become child. What he wishes to become is oddly enough, a 'catcher' of children. Something he ultimately fails at, perhaps in recognition of the impossibility of preventing their fall. In one of the most poignant passages in the novel, he realizes he can never erase all the 'Fuck You's' graffitied on walls exposed to children. Neither will he always be there to save Phoebe. Just as he must accept time as continuing and change as inevitable, he also must accept every child must be allowed to take their own risk, wherever or however it might change them. Becoming-child is, as Colebrook (2011) suggests following Deleuze and Guattari, is a kind of style which, similar to becoming-woman "will both encounter something other than itself, and rewrite just what that "other" (or woman) is" (29). Becoming-child is a singular, hybrid assemblage. Or as Deleuze and Guattari explain it, "Every becoming is a block of coexistence" (ATP, 292), a kind of 'in-between' which "constitutes a zone of proximity and indiscernibility... carrying one into the proximity of the other" (293).

For Olsson, whose research focused on preschools, "children are connected to and experiment with many more sorts of desire than those offered through family, school and culture" (2009, 146). Like Olsson, who observes "how children's desires deploy themselves away from the

institutions repression of desire” (147), Holden’s fascination with children, though unconscious, seems to coincide with this sense of their freedom, the nature of their movements that seem oblivious to social expectations. For as Bogue explains, “what matters most about becoming-child is not the specific age of children but the deterritorialising force that is activated in the playful world of the child.... The ‘youth’ of a given age is its newness, its power of setting in disequilibrium the codes, conventions and practices of fixed power structures” (2010, 99). In the incident from which the book’s title derives, Holden observes a small boy “singing the hell out of” a song. As he takes in the scene, “The cars zoomed by, brakes screeched all over the place, his parents paid no attention to him, and he kept on walking next to the curb and singing ‘If a body catch a body coming through the rye’” (Ch. 15). The detail of his parents not paying attention to the child is especially relevant here, as it emphasizes just how much distance there is between the two poles, in this case the paranoid pole of adulthood games – their captured interests and preoccupations – and the schizo-revolutionary pole of childhood play. To a much greater degree, given his deteriorating condition, Holden is torn between the paranoid desire of territorialized lack to reconcile himself to the game and what for him at his age would be a frighteningly lonely prospect, though arguably more affirmative schizo desire to play.

At this point, it is important to note the caveats regarding this discussion of becoming. Colebrook suggests that “no notion has been more normative than that of becoming” (2011b, 25). Though it is uncertain why this should be, she surmises that it is possibly a result of the “now institutionalized poststructuralism that appears to have privileged process over stability, creation over system, and singularity over universality — becoming appears at first glance to be *the* notion that would free us at once from moralizing normativity and rigid identity politics” (25). However, as she makes clear, this is as much a cause for concern as for celebration. And one that I include here as I myself have fallen victim to the same tendency she describes as “the contemporary valorization of becoming over being.” Viewing becoming through proverbial rose-coloured glasses “repeats rather than destabilizes a highly traditional and humanist sentiment of privileging act over inertia, life and creativity over death and stasis, and pure existence or coming-into-being over determination” (25). Recalling earlier discussions, there are

always dangers associated with any line of flight. In spite of his apparent fondness for certain qualities, even Deleuze, following Spinoza, recognizes certain vulnerabilities intrinsic to childhood. Describing Adam as “correspond[ing] to childhood of humanity” he describes him as therefore “sad, weak, enslaved, ignorant, left to chance encounters” (EPS, 263). These same dangers accompany the qualities Holden most admires about children, including their openness to the world, which comes with unprotected exposure to it as well. In desiring to be the catcher in the rye, he recognizes the potential for their fall, whether that be to adulthood or some other danger. This again speaks to tragic irony at the centre of the inquiry, that as much as he wants to save children, and Phoebe in particular, he is the one who is falling. At the end of the book, as a blurred line of flight, Holden’s trajectory remains indeterminate. As he says,

A lot of people, especially this one psychoanalyst guy they have here, keeps asking me if I'm going apply myself when I go back to school next September. It's such a stupid question, in my opinion. I mean how do you know what you're going to do till you do it? The answer is, you don't. I think I am, but how do I know? I swear it's a stupid question. (Ch. 25).

But it is also here that he perhaps most appears most Spinozist, and child-like, in his assumption of a life with no end in mind.

Reflected in a more positive light, however, Holden emerges in the end with a child’s sense of optimism and openness to uncertainty, perhaps a result of increased affective capacity, or some of Phoebe’s ‘sun’ rubbing off. I would argue that it is love which propels Holden A kind of love for life and a recognition that even if the connections he makes are not imbued with the level of integrity he might hope for, that they still contribute to his own becoming, so long as he accepts them for what they are. In this way, Holden evokes a nod to Nietzsche and the stoics notion of *amor fati*, love of one’s fate, which Deleuze adapts as a kind being worthy of the events which unfold in one’s life. Though bitter-sweet, and not the ending some might desire, it is perhaps the only way we could envision Holden as surviving in such an environment. As he states in the novel’s final sentence,

About all I know is, I sort of miss everybody I told about. Even old Stradlater and Ackley, for instance. I think I even miss that goddam Maurice. It's funny. Don't ever tell anybody anything. If you do, you start missing everybody” (Ch. 26).

A People Yet to Come

There is no doubt a flow of desire at work in Holden's seemingly random search for connection. And though his proposal to move to a cabin in the woods provides an imaginary alternative, it is one which precludes the possibility of connection or relationship. It is tantamount to contraction rather than expansion and risks flight into the black holes Deleuze and Guattari warn against. As Goodchild (reminds us, "deterritorialization and nomadism are not ends in themselves for Deleuze and Guattari; instead, they wish to intensify social relations. They desire to construct a social space where immanent relations can be produced" (1996, 3).

It is with this impasse, the impossibility of being alone and the impossibility of finding connection, that perhaps most directly speaks to the fabulation of a 'people yet to come.' As a whole, the novel seems to speak to a vision of love that defines connection as being without artifice and without codes. Connection as an undetermined flow of desire. In searching through the literature on the topic of love, I coincidentally discovered an article by Alexandre Lefebvre who similarly concludes, albeit in a different context, that "love is what Deleuze calls immanence" (2011).

This is a love and a life which resonates with the speed and movement of untamed and untainted subjectivities of children. The life which most adults, and certainly many who Holden meets, seem incapable of. In speaking of the fabulating function of literature, the 'health' that "consists in inventing a people who are missing" (ECC, 4), Deleuze explains that "literary characters are perfectly individuated, and are neither vague nor general; but all their individual traits elevate them to a vision that carries them off in an indefinite, like a becoming that is too powerful for them: Ahab and the vision of Moby-Dick" (ECC, 3). It is not Salinger's ego that is 'projected' onto the character of Holden, but rather, as Deleuze emphasizes, the fabulation Holden that generates a certain vision and "raises itself to these becomings and powers" (3). The fictional Holden cannot exist in the world as it is, one that demands he either enter the game or live in isolation. Nor, as readers, do we wish to see him compromise himself in order to live in it. Were Holden to do so, he would no longer be Holden.

Ultimately, the ‘work’ of CTR as a literary machine fabulates a vision of human connection and education that does not yet exist. The world does not have room for someone like Holden. His challenge is to find the gaps in which he can survive. But in his search, he opens the imagination to the possibilities for a people yet to come. In recalling the earlier discussion regarding the author’s experience in WWII, we consider Deleuze’s suggestion that, “The writer returns from what he has seen and heard with bloodshot eyes and pierced eardrums. What health would be sufficient to liberate life wherever it is imprisoned by and within man, by and within organisms and genera?” (ECC, 3). What, we might ask then, might this new vision of ‘*a life liberated*’ be? What might health look like? The significance of play, and its relationship to the novel’s vision of possibilities, is highlighted in the insights of Stuart Brown, one of the foremost scholars of play in the world, who states that “the opposite of play is not work—the opposite of play is depression. Our inherent need for variety and challenge can be buried by an overwhelming sense of responsibility. Over the long haul, when these spice-of-life elements are missing, what is left is a dulled soul” (2009, 274). This coheres with Marg Sellers observation that “children’s play(ing) happens in [a] kind of potential space as a machinic assemblage. In such potential, liminal spaces an intensity of forces operates. . . it is the play in-between that generates movement – if there is insufficient play, things seize, nothing happens (2013, 116). Which further confirms that, not only for young children but for all organisms, without movement, there is a kind slow death that take place, a stagnation that spells the end of what it means to be living. Within the context of Deleuze’s conceptualization of ‘a life’ and the outside as a source of passive vitality, play becomes not only desirable in life, but necessary to health. Echoing O’Sullivan, we might ask how CTR helps us to construct our lives differently? Speaking only for myself, it is both one of the saddest and most challenging texts I have encountered, but one that has undoubtedly shaped the way I live and teach. Every year when I begin a new class with a new group of students, I am haunted by the prospect of Holden challenging me from the back row.

In bringing this discussion to a close, the novel’s value within a pedagogy of disturbance lies in its potential to disrupt the dominant assumption, conscious or unconscious, of life lived as a

game, one segmented by identities, prescribe pathways to success, and clearly defined sides of us and them. In addition to its affective potential to loosen sedimented molarities with education, CTR can also affect a becoming minor, becoming child, of the reader. And to Elizabeth St. Pierre's challenge that "we need new concepts in order to think and live education differently" (2004, 285), it provokes a reconceptualization of play.

For the classroom it challenges us to consider what education might look like for the Holdens and the Kinsellas to experiment, not to mention the Phoebes to come. It inspires us to create more smooth spaces for play, and a greater willingness to allow 'lessons' to deviate – digress – from the 'plan.' But perhaps most compelling in this reconceptualization of play is the acknowledgement and disruption of the games that largely define our lives and our relationships. In considering a pedagogy of disturbance, the novel challenges us to make room for flows of desire which are potentially generative of new relations and new spaces of vitality for learning to take place.

Chapter 8: Wajdi Mouawad's Scorched and the Violence of Silence

As stated earlier, my readings in affect theory have led me over the past couple of years to begin to question my teaching and particularly the machines of literature I have, until now, selected for the classroom. In making 'appropriate selections,' I try to avoid sensationalist literature, no matter how popular they might be, including those that succeed on the bases of shock value, entertainment value, or comfort (often synonymous with relevance) levels. More and more I have struggled, recognizing the uncertainties and singularities of impact, to consider literature for its potential production of difference in student lives, but not simply difference for the sake of difference. Rather virtual difference in kind that might actualize into new ways of viewing the world and one's place in it.

I first experienced the play *Scorched*, by Canadian playwright Wajdi Mouawad, performed at the Citadel Theatre in Edmonton in 2009. As its title in both English and the original French, *Incendies*, suggests, this is a play that will not be easily forgotten. I remember at the end of the play, following its shocking final scene, an eerie stillness in the theatre unlike any I had experienced before. In contrast to the typical whisperings and murmuring of audiences making their way out of the theatre, everyone remained seated for what seemed like several minutes. As for myself, I finally left the theatre exhausted yet vibrating – carrying an impression that I have yet to fully comprehend. It was something I truly felt as dis[ease] in the body, but one that was paradoxically both darkly discomfiting and yet warmly life-affirming. A sweet aching that has to this day continued to demand my attention.

As a literary selection for high school English, *Scorched*,⁵ as translated from the French, *Incendies*, by Linda Gaborieau, contrasts *Catcher in the Rye (CITR)* in many ways. Most obviously, *Scorched* is intended for the stage, and therefore to be encountered as performance

⁵ One of my own challenges in addressing this work has been my lack of facility in French, for which I have been forced to rely not only on the work in translation, but on other's translations, including google translate (indicated as GT), in accessing Mouawad's interviews and other scholarship only appearing in French.

rather than text. As well, though *CITR* may have subtle inferences to WWII, *Scorched* more explicitly addresses the issues of conflict, as it is primarily set in and revolves around an actual civil war. Also, while *CITR* is perhaps more typical of the literature in classrooms today (though this was not the case when it was first published), *Scorched* is a far more unlikely candidate, both in its experimental style and its content, and consequently it poses more risk on the part of the teacher. And while *CITR* disturbs in many ways, for the most part it does so with considerably less recognizable intensity of bodily affections than most students will likely experience with *Scorched*. In this respect, the most significant difference between the two is how it works on the reader/audience and how it engages their attention with what many will refer to as events of historical violence or collective trauma. While *CITR* tends to focus inwardly, asking readers to consider their own position relative to institutional (educational) and social forces and future possibilities, *Scorched* pushes the audience into the position of witnessing and a set of inquiries more collective in nature arising as they do from communal crises and disturbances at the global level.

In this way, as Jennifer Ballengee and David Kelman have suggested, “the space of literature” is not only a space “to work through these traumatic events [problems of national and imperial growth and dissolution] via the imagination” but it “becomes that place where language and representation combine with silence—or a lacuna or gap—to enable a thinking through of the event in its becoming” (2021, 4). As they imply throughout their discussions, there is clearly a potential relationship between what may or may not be named as a traumatic event and the prospects of thought and action. However, it is worth repeating again that my interest in disturbance as a pedagogical practice is concerned less with meaning than it is with subsequent movement or shifts in thinking and behaving. In considering the intensive ‘reading’ of *Scorched*, I owe considerably to the previous work of Jill Bennett who, albeit primarily concerned with visual art, asks “what it is that art itself *does* that gives rise to a way of thinking and feeling about this subject... on the affective operations of art and on the ways in which these situate art in a certain relation to trauma” (2005, 2,3). As a teacher, however, I am ultimately

interested in the specifics of thinking, doing, and becoming that this play potentially generates in students.

In keeping the play's *work* open to all possibilities, it is also important that we avoid the traps of pre-categorization, in this case the tendency to prematurely label art as tragic or 'about' trauma, which may, as Bennett points out, open up "new readings," but at the same time "it also reduces work to a singular defining subject matter in a fashion that is often anathema to artists, who construe the operations of their work as exceeding any single signifying function" (3). Similarly, though *Scorched* might indirectly allude to real historical events, to filter our reading through a historical lens is equally problematic. Following Yana Meerzon (2013), I find Lubomir Doležel's distinction between historical and fictional worlds of particular interest here, especially considering its relevance to Deleuze's conceptualizations of art, style and fabulation as a power of the false. Doležel identifies fictional worlds as "imaginary alternates of the actual world," in contrast to historical worlds described as "cognitive models of the actual past" (2010, 33). Elaborating further, he explains that "by writing a text the author creates a fictional world that was not available prior to this act" (41). In the case of *Scorched*, even if inspired or triggered by a real-world event, as Meerzon suggests, it "enjoys the freedom of a fictional world. It is characterized by a degree of incompleteness" (2013, 15). And while it may, indeed, share qualities of testimony and witnessing to historical injustice, it must still be encountered as a work of art, a work of creation conditioned by a multiplicity of forces affecting the playwright's production.

As part of the artist's assemblage, however, there seems little question that certain forces conditioning the play's creation derive from childhood experience. According to Nicole Renault, Mouawad implies that certain historical details and memories are subject to the mediation of creative playwrighting, "So when a woman says that a bus was set on fire with all its passengers, when a bomb destroys the garden where a boy was watering delicate herbs, or when a maverick interprets a song by an American group that marked our teenage years with a machine gun as a microphone, the war becomes less abstract" (GT from Renault, 2009, 38). In

many interviews, he also admits to the influence of events in his own life, and the experience of becoming part of the Lebanese diaspora in Canada:

I think I am only responding to this initial death that tore me from my country. It is a work of extremely personal resistance. To play, read, write, stage, choreograph, directing a company or a theater, to paint, for me, every time, it's a way of responding to death. (GT from Renault, 9).

Born in Lebanon in 1968, Mouawad's family chose to flee in 1975, shortly after the civil war broke out and after two bombs were dropped in close vicinity to his home. He moved with his family first to Paris, and later to Montreal in 1983. As a result of his own journey to learn the history of his birth country, he admits the story is, at least in part, inspired by the story he heard of Soha Béchara, "a Lebanese Christian with pro-Muslim sympathies" (Rubin, 2012), a woman whose story was retold in her own memoir (2003). Apparently, she "had attempted to assassinate the commander of the Israeli supported South Lebanon Army during the Lebanese Civil War and was subsequently incarcerated in the notorious Khiam prison for a decade ... sentenced to solitary confinement in a cell adjacent to the room where inmates were tortured." (Rubin, 2012) Mouawad recalls certain details of her life he subsequently adapted into his play:

For ten years she heard the crying and pain of the tortured. To try not to become mad, she began to sing. She sang the songs she knew popular songs. The people in the jail, who heard this woman but never saw her, called her The Woman Who Sings. She gave them hope and courage to survive. (Morrow, 2008).

From his perspective, the conflict in Lebanon, "was a very shameful war, where fathers killed sons, where sons killed their brothers, where sons raped their mothers" (Morrow, 2008). And not unlike the mother figure of Nawal, the character inspired by Soha Béchara, his parents never talked about the war with their children; they "didn't want to explain to my generation what had happened...Strangers had to tell me my own story" (2008). Elsewhere, Mouawad admits that specifically, the initial spark was the events unfolding in southern Lebanon under the occupation of the Israeli army at Khiam prison,

where thousands of Lebanese were tortured by executioners Lebanese working in the pay of the Israeli army. [...] The technique consisted of torturing women to get them to depose and denounce their husbands, sons, fathers or brothers. However, this is only the starting point. [...] This event is therefore the trigger. A dry and raw trigger. (cited in Mounsef, 2015, 266).

This admission raises numerous points of consideration for artists and audiences regarding not only the embodied effects of war, what some will now refer to as trauma, but also the relationship between these effects and silence, truth-telling, and the problematics of witnessing and testimony. These also have significant implications for education: what is the pedagogical value of student exposure to violence? How should we as educators respond to historical atrocities? How do such encounters work to both unsettle and educate? What does this art do in generating new becomings?

With respect to the potential impact on readers or audiences, Irmy Schweiger contrasts 'traumatic' history "which strives for a neutral and objective stance from which to narrate the past" to literature which is capable of multiple effects: "as *healing*, in that it restores meaning where it has been destroyed; as *subversive*, in that it tells counter-histories of the master-narrative; as *complementary*, in that it integrates suppressed voices and painful experiences into the collective memory; or as *disturbing*, in that it narrates trauma as a persisting condition that continues into the present" (2015, 345). In any case, in terms of immediate impact the affective force of *Scorched* is hard to avoid. With outbursts of extreme profanity, narrations of violence, and references – though rarely explicit – to sexual assaults, while *Scorched* provides an extraordinary encounter for students and teachers, unlike many they will have experienced previously. Not only is it diverse in voice, language, race and ethnicity, but it resides at a distance from the comfort zone of canonical or prescribed text lists. Needless to say, the inclusion of Wajdi Mouawad's play in my grade 12 classroom has provided moments bordering on chaos, but I am satisfied that it has also provided some of the most rewarding. With its rather shocking final scenes, *Scorched* will resonate with, but surpass the affective impact of most classical and modern 'tragic' performances, including Sophocle's *Oedipus Rex*, the work with which it seems in most directly in conversation. Mouawad himself acknowledges that he "always [has] Sophocles in [his] head" (in Morrow, 2008) and that along with Kafka, the Greek tragedians are definitely inspirations: "They not only inspire me, they give me the oxygen so I can live [as an artist]. I would be lost if I hadn't found them" (2008).

As already mentioned, adding to the weight of this work is its relation to actual and imagined or inferred historical events, the latter for which no explicit allusions are made. As Mouawad says of *Scorched*, “I tried to be more political... I tried to say the real names: Palestinians, Israelis, Syrians, Lebanese... but every time . . . the poetry and the theater stray far away from me. I stop and they come back. . . . Every time I speak about a Middle East tragedy, I can’t name it” (in Kamal Al-Solaylee, 2005). But even though the playwright intentionally omits actual place and faction names in the script, a choice with definite implications, from Mouawad’s bio we might readily recognize the primary site as Lebanon, with several scenes seemingly correlated to actual events of the 15-year civil war. In brief, as the play itself suggests, the history behind the war is extremely complex, with tensions arguably exacerbated in 1948 with the formation of Israel and the ongoing tensions continuing to today, through which approximately 120,000 initial Palestinian refugees increased to today’s estimate of 400,000 (Elsayed-Ali, 2006) fled to Lebanon. With mounting pressures both within the borders of Lebanon and from Israel next door, between supporters of Palestinians and those who sided with the Israelis, war was inevitable. According to Fawwaz Ṭarābulṣī, it was the Ayn al-Rummaneh bus incident which many consider to be the proverbial spark that ignited the so-called Christian-Palestinian war, during which the Israeli-aligned Phalangist militia (associated with the right-winged Christian party) open-fired on an unarmed bus of Palestinian refugees (2007, 187). Initially a two-year war, it stretched into a total of 15 years, lasting from 1975 to 1990. As journalist Martin Morrow suggests, this is a country “where horrors worthy of an antique tragedy have been perpetrated in modern times” (2008).

In an interview with J.F. Côté, Mouawad recalls a return visit to his home in Beirut. And he remembers the bus massacre which he witnessed from the balcony of his home:

It was down in the street...A bus filled with Palestinian civilians was strafed by Christian militias to avenge the assassination of their leader by Palestinian militias. They stopped the bus and they fired. I saw it from the balcony. I am placed where I was when, as a child, I watched this massacre; I looked in the street and tried to remember how the bus was positioned and where one of the shooters was located. It was very clear (GT in Renault, 39)

Elsewhere, interviewer Stéphane Lépine points out that “he never talks about Lebanon. He speaks rather of interior tears and divisions, he speaks of moral resistance and combat, of internal wars, that is, difficult to swallow and expectorate, to put into words or to shit” (GT, in Renault, 39). In spite of the historical associations surrounding the play, Mouawad encourages us to see the play as a fictional world rather than a historical one, explaining his reasons for not including explicit allusions to Lebanon:

I need not to name things too much, to leave some opening so people don't say, "Ah, hey, this is about the war on Lebanon!" Basically, that's never what is really important, it's especially a context in which evolve characters who are taken by other matters, friendship, love, promise, death, relationships human ... These are not plays that deal with war, they are plays that speak of the attempt to remain human in a context inhuman. (GT, in Renault, 39).

It is this final comment of Mouawad’s which perhaps stands out for me the most as it relates to my choice of this text. My interest in such literature is not simply narrative for the sake of awe or shock. Nor is it especially in the interest of generating empathy, which, as will be discussed later, is problematic. Rather, building on the idea of intensive reading, I wish to explore how such texts work as literary machines and expressions of minor politics on the unconscious of readers or observers in order to create new lines of thinking and becoming. Whether or not the disturbance of *Scorched* is capable of disrupting the molar walls dividing ‘us’ and ‘them,’ walls conditioned by either historical or contemporary forces of territorialization – interpretive machines operating in response to conflict (consider for example, George Bush’s naming of the ‘axis of evil’), I suppose will depend largely on the bodies and conditions surrounding its engagement in the classroom.

Affective Symptoms

In brief, the plot line of the play, covering multiple countries and locations, revolves around the central character and mother figure, Nawal. The play opens with a daughter, Janine/ Jannaane, and a son, Simon/Sarwane, meeting at the office of the notary and friend of the mother, Alphonse Lebel, to witness the reading of their mother's will and testament. At the age of 65, the mother, Nawal Marwan, has passed away, having lived in complete silence, for reasons which no one understands, for her last five years of life. She has left one sealed letter for her daughter, requesting that she not open it, but instead deliver to a brother that up until this moment neither knew existed, and a second sealed letter to her son, again with the instructions not to open it but to deliver it to their father, whom they had been led to believe had long since died.

With these triggering discoveries of secrets withheld from the children (and audience), the play unfolds as a series of journeys through the four acts of the play titled after different fires, each of which loosely retraces various pieces of Nawal's life. First is the background story, *Nawal's Fire*, set in a distant nameless country, with a mood foreboding of political unrest, and which soon enough is filled with images of civil war. At age 14, she appears announcing to her young lover that she is to give birth to a child. Immediately, however, the child is forcefully taken from her and moved to a distant orphanage, while her boyfriend, too, is shown leaving the village to join the resistance (though to what force and for what cause is never revealed). The act ends with the side-by-side burial of Nawal's grandmother with Nawal at age 16 and Nawal herself in the presence of Alphonse, Janine and Simon with the stage serving two time periods. The next act, *Childhood on Fire*, advances the revelations of Nawal's story to the age of 19, and her encounter with one of the most significant incidents of the war in which the busload of refugees is set ablaze. It is also at this point that Janine finally decides to go in search of her real father.

In the third act, *Jannaane's Fire*, we learn more of Nawal's story but this time primarily through Janine's journey in the country of her mother's birth. There is also a significant jump in time as we now discover Nawal, beginning in the first scene of the act at age 40, fully embroiled, along with her companion, Sawda and others around her, in the violence of an undefined war. In attempting to fulfill her mother's wishes, Janine, named Jannaane at birth, eventually discovers the identity of her father, her mother's torturer and rapist, at which point in the play she, too, is silenced. Before the act ends, Simon finally opens the red notebook her mother left to him, through which we hear the voice of Nawal at age 60 testifying in the war tribunal and confronting the man, Abou Tarek (the same person as her son, Nihad), who tortured her in prison. Here the audience hears in more detail the extent of the violence she endured. Presumably after reading the testimony, though with considerably more reluctance, Simon is finally persuaded to go in search for his brother.

In the final act, *Sarwane's Fire*, named after Simon's birth name, the audience experiences the convergence of all 3 journeys in the character of Nihad – a man who appears pathological to a level reminiscent of Heath Ledgers' grotesque portrayal of the Joker in *Batman*. Like the Joker, the horror of Nihad's persona is heightened by his flippant, though broken English, his absurd nods to American celebrities and pop culture, and his grotesquely black humour and complete detachment from life around him. The audience discovers that it is in fact he who Nawal encountered during the post-war tribunals during which he goes so far as to mock his jury and audience, including Nawal, by donning a garish red clown nose. It is only at that point in the tribunal, however, that Nawal, and the audience, recognizing the nose as the gift she left with her baby son, realize that the person who tortured and raped her, is in fact also her son who she was forced to give up at birth and for whom she has spent her life searching. The play culminates with the reading of the three letters Nawal left to be delivered: the first to the father of her twins, the second to the brother of the twins and her first son, and the third to the twins. The first Nihad rips up, but with the second, realizing the woman he raped was also the mother he had searched for, he is silenced. And as the twins finish reading their letter, the play ends... with them listening to the hiss of the cassette recording of their mother's silence.

Dangerous Theatre

Karen Malpede distinguishes between two types of theatre: “One is spectacular, made for entertainment, and seems to be doing fine. The other, our necessary theatre - rough, dangerous, holy, immediate - requires re-imagining because as we near the new millennium the weight of the violence of the twentieth century threatens completely to overwhelm our own abilities to cope” (1996, 266). With the crises already experienced in the 21st century, and inevitable destruction of climate change no longer just a threat, the theatre/art/literature she speaks of is every bit as necessary now. Whether or not it justifies her proposal of a ‘theatre of witness,’ remains to be seen. The operative word for me is that it be ‘dangerous,’ which I read as affective and political as it disrupts habit and initiates movement.

Though Deleuze and Guattari wrote very little on theatre, excepting the influence of Antonin Artaud and Beckett, they do occasionally make allusions to the notion of the theatrical.

Deleuze, for example, attributes Kierkegaard and Nietzsche for speaking to an ‘overcoming of philosophy’ by putting “metaphysics in motion, in action” (DR, 8), which challenges us with

a question of producing within the work a movement capable of affecting the mind outside of all representation; it is a question of making movement itself a work... of inventing vibrations, rotations, whirlings, gravitations, dances or leaps which directly touch the mind. This is the idea of a man of the theatre, the idea of a director before his time. (DR, 8).

It follows, then, that theatre is well suited for the demands Deleuze makes of all art works. As a creative form that challenges audiences with spectacles of sights and sounds, a plethora of affective stirrings, together with the immanence of live actors becoming through their roles and the audience’s participation in collective reaction, it is hard to imagine a more intensive bodily encounter. Theatre, as with film, is perhaps the apex of multisensory art, and the direct encounter with a three-dimensional stage and three-dimensional character bodies, it is also at the height of what Lauren Cull refers to as ‘differential presence’ (2009), wherein the body of the audience is not only witness to but participates in the work of the art on the body. In addition to the modulation of language and speech, theatre can also avail itself to varying affects of lighting, sound, colour, set, blocking and gesture. As Robert Skloot contends, “The

theatre's lasting influence lies in its ability to extend the limits of our language and imagination" (2008, 9). With so many tools and devices available, it is worth keeping in mind that Mouawad offers very few stage directions, and therefore allows directors, managers, and actors certain liberties to work through the co-creation of machined desires as the play works on and through each of them. In considerations of theatrical techniques, we may, for example, speak of the differences in *mise en scène* which each new direction might introduce. Of particular interest is how much Mouawad himself might have influenced the English performance, or whether it took on a different shape based on the differences in text or based on the most recent revision made in French prior to its translation. As but one example of the contrast, Renault points to the grandmother's burial scene, wherein "Mouawad's *mise en scène* in Montréal turns the ritual into an elaborate movement piece accompanied by an Arabic dirge, whereas in Rose's [English] *mise en scène* it is still and frozen imagery which surrounds both funerals" (2009, 16).

In so far as it coheres with the emphasis Deleuze and Guattari place on art's production from the plane of immanence, it is also worth noting that the art of theatre can potentially emerge from multiple processes or modalities of creative unfolding besides simply pen and paper. As Mouawad explains with specific reference to *Scorched*, "The actors were revealed through the characters and the characters were revealed through the actors, so that no psychological space separated them" (2009, iii). Similarly, "The set designer's work had to adapt to a text that was being written as we went along" (2009, v). His process is described as both collaborative and collective, and though he is ultimately the playwright, the work emerged out of a 10 month 'rehearsal period' after an extended process of shared ideas and stories, discussions and workshopping, a process that might be labelled immanent generation, in which details such as Janine's choice of a career in mathematics and Simon's choice of professional boxing were determined collectively. Likewise, the choice of including the prop of a clown's nose, which later contributes significantly to the play's climactic final scene, and not necessarily in a symbolic or metaphoric sense. As he says in the preface to *Scorched*, beginning with an intuition only:

Words began to surface, I set out. I set out into the darkness. The actors' voices guided me. One day, I asked them: "What do you want to do on stage? What do you want to

say? What fantasy would you like to act out?" Everything was allowed. From the most playful to the most serious, from the most grotesque to the most conventional, we had nothing to lose. (2009, iv)

As Mouawad continues, it is clear that the collective process of rehearsal is itself a product of following various lines of flight; the actualization of the artwork emerges as response to virtual problems:

It was amusing and touching to see everyone admit their childhood or teenage fantasies, but every desire contains an undeniable truth, and every desire, expressed so simply sitting around a table one day in May, became a lead I never would have imagined alone. Not everything was taken into consideration, but those wishes often led to solutions as I developed the plot. (iv).

As Renault also points out, Mouawad's *mise-en-abîme* (or abyme), including the multiple intersections of past and present on the stage, are layered in complexity as he employs several staging techniques such as "the splitting of time and space; the use of dead, imagined, and archetypal characters; a splitting of the subject position; a return to the feminine narrative; and a deconstruction of language" (2009, 6). But while Renault theorizes from the perspective of post-colonial theory, arguing that "this dismantling and rebuilding of self are very similar to those utilized in postcolonial narratives" (6), my interest, moving away from specific interpretive lens which even here seems to preclude other possibilities in the text, is instead focused on how the play works affectively, as signs of symptoms produced within the artwork. However, as these points already suggest, approaching *Scorched* as an intense reading is a very different encounter for students. Even when compared to other plays, while not extreme in its experimentalism, it differs in many ways from the typical theatre studied in high school, with often very complex and challenging stage blocking, set arrangements and character presentations. Which means even though a teacher can do their best to bring it to life reenacting scenes in the classroom, unless they teach in a theatre space, it may still require more direct reading than performing, relying on stretches of student imagination to take it to the stage. With the relative sparsity of stage directions, I found it helpful to encourage students to accept the creative challenges and opportunities available to consider how certain scenes appeared to them personally.

Trauma

As already mentioned, to pre-categorize this work as trauma literature is to risk a reductionist reading. As Bennett suggests, we must consider whether or not thematic classifications such as this one “are inclined to commit us to a particular set of programmatic understandings about art’s relationship to experience and subjectivity,” in which case they “may preclude recognition of the possibility that new ways of conceptualizing the politics of experience might actually be derived from the manner in which a visual arts medium can, in distinctive ways, register and embody affect” (4). Implying that the play actually depicts ‘trauma,’ suggests, as Bennett points out, not only a certain “hubris in colonizing such experience” and remains dependent on the assumption that “art can capture and transmit real experience,” but it is incongruous with what she calls a politics of witness that “requires of art *not* a faithful translation of testimony; rather, it calls upon art to exploit its own unique capacities to contribute actively to this politics” (3). Following Deleuze, it is not representation that we look for in art, but rather its ability to affectively disturb the body in order to discharge new inquiries (searches), new lines of flight, and in some cases, new concepts for thinking. For Bennett, following Deleuze, the value of such art lies in its capacity to produce affect and how the affect is experienced by the audience, including through affective signs that might act as “a catalyst for critical inquiry or deep thought” (7). That said, it is virtually impossible, especially as a teacher, to not associate certain scenes with what we now understand, even at a superficial level, as potentially traumatic experiences. While keeping these precautions in mind, I have made the choice to make some exceptions in consideration of certain scholarly explorations of trauma and art, but only in so far as they have sparked additional lines of inquiry, hopefully without foreclosing on other possible opportunities which *Scorched* opens for the reader/audience.

Donia Mounsef and Mai Hussein suggest that trauma has become “an overused trope that pervades all levels of interactions with the world” (2014, 140). And though I hesitate to say whether it is necessarily overused in the realm of education, I would agree with their recognition of a surprising increase in “trauma narratives that attempt to capture the

unspeakable of wound culture in both literary and performative language” (140). Though motives differ, with the increased interest in Indigenous struggles around the world and the embodied traumas related to racialized populations both in and out of war and conflict zones, there appears to be a corresponding resurgence of interest in theorizing such literature as direct and third-party witnessing or literature of testimony, with much of the scholarship still alluding to Shoshanna Felman’s landmark work, *Testimonies: Crisis of Witnessing Literature, Psychoanalysis, and History* (1991). Along with Felman, others include Felman and Laub (1992), Caruth (1995, 1996, 2013), Malpede (1996), Schumacher (1998), Patraaka (1999), Bar-On (1999), St. Pierre and Pillow (2000), Bennett (2005), Parr (2008), Leys (2012), LaCapra (2001/2014), Richardson (2016), Santos et. al. (2019), Dutro (2008, 2011, 2013, 2019a, b, c) and Ballengee et. al. (2021). Though they differ in many respects, there are definite points of resonance between theorizing around trauma and aspects of Deleuze’s thinking surrounding art and affect. While it is true that, trauma theory typically takes up subjectivity in a more psychoanalytical and pathological sense, there seems to be some agreement that one ‘productive’ way of expressing the inarticulable violence of the event, including as a kind of witness or testimony to its degree of atrocity, would be through artistic expression. The element of most interest to me is how many of the discussions regarding trauma literature revolve around a similar axis as those regarding affect: that events in the body somehow exceed the capacity for adequate representation or communication. As Felman explains, “The contemporary writer often dramatizes the predicament (whether chosen or imposed, whether conscious or unconscious) of a voluntary or of an unwitting, inadvertent, and sometimes involuntary witness: witness to a trauma, to a crime, or to an outrage; witness to a horror or an illness whose effects explode any capacity for explanation or rationalization” (1992, 4). This indeed appears to be the case in *Scorched* as silence punctuates moments throughout the play, and the ‘sense’ of excess is conveyed through the multiple techniques available to the stage.

Before proceeding further, it should be said that one of the common concerns with trauma theorists is how we, as victims, witnesses, or testifiers, respond to and transmit experiences of violence. Felman, (similar to other scholars such as Bessel van der Kolk, 2014), explains the

challenge as based on the limitations of our abilities to process the experience: “As a relation to events, testimony seems to be composed of bits and pieces of a memory that has been overwhelmed by occurrences that have not settled into understanding or remembrance, acts that cannot be construed as knowledge nor assimilated into full cognition, events in excess of our frames of reference” (1992, 5). These concerns are just as relevant within the context of art and education. As Bennett suggests, art “is best understood as *transactive* rather than *communicative*. It often touches us, but it does not necessarily communicate the “secret” of personal experience” (7). The intensity experienced in *Scorched* is no doubt elevated because of the events of violence, both historical and relational, woven into the narrative. But rather impressively, the playwright/director manages to achieve moments of peak affection without displays of explicit or narrative violence. Much of the violence in *Scorched* is implied in moments of discovery related to antecedent or off-stage events. As Katherina Pewny observes, “What lies at the core of the trauma – and of the attempted assassination – remains outside the realm of scenic presentation and representation” (2014, 7), a point which further confirms what Cathy Caruth refers to as “force of an experience not yet fully owned” (1995, 151).

Bennett suggests that setting aside the audience’s inclination towards interpretation or desire for meaning, “refut[es] the argument that art transmits content or meaning intersubjectively, and the associated notion that the substantive condition of trauma might be retransmitted via representation.” We are then left to focus on the primary task of art theory which is, as she states, “to determine the specific nature of both the aesthetic experience of affect and the manner in which art is able to open up trauma to an audience” (2005, 10-11). While the educational or political potential of such art will be addressed later, we begin by further exploring what and how aesthetic experience is generated through the movement of affect and generation of affective signs.

Wound

As with *CITR*, the aesthetic work of the play begins with its very structure. The considerations of trauma, whether real or theoretical, appear to be readily apparent in the nature of the play’s

structural and stylistic elements. Trauma, a term etymologically signifying a 'wound,' is largely held in the body, at the unconscious or pre-conscious level, where Deleuze locates the virtual, and though it may be identified in conscious recognition, when it does it is often fragmented and prone to unanticipated disruptions of conscious life. Not only are these disruptions evident in the structure and style of the play, but it is through them that we are introduced to the signs or symptomatology of something akin to trauma.

It is not surprising that in *Scorched*, the audience encounters the narrative of the central character, Nawal, not in a linear chronology, but instead as a series of fragments or short vignettes. Though comprised of only four acts, each named after a different fire, the play evolves over a total of 37 scenes, many which overlap with each other on the stage, such that time and place are continuously blurred or conflated. This, too, coheres with various descriptions of trauma. Caruth, for example, describes fragmentation as a "response to an unexpected or overwhelming violent event or events that are not fully grasped as they occur, but return later in repeated flashbacks, nightmares, and other repetitive phenomena" (1996, 91). More significant than the cognitive residue which victims may or may not be able to articulate, are the deeper, more inexplicable or inarticulable material events within the body which impact the unconscious processing of memory. Here, too, trauma speaks directly to the non-linear or disjointed nature of time, which audiences experience in the performance. Perhaps the most obvious structural element of the play, paralleling its four acts, is the employment of repetition, with difference, that shapes the audience's encounter with Nawal. As we experience first the mother's story, followed by each of her children's stories, we are exposed to the same life, with overlapping characters and scenes, each time from different perspectives and understandings. As Caruth states, "the history of the traumatized individual, is nothing other than the determined repetition of the event of destruction" (1996, 63). And perhaps just as much as the "endless inherent necessity of repetition ... may lead to destruction" (63), as Caruth suggests, sadly it may also explain why so many victims ultimately commit suicide. But from the perspective of the affective nature of pure difference, or difference-in-itself, the audience relives glimpses of Nawal's life, but each time with difference,

each time shaping previous understandings, and each time accumulating forces of difference as each recurrence builds with intensity.

Time

In many ways, the structure of *Scorched* operates on the audience with similarities to those Deleuze associates with modern cinema and the structure of stories in contrast to classic cinema and its emphasis on narrative. As Bogue explains, narrative, for Deleuze, “reinforces the spatiotemporal structures of the common-sense world by subordinating time to regulated movement” (2010,30), while story ‘problematizes’ the coherence of chronological time. In discussing cinema’s fabulation or ‘powers of the false,’ Deleuze identifies three types of time images: the first two are “essentially concerned the *order of time*, that is, the coexistence of relations or the simultaneity of the elements internal to time” (CII, 155). Bogue elaborates further, explaining that in these two, “one can see diverse images of multiple past events that coexist in a single domain (‘sheets of the past’) or images of multiple, contradictory present events that occur simultaneously” (2010, 30-31). As for the third kind, Deleuze explains, it “concerns the *series of time*, which brings together the before and the after in a becoming, instead of separating them; its paradox is to introduce an enduring interval in the moment itself” (CII, 155). As he concludes, all three time images “break with indirect representation, but also shatter the empirical continuation of time, the chronological succession, the separation of the before and the after” (155).

In *Scorched*, the audience in the theatre is exposed to all three of these time images. For example, scene three offers an example of simultaneously juxtaposing two vignettes from the present but very disparate lives of Janine teaching mathematics in a university class and Simon engaged in a post-boxing match conversation with his coach at a gymnasium. While there are no stage directions as to how these scenes are blocked, one can imagine them somewhat chaotically infused with different lighting and background sounds corresponding to their two venues. Perhaps less from design and more out of the necessity for rapid and seamless scene changes, the set itself is sparsely furnished with a bare minimum of props, if any, from which to

project the fullness of each site in the audience's imagination. Placing them side-by-side forces the audience not only to compare the characterizations, but to sense two very different speeds and movements of intensity. In each case, there are glimpses of both literal notions of limited vision, as well as more ambiguous tensions percolating through elements of characterization, including gestures of underlying angst or frustration. With this scene falling immediately after the previous one where Janine and Simon listen to their mother's cryptic last will and testament, a constellation of elements begin to form which for many will instigate one of many affective signs in the play.

Contributing further to the density and complexity of the play, and more frequently occurring through the play beginning in the second act, *Childhood on Fire*, are scenes that employ the third kind of time image, with the voices of Simon or Janine either juxtaposed or seemingly interacting directly with events, images, or speech from various points of past time in their mother's life. These intersections of different times, places, and characters, disrupt any sense of chronology or linear time but by condensing and overlapping multiple images and sounds at once, the intensity experienced by the audience is heightened seemingly to the threshold of endurance. For example, in scene 14, we see in the foreground Simon chastising his twin, Janine, for not talking, not answering calls, and becoming like their mother. Janine asks Simon to listen to the cassettes recorded by their mother's nurse, Antoine, during her five years of silence. As Simon listens with the earphone pressed to his ear, he exclaims, "You're listening to silence!" to which Janine replies "It's her silence" (48). The repeating reference to listening to silence serves to emphasize the implied paradox, that rather than empty, the silence is full of expression, building affective tension through absence rather than relieving it through some signifying meaning or representation. To further highlight the moment with irony, her words are followed immediately elsewhere on stage (again, no blocking directions are provided) with the voices of Nawal (age 19) and her friend Sawda to whom she is teaching the Arabic alphabet, reciting the letters one at a time. The two sets of conversations become blended within the script itself, as Simon continues to berate his sister, telling her to get rid of the tapes and go back to her studies, and Janine responds, "I don't give a damn about my Ph.D. There's

something in my mother's silence that I want to understand, something I need to understand" (49). No doubt the audience is moved to share Janine's search for the intangible something as silence inevitably projects affections of sign and symptom. But of what, we cannot be sure. We are instead left to grapple with its ambiguity.

As Simon leaves the stage, we again hear the voices of Nawal and Sawda, with the scene closing on Janine's final words, as though addressing her mother somewhere inside the cassette player, "Why won't you say something to me? Why won't you say something to me?" (51). The back and forth of the intermingled scenes, two different time periods, two different countries and two different lives, with the common denominator being the fragmented thread of young Nawal's life at 19 and her life, the only Nawal the twins know via the cassette, in her 60s. Between the two, the dramatic tension builds through the agonizing separation between the twins and their mother, but also in the irony of their mother's silence on one hand, and her confident role as a teacher of communication on the other. The intersection of these two moments in time continues briefly in scene 15, as the directions indicate Nawal and Sawda "pass Janine; Janine is listening to silence," further indicating the proximity of the two lifetimes and escalating the tensions that connect them.

Language Disturbed

As these scenes suggest, the presence and absence of Nawal coincides with the disruptions and deterritorializations of language in nearly every scene of the play. This, too, might be compared to the heightened affect achieved in modern cinema. Bogue, following Deleuze, explains that "directors emphasize not only the gaps between images, but also the gaps of silence between sounds, the gaps separating sound effects, music, and dialogue from each other, as well as the gap between the visual and audio elements of film (such that there is in modern films a constant back-and-forth of the visual and the sonic in dynamic disequilibrium rather than a mutual doubling or reinforcement of sight and sound)" (2004, 339). My own recollection is of the discomfort I felt at several points in the play when what was happening on stage was

punctuated by what became excruciating moments of varying lengths of silence, including those in which silence was emphasized by the hiss of the cassette tape recordings of silence.

These cinematic effects are, however, also significant in their ability to convey the ruptures or disturbances in representation and the space-time continuum that is sometimes evidenced in trauma. Whether Mouawad was aware of it or not, the signs emerging from the experience of the play are strangely symptomatic of the cacophony of sound and sight consistent with experiential and theoretical accounts of trauma. In other words, affective elements, and signs of excess and the non-representational in the theatrical experience coincides with what we might imagine to be the nonrepresentational nature of trauma at its core. In discussions of fabulation, Bogue shares this contention: “The time of trauma has a specific structure, which a number of important studies have elucidated” (2010, 80). And while a specific event imposes a disruption in time and memory due to the excess of assimilable intensity, what he calls, “a traumatic counter- time of an incommensurable before and after” (80), it is living with the experience that prolongs the suffering. Elaborating further, Bogue explains that “in many cases of trauma, there is a sense in which the original traumatic event is only fully experienced after the fact. In such cases the trauma as lived event cannot be registered and absorbed; its full force instead only becomes manifest later in a delayed reliving of the event as if for the first time” (80), an experience of time and memory that matches the concept of time as *Aion*: “a Forever as unfolding multiplicity of coexistent moments (the Greek *Aion* = eternity)” (2014, 97). As a scholar who has dedicated her life to trauma studies, Caruth also alludes to this experience of time in victims, for whom trauma “does not simply serve as record of the past but precisely registers the force of an experience that is not yet fully owned” (1995, 151). Whether by necessity or by incursion, the force of trauma is repeatedly relived. Not unlike the fragments, vignettes, and repetitions of narrative elements appearing in *Scorched*. The challenge for the playwright, who may himself be ‘possessed’ by both a familial history and various testimonies to which he has been exposed, is how to express that which is inexpressible. The only possible solution, and one that emerges through the creative process, is a work that relies on the experience of aesthetic forces rather than a narrative retelling of an event.

Cruelty

In addition to its affiliation with trauma studies, the centrality of violence to this play also invites the kinds of associations many have already made between Mouawad's art and the theoretical and literary challenges posed by Antonin Artaud, of whom I have spoken earlier with respect to his influence on Deleuze and Guattari. Ironically, while Artaud's theatre was known for depictions of extreme violence, he was explicit in his dismissal of 'representational' violence as necessary for a theatre of cruelty:

as soon as I have said "cruelty," everybody will at once take it to mean "blood." But "theater of cruelty" means a theater difficult and cruel for myself first of all. And, on the level of performance, it is not the cruelty we can exercise upon each other by hacking at each other's bodies...., but the much more terrible and necessary cruelty which things can exercise against us. We are not free. And the sky can still fall on our heads. And the theater has been created to teach us that first of all. (1958, 79)

Like Malpede, Artaud recognizes "our long habit of seeking diversion has made us forget the idea of a serious theater," one which he contends is able to 'inspire' us "with the fiery magnetism of its images and acts upon us like a spiritual therapeutics whose touch can never be forgotten" (1958, 84-85). Of particular relevance here, is the intent of a theatre of cruelty to work on the audience materially as opposed to representationally. For Artaud, as with Deleuze, the challenge is to use all the available tools of the medium to touch the Outside, to avoid easily assimilable qualities of common-sense associations:

The theater must give us everything that is in crime, love, war, or madness, if it wants to recover its necessity. Everyday love, personal ambition, struggles for status, all have value only in proportion to their relation to the terrible lyricism of the Myths to which the great mass of men have assented. (1958, 85).

Instead of a poetry of language, Artaud thinks of theatre as a poetry of space "which will be resolved in precisely the domain which does not belong strictly to words" (1958, 38). In its ability to surpass the limitations of language, "this very difficult and complex poetry assumes many aspects: especially the aspects of all the means of expression utilizable on the stage, such as music, dance, plastic art, pantomime, mimicry, gesticulation, intonation, architecture, lighting, and scenery" (39), with the end result being a "spectacle addressed to the entire

organism” (86-87), one which is “unafraid of going as far as necessary in the exploration of our nervous sensibility” (87). Julie LaPorte suggests that through its incorporation of other elements of performance – including movement, sound, and gesture – the theatre of cruelty not only counters what “he saw as the supremacy of the text in the Western tradition” (2009, 9), but it “provides essential scenic tools which can today be seen to allow for the oftentimes painful enunciation of collective trauma in the works of playwrights such as Mouawad” (7) Specifically, in speaking of the space of poetry, Artaud describes the affective forces of theatre not unlike the way I personally experienced *Scorched*, as a kind of spectacle:

[T]he sonorisation is constant: sounds, noises, cries are chosen first for their vibratory quality, than for what they represent. Among these gradually refined means light is interposed in its turn. Light which is not created merely to add color or to brighten, and which brings its power, influence, suggestions with it. And the light of a green cavern does not sensually dispose the organism like the light of a windy day. After sound and light there is action, and the dynamism of action: here the theater, far from copying life, puts itself whenever possible in communication with pure forces. And whether you accept or deny them, there is nevertheless a way of speaking which gives the name of "forces" to whatever brings to birth images of energy in the unconscious, (1958, 81-82)

Hence, there is a connection here between the kind of breaks to which trauma studies refer and the ‘stammering’ or ‘stuttering’ that Deleuze speaks to in terms of a minor literature’s language against language; in both cases, the break-down of language, signalled through expressions of style embedded in plot and characterization, evidence the inability of a major language to represent or speak to the affective forces circulating in the minoritarian body of victims of actualized violence.

Considering what we know of its author, *Scorched* was likely influenced, consciously or unconsciously, by both the conditions of embodied trauma as well as his likely exposure to theories and creations of a theatre of cruelty. The play’s flow and it’s visual and oral expression captures many of the signs or symptomatology of what otherwise has been termed trauma – individual, cultural and intergenerational. And these, in turn, evidence affective language and affections, which factor into the recognition of further signs in the text. As Deleuze and Guattari observe, in reference to Paul Klee, “There is no longer a matter that finds its corresponding principle of intelligibility in form. It is now a question of elaborating a material charged with

harnessing forces of a different order: the visual material must capture nonvisible forces. *Render visible*, Klee said; not render or reproduce the visible” (ATP, 342). Even more telling is the example offered by the painter Jean-François Millet, who according to them “used to say that what counts in painting is not, for example, what a peasant is carrying, whether it is a sacred object or a sack of potatoes, but its exact weight... the essential thing is no longer forms and matters, or themes, but forces, densities, intensities” (ATP, 343). It is therefore, I believe, worth identifying a few of the more striking examples of elements which contribute to the ‘weight’ of the play, and the affections sensed by the audience and which inspire the reflexive search they may begin.

The Limits of Language

Perhaps not surprising, through plot and characterization language and communication are directly challenged throughout the play. Paralleling the aesthetic questions of language’s efficacy and futility, the performance also implies the more thematic or political question of whether or not language is capable of disarming conflict. In some ways, as will be discussed further on, this is one of the notions against which the aesthetic works to disorder and deterritorialize. Initially, language is positioned as pivotal for peaceful resolution of conflict. At her grandmother’s bequest, Nawal learns to read and write, believing it to be a force of power. As Renault observes, “By leaving her native village and becoming educated, Nawal becomes an enlightened woman – a status that will aid in her ontological survival in the middle of a civil war” (2009. 8). From learning to read and write Arabic, engraving her grandmother’s gravestone, teaching Sawda the language, and setting up the newspaper to inform others of the war, Nawal enacts her faith in language. In scene 15, as Nawal teaches Sawda, she explains how the letters “are your weapons. Your bullets” (51), a metaphor that highlights her belief in the power of language, but with the ironic imagery of violence. But this scene is also intertwined in time and space with Janine walking by and listening to her mother’s silence on the tapes. It is this conflation, an entanglement of language and silence, which generates the uncomfortable tension within the theatre. Notably, Artaud also refers to this as an element of cruelty, explaining that a “space thundering with images and crammed with sounds speaks too,

if one knows how to intersperse from time to time a sufficient extent of space stocked with silence and immobility" (87).

Having learned Arabic, Nawal returns to her village to engrave her grandmother's name on her tombstone. But in the process, she encounters the villager's laughter, as well as a more verbal attack by one man: "One man spit on me. He said: 'You know how to write but you don't know how to defend yourself.' I took a book out of my pocket. I hit him so hard, I bent the cover and he passed out." (43). Though subtle, here again is the ironic inference to language's impotence. Finally, Nawal (age 40) and Sawda are forced to acknowledge the limits of language in scene 21, entitled *The Hundred Years War*, where they discover that the newspaper she struggled to maintain has been destroyed: "They killed everyone who contributed money to the newspaper. Everyone who worked at the newspaper. They burned the printing press. Burned the paper. Threw out the ink" (73). To which Sawda adds, "They even destroyed the homes of people who read the newspaper" (74). The effect of repetition here emphasizes the utter defeat of language and reason. The destruction of the paper is the catalyst for the transformations that inevitably leads to their own involvement in the violence.

As if to further emphasize its futility, in the final scenes we encounter the bitter reversal of Nawal's earlier words in the voice of Nahid, who by then joyfully engages in violence for the sake of violence, and who boasts: "Every bullet I put in a gun is like a poetry. And I shoot a poetry to the people, and it is precision of my poetry that kill people and that's why my photo's is fantastic" (118). In the final minutes of the play, the notion of words and literacy as a source of power and change evaporates completely into meaninglessness as the play fades into silence.

Exorcisms

Though visual images may be more capable of conveying that which exceeds or defies representation, we cannot, as in the case of pure prose, forget that words can also produce or amplify affect: as Michael Richardson points out, "Words cannot carry meaning *and* be a-

signifying, but they can affect as well as represent” (2016, 76). In this regard, Artaud elaborates further that:

[The] language of the theater can fascinate and ensnare the organs. It flows into the sensibility. ... It extends the voice. It utilizes the vibrations and qualities of the voice. It wildly tramples rhythms underfoot. It pile-drives sounds. It seeks to exalt, to benumb, to charm, to arrest the sensibility. It liberates a new lyricism of gesture which, by its precipitation or its amplitude in the air, ends by surpassing the lyricism of words. It ultimately breaks away from the intellectual subjugation of the language, by conveying the sense of a new and deeper intellectuality which hides itself beneath the gestures and signs, raised to the dignity of particular exorcisms. (91)

What are these ‘exorcisms’ to which Artaud refers? Implied is the need to get “Under the Skin Nerves,” to employ the words of Jagodzinski (2012). While much of the affective experience of *Scorched* derives from elements of theatre already mentioned, including light and sound, and notable stutterings of silence which will be discussed in more depth later in this section, language itself becomes affective and demonstrative of its inability to paradoxically express the non-representational. This is achieved through various means of verbal disturbances and deterritorializations, including broken or distorted English, a heteroglossia of multiple voices and languages, and multiple modalities of textured verbal expression, including malapropisms, shouting, crying, profanity, whispers, versification, and song, in which the content of words are overshadowed by affective forms of utterance. As Elizabeth Dahab observes, “A highly scatological language is often juxtaposed with one infused with a puissant ‘souffle littéraire,’ or literary breath, as Mouawad himself calls it. To juxtapose the mythical with the real and the vulgar with the poetic is a conscious, professed aim of this innovative playwright” (2009, 138).

Humour

In a play wrought with the somber tones of despair situated against the ugliness and destruction of war, Mouawad’s inclusion of small touches of humour is both disarming and sometimes paradoxically disturbing. In the opening scene we are introduced to Hermile Lebel’s office set within the context of low-end market complexes. As Omar Zahzah notes, the notary himself is “a charming character whose malapropisms, mondegreens and general mangling of

phrases function as primary devices for comic relief” (2012, 5). I would, however, argue that his contribution extends past comic relief, as examples such as “you’re stuck between the devil and the Blue Danube” (20) also deterritorialize language. But in terms of humour, the other character that stands out as charming is at the same time perhaps the most despicable. The son/father figure of Nihad, whose singing and mimicry are both beguiling and terrifying, especially when juxtaposed against his extreme violence. And the object of the clown nose, which is usually a point of laughter, becomes one of horror.

Song

Similar to humour is the affective impact of verse and song in the play, which operates at multiple points as a sort of alleviation of tension: “If you’re sad, I’ll sing, if you feel weak, I’ll help you, I’ll carry you” (45). As Renault explains, “Sawda’s response to the destruction of the newspaper and the murder of their acquaintances is to sing...Their use of song becomes another rebellion against the dominant force; it dissociates language into an aesthetic tool used to provide comfort and peace in the face of great fear and danger” (43). Much of the singing performed in the play is in Arabic which, as Mouawad explains, “is a very rich in sound, the sounds can nuance the story. I was told these stories to fall asleep, and therefore this language is also linked to the night: it became for me the language of dreams, of imagination” (GT, in Renault, 43). However, coming from Nawal, who is eventually referred to as “the woman who sings,” Nawal’s identity within the prison in which she is tortured and raped, and in which she listened to others being tortured: “She was a prisoner here for five years. When the others were being tortured, she’d sing—” (80). Hers seems to be a characterization which gestures towards a kind of subversive act of gentleness against cruelty, but which is consistent with the tone and style of her letters, which, including the one to Nihad, are composed in verse. Once again, the song, verse and music of the women in the play is bitterly contrasted to the figure of Nihad who also sings pop songs, but in broken English. From him, it is an act of cruelty against the gentleness of his victims.

Profanity

While there are no doubt other examples of language expressed in ways that convey affective impact on the audience, I will conclude this section with the element which often comes as a shock to students encountering the play, especially given its unfamiliarity in the context of the classroom. That, of course, is the extremes of profanity, a wall of utter vitriol that begins with Simon's first words in the play:

She had to piss us off right to the very end! That bitch! That stupid bitch! Goddamn fucking cunt! Fucking bitch! She really had to piss us off right to the very end! For ages now, we've been thinking, the bitch is going to croak any day now, she'll finally stop fucking up our lives, the old pain in the ass! And then, bingo! She finally croaks! But, surprise! It's not over yet! Shit! We never expected this. Christ! She really set us up, calculated everything, the fucking whore! I'd like to kick her corpse! You bet we're going to bury her face down! You bet! We'll spit on her grave. (9)

The juxtapositions of song and violence and verse and profanity share a similar incongruity with the repetition of the line which first appears in the final words of Nawal's will: "Childhood is a knife stuck in the throat. It can't be easily removed" (8). In its emphasis of the challenge her legacy leaves to the next generation and to the audience, it is a phrase that also elicits the more political questions of the play's potential as a source of schizoanalysis.

Schizoanalysis and the Political Pedagogical in Scorched

Unknowable Horror

Following my own encounter with the play in 2009, I felt compelled to introduce it to my classes, though it was several years before I had the opportunity or the courage. Like many teachers, I questioned whether or not it would be ‘too much’ for them. And, of course, whether or not I could justify it if challenged. The first of these questions I clearly came to terms with as I have since exposed it to several classes of grade 12 students. The second, the focus of this section, has remained somewhat elusive, perhaps as it should. Recalling what Deleuze and Guattari identify with as grounds for experimentation or conditions of philosophy, I can reasonably argue that, from the very beginning, I was drawn to something “interesting, remarkable, or important” that I believed qualified it for educational sustenance, and to what I now refer to as a pedagogy of disturbance.

Richardson asks “how [literature] might gesture the unknowable, how it might enact the unrepresentable? How, paradoxically, [might literature] convey more of experience than words can represent? (2016, 2). Similarly, Samuel Becket once wrote in a letter to the actress Jessica Tandy, stating “I am not unduly concerned with intelligibility. I hope the piece may work on the nerves of the audience not on its intellect” (as quoted in Simone, 1988, 57). And while *Scorched* may be horrifyingly intelligible in one sense, it is first and foremost a visceral experience, with reverberations continuing as further realizations occur in the subsequent processing of the experience. More directly, of works such as this, Felman asks if “the act of reading literary texts [is] itself inherently related to the act of facing horror” (1992, 2). Obviously, it is one thing to experience horror and quite another to read about it; the person who encounters it through reading is safely distanced from the actual experience of horror. And Felman has no wish to deny this difference; on the contrary, she insists on it. For when testimony is “simply relayed, repeated or reported,” she argues, it “loses its function as a testimony” (3). Quoting Paul Celan, “No one bears witness for the witness” (5), suggesting the impossibility of representing the experience itself, for such events, Felman argues, are “in excess of our frames of reference” (5).

Incidentally, this also helps to explain the limits of empathy for those who have not experienced the event. Perhaps, the closest we can come to the direct experience, which must surpass the purely expository retelling to provide some inkling of the excess entering the body, would be the vicarious encounter through art, through the “performative speech act” rather than the “statement” (1991, 5). In reference to Celan’s poetry, Felman suggests, “it performs its own meaning in resisting our grasp, in resisting our replicating or recuperative witnessing. It thus performs its own solitude: it puts into effect what cannot be understood, transmitted, in the mission of transmission of the witness” (3). Likewise, alluding to the disingenuous appropriation of violence for the stage, Claude Schumacher also points out the significant distance between the direct experience of violence, the bearing witness to it, and the performing of testimony:

The staging of a theatrical text requires the physical presence of the actor, that 'other', that 'impostor' who was not in Auschwitz. How can that actor, who lives in the same world as us, who performs in the same space which, we, the audience, inhabit, how can that actor effectively convince us that he is a camp inmate, a Nazi officer, or even a survivor from those days? My answer is that theatre- theatre which has true integrity and the highest artistic standards-does not try to create an illusion of reality (that cheap kind of mimetism found in cinema or television), and it is precisely in the absence of mimetic trompe-roeil that the real strength of the theatrical performance lies. True theatre affords the spectator a heightened experience 'liberated from the lie of being the truth'. (1998, 4)

The question that needs to be asked, however, is not only whether the purpose of such theatre lies in its testimonial impact, providing the audience with a glimpse at some horrific experience of which they may be ignorant, but in the extremes of affective conveyance, what work does the encounter itself do on its audience, pedagogically and politically? Here I have chosen once again to consider the text as “one machine among others” and to read it intensively or ‘with love,’ by getting it “to interact with other things” (N, 8). In this case, in making an effort to avoid the interpretive lens, I nevertheless have found it useful to ‘read’ Mouawad alongside other artists and philosophers who have struggled with similar challenges in their experiences as artists and/or as receivers of art.

Theodore Adorno, who famously insisted on the barbarism of writing lyric poetry after the war, qualifies the comment, “I have no wish to soften the saying that to write lyric poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric. ... But Enzensberger’s retort also remains true, that *literature must resist this verdict* . . . It is now virtually in art alone that suffering can still find its own voice, consolation, without immediately being betrayed by it... it is to works of art that has fallen the burden of wordlessly asserting what is barred to politics.” (1979, 60, 61, 66). Elaborating further, Adrian Parr adds that Adorno,

brings to our attention the problem of re-presenting the wound of traumatic events and the difficulty any concept of the ‘inhuman’ poses for humanism per se. Largely, this is a cultural problem of how to avoid displacing the affective power of trauma in a playful gesture of banality or resolving its unmanageable dimension via an appeal to the historical guarantees humanism provides us with. (2008, 34).

Violence of Senses

It follows, then, that a critical point of intersection between Mouawad and other artists and philosophers of art, including those already mentioned in the field of trauma studies, is the problem of violence itself and whether it is justified. While many works of literature which highlight incidents of historical violence are no doubt written with an eye for justice, arguably *Scorched* does not appear to be oriented toward shame, blame or vindication. Nor, for that matter, does it convey a tonality of anger or resentment. And perhaps most importantly, it does not revel in violence for pure market value – voyeurism, entertainment, or shock – for if that were true, there would be less second-hand retellings and far more reliance on displays of explicit violence throughout the play.

However, despite lacking any discernable political target or intention of retribution, as might be expected in a work alluding to specific historical conflicts, considered through the process of schizoanalysis, there seems little doubt that the affections aroused during the course of the play are very much micropolitical in nature. Though the play has inspired a surprising number of critical analyses, many in French, these are for the most part interpretive in nature, setting aside questions of its political or pedagogical force. Those which from the perspective of

schizoanalysis might consider how it is uniquely positioned for the tasks of destruction and deterritorialization. Consistent with the first task of schizoanalysis, O’Sullivan challenges us to consider how violence acts against “the *stasis* we freeze ourselves in” and how artists might “write *in violence* against the *stratum* of (dominant) subjectivity” (2000, 105). How does the art works on the assemblages of audience members? What molar rigidities does it shake loose?

Considering the micropolitical potential of the play and its destructive potency, it is especially important that we distinguish between violence as representation, attached to a specific object and more significantly with judgment, and violence of sensation. Or as Marco Abel puts it, “with violent images in terms of signification and meaning (mediation),” and encounters with “affects and force – that is, asignifying intensities” (2007, x). Deleuze himself also elaborates on the distinction: “The violence of sensation is opposed to the violence of the represented (the sensational, the cliché). The former is inseparable from its direct action on the nervous system, the levels through which it passes, the domains it traverses” (FB, 39). And with respect to *Scorched*, though both varieties of violence are very much present on stage, it is the violence of sensation that lingers in the body as affect in the virtual. And it is imprint that works at the molecular level with the potential to produce different subjectivities.

This is not to say that narrative violence is irrelevant or to be dismissed as somehow untrue or trivial. To not acknowledge the ‘facts’ of violence endured by real people is to engage in a kind of cold voyeurism, not to mention an unjustifiable appropriation of the suffering of others. But in the context of this work and its considerations in the English classroom, my focus, while still grounded in the political and ethical, is on the aesthetic merit of literature that exceeds its ability to relay historical fact. As a work of art rather than a historical record, the intent is not to communicate, let alone to draw lines of allegiance or raise motives for vindication. Rather, as Schumacher claims of the Holocaust, a successful performance “is one that disturbs, offers no comfort, advances no solution; it is a play that leaves the reader or spectator perplexed, wanting to know more although convinced that no knowledge can ever cure him of his perplexity. It must be a play that generates stunned silence” (1998, 8). This is perhaps what

jagodzinski is getting at in reference to the “nothing point,” at greyness that touches “the abyss or chaos” (2019b, 121). But like Cordelia’s *nothing* in *Kind Lear*, in its potential as a force of becoming, it is far from empty. Simply put, literature as fabulation has the capacity to speak to world events characterized by various violences and trauma, in a more penetrating, activating, and energizing way than pure exposition of historical facts and statistics.

As a spectacle, the play confronts the audience with the kind of cruelty that Artaud might have in mind, particularly in its capacity to disorient the harmony of the faculties. As Deleuze says of Artaud, “cruelty is not what one believes it to be and depends less and less on what is represented.” (FB, 39). This is the kind of violence that is arguably necessary to disturb the molar, the representational, and the borders of language which attempt to tame and contain it. Theatre faces an even greater challenge in attempting to avoid an easy consumption of the representational, considering its more narrative structure. Despite his dismissal of the necessity for displays of violence on the stage, Artaud’s theatre was often characterized by its use. But for him, it was not about the violence itself. As he explains,

A violent and concentrated action is a kind of lyricism: it summons up supernatural images, a bloodstream of images, a bleeding spurt of images in the poet's head and in the spectator's as well. Whatever the conflicts that haunt the mind of a given period, I defy any spectator to whom such violent scenes will have transferred their blood, who will have felt in himself the transit of a superior action, who will have seen the extraordinary and essential movements of his thought illuminated in extraordinary deeds--the violence and blood having been placed at the service of the violence of the thought--I defy that spectator to give himself up, once outside the theater, to ideas of war, riot, and blatant murder. (1958, 82)

Considering the title of the play, *Scorched*, and whatever publicity precedes it, there can be little doubt that the audience is predisposed to receive disturbance when they enter the theatre. But surprisingly, though violent imagery appears in various descriptions offered by the characters on stage, as already mentioned, very little actual or literal violence appears on stage. The playwright in fact seems intentional in avoiding violence as purely narrative. Instead of identifying the country in which the war takes place, it remains nameless; instead of identifying the battling sides of the conflict, or which characters are affiliated with which, these too remain nameless. And instead of acting out the rape and infanticide, these are presented indirectly.

Diagram

As already mentioned, Deleuze wrote very little about the theatre. He did, however, write extensively about the nature of violence and his explorations of the affective potency of Francis Bacon's painting seem especially relevant to the theatre of Mouawad. As Deleuze states, Bacon, not unlike Artaud, "often traffics in the violence of a depicted scene: spectacles of horror, crucifixions, prostheses and mutilations, monsters" (FB, X). But also, like Artaud, he cautions us from placing too much emphasis on the literal or narrative elements of violence, reminding us that "these are overly facile detours, detours that the artist himself judges severely and condemns in his work" (x). That said, avoiding the capture of the narrative or representational proves difficult for both artist and audience. As he also observes, the challenge remains as to how the artist might "escape the figurative" (LS, 2). In painting, one can either choose "pure form, through abstractions; or toward the purely figural, through extraction or isolation" (FB, 2). While the former risks breakdown, losing the potential of art to affect the audience, the latter he ultimately associates with artists such as Bacon and Turner.

For Deleuze, it is the conceptualization of the diagram that allows us to understand art's resistance to or disruption of representation, "the operative set of asignifying and nonrepresentative lines and zones, linestrokes and color-patches" (FB, 101). Furthermore, citing Bacon he contends that its function, "is to be 'suggestive'" or, drawing from Wittgenstein, "to introduce possibilities of fact" (101). One of the examples he provides, perhaps more familiar to most people, is of Van Gogh, whose diagram he describes as comprised of "the set of straight and curved hatch marks that raise and lower the ground, twist the trees, make the sky palpitate, and which assume a particular intensity" (FB, 102). Still, as Deleuze points to another challenge, a painting can 'fail' in two ways, either too much figure or too much diagram: "One can remain entangled in the figurative givens and the optical organization of representation; but one can also spoil the diagram, botch it, so overload it that it is rendered inoperative" (101).

Similarly, while most popular theatre and most narrative violence fails because of an overreliance on ‘common sense’ and the comfort but impotency of the familiar, the experimental, arguably including that of Artaud, fails because of a complete collapse of the figure, giving too little of the familiar or the organized body to allow the audience a point of contact. The key lies in a rather fragile balance between the asignifying and signifying. Though some might disagree, I believe Mouawad approaches the sweet spot of affective [and micropolitical] theatre. In multiple scenes, he achieves what Deleuze refers to as “making the forces visible through their effects on the flesh” (FB, x). And as Richardson also observes, it is not surprising that visual images of torture are far more common than literary examples, in part because “Images tend to produce intensities, to thrive in affect, and this inclines them to more readily escape or exceed the limits of referential representation—an image is more readily experienced as possessing its own force, distinct from what (if anything) it “represents.” (2016, 75). But in the case of theatre, arguably we have both, as well as affective forces acting on other senses. And though it is possible to point to several scenes in the play which arguably achieve an effective balance between figure and diagram, I will settle on one.

Scene 19: Gestures of Noise

Appearing midway in the play, Scene 19 is quaintly and deceptively entitled, *Lawns in the Suburbs* (62). The scene follows a previous image of Nawal at age 19 boarding a bus in search of her son, and with her daughter, Janine, finally deciding to make the trip in search of her mother’s story. It opens in the backyard of the notary’s house, with Simon, Janine and Alphonse on stage and the opening stage direction, “Noise of traffic and jackhammers close by” (62). Notably, reference to the sound of jackhammers is repeated 7 times in this one scene. As with the opening scene of the play, this one commences with the words of Alphonse, a Polonius type character whose words border on the non-sensical and banal, who, as mentioned earlier, is prone to malapropisms such as the example in this scene, “You show up like a fly in the appointment” (63). But rather than serving a purely comedic effect as some might suggest, it also sets the context for a sharper crescendo of intensity building over the course of the scene

and contrast the tedious luxury of the Canadian suburb -- complete with the lawn sprinkler, Canadian Tire and the arduous task of choosing a pizza – and the horror experienced outside our field of vision or concern. The diagram of the stage is therefore a combination of a sparsely propped staged design, the banality of Lebel’s dialogue, and the background din of jackhammers, no doubt mimicking the sounds of gunfire that are introduced with Nawal and Sawda’s war scene juxtaposed on stage later in the same scene. At the height of intensity, the stage directions read as follows: "Long sequence of jackhammer noise that entirely drowns the sound of ALPHONSE LEBEL's voice. The sprinklers spray blood and flood everything"(68). This moment combines a scene from the past, in which a busload of people are massacred with machine guns, and a scene from the present, in which Alphonse Lebel tells this same story to Simon and Janine.

As Deleuze says of the diagram, “it is precisely through the action of these marks that the visual whole will cease to be an optical organization; it will give the eye another power, as well as an object that will no longer be figurative” (FB, 101-102). One might readily imagine similar ‘marks’ constructing the diagram in the art of theatre. In *Scorched*, many of these elements have already been mentioned under the umbrella of a poetics of space that includes light, sound and *mis en scène*, such as the affective modalities in this scene where the narrative events become blurred against the shocks of sound, sight and gesture.

Silence as a Scream

The affective performance of violence, the cruelty enacted on the audience, parallels and extends both the sense of collective and individual violence. Judith Herman suggests that traumatic events ultimately “violate the victim’s faith in a natural or divine order and cast the victim into a state of existential crisis” (1992, 51), which points to the kind of meaninglessness that Mouawad alludes to throughout the script. “Traumatic events,” Herman emphasizes, “have primary effects not only on the psychological structures of the self but also on the systems of attachment and meaning that link individual and community.... [and] destroy the victim’s fundamental assumptions about the safety of the world” (51). Similarly, the audience,

having not directly experienced the event, may also experience a visceral, albeit vicarious, breakdown of beliefs and assumptions of safety, sensing the precariousness of life from the less threatening position of the sidelines. As Emily Johnston states, “As readers, we can sit with the discomfort of trauma—the pain of its still-open wounds—effectively engaging in the restorative process of reconciling horror with surviving that horror” (2014, 6). But these feelings of discomfort, which arise from the disturbance of the virtual assemblage, need not, as I will later discuss, be judged as a negative.

Much of the intensity – dramatic tension – of the play is heightened by the unmediated experience of silence. Aside from the theatrically imposed silences that operate in the interstitial pauses between scenes, not only does silence punctuate the play, literally as the playwright frequently inscribes silence” within the stage directions, and dramatically as the flow of action, juxtaposition of time periods, and scenes of shock on stage evoke unscripted silences, the motif of silence within the play is mirrored by the dominant reaction to the play.

Added to the discomfort of words and actions within the narrative are the many scenes in which the figure of Nawal remains silent on stage, often haunting the foregrounded figures of her children. As the play evolves, while there are many scenes which convey the depravity of the war, it is the violence experienced by Nawal, that is perhaps the most affecting of the play. Without ever actually witnessing the violence at its most horrific moment, the rape she endures while in prison, the audience is nevertheless moved to such extremes of discomfort as to sense the significance of her experience. In terms of the literal or narrative violence, as already stated much of it is revealed indirectly. What she experienced is most explicitly, though still shared as a retelling than shown directly, is presented in the notes she leaves in her notebook, presumably the speech she gives to the tribunal:

You know the truth of your anger towards me, when you hanged me by the feet, when the water and the electrical current... the shards under my fingernails... the gun loaded with blanks against my temple.... The gunshots and death that are part of torture, and the urine on my body, yours, in my mouth, on my sex, and your sex in my sex, once, twice, three times, so often that time was shattered. My belly growing big with you, your

ghastly torture in my belly, and left alone, all alone, you insisted that I be alone to give birth. (101).

Though we may eventually interpret her silence as an act of refusal, incapacity or defiance, we do not actually learn about the violence she has endured until near the end of the play. As a result, without the narrative providing readily available explanatory or causal sources, for much of the play, Nawal's silence adds to the disturbing force of a secret. Arguably, it is not a narrative violence that lingers with the audience. In returning to the question shared by Bacon and Artaud's challenge, we might ask once again, following Deleuze, how it is possible to move from "the violence of the represented (the cliché)" to "the violence of sensation" (LS, 39). Katherina Pewny recognizes the 'dramaturgical tension' that centres around the mother's trauma, the core of which she suggests revolves around the incestuous rape, but nevertheless, it "remains outside the realm of scenic presentation and representation" (2014, 7). With respect to the context of historical violence, Deleuze further emphasizes that, "When talking about the violence of paint, it's nothing to do with the violence of war." (LS, 13)

I would suggest that, as with the poetics of space surrounding scene 19, silence also serves as the dominant marks of the stage canvas producing the theatrical diagram, creating what Deleuze calls the "zone of indiscernability or undecideability" (FB, 21) which is "more profound than any sentimental identification" (25), a liminal space of becoming. Somewhat paradoxically, silence in *Scorched* shares similarities to Francis Bacon's expressions: the representational force of the cry or the scream. Deleuze suggests, with evidence from Bacon's own comments, what is of most interest to the artist "is a violence that is involved only with color and line: the violence of a sensation (and not of a representation), a static or potential violence, a violence of reaction and expression. For example, a scream rent from us by a foreboding of invisible forces: "to paint the scream more than the horror'" (FB, x). Elaborating further, Deleuze explains:

the forces that produce the scream, that convulse the body until they emerge at the mouth as a scrubbed zone, must not be confused with the visible spectacle before which one screams, nor even with the perceptible and sensible objects whose action decomposes and recomposes our pain. If we scream, it is always as victims of invisible and insensible forces that scramble every spectacle, and that even lie beyond pain and feeling. This is what Bacon means when he says he wanted 'to paint the scream more than the horror'." (LS, 60)

Thus, we imagine Nawal's figure shrouded in silence for much of the play. The challenge faced by artists who confront the 'scream' is, according to Deleuze, "to render visible these invisible forces that are making him scream, these powers of the future" (61). Mouawad shares Bacon's challenge in trying to avoid what might have been simplistic and less affective revelation of Nawal's thoughts on stage. Instead, the audience is forced to feel or sense certain forces at work, without ever being able to resolve them into easy causation.

While Bacon isolates the figural through markings, Mouawad isolates the figure through silence. As Deleuze explains, "the Figure itself is isolated in the painting by the round area or the parallelepiped. Why? Bacon often explains that it is to avoid *the figurative, illustrative, and narrative* character the Figure would necessarily have if it were not isolated" (LS, 2). Though not exclusively so, unlike the painting, theatre often is associated with predominantly narrative elements, many of which, as the passage quoted above suggests, will likely contribute certain affective associations to the audience. But even within the narrative, the character of Nawal is isolated in the secrecy enshrouding her presence, often ghostlike, whenever she is on stage. She is isolated by the physical and emotional distance felt by her children, by the loud expressions of profanity directed at her in her absence, and by the hissing tapes the substitute for, while at the same time paradoxically emphasizing her presence in her absence. Silence allows the full play of difference to operate outside of the drive of narrative fill. It challenges our immediate need to resolve the discomfort that comes with it.

Affirmative Violence, Becoming and a People Yet To Come

These passages, exemplary of the affective work of the play, brings me to the questions of the pedagogical and political work of the play and indirectly the justification for exposing students to its violence. Mouawad seems to take up a similar challenge in his own work. As he states:

War is where the collective and the intimate collide. My question is how to be happy personally when the collective isn't working. The history of our inner lives is as complex as our collective history. In the stories that I tell, I ask the questions: How far can we go? How do we console? How do we find safety? (in Rubin, 2012, 6)

Similar to Felman and I believe consistent with Deleuze, Elizabeth Dutro makes the case for affective literature as “building the kinds of visceral connections—and awareness of disconnections—that call into question the impulse to speak as though we know about a life or an entire community of lives, when all we know is the façade that has been narrated and re-narrated in the image and voice of the materially privileged” (Dutro, 2011, 196). In other words, the affective work of the play comes closer to the conveying the depth and excess of atrocity, for which there are no easy answers, than do other forms of media, including news reports, whose stories are often mediated and drained of affect for the purposes of their audiences. And while *Scorched* indeed implicates narrative or representational violence, *it is affective violence which does the work of education in the play*. Ontologically, politically and ethically, it is the aesthetic capacity of the performance which is most likely to disturb the dominant molarities and settlements in our society, which in spite of a mere keyboard’s distance from information around the world, is surprisingly myopic in its attention to the stranger beyond our border. In this sense, I consider Lawrence Langer’s position especially informative:

Until we find a way of toppling the barrier that sequesters mass suffering in other regions of the world from the comfort and safety we enjoy far from its ravages, little will be done to rouse the attention of our political or professional leaders... Domestic calm encourages distancing foreign pain... We need, but lack, a new kind of discourse to disturb our collective consciousness and stir it into practical action that moves beyond mere pity. (1998, 59)

In this case, the challenge for educators, taking us back to the opening question, is to consider violence as a way of jarring, disrupting, disturbing dogmatic images of thought or subjectivities which students so readily cling to and which are so pervasively promoted in the cultural milieu which they inhabit.

Mouawad's play seems to be striving for something more than simply capturing the experience of otherness or awakening their demand for retaliatory justice, especially considering the revisions he makes toward leaving the play hanging rather than wrapped up neatly. While considerations of substantive empathy and compassion, rather than 'crude empathy' will be discussed later with respect to the ethics of disturbance, it should be clear that the violence of works such as *Scorched* function pedagogically in ways that are well beyond sheer shock value.

[I]t is only art that can henceforth be equal to its own historical impossibility, that art alone can live up to the task of contemporary thinking and of meeting the incredible demands of suffering, of politics and of contemporary consciousness (Caruth, 1995: 40)

Having explored its capacity to create a violence of sensation, we also need to consider *Scorched* for what Deleuze and Guattari refer to as its 'productive use' use as a literary machine, "a montage of desiring machines, a schizoid exercise that extracts from the text its revolutionary force" (AO, 106). In other words, for its potential to generate difference and novel lines of becoming. As if attending to their insistence that reading is not "a scholarly exercise in search of what is signified.... [or] in search of a signifier" (106), Mouawad intentionally avoids specific markers that would further tempt viewers to engage in interpretation. When asked about his decision not to identify Lebanon or other historical identifiers in the play, he explains:

I need not to name things too much, to leave a certain openness so that people do not say to themselves "Ah, hey, it's about the war in Lebanon!" Basically, this is never what is really important, it is above all a context in which characters evolve who are taken by other questions, friendship, love, promise, death, human relations... These are not plays that deal with war, they are plays that speak of the attempt to remain human in an inhuman context. (GT in De Giusti, 2014)

While his words still relay and inherent humanism, the very mention of the 'inhuman context' implies, perhaps unintentionally, that there are more-than-human forces at issue. And considered from a perspective of transcendental empiricism, these forces also contribute to the affective potency of the work and while the 'inhuman' of human conflict may speak of abhorrent atrocities, within the context of art, paradoxically its force may be channeled into desiring production. Speaking with the double entendre of Artaud's theoretical context of

theatre as well as their own image of the unconscious as a theatre of production, Deleuze and Guattari insist that a successful or complete schizoanalysis is

not a promised and a pre-existing land, but a world created in the process of its tendency, its coming undone, its deterritorialization. The movement of the theater of cruelty; for it is the only theater of production, there where the flows cross the threshold of deterritorialization and produce the new land...An active point of escape where the revolutionary machine, the artistic machine, the scientific machine, and the (schizo) analytic machine become parts and pieces of one another. (AO, 322)

While it is never clear from what constraints or limiting territorializations of desire are being escaped, my experience of the play left me with the impression that it is the reflexive (common-sense?) reactions to historical violence which becomes an obstacle to imagining alternative responses. In other words, it may very well be our own affect, likely numbed by populous messaging and biased media coverage of subjected groups, which constrains our capacity to receive affect and ultimately limits our ability to think or feel otherwise. Here I am thinking of affect, discussed earlier, as either sad or joyful. For many organisms, non-human included, the experience of violence leads to contraction or withdrawal. And for humans, in so far as it reduces one's capacities, it manifests itself in reactionary opposition. In this way, violence is conditioned by a desire caught within majoritarian territories.

But as already suggested in the discussion thus far, literal or narrative violence operates very differently than the asignifying violence that I have been discussing, which disturbs, but in a way potentially produces joy and opens up rather than closes it off. In this sense, O'Sullivan asks, "Is there a way of writing in violence – but not as negative critique?" (2000, 104).

Following Deleuze, he challenges us to consider a violence which is affirmative in nature:

I want to write – in violence – against representation... I have in mind a different kind of violence. Something more affirmative. Alternatives which have a violent – forceful - quality, but which are creative rather than reactive. A productive violence – if this is not a contradiction in ... A programmatic violence, which, if understood – and, more importantly, acted upon (actualised), opens up spaces and places for a different mode of being. An ethical violence even. (104)

As indicated earlier, despite any historical associations the play might raise, the stylistic, verbal, and visual elements contribute to breaking down the clichés and reactionary judgements otherwise associated with narrative violence. The result is realized in a tangible difference in the positioning of the audience, dispelling the distanced comfort of judgment and

interpretation to the more visceral penetration of a violence of sensation. Against the possibilities of a crude empathy of identification with victims such as Nawal, one that is perhaps accommodated by the narrative, Deleuze implies that affective violence is more likely to dissolve the ego rather than reinforce it:

Emotion does not say "I". You said it yourself: you are beside yourself. Emotion is not of the order of the ego but of the event. It is very difficult to grasp an event, but I do not believe that this grasp implies the first person. It would be better to use the third person like Maurice Blanchet when he says that there is more intensity in the sentence "he suffers" than "I suffer." (TRoM, 187).

Delirium

Faced with both sources of violence, as well as the opportunity to leave the theatre, the position of the audience, both subjective and pre-subjective, in many ways parallels that of the characters within the play. I am especially curious about the kind of delirium we all experience that seems depicted in the characters of the three grown children, Janine, Simon, and Nihad. In each case, faced with affective challenges to truth, meaning and the subsequent aura of violence, the territorializations of the paranoid or fascistic pole are quick to succumb to a psychoanalytical lack, instigated in the moment of their mother's silence and eventual death. As the play begins, both Janine and Simon are immersed in life pathways that, while seemingly opposite, are defined by a sense of malingering nihilism. Janine, for example, announces in her opening lecture to her class, "Mathematics as you have known them so far were all about finding strict and definitive answers to strict and definitively stated problems. The mathematics you will encounter in this introductory course on graph theory are totally different since we will be dealing with insoluble problems that will always lead to other problems, every bit as insoluble. People around you will insist that what you are wrestling with is useless" (16). To add to such a dour promise, she adds that choosing this will, presumably speaking from her own experience, lead to a life of silence and solitude: "Your manner of speaking will change and, even more profoundly, so will your manner of remaining silent and of thinking. That is exactly what people will find the hardest to forgive.... Welcome to pure mathematics, in other words, to the world of solitude" (16-17).

Juxtaposed and overlapping in the same scene are images of Simon defending his repeated losses to his coach. He has devoted his life to boxing, but as he admits, he remains out of shape, making the choice appear more of a kind of useless self-flagellation than one of dreams and triumph: "I've got a boxing match in ten days, that's all I care about" (12). Based on their reactions to their mother's will and testament – Simon's almost pugilistic outbursts of profanity and Janine's silence – the differences between the twins are already evident. Yet their behaviours are similarly based on efforts to escape from the empty space left in the wake of Nawal's silence. Though both would appear to be in denial of their projected desires, their respective challenges hint at a similar issue of lack – presumably the absent mother. For example, we overhear Janine posing a specific graphing problem to her students, but rather than being completely abstract as we might expect, there are traces of sense as she describes a hypothetical polygon that "represents the floor plan of a house where a family lives" and in which each member is imagined to be positioned at different corners of the polygon: "replac[ing] A, B, C, D and E by the grandmother, the father, the mother, the son and the daughter who live together in Polygon...let's ask ourselves who, from his or her position, sees whom" (17). Meanwhile, in the set unfolding elsewhere on the stage in the same scene, the audience hears Simon's coach coincidentally referring to a similar problem in his boxing strategy as a "a peripheral vision problem" (18).

Both literally and figuratively, the abstracted image of the polygon as problematizing family relations and sightlines is reiterated at various stages of the play, often demonstrating swings from the paranoid to the more schizophrenically adventurous. In Scene 20, for example, Janine speaks to Simon on the phone to let him know she is leaving on her search: "I'm going to hang up and tumble headfirst into a world far from here, far from the strict geometry that has defined my life...the hole I'm about to tumble into, the hole I'm already slipping into, is that of her silence" (69). Simultaneously, Nawal's voice is heard, perhaps whispered, in the background, "To the very heart of the polygon, Janine, to the very heart of the polygon" (69), which is even more affectively juxtaposed against the portrayal of Simon not only fighting but losing his fight by a knockout. In both cases, their initial paths of escape are shifting.

As Mouawad explains in the preface, the choice to have Janine play a mathematics student/professor and Simon a boxer emerged from the year-long rehearsals, but there is no other explanation provided. The incongruity between the two chosen directions is not lost. Yet both, operating as signs or symptoms, point to numerous possibilities. And both share the common characteristic of a kind of removal from 'life.' Paradoxically, recognizing the word play, they might just as easily be seen as a craving for 'a life,' something that has been lost which can only be located in the impossible. In the following scene, Janine observes as much in realizing that the certainty she found in mathematics that is of most interest, is that the graph problem of family relations "remains for the time being impossible to solve. And it's this impossibility that is beautiful." (19). As certain as she has been about "1 plus 1 equals 2" (21), she has been, just as certain regarding her own position in the polygon. But after realizing nothing is what it seems, the molar rigidity of her world trembles, affections no doubt associated with the virtual disturbance of an unsolved problem.

As the play unfolds, the pendulum of delirium appears to shift towards a more revolutionary pole in which desire is set free and the son and daughter begin to grasp not only the false depth of their initial fixations on mathematics and boxing respectively. In opening themselves to the unknown, their delirium shifts to the schizo, eventually vaulting them both, in turn, onto literal and molecular lines of flight.

Secret

In exploring the nature of schizoanalysis as it might apply here, it is worth noting Deleuze and Guattari's employment of 'the secret,' already mentioned, as a concept which interjects a kind of disturbance into fiction. The circumstances at the beginning of *Scorched* are not unlike those Deleuze and Guattari describe in the novella, "In the Cage" by Henry James, as Janine and Simon inhabit "a line of rigid segmentarity on which everything seems calculable and foreseen, the beginning and end of a segment, the passage from one segment to another" (ATP, 195). Yet also like James's story, their lives are segmented in a way that "ensure[s] and control[s] the identity of each agency including personal identity" (195). Janine's life, as a mathematician, and

Simon's life, as a boxer, are presumably well established when we first encounter them on stage. But as sedimented as they might be, their lives have emerged out of conditions that which neither they, nor the audience are privy to. The secret, or the discovery that something has happened, launches first Janine, and then Simon from their well defined, carefully segmented lives. The secret disturbs, and with it, so does the intensification of the molecular discomfort in the characters and the audience. While this narrative arc might suppose a simplistic search for origins, as Deleuze and Guattari argue, whether or not the secret is revealed is ultimately less important than "the form of the secret" (ATP, 196). As they explain, with the introduction the secret, "there are two politics involved.... a macropolitics and a micropolitics that do not envision classes, sexes, people, or feelings in at all the same way" (196). The latter introduces "a line of molecular or supple segmentation the segments of which are like quanta of deterritorialization" on which we realize that the present as been defined, "whose very form is the form of something that has already happened, however close you might be to it, since the ungraspable matter of that something is entirely molecularized" (196).

As we reach the final scenes, both Janine and Simon have been exposed to an initial shock, Janine discovering her brother as the lost child of her mother's, and Simon discovering the father as their mother's rapist. This is followed shortly after by an additional, a far more affecting shock in discovering their brother is also their father. Such disturbance could easily reach what Deleuze and Guattari describe as the quantum surpassing a threshold, "a danger that these vibrations traversing us may be aggravated beyond our endurance" (197). This moment of question further intensified once again through the silence on stage, and the affective stance of each of the actors. Ultimately, however, my sense is that each of the characters breaks through, reaching "something like a new line, a third type, a kind of *line of flight*...[that] no longer tolerates segments" (197). One can only imagine the possibilities going forward, as the characters appear to have "attained a kind of absolute deterritorialization" (197). This, it is worth noting, is consistent with what Mouawad says himself in deferring questions of identity,

It is above all a way to break with what came before.... If the word wasn't too strong I would say it's a kind of suicide, a desire to turn off my word "tap". To overturn the

machine, to be able to remain ten minutes on stage without speaking, to dare to go to places dangerous for me, the place of the unspoken (2008).

Elaborating further on the nature of the secret in the play, it does not, as Mouawad's words suggest, simply end with any realizations the characters or the audience might have about identities in the play. While perhaps entertaining and even interesting, I think the deeper secret revolves around the causality or justification for the war that lies at the root of Nawal's suffering. The delirium evidenced in the characterization of Simon and Janine paralleled at a more profound level in the many passages alluding to the nonsensical nature of repeated cycles of violence, moving from freedom to paranoia as lines/segments of opposing camps are drawn, causes are imagined, and delusional freedom is sought, fueled by a territorialized desire arguably also fashioned out of lack.

Cycles of Vengeance

Mouawad's says of his own relationship to war, vengeance and cause and effect, as related to his family's history:

I belong, as a whole, to all this violence. I look at the land of my father and mother and I see myself, me: I could kill and I could agree with both sides, six sides, twenty sides. I could invade and I could terrorize. I could defend myself and I could resist and to top it all off, if I were one or if I were the other, I would know how to justify each one of my actions, and justify the injustice that fills me, I would find the words with which to express how they slaughter me so, how they remove all possibility for me to live. (In Rubin, 2012, 8)

But in his admission, Mouawad appears to recognize such inclinations as products of territorialized justifications, drawing on historical wounds and memories that continue to fuel hatred and revenge. Contributing to the delirium and often in convoluted configurations in concert with or against despotic regimes in power, are the axiomatics of capitalism which have played a significant role in mobilizing and propelling wars around the world, particularly where there are interests in extractable and marketable resources. Admitting his own vulnerability to reactionary responses to violence, Mouawad's work challenges such reflexes, problematizing historical arguments of causality so often employed to incite retaliatory violence and generate

alliances of loyalty to one side or the other – molar walls defining us and them. It is not surprising that violence in *Scorched*, even that which may allude to historical events, the war itself appears without specificity of cause. On the contrary, it is the justification of causality which is ultimately put on trial.

To this end, throughout the play we encounter scenes which display both the fomentation of violence, as well as appeals to end it, with allusions to its cyclical nature. The grandmother figure of Nazira, for example, appeals to Nawal in her final breaths, “We... our family, the women in our family... are caught in the web of anger. We have been for ages: I was angry at my mother, and your mother is angry at me, just as you are angry at your mother. And your legacy to your daughter will be anger too. We have to break the thread. So learn. Then leave” (33). Not surprisingly, these same lines are later echoed by Nawal in her final words written to Janine: “The women in our family are trapped in anger/ I was angry with my mother/ Just as you are angry with me/ And just as my mother was angry with her / mother. / We have to break the thread” (134).

These familial warnings resonate at the broader social level of the war which backgrounds the play, making it the more symbolic, in a Lacanian sense, focus of interrogation. In scene 17, when Nawal (age 19) and Sawda arrive at the orphanage to discover there are no children to be found, the doctor informs them that it’s because of the war. But in response to Sawda’s question “what war?” the doctor notes its intrinsic absurdity:

Who knows.... Brothers are shooting their brothers and fathers are shooting their fathers. A war. But what war? One day 500,000 refugees arrived from the other side of the border and said: “They’ve chased us off our land, let us live side by side.” Some people from here said yes, some people from here said no, some people from here fled. Millions of destinies. And no one knows who is shooting whom or why. It’s a war. (55)

Thwarting the habituated need for an identifiable cause, enemy, or scapegoat, his answer no doubt frustrates. That ‘it’s a war’ is stated as if it is obvious, but its lack of justification is confounding. As he proceeds to trace the dominoes of revenge motives to the limits of memory, the search for an original cause, and therefore a satisfactory justification, becomes

both ridiculous and futile: “There must be a reason, that’s as far as my memory goes, I can’t retrace it any further, but the story can go on forever, one thing leading to another, from anger to anger, from sadness to grief, from rape to murder, back to the beginning of time” (55-56). Following endless cycles of blame, the conflict to which they find themselves bound ultimately seems, at least to the audience, pointless.

Later, in scene 25, we encounter what is perhaps the most direct expression of a philosophy of war in the exchange between Nawal (age 40) and Sawda. Though slipping into a more pedantic appeal to reason, the aesthetic strength of the scene is carried through the shared exasperation displayed by the two women, as well as the audience, many of whom likely share Sawda’s conditioned desire for retaliation: “An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, that’s what they say!” (83). Nawal, as a critical friend, appeals to Sawda’s ability to imagine probable futures: “You are a victim and you’re going to kill everyone who crosses your path, and then you’ll be the murderer. Then in turn, you’ll be the victim again!” (83). Sawda, as if stating the obvious need for action, regales Nawal of the horrors perpetrated by an unnamed other:

They began by throwing children against the walls, then they killed every man they could find. They slit the boys’ throats and burned the girls alive. Everything was on fire, Nawal, everything was on fire, everything went up in flames. Blood was flowing through the streets. Screams filled throats and died, another life gone. One militiaman was preparing the death of three brothers. He lined them up against the wall. I was at their feet, hiding in the gutter. I could see their legs shaking. Three brothers. The militiamen pulled their mother by the hair, stood her in front of her sons and one of them shouted: “Choose, choose which one you want to save. Choose or I’ll shoot all three of them...” (83)

Again, Nawal appeals to reason:

[Y]ou can’t just strike back blindly...we have blood on our hands and in a situation like this, a mother’s suffering is less important than the terrible machine that is crushing us. That woman’s pain, your pain and mine, the pain of those who died that night is no longer a scandal, it is an accumulation, an accumulation too monstrous to be calculated. So you, Sawda ... you can’t add to this monstrous accumulation of pain. You simply can’t (84-85).

But to Sawda’s pleading question, “What can we do” (85), Nawal has no answers:

There are no values to guide us, so we have to rely on makeshift values... on what we know and what we feel. This is good, that is bad. You want to take revenge, burn down houses, make people feel what you feel so they’ll understand, so they’ll change, so

the men who have done this will be transformed. You want to punish them so they'll understand. But this idiotic game feeds off the madness and the pain that are blinding you (85-86).

But while admitting she shares Sawda's hatred and likely her desire for vindication – "Don't think I can't feel that woman's pain. It's inside me like a poison," – she refuses to act out of revenge:

I promised an old woman I would learn to read, to write and to speak, so I could escape poverty and hatred. And this promise is going to guide me. No matter what. Never let hatred be your guide, never, reach for the stars, always. A promise made to an old woman who wasn't beautiful or rich or anything special, but who helped me, who cared for me and who saved me. (87)

A Flash of Red

Finally, it is the character Nihad, who appears in act IV, that serves as both a foil to the search for reason echoed in the journeys of Simon and Janine, as well as Nawal and Sawda. While he shares, albeit in a very different context, his children's/sibling's search for answers, and to his mother's identity, he also shares their delirium, moving from a paranoid position of authority as the warden of a prison to the schizoid image of mercenary for hire, shooting people without personal cause or allegiance.

Nihad's appearance in the play seems to emphasize Simon, Janine and Nawal's culminating recognition of the absence or breakdown of reason and common sense. He is arguably the most affecting and challenging figure in the play, as Nawal's rapist and sociopathic sniper, but also as her son and her twin's father. With respect to the latter, Artaud's theatre of cruelty is most evidenced in the juxtaposition of extreme violence with humour. In scene 31, Nihad boasts of his photography skills as he attaches the camera to the rifle barrel so as to catch his targets, including innocent bystanders such as journalists, at the moment of their death. But woven in between are images of Nihad and hamming it up by mimicking an American celebrity interview as 'Kirk.' As Artaud claims, "HUMOR AS DESTRUCTION can serve to reconcile the corrosive nature of laughter to the habits of reason" (1958, 91).

Adding to the force of violence his image conveys, Nihad sings two different songs in the final act: *The Logical Song* by Supertramp and *Roxanne*, by the Police. Both resonate with his story. *The Logical Song* is full of reverberations of both the character and war's irrational underpinnings: "[w]on't you please, please tell me what we've learned / I know it sounds absurd / But please tell me who I am" (1979). The song *Roxanne*, on the other hand, may be even more bombastic in nature, particularly in its reference to prostitution, not unlike Nahid's apparent role as a mercenary fighting for pay. Here too, certain lyrics coincide with signs of reason collapsing: "You don't care if it's wrong or if it's right" (1978). And though it disturbs on a narrative level, the real disturbance is that which derives from the violence of disorientation to our senses. Juxtaposed against acts of sadistic violence, the singing disorders the sensibilities of the audience struggling to connect the incongruent elements of charm and violence.

While no doubt, her treatment in prison, including multiple rapes, is central to Nawal's trauma, it is not what actually triggers her final years of silence. Rather, it appears to be the moment during the trial hearings, when she recognizes Nihad's clown nose, the one gift the mother leaves with her infant son as he is taken from her to an unknown orphanage. In reference to the Eichmann trial that took place following the holocaust, Felman relates how a writer by the name of K-Zetnik, "cannot complete his testimony because he literally loses consciousness and faints on the witness stand" (2002, 125). She subsequently notes that the "Testimony does not simply tell *about* the impossibility of telling: it dramatizes it - *enacts it* - through its own lapse into coma and its own collapse into silence" (2002, 161). As with Nihad's character, the clown nose, more typically associated with humour, paradoxically becomes a catalyst for the scream of silence, producing another point of discord and discomfort for the audience. Its positioning in the play is itself a product of the rhizomatic process of the play's creation, as mentioned earlier. As Mouawad explains,

The most surprising example is the idea of the clown nose. Isabelle Roy, who would play the youngest Nawal, admitted she'd love to play an unfunny clown. There was a huge gap between young Nawal and an unfunny clown, but the idea of a clown took an unexpected turn and became one of the pivotal points in the story" (2009, iv).

The red clown nose indeed becomes the pivot point which reconnects the mother and son, as well as the pivot point from language to silence. In response to the violence and the depictions of war and the innocence of numerous victims, it is conceivable that both the despotic regimes and the axiomatics of capitalism are quick to dangle the carrots of opportunism as a way to capture or in the case of capitalism, instrumentalize the release of energy. Alternatively, however, the worthiness of the audience might also relinquish its affective charge in less predictable directions. As Nawal states in her letter to Nihad, the father/rapist, "Silence awaits everyone in the face of truth" (130)

Imperceptible

The theatrical success of Mouawad's diagram, the partial disfigurement of the characters and the multiple lapses into silence contribute to a process of becoming imperceptible. As Deleuze states, "the diagram acted by imposing a zone of objective indiscernibility or indeterminability between two forms, one of which was no longer, and the other, not yet...there is indeed a change of form, but the change of form is a deformation; that is, a creation of original relations which are substituted for the form (FB, 157-158). Nawal's character projects attributes similar to those Deleuze and Guattari admire in Kleist's characterization of the legendary German hero, "Arminius" in the play *Die Hermannsschlacht*, and of the titular character in the novella *Michael Kohlhaas*. As they ask, "Is it the destiny of the war machine, when the State triumphs, to be caught in this alternative: either to be nothing more than the disciplined, military organ of the State apparatus, *or to turn against itself*, to become a double suicide machine for a solitary man and a solitary woman?" (ATP, 356). Like them, in her initial commitment to words, language and reason, and later out of desperation her resorting to the use of weapons, Nawal also participates in actions against despotic forces. And perhaps also similar to Kleist's characters, "feelings become uprooted from the interiority of a 'subject,' to be projected violently outward into a milieu of pure exteriority that lends them an incredible velocity, a catapulting force: love or hate, they are no longer feelings but affects... so many instances of the becoming-woman, the becoming-animal of the warrior" (356). The exteriority of sounds, visuals and gestures not

only signal becomings in Nawal, but more importantly, they potentially affect shifts in the audience.

The repetitions of Nawal's journey, also elements of exteriority, relate to the cinematic effects of time-images discussed earlier, as well as a series of untimely percolations of traumatic affections. These, they argue, "give time a new rhythm: an endless succession of catatonic episodes or fainting spells, and flashes or rushes. Catatonia signals that 'This affect is too strong for me,' and a flash that 'The power of this affect sweeps me away,' so that the Self (*Moi*) is now nothing more than a character whose actions and emotions are desubjectified, perhaps even to the point of death.... a succession of flights of madness and catatonic freezes in which no subjective interiority remains" (356). In her final moment of apparent recognition during the tribunal as Nawal realizes that her rapist is also her son, she lapses into a sustained silence, *a kind of death of self*. In ultimately refusing to choose sides, refusing to act out of revenge, and refusing to be consumed by the resentment of loss, Nawal, too, abdicates identitarian attachments to nationalism or heroism. In her last five years of life, for all intents and purposes, she has become imperceptible, despite the significant costs of her collapse into silence.

As a scholar and director of theatre, David Fancy describes the "pairing cognitive and critical self-awareness...with the occasionally violent falling away of affective habituation central to becoming-imperceptible" in a way that "can serve as affective and critical bases for visions and actualizations of increasingly equitable futures between and among various human subjectivities and even other-than-human life forms" (2014, 73). The extent of Nawal's transformation is perhaps most succinctly evidenced in the instructions she leaves, in verse form, to her children for her burial:

Bury me naked/ Bury me without a coffin/ No clothing, no covering/ No prayers/ Face to the ground./ Place me at the bottom of a hole,/ Face first, against the world./ As a farewell gesture,/ You will each throw/ A pail of cold water/ On my body./ Then you will fill the hole with earth and seal/ my grave/ Let no stone be placed on my grave/ Nor my name engraved anywhere/... No epitaph for those who keep the silence/ And silence was kept. / No stone/ No name on the stone/ No epitaph for an absent name on an absent stone./ No name. (7-8)

Interestingly, in emphasizing the “immanent potentials available in the moments of the actor's and characters' co-becoming-imperceptible” Fancy also observes that it in several plays, it is the point of what was classically referred to as the anagnorisis, not unlike the moment of Nawal’s recognition, when characters are “experiencing recognition and/or reversal” which corresponds to “moments of becoming-imperceptible” (2014, 66). Not only do such moments offer significant impacts on the audience, but for the actors, he suggests that “their development as characters is fuelled by levels of realization, of intensive moments of becoming-minor, that cause a sudden and significant increase in self (and other-than-self) awareness” (2014, 66).

Anagnorisis and the Shaken

In her more in-depth study of Mouawad, Natalie Pangburn also notes the profound influence Czech philosopher Jan Patočka had on his work. She relates Patočka’s concept of shakenness to Aristotle’s observation of tragic theatre’s moment of recognition or anagnorisis, which in my own teaching I’ve often found one of the few concepts useful in exploring a selection’s highest point of intensity:

As Aristotle explains in his Poetics, ‘Recognition [anagnorisis] as in fact the term indicates, is a change from ignorance to knowledge.’ (Aristotle 1996: 18) Such a transition is crucial in all of Mouawad’s plays. This is what Mouawad calls a ‘revelation of being’, which provokes the metamorphosis necessary for ‘shakenness’, ... or change in thinking. (2016, 20).

As she suggests, also inspired by classical Greek theatre and no doubt Aristotle, he interprets the idea of anagnorisis, the moment of discovery or realization in the play, as related to the ‘trace’ which “operates as the disruptive presence of what is absent – often a remnant of the past, either historical or personal – that fragments protagonists’ accepted understanding of the world. The trace frequently functions for Mouawad’s characters as a *memento mori*, provoking a realisation of mortality and loss (2016, iii). In one interview, Mouawad states,

Why, for example, do I read Sophocles and less Aeschylus or Euripides, or even Beckett. [...] Because Sophocles doubts, because he says that we are faced with a complicated world, because all of his characters are confronted with the revelation of their being, that brings them to gouge out their eyes or kill their son. [...] This experience of the

instant of revelation is for me the most profound experience there can be. (in Pangburn, 2016, 19).

Importantly, the becoming minor of characters corresponds to a becoming minor of the art, which may also affect a becoming minor of the audience. This, too, resonates with Felman's commentary regarding the importance of silence, particularly as evidence of the breakdown of language in the face of testimony. In reference to Celan's poetry, she states that,

By introducing silence as a rhythmic breakdown and as a displacing counterpoint to sound... Celan strives to defetishize his language and to dislocate his own esthetic mastery, by breaking down any self-possessed control of sense and by disrupting any unity, integrity or continuity of conscious meaning. Through their very breakdown, the sounds testify, henceforth, precisely to a knowledge they do not possess, by unleashing, and by drifting into, their own buried depths of silence. (1991, 37).

Consistent with Deleuze and Guattari's contention that minor literature is collective and political in nature, Artaud also insists that "the first spectacle of the Theater of Cruelty will turn upon the preoccupations of the great mass of men, preoccupations much more pressing and disquieting than those of any individual whatsoever" (Artaud, 1958, 87). Though *Scorched* revolves around the experience of Nawal, as a mother figure she embodies a collective scream to all generations to come. It is at this moment that the readers of those words are, as Felman suggests, "ready to be solicited" not by the 'meaning' those words convey, since, as language breaks down, it is precisely their meaning that is put in question: "the event of creating an address for the specificity of a historical experience which annihilated any possibility of address" (1991, 38).

Productive Catastrophe

In drawing these elements together, the diagram, the silence, and becoming imperceptible contribute to the success of what Deleuze conceptualizes as the catastrophe, which once again relates to the visual:

It is as if, in the midst of the figurative and probabilistic givens, a catastrophe overcame the canvas. It is like the emergence of another world. For these marks, these traits, are irrational, involuntary, accidental, free, random. They are nonrepresentative,

nonillustrative, nonnarrative. They are no longer either significant or signifiers: they are asignifying traits. They are traits of sensation, but of confused sensation... . (FB, 100)

As a defining feature of art-literature that is perhaps most promising in a pedagogy of disturbance, it is, as James Williams states, its participation in the disaster (1997, 234). Pointing to the definition in the OED, he adds that “catastrophe is any event 'subverting a system of things'. The subversion of systematicity and identity is the attraction of catastrophe rather than the harsh lessons of its violence” (234). And while Bacon is the artist Deleuze turns to in exploring affective violence, it is the painter, J.M.W. Turner, who he, along with Guattari, sees as exemplifying the triumph of disaster.

The canvas turns in on itself, it is pierced by a hole, a lake, a flame, a tornado, an explosion...The canvas is truly broken, sundered by what penetrates it. All that remains is a background of gold and fog, intense, intensive, traversed in depth by what has just sundered its breadth: the schiz. Everything becomes mixed and confused, and it is here that the breakthrough—not the breakdown—occurs. (AO, 132)

As they allude to here, there is a precarious balance to be drawn between too much and too little. In theatre, as in painting, its ability to adequately disorient or disorder is achieved through a balance between the asignifying expression of the diagram and the appearance of the figure, what Williams refers to as “a diagrammatic painting that saves line and figure by ‘controlling’ catastrophe” (244). This fragile balance leads to the difference to which Richardson refers between the narrative and the affective force of violence. As he points out, discovering images of Abu Graib online or in a sequence by themselves is very different than encountering them with a backdrop of ‘contextual knowledge.’ As he states, “Explaining, categorizing, and narrativizing the images cannot but interrupt their forcefulness” (2016, 79). This leads to the dilemmas faced by the artist, writer, director and in this case film director, Errol Morris who “must wrestle aesthetically with the dilemma of giving torturers the opportunity to linguistically reframe the images, an opportunity not afforded to the detainees, while retaining that visual capacity to intensely affect” (80). In the case of theatre, dilemmas faced in the depiction of raw footage or historical events are complicated by the employment of expressions of gesture, blocking, lighting, or sound which either escalate or deescalate the force or intensity of pure affect. Not only does this speak to the need for a balance between the figure and the diagram,

but it proves a necessary caution for educators who prematurely jump to reactionary, mediating or pacifying explanations in the discussion of charged works, but to allow space and silence, as in the case of *Scorched*, to fulfill its affective work. Coincidentally, Deleuze also speaks of the necessity of silence, observing that, in the pressure and rush to fill every gap in speech, whether between couples or as depicted on radio and television, “we're riddled with pointless talk, insane quantities of words and images” (N, 129). As he contends,

[I]t's not a problem of getting people to express themselves but of providing little gaps of solitude and silence in which they might eventually find something to say. Repressive forces don't stop people expressing themselves but rather force them to express themselves. What a relief to have nothing to say, the right to say nothing, because only then is there a chance of framing the rare, and ever rarer, thing that might be worth saying. (N, 129)

In the final scenes of the play, perhaps in the final moments of punctuated silence, it is the character of Nihad who most brings to bear the full sense of catastrophe and destruction of which Deleuze speaks. After all that has happened over the course of his life, all that he contributed to his individuation – being orphaned as a baby, pursuing a long but unsuccessful search for his mother, assuming the role of warden and torturer rapist of the prison, and assuming the role of the joker sniper in the desert, one whose cruelty is augmented by maniacal laughter and mimicry – it is the love letter from his mother that ultimately silences him, too, in the end.

A Certain Vitality

It is perhaps Nihad's silence, followed shortly after by Janine and Simons, that not only factors into the success of the catastrophe, but also certain insight into the productive work of the play. Yes, there is a becoming imperceptible taking place, to some degree in every character, but especially Nawal and Nihad. And, in that movement, the play opens to the possibility of joyful affect. For these culminating scenes, after all, reveal a silence that opens us to a certain vitalism.

Nihad's character, despicable yet disarmingly likable, perhaps most points to the vitalism of 'a life' percolating beneath the actualized subjectivity evidenced to the audience. In many ways, he approaches the Dickensian character that Deleuze refers to in searching for a concrete example of the breaking through of 'a life.' Like the "disreputable man, [the] rogue" in Deleuze's allusion, who is "held in contempt by everyone" (PI, 27), Nihad, too, as a subject is one of the most reprehensible characters imaginable. In his final scenes in the desert, as a sniper targeting indiscriminately, he is empty and nihilistic ... the ultimate sociopath. Yet like Dicken's character, who in the narrow gap between life and death becomes depersonalized, there is "a moment that is only that of a life playing with death" and "the life of the individual gives way to an impersonal and yet singular life that releases a pure event freed from the accidents of internal and external life, that is, from the subjectivity and objectivity of what happens" (PI, 27). As a singularization, in his movement toward becoming imperceptible, Nihad opens us to "a life of pure immanence, neutral, beyond good and evil, for it was only the subject that incarnated it in the midst of things that made it good or bad ...such individuality fades away in favor of the singular life immanent to a man who no longer has a name... a singular essence, a life" (PI, 28).

In its affirmation of 'a life' and visions of a people yet to come, the play exemplifies the difference between habituated repetition, as in the endless cycles of war, and repetition with difference. Expressed most profoundly in the characterization of Nawal, who has endured the greatest suffering in the play, the way out of repeated patterns of hate, violence and division demand certain efforts of counteractualization. As she writes in her letter to Nihad, "where there is love, there can be no hatred. And to preserve love, I blindly chose not to speak" (132). We might ask how we know whether the delirium of historical allegiances will resolve itself in bitterness, as with Nihad, or love, as with Nawal. What ensures our encounter with violence produces compassion rather than bitterness? These are, of course, big questions, and with the uncertainty of any line of flight, impossible to predict. As Mouawad states, "There will only be history for as long as there will be people who will not content themselves with simply 'living' but who will on the contrary be ready to renounce plain life in order to lay down and defend

the foundations of a community of mutual recognition” (Mouwad, 2009, 24-27; in Pangburn, 188). In remaining silent, Nawal effectively ends the habitually repetitive cycle of hate and violence that has plagued her life. Whether as a product of actualized difference, a response of collective agency, or a singular anomalous act unique to an organism such as Nawal, the event of behavioural change works through processes of differentiation and differentiation to affect disruptions of habit. By shifting the field of immanence – forces of the actual – we shift the forces of difference acting on the virtual. This is also perhaps what Mouawad has in mind with Nawal’s final words to her twins: “Janine, Simon, / Where does your story begin? / At your birth? / Then it begins in horror. / At your father’s birth? / Then it is a beautiful love story” (134). The difference is in how we as a collective approach historical violence. Whether we respond reactively in seething bitterness– Nietzsche’s resentment – or by seeking retaliation is largely a product of our capacity to live up to the challenge of *amor fati*, not in passivity, but actively, in the footsteps of the way Deleuze adopts it from Nietzsche and the Stoics before him:

I want to learn more and more to see as beautiful what is necessary in things; then I shall be one of those who make things beautiful. Amor fati let that be my love henceforth! I do not want to wage war against what is ugly. I do not want to accuse; I do not even want to accuse those who accuse. Looking away shall be my only negation. (1974, 276).

While this will be discussed in more detail later, Nawal proves herself worthy of the event through a conscious or pre-conscious willingness to end the cycle of negative or sad affects, and in the interest or desire fueled by ‘a life’ act in the interest of life that holds the greatest possibility of connection and expansion. As Braidotti points out, “This is not fatalism, and even less resignation, but rather *amor fati*. The difference is crucial: we have to be worthy of what happens to us and rework it within an ethics of relation, without falling into negativity” (2012, 185). Against the appeal to individualism and paranoia fueled by partisanship and exacerbated under the axiomatics of capitalism, the life exemplified by Nawal emerges from a collective and more expansive desire for connectivity.

A Solidarity of the Shaken

In generating a vision of a people yet to come, we might imagine a people capable of love in the largest sense of the word. These are people who choose non-violence out of love rather than out of strategy. As a good friend of mine who worked in Rwanda has told me, many women who survived the genocide have decided that the pursuit of justice, of reparations, or of retribution will only end in a life of frustration. Instead, many have chosen, like Nawal, to try to move on, if not for their sake, then as many have said, for their children's.

For some, such an expectation is but a fantasy, relying as it does on what might be deemed a romanticized capacity of agency. Alternatively, consistent with the forces of unconscious production, we might argue that the forces of violence quasi-causally produce a silence which in turn opens a gap between causality of conflict and reactive effects of retaliation.

Simultaneously, in opening to a certain vitalism of 'a life,' the play also opens to the new.

Considered as a product of creation in consort with the Outside, we need not think of *Scorched* in terms of conscious intentionality. This is perhaps what was intended by the later revision of the play, preceding its translation to English by Gaboriau. In the earliest version, the play concludes in a very positive note; in the later version and the English translation, the resolution is left indeterminate. As Renault explains, the ending of the original French version, "allows Nawal to return to the place of love she sought as a youth and experience the bliss she shared with Wahab. It also places her speech above her silence, giving her the final word and closing the circle of testimony" (58) suggesting the 'silence' is finally broken. In contrast, in the latter version, the final tableau of the play unfolds with Simon and Janine sitting together, rain falling outside, listening now more intently than ever to their mother's cassette recording, with Nihad ambiguously positioned in silence as a background question mark. Replying to Renault's question regarding change, Gaboriau replies, "I seem to remember that he felt it was a false note to end with a poetic, almost-happy moment" (in Renault, 59).

Because of the indeterminacy of the revised ending, while some might still interpret the play as reaching a positive resolution, in my experience, it leaves the audience sitting in silence... and likely shock. Recalling Artaud's notion of a 'violence of thought,' a possible residue of

encounters with the theatre of cruelty, this is a state also coincides with Czech philosopher, Jan Patočka's belief that the "solidarity of the shaken... is what the theatre must show" (in Arseneault, 2006). Though the children remaining on stage may have more understanding of their mother and therefore themselves, the questions at the heart of the play emerging from encounters with violence, both narrative and affective, remain open.

How, paradoxically, can we come to terms with the reverberating shock of the rape of the mother by the son, and the indeterminacy of the end, with the notion of literature's clinical production of health? To reiterate an earlier comment, it is in this shock to thought that we might justify the play, somber though it may be, as an opening to the vitalism of 'a life.' Miguel de Beistegui explains further:

Rather, the life that is set free in painting is the life that is trapped and covered up in the organised body; it is the anorganic or dis-organised life of sensation. In formulating this demand that art return us to life more violently, Bacon achieves in painting the task that Rimbaud – and Artaud after him – had ascribed to poetry, namely, 'to arrive at the unknown through the disjunction of all the senses.' (2010, 174).

Along with Artaud, Bacon and Deleuze, it seems that Mouawad, too, places his confidence in theatre's capacity to evoke affective violence to open possibilities of something deeper in life. With respect to theatre, Artaud states that, "To break through language in order to touch life is to create or recreate the theater" (1958, 13). Not unlike Deleuze, he clarifies that by 'life' "we are not referring to life as we know it from its surface of fact, but to that fragile, fluctuating center which forms never reach. And if there is still one hellish, truly accursed thing in our time, it is our artistic dallying with forms, instead of being like victims burnt at the stake, signaling through the flames" (1958, 13). In other words, for Artaud, as for Deleuze, art allows access to that which surpasses representation and common sense.

The theatre Artaud envisions "presents itself first of all as an exceptional power of redirection" (1958, 83). And though he, like Deleuze, does not specify a specific vision for the future, he is confident that there is more to 'life' than the numbness we are inclined to settle for: "I do not believe we have managed to revitalize the world we live in, and I do not believe it is worth the trouble of clinging to; but I do propose something to get us out of our marasmus, instead of

continuing to complain about it, and about the boredom, inertia, and stupidity of everything” (1958, 83). Theatre is for Artaud, as art is for Deleuze, a source of health that introduces forces from the Outside to not only to disrupt molar reservations of habit, but to spark new directions of thought and action.

Similarly, in interviews with David Sylvester, when considering “why this particular way of painting is more poignant than illustration,” Bacon responds that it is “because it has a life completely of its own... the artist may be able to open up or rather, should I say, unlock the valves of feeling and therefore return the onlooker to life more violently” (1988, 17). There are resonances here with Deleuze’s own conceptualization of violence as necessary in freeing thought, as well as his faith in art’s ability to connect the viewer to the Outside, with ‘a life.’

Distinguishing “the perceptible force of the scream and the imperceptible force that makes one scream,” Deleuze suggests is itself “a source of extraordinary vitality” (FB, 61). Continuing, he notes that when the violence of ‘spectacle’ is “renounced” [in order to reach the violence of sensation], “it is a kind of declaration of faith in life” (FB, 61). Even Mouawad, as the writer and creator, appeals to a life borne of violence: “The theater brings together people who have come to listen to a cry that will overwhelm them. This gratuity seems fundamental to me today” (GT from Katuszewski, 2020). As Isotta Comboni explains, Patočka’s notion of the ‘the solidarity of the shaken’ also refers to a collective experience:

a particular bond that originates between people who have experienced a strong disturbance of the certainties, big and small, that hold their lives in place. The ‘shaken’ is an individual whose everyday assurances have been overturned by a deeply shocking experience, which allows them to change their perspective on life. (2015)

Is it possible, then, to conceive of works such as *Scorched*, so bleak in its ostensible outlook, to be a work of joyous affect? My answer is clearly yes. Not only in its capacity to disrupt the banality of capitalism, but in capacity to connect and expand ‘a life’ into new subjectivities. As ‘disagreeable’ as it might seem in tone, it is certainly agreeable in its affective possibilities.

Classroom

That said, considering the world today, including the classrooms of Alberta, the prospect of everyone living a life circumscribed by love and respect is hardly one we can anticipate in the near horizon. Skloot contends, “In truth, plays are ineffective in bringing about *immediate* changes in societies no matter how intelligent or powerful they may be” (2008, 6). Rather, it is a but a vague vision which a work of literature such as *Scorched* plants as a seed for potential new becomings. Throughout the play, we hear the refrain of Nawal’s words, the only words the tapes reveal in her last five years: “Now that we’re together everything feels better” (15). With the questions circulating at the end of the play, however, these words remain but a lingering possibility of ‘a people yet to come,’ a people who ultimately may silence rather than conflict, and in doing so, allow the molar walls dividing ‘us’ and ‘them’ to soften.

This affirmation of violence produces an affirmation of silence. Robert Porter claims, “Arts such as painting and literature do not just mediate the real through commentary or representation; *they are real* to the degree that they participate in, or precipitate, a certain movement in the order of things” (2009, 4). While history might look back in past time, news and media to present time, art extends to a future time. Fabulation, Porter suggests, operates as “a kind of active political philosophy, where its political function is, as they put it, to call forth a ‘new earth’ or a ‘new people’; that is, to create new forms of political subjectivity” (4). Who are these people yet to come? As Fancy suggests,

Becoming-imperceptible, when undertaken cautiously and methodically in creative and pedagogical settings, in or out of the studio, can be an affirmational (though not always unpainful), ethical, as well as pragmatic process insofar as it invites-and indeed insists-on experimentation with different ways of constituting subjectivity, permitting in turn increased possibility for intervention into the micropolitical realities of everyday life. Actors or audience members who have developed increased resonances with coherences other than themselves might be more liable to respond to future manifestations of difference with openness rather than ignorance, censure, or violence. (2014, 65-66)

In its capacity to disturb us into pausing, art can provide a much-needed space for disturbing our inclinations to react, and if successful, charge us with the necessary intensities to stir up virtual problems which may, in turn, incite actualizing shifts in habit. In considering a work such

as *Scorched* for the classroom, Feldman's explanation is equally resonant with the educational value of disturbance from the Outside of thought:

If teaching does not hit upon some sort of crisis, if it does not encounter either the vulnerability or the explosiveness of a (explicit or implicit) critical and unpredictable dimension, it has perhaps not truly taught.... I therefore think that my job as a teacher, paradoxical as it may sound, was that of creating in the class the highest state of crisis that it could withstand, without 'driving the students crazy,' – without compromising the students' bounds. (1992: 53)

Without disturbance, encounters with literature are apt to have little, if any, lasting impact. Rather than the specifics of narrative or character, it is the imprint of the crisis in thought, affective discomfort, that is retained. Recalling Deleuze and Guattari's notion of art as monument, Parr suggests that it attains an independence or ability to "stand up on its own" by "conserving, not commemorating, the being of sensation" (2008, 183). It follows, then, that memorialization becomes independent from the event, and even the violence from which it might have emerged. As Parr remarks, "Memorialization is an enduring activity of public remembrance that is conserved and activated throughout cultural activities" (2008, 183).

Similarly, H el ene Frichot identifies art with Deleuze's conceptualization of signs, such that in encounters with works such as *Scorched*, viewers may willingly or unwillingly enter an apprenticeship; art "can be the means by which we are swept on to imagine new ways of becoming with a world, becoming-woman, becoming-child, becoming-other, becoming-minoritarian, nonhuman becomings, blocks of sensation that subvert the fixity of meaning or those dead ends where memory gets stuck (2011, 84).

As the most evident signs of the event of crisis, then, it should not be surprising that with respect to the philosophical production of *Scorched*, the concept which emerges for me, with no pretensions that it is a novel one, is that of silence as machinic and productive. "Fabulation," Bogue contends, "emerges in the shock of an event, a vertiginous moment of disorientation in which images bypass reason and work directly on the senses to induce action" (2006, 207). And for Deleuze, it contributes to "the genuinely creative process that makes of the event the

occasion for the invention of a people to come” (Bogue, 2006, 209). At the defining point of this moment of discord, silence becomes the smooth space of genuine indiscernibility or uncertainty that sparks new becomings. It operates on the unconscious plain of immanence. But smooth space is not calm space. As a silence of violence [or is it a violence of silence?] O’Sullivan describes an ‘imagining’ or ‘imaging’ of violence as productive:

The violence of a storm, or of a volcano (Violence: involving great physical force). The release of ‘frozen’ energy in a bout of intense activity. The opening up of blocked channels and flows. It is this kind of violence that creates new worlds. Winds die down – liquids solidify. New landscapes emerge. In fact, this is what violence is, and always has been – an endlessly creative force.... Violence here announces precisely a change in state. (2000, 104).

How might silence work, pedagogically, in producing different ways of thinking and becoming? Too often, rather than allow the affect work through the processes of actualization, to allow disturbance to do its work, classrooms are ‘rescued’ from the discomfort experienced in certain encounters. As jagodzinski points out,

The easiest way to ‘tame’ the image, to mitigate its force, has been through language and meaning. This has been a popular ‘literary’ approach perpetuated by many English curricula where ‘media’ (usually film, art, and popular culture) is part of their syllabus. The potential threat of the image is ‘captured’ through linguistic means (2018,48).

In an age where, as jagodzinski implies, violence is normatively processed narratively, and through the mediation of coded language and responses, produces reactive rather than active responses, teachers need to consider new approaches to learning. Without the dulling or flattening intrusion of language which freezes the multiplicity of forces into interpretation and precludes other possibilities from crystallizing into the imaginary, silence offers a truly pedagogical space of problem generation. It is, paradoxically, both void of meaning and simultaneously charged with expectancy, and left to itself, it can defy simplistic reductions to meaning. The ‘work’ of silence within and beyond the production of *Scorched* is ultimately a disturbance of static, dogmatic images of thought, while simultaneously a creative force for novel responses to violence. In the productive still point at the end of the play, we might apply what Deleuze says of the scream: “if we scream it is always as victims of invisible and insensible

forces that scramble every spectacle... invisible forces which are nothing else than the forces of the future...Every scream contains them potentially” (FB, 51-2). Silence allows differential intensities within the virtual -- pure difference -- to circulate, potentially leaking through as discomfort in actual. But in an age where most violence is processed narratively, often habitually, the violence of silence | the silence of violence is asignifying and joyfully affective in opening reception to the new. And what, we should ask, is education if not about expanding possible futures?

Chapter 9: Marilyn Dumont and Disturbing Settler Sedimentation

I was first introduced to poems of Marilyn Dumont over 20 years ago, at which time, with little comprehension of just how important they were, I felt the need to introduce them to students in my English classes. In light of movements such as *Idle No More*, protests in support of the Wet'suwet'en and the publications of the *Truth and Reconciliation (TRC) Commission Report* and the report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, *Reclaiming Power and Place*, Dumont's work has become more resonant than ever in troubling the ethical, political and pedagogical.

Born in 1955, in the town of Olds, Alberta, Marilyn Dumont is of Cree/ Métis ancestry, and a descendent of the Red River Rebellion's freedom fighter, Gabriel Dumont's brother. She currently teaches at the University of Alberta. Such proximity has offered me the privilege of meeting her on numerous occasions, each time adding to the affective affinity I feel for her words. And though students' reception of Dumont's poetry has been generally positive, as with the other works here, it has not been without discomfort. Since my first encounter, a year has not passed that I have not returned to these poems, or to her newer publications, without recognizing how it has disturbed – unsettled -- my thinking, whether in the moment of reading, or in lingering sensations thereafter.

As a colonial settler, unsettlement sounds paradoxical. But as I wish to argue, it is relationally necessary. And as a constituent of the dominant or majoritarian cultural assemblage, which most Canadians are whether they choose to be or not, I am deeply aware of my settler status. In situating this work within my own lived experience, over the course of this research I have come to realize that in its ability to unsettle, it has also produced new possibilities of future becoming, beyond the limits of colonial territorializations in every sense of the word. For in this current exploration of her poetry, I am immediately drawn to the concept of settlement as associated with the concept of 'strata' of which Deleuze and Guattari speak. In my mind, as much as we might speak of the manner in which colonization works to shape another culture,

rarely mentioned is how colonizers are also subjugated (colonized) under forces of their own colonization. Whether experienced consciously or not, considered with respect to the ecology of the assemblage in which relationships are intertwined, one can't help but think that our mind frames have been frozen into a monocultural majoritarian way of living as settlers, consciously or unconsciously perpetuating colonization.

To confess my reservations at the outset, it should now be clear that I am not, at least that I'm aware of, of Indigenous decent. As Allison Hargreaves notes, locating ourselves relative to our work is made "not only as a gesture by which we acknowledge social position relative to our research—but, rather, as a relational process grounded in Indigenous ontologies" (2016, 110). This makes any discussion of Indigenous literature a very delicate matter coming from a colonial settler heritage, and I know for some, this work may be subject to accusations of misappropriation of Indigenous cultural matter.

While any discussion of identity is problematic, in an attempt to minimize such accusations, I have chosen to apply several distinctions in terminology: *Indigenous* populations refer to those peoples with ancestral roots and rights of belonging to this land; *arrivants*, as Jodi Byrd suggests, "signify those people forced into the Americas through the violence of European and Anglo-American colonialism and imperialism around the globe" (2011, xix), and *colonial settlers* to those who either chose or whose ancestors chose to move here, in most cases without invitation or agreement with the First Peoples. With respect to the latter, following Métis writer Chelsea Vowel, in conversations focused on relationship, it might be easier to use the less pejorative term 'settler' but by definition, as she points out, settler colonialism "refers to the deliberate physical occupation of land as a method of asserting ownership over land and resources" (2017). To this day, colonization remains largely institutionalized and embodied in every aspect of settlers' lives. These categories, as Vowel admits, belie layers of complexities which "become more obvious when one considers that Indigenous is not really a racial category; there are many mixed-race Indians" (2017). Elsewhere, in response to reader inquiries and comments, Vowel emphasizes that:

We should be examining this in a relational sense, not trying to find rigid categories... we're not going to start applying blood quantum to settlerhood! The point is, there is an obligation on the part of those who are set up to most benefit from ongoing colonialism, to do something about it. To change the relationship. Proximity to whiteness is a huge part of this, but not the only part. We need terms we can use to talk about this, but the terms will never be static or perfect. (2020)

While questions of identity are significant both from the perspective of transcendental empiricism, as well as positions relative to this land from which I write, I have deferred, tentatively and out of respect for Indigenous peoples, to define myself, as much by time and place as by subjecthood, as a white, male, colonial settler. For which purposes, Emma Lowman and Adam Barker provide one of the most thorough and affectively stirring definitions of settler I have come across:

Settler. This word voices relationships to structures and process in Canada today, to the histories of our peoples on this land, to Indigenous peoples, and to our own day-to-day choices and actions. Settler. This word turns us toward uncomfortable realisations, difficult subjects, and potential complicity in systems of dispossession and violence. Settler. This word represents a tool, a way of understanding and choosing to act differently. A tool we can use to confront the fundamental problems and injustices in Canada today. Settler. It is analytical, personal, and uncomfortable. It can be an identity that we claim or deny, but that we inevitably live and embody. (2015, 2)

Similarly, Daniel Heath Justice observes how the word settler is “agitating for a lot of people” (2018), but believes it is OK to be disturbed. In the act of accepting this identity label, several considerations come to mind. The first is the acknowledgement, following Deleuze, that this is a description of a certain duration of molarity that has generated this consistency of subjectivity. It is a product of the dominant assemblage in which I have been immersed, and of certain dominant or territorialized forces and conditions that actualized into certain habits of thinking and being in the world. I do, however, believe that these same forces can be disturbed through encounters with Indigenous voices and experiences, including minor literature (in contrast to majoritarian), potentially disassembles or reassembles the underlying machines of my making, as well as those of my students subjected to the same colonial machinery. As Colebrook maintains, “For Deleuze and Guattari all great literature is minor literature, refusing any already

given standard of recognition or success. Similarly, all effective politics is a becoming-minoritarian, not appealing to who we are but to what we might become” (2002b, xxv).

Admittedly, the very prospect of a non-Indigenous colonial settler exploring intensive encounters with Indigenous texts is fraught with concerns. No doubt there are Indigenous scholars, including Jodi Byrd, who resent any incursion of post-structuralist thought such as that of Deleuze and Guattari, as threatening erasure of Indigenous identities in the interests of smooth spaces. Having had the privilege of meeting Elders across Canada, I have yet to meet one who did not open their homes or sweat lodges to me, and who did not welcome the opportunity to share their ways of knowing and being. And as I have discussed throughout, proximity, particularly in the company of agreeable encounters with affect, yields becoming. This is in disagreement with scholars such as La Paperson (a.k.a. K. Wayne Yang) who remains suspicious of “Deleuze and Guattari’s theorizations of ‘desiring machines’” as they might conceivably bolster the colonial project:

The settler desires to become the native. His machines turn the Native into chattel and/or subtracts her indigeneity to make her less and less native.[20] Machines of genocide, enslavement, land mining, and war run through the colonial apparatus and produce multiple colonialisms as adaptations to each particular place and time. This is why specific colonial apparatuses differ but similar technologies recirculate in them—pieces of desiring machines that assemble into new machines. (2017)

Though it is true that desire can be captured within the axiomatics of capitalism or despotic territorializations and therefore serve such ends, I believe it is also possible to consider these theorizations in the service of building ethical relations. In the purist sense, there can be no preconceived or teleological end in mind, including becoming Indigenous. Rather, the becoming that is set in motion through an encounter with literature of difference – in this case exposing the reader to a minor literature of Indigenous voices, ways of knowing and ways of being – arises across the plane of immanence, where the body meets an outside, and where the virtual is productively disturbed by the violence of thought. This is not an encounter approached with the greed of an usurper, but rather the humility of the learner. One that is hopefully more

likely to be expansive than contractive, and is defined more by affirmative affect rather than the cynical and destruct forces of the negative.

While I proceed with as much caution and respect as I can, I apologize in advance for any errors in judgement I might make in the process. It is because I deeply respect the traditional beliefs and ways of being of the Indigenous cultures that I feel it belongs in the classroom and should not be tokened off to the periphery of curricula. As well, based on my own experience with Elders, it is because I believe certain ways of knowing and becoming offer an alternative to the territorialized Capitalist visions that dominate our education system and are largely responsible for the decimation of the planet. And finally, because in the wake of our nations *Truth and Reconciliation* discussions of 2014, the prospect of reconciliation simply cannot be realized without significant shifts across the collective body. As Cree scholar Dwayne Donald emphasizes, much of *Truth and Reconciliation* boils down to one challenge: how can we enter good relations with each other? The 'ethical terms' of the original intentions of the treaties "teach that we are called to work together in ways that bring benefits to all people who live on the land together... learning from each other in balanced ways and sharing the wisdom that comes from working together in the spirit of good relations" (2013). As he has stressed elsewhere, questions remain as to what the terms might be for ethical or 'good relations,' and more importantly, whose voices will dominate in setting those terms. How much say have Indigenous peoples had or how much will they have in terms of concrete compensations for and means to address past wrongs? On what grounds do we have any right to ask now for an openness to a future of reconciliation when many argue there was never a conciliation?

In many ways, my project shares similarities to that of Heather Dorries and Sue Ruddick who also bring together Deleuze and Indigenous voices which, in their case, is to explore the work of Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg writer Leanne Betasamosake Simpson. As they admit, it is "a project which runs the risk of reproducing the same power relations it seeks to transcend while also replicating a 'settler move to innocence'" (2018, 620). In this regard, such work provokes difficult questions: "what it means to engage with Indigenous thought from within the context

of a colonial institution?” and, “how might it be possible to put Western philosophy in conversation with Indigenous philosophy without repeating a colonial gesture?” (620). To these, I would add a third: how might an encounter between Indigenous texts and non-Indigenous colonial readers shift the imbalance of relationship and disturb the divisive lines between us and them? As Donald points out, these relations have been established largely through what he calls *fort logic*: “the development of a narrative template and colonial frontier logic— delineated by the fort walls—of insiders (settlers/Canadians) and outsiders (Indigenous peoples)” (2013). And when educators speak of incorporating or infusing education with Indigenous content, it is often, as Donald suggests, simply another affirmation of this same logic “that guides educators to believe that their central task with regard to Aboriginal curriculum perspectives is to bring them *inside* the fort walls. In this case, then, schools, classrooms and curriculum documents serve as forts of a different kind” (2013). Mi'kmaq scholar Marie Battiste also cautions scholars by noting certain principles which need to be considered, including her often repeated adage “nothing about us without us” (2016). As a colonial settler, therefore, I shall do my best to refrain from speaking to the experiences of Indigenous peoples.

Likewise, reading Indigenous texts from a non-Indigenous lens demands the same sensitivity to interpretive traps of cognitive, epistemological, or ethical imperialism. As Dorries and Ruddick state, one “who reads for similarities is on the lookout for the familiar as she treads new intellectual territories, taking commensurability as a signpost of intelligibility, with a perceived lack of commensurability often interpreted as unintelligibility... [and] in this way forecloses the possibility for reading to be part of a transformative process” (621-622). Additionally, there are equally important “issues of appropriation, mindful of the trap of ‘stealing the pain of others’” (622). Encounters with Indigenous literature, or any literature that qualifies as minor literature, involves “leaving familiar intellectual territory and venturing into a space of unfamiliar concepts and intellectual frameworks” and demands consideration of the question: “what does it mean to practice good relations when entering this new intellectual terrain?” (624).

One answer is that as a non-Indigenous teacher, good relations imply approaching such encounters with respect and humility, both cultural and intellectual, not only in the interest of cognitive demands, but to allow time and space for the intrinsic affect to work. Addressed to colonial settler populations, such reading, as will soon be discussed in more detail, amounts to a micropolitics of decolonization. Culpability for the maintenance of and continued adherence to the colonial complex, from structural and systemic impositions down to individual acts of repression, suppression, or oppression including acts of racism, falls on the shoulders of the non-Indigenous population, but in particular, those who benefit from it. As many Indigenous Elders and scholars have said or implied, the burden of '[re]conciliation' should not fall solely on the shoulders of Indigenous populations. This is perhaps what Unanga scholar Eve Tuck and Wayne Yang allude to in their concern that so many efforts located under the umbrella of social justice ultimately fail to address underlying issues:

We don't intend to discourage those who have dedicated careers and lives to teaching themselves and others to be critically conscious of racism, sexism, homophobia, classism, xenophobia, and settler colonialism. We are asking them/you to consider how the pursuit of critical consciousness, the pursuit of social justice through a critical enlightenment, can also be settler moves to innocence - diversions, distractions, which relieve the settler of feelings of guilt or responsibility, and conceal the need to give up land or power or privilege. (2012, 21)

Throughout this thesis I have primarily targeted divisions of 'us' and 'them' that I consider to be a central problematic in our world today, the boundaries around which a pedagogy of disturbance might be capable of softening. Throughout Canada's history, there can be little doubt who has set and repeatedly reset the terms in the creation of a colonial settler state, and relations to Indigenous peoples. Terms which, in the language of Deleuze and Guattari, comply with majoritarian lines of desire. For that reason, though non-Indigenous and Indigenous populations have been in opposition for most of our history, this section is primarily concerned with the conditions from which non-Indigenous groups have actualized and maintained structures and codings of colonization, against which Indigenous groups have legitimate claims. These underlying conditions, the territorialized desires of both colonial fascism and capitalist thirst, present formidable obstacles to realizing real change in the nature of relations. Tuck and

Yang refer to what they call an *ethic of incommensurability*, referring to how “decolonization as material, not metaphor, unsettles innocence” (28). Citing Fanon and Memmi, they add that,

Incommensurability is an acknowledgement that decolonization will require a change in the order of the world...This is not to say that Indigenous peoples or Black and brown peoples take positions of dominance over white settlers; the goal is not for everyone to merely swap spots on the settler-colonial triad, to take another turn on the merry-go-round. The goal is to break the relentless structuring of the triad - a break and not a compromise (2012, 31).

Arguably, one of the most tragic exclusions of colonization and late Capitalism, as mentioned earlier, is that of Indigenous ontologies and epistemologies to mainstream education. Though it is beginning to be recognized in Canada as part of the TRC calls to action, continued resistance to change is no doubt related to the unsettlement arising from fundamental incommensurability. Not only are the aims of Indigenous resurgence in conflict with the curriculum of nationalism, but the fundamental approaches to and values of relationship, animism, and stewardship are anathema to the capitalist and neoliberal machinery of individualism, competition, and possession. Dene scholar Glen Coulthard likewise argues that any genuine interest in decolonization “must directly confront more than mere economic relations; it has to account for the multifarious ways in which capitalism, patriarchy, white supremacy, and the totalizing character of state power interact with one another to form the constellation of power relations that sustain colonial patterns of behavior, structures, and relationships.” (2014, 14). Sadly, it may take many years before curricula in Alberta extends beyond tokenism, unless teachers or willing to make substantive changes to their own syllabi and methodologies. Including the role of literature.

While some may argue that experimental encounters with Indigenous literature will have marginal impact, we must keep in mind that a micropolitics operates at the same level of political urgency as macropolitical campaigns, but also recognizes how rigidly ‘settled’ within the body of subjugated groups – colonial settlers – molar resistances reside, especially relative to territorialized desires and privileges. The intention here is not to assume the terms of a relationship, but rather to consider the underlying – largely unconscious -- conditions or forces

through which non-Indigenous peoples might be more open to alternative terms of relationship and more willing to open themselves to the guidance of Indigenous peoples who not only have the legal/ethical right to provide leadership when it comes to such terms, but several millennia of apparent success in stewardship of the land and resources to justify such guidance, in sharp contrast to the destruction a few centuries of Capitalism has reaped on the environment.

Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy has, as Bignall and Patton suggest, been criticized for "lack of explicit engagement with the body of postcolonial thought and with colonialism as a problematic site of analysis" (2010a, 1). Furthermore, Deleuze has been condemned for his "failure to provide concepts of resistance, critique and political society that address the concerns of formerly colonised peoples" (2). Elsewhere Bignall also points to Gayatri Spivak's critique which censures the work of Deleuze and other Western thinkers as "a discourse originating chiefly within formerly colonizing centres, poststructuralism [that] also carries with it the danger that it may continue the imperial project by more subtle means" (2008, 128). In response to such accusations, one response would be, as Dorries and Ruddick suggest, that Deleuze and Guattari's 'framework' actually refrains from directly engaging with "Indigenous politics" (625). More importantly, much of their work complements anti or decolonizing work, sharing many of its concerns: "subject positions that colonize the consciousness even of those it dominates" (626). Finally, as will be developed shortly, while many who participate in decolonization work engage in more overt strategies of macropolitics focusing on identified policies and confrontations, Deleuze and Guattari's work is aimed at a micropolitics of transformation and is therefore more organic in nature. This is not intended to be an ideological imposition from above, but instead an affective and immanent encounter which may or may not unfold as an event of learning and becoming.

In my own research, I have also found resonance between the interests or problems fueling Deleuze and Guattari's work against capitalism and despotic regimes that characterize many colonial structures around the world, and Indigenous concerns of self-determination, land stewardship, and restoration or creation of agreeable relations. I do not read Deleuze and

Guattari as necessarily speaking for the sub-altern. Rather, as a colonial settler, I take from their work critiques and disturbances to my own positionality. Bignall contends that philosophers such as Foucault and Deleuze “aim to interrogate and transform the ‘regime of truth’ defining many entrenched social attitudes and unspoken rules of engagement” (2008, 128), and that in recognition of their privilege, they often seek “to address the ethical implications of philosophizing from such a position” (143). Finally, it should be noted that the primary work of many Indigenous activists and scholars – self-determination, control over land management, and/or the freedom to return to their traditions and cultural practices – are commensurate with concerns that would be shared by Deleuze and Guattari, especially their abhorrence of the capitalist and colonial territorialization responsible for so much violence against Indigenous peoples and the ecological destruction of the very conditions for flourishing.

As for concerns that might be raised regarding the risks of non-Indigenous interpretive practices, it is worth reiterating that the ethos an immanent or intensive reading may be the least likely to enter into the minefields of many ethnocentrically filtered interpretive approaches. Here, perhaps even more so than with *Scorched*, I am aware of the political forces of literature, its collective enunciation, and how many Aboriginal writers may deterritorialize language, consciously or unconsciously, and thereby subvert assimilation and challenge colonial subjugation. As Helen Hoy states, speaking to the historical approaches taken by non-Indigenous readers of Indigenous texts, “The question ‘How should I eat these?’ or, in the case of Native literature, ‘How should I read these?’ can involve, then, for the outsider reader, unfortunate occasions either for absolute, irreducible distance or for presumptuous familiarity... reifying difference and erasing it are far from mutually exclusive approaches” (2001, 11). Though such cautions are certainly justified, and difficult to ensure against, in purposely trying to avoid interpretation and meaning making, intensive or immanent reading, focuses on the transformative forces potentially acting on the assemblage body of the reader. In doing this work, my interests hopefully align with notions of co-conspiracy, to be discussed later, in the priority given to work on my own subjectivity first, while also considering the political disturbance of colonial settlements more generally in the classroom.

The choice to work with Marilyn Dumont's poetry derives from three primary motives. The first is that poetry is often the most challenging genre for teachers in high school, either because of student resistance or because of their own discomfort with how to work with it. As such, it is hoped that my focus here will help alleviate some of these concerns. Secondly, as an Indigenous author, Dumont's poetry is exemplary of minor literature, which, in recalling earlier discussions, Deleuze and Guattari emphasize does not mean it "come[s] from a minor language [nor for that matter a minor people]; it is rather that which a minority constructs within a major language" (K, 16). And thirdly, I am interested in how such literature disturbs non-Indigenous settlement? In other words, how it unsettles settler strata?

Ultimately then, my question is not so much why Indigenous literature matters, but more specifically, why or *how* might it matter to non-Indigenous readers in generating lines of flight away from the colonial habitus. As with all classroom texts, the choice to introduce Dumont's poetry to students is grounded in experimentation with affective relations. In so far as her poetry will no doubt confront students with blocs of sensation, it matches what Bignall describes in the Australian context as "a collision of 'very disparate' bodies, which being merely thrown together by geographical and historical circumstance, did not initially actively seek or desire engagement" (2010b, 90).

As a minor literature, against a backdrop of majoritarian and in this case settler colonial regimes of signs, the poetry of Dumont is, by definition, political. As an added rhizomatic appendage to majoritarian assemblages, one might anticipate encounters to meet with resistance. But as a work of art, its forces are greatest at the unconscious level of aesthetic disturbance, though one might expect a percolation of affections signaling symptoms of dis[ease]. Dumont herself admits that "poets and the Indigenous community are [her] two main audiences, but it is also the non-Native audience. When [she's] writing about resisting things, quite often [she's] talking to the non-Native audience" (2020, 145). That said, the impact on non-Indigenous readers such as myself has by no means been limited to her poems of resistance.

The Forces of Affect in Dumont's Poetry: A Sampling

*It is difficult
to get the news from poems
yet men die miserably every day
for lack
of what is found there.*

(William Carlos Williams, *Asphodel, That Greeny Flower*, 1986,310)

As these excerpted lines from Williams suggest, the strength of poetry lies not in what it says, but how it says it. David Bergman describes poems that disturb as poems which, instead of turning the page, you tend to stop and read again. As he reflects,

I like the poem or I don't like the poem – it amounts to the same thing, since both pleasure and dislike can be bothersome – but this time I am not, at least at first, aware of my discomfort, or only slightly aware of it. And then something odd happens. I can't let this uneasiness release me.... And so by small increments, a certain intimacy develops between us as if it had discovered something in me I would rather have had left alone, and I had discovered within it something it doesn't seem aware that it possesses. This is what I mean by a disturbing poem. (2015, 1).

And while I share a similar experience with many of the poems of Marilyn Dumont, it is the notion of sensing something – an 'uneasiness' that will not 'release me' as Bergman says – that stands out. This is once again, a violence to thought, unique to each reader and subject to each reader's ability to allow the poem to work. These are not, as Bergman adds, "[poems] we turn to for comfort or reassurance" (1). As a brief introduction to the potential sources of affect in Dumont's poetry, a topic no doubt worthy of an entire thesis, I will limit myself to only a few examples that have stood out in my personal readings. Notably, it would be near impossible to generalize across Dumont's body of poetry as each volume, and in many cases, each poem, is unique, particularly in its symptomatology and stylistic becoming.

A Less than Comforting Ambiguity

The first poem I recall of Dumont's, at least the first which cut under my colonial skin, was *Spineless* (1996/2017, 51). If there is an equivalent to Bacon's scream described previously, this

is it. It is a scream that enunciates not only through the harshness of language, and the imagery of freezing on a downtown corner in Edmonton during a -40 day in winter, but in the way the speaker both denounces herself, yet at the same time, retains a demand for dignity rather than pity. Throughout, there is a blurring of ugliness and humanity, both in action and attitude that we infer from the speaker's reaction to an undefined 'you' who is implicated in their silence and their absence.

Irony, both humorous and dark, is a quality characteristic of many Indigenous prose writers and one which Dumont herself admits to in a recent interview:

Irony is a powerful tool in the fight for social justice because it is a lateral shift from anger to something that a reader might first laugh at, but once they stop laughing, the reality and truth of the situation sink in. Indigenous writers employ irony frequently to address ongoing settler colonialism because humour, even dark humour, is medicine for Indigenous Peoples. This humour and particularly irony has maintained a sense of power (2021).

Though reference to tone might insinuate interpretation, I think it is safe to say that what troubles me most in *Spineless* is the ambiguity of tone. Like many poems, tone is rarely consistent from top to bottom. But what makes this poem especially unsettling is the blurring of speaker, the unidentified silent interlocutor, and the reader/ audience. Consider, for example, the opening three lines: "the welcome image of you/is gone, the unwelcome/ image of me is still here." Who is speaking? And who and why would they refer to themselves, in later lines, as not only unwelcome but "big, loud and bitching," and as "bitch of the north." These same troubling layers of sense and tone are infused in the last line in which an ambiguous 'someone' is "too mute to ask for change," with rather discomfiting implications affecting the reader.

Poetry, as a work of art, has the potential to break through the representational limits of language. It is not surprising then to recognize the impact of structural elements such as enjambment, caesuras and line length in Dumont's poems as contributing to their affective potency. In *Spineless*, for example, it is worth noting the intensification of lines and images

through the poetic elements, which work to add to the multiplicity of forces generated. For example, the enjambment of the first three lines cited earlier adds to both the blurring of voice, but also to multiple directions of inference. The line, “the ones I threaten your small frightened frame of mind with,” reads quicker in pace and sharper in tone not simply because of the words themselves, but because of its length. And the single isolated line in the middle of the poem, marking a shift in point of view, reverberates with intensity that is not lessened by its ambiguity of inferred intentions: “all you’ve heard are lies.” Together, these elements constitute as constellation of signs which accumulate in affect.

In a more personal inquiry into what makes poetry, poetry, Sun Paik suggests that, it “always leaves a question for the reader to answer.... a poem is a constant game of uncovering, of opening a new layer to something that feels illegible and inaccessible” (Paik, 2017). This seems especially true of *Spineless*, at least encountering it as a non-Indigenous reader, as it challenges us with several questions: Who is saying what to whom? Who or what is implicated by these words? Who is culpable of the violence unleashed? What is the violence it implies? While we might be tempted to imagine ourselves within the poem, empathy and compassion are strained by the portrayal of a woman yelling, justifiably perhaps, at the would-be saviour-figure. In this way it not only avoids easy clichés, but it recognizes her dignity.

The ambiguity found in *Spineless* characterizes many of Dumont’s poems, and often raises questions, such as these, regarding the persona and the implied audience. Another example is the longer work, *the dimness of mothers and daughters* (2001, 23-24), in which the speaker seems to address who is absent more so than who is present, with the unnamed you potentially inferring all mothers and daughters presumably of Indigenous descent. But internal paradoxes emerge from lines such as, “This is your story/ even though you haven’t told it/ all or don’t know how to tell/ parts of it yet,” and “By starting the story/ the story tells you,” which challenge us to consider multiple subjects of speculation, including the speaker and the reader. Again, such multiplicities of relations serve to add to the disturbance of questions the poem produces, particularly as our focus comes back to the ambiguity of the title and the force of the

word 'dimness.' Who is it that is calling these mothers dim? In what ways does dimness resonate differently between non-Indigenous and Indigenous audiences? Should it differ? These questions extend further in the final lines, with the analogy between "your life," which remains generalized but targeted, and a beaded design for which 'you' must accept "the misplaced, or the misshapen/even misrepresented" acknowledging that "lost beads" fell or were never "stitched in/place," with the enjambment of these final words across two lines contributing to further convolutions. The insistence in the final two lines that "there was a pattern/there was a plan," not only expresses even darker intimations, but again raises the question, as in *Spineless*, of who is responsible. It is notable that the opening stanza of this poem now appears as a monument on the streets of North Bay, as a homage to the Missing or Murdered Indigenous Women. Perhaps this is not so unlike the monuments Deleuze and Guattari speak of in terms of the art standing for itself, as affects and percepts freed from an implied conscious subject's affections and perceptions.

As Bergman suggests, disturbing poems are often 'sneaky' and may actually "look safe enough at first but unsettle us later," even if "sometimes it takes decades to unravel what bothers us about a poem" (2015, 1). In this sense, what unsettles us in these poems draw our attention to signs of what 'matters' or what should matter to us, even if, like many signs, we can not immediately say what that is. In forcing us to linger on the possibilities, we are perhaps brought closer to questions of relationality at the core of the [re]conciliation process. Dumont herself admits that the reason she prefers the poem form is "because poets are subversive. They subvert language and, within that, thought and perception" (2018, 70).

Affective Time-Images

As scholars such as Jason Skeet (2017) have pointed out, Deleuze wrote very little about poetry. This is surprising given that so many characteristics of poetry mirror many of the affective components he finds in other literary genres, and in particular the books he addressed to the art of cinema. In addressing Deleuze's distinction between movement images and time images,

Colebrook explains that cinema relates multiple images “to form a sequence” but it then “cuts and connects sequences using the inhuman eye of the camera, which can therefore create a number of competing viewpoints or angles” (2002a, 31). The cinematic of cinema lies in its capacity for liberating “the sequencing of images from any single observer...seeing from our interested and embodied perspective” (2002a, 31) and liberating perception from the “organizing structure of everyday life,” what we perceive as chronological order. The time image of cinema is thus able to intensify encounters. In a similar way, I suggest, so can poetry. The techniques unique to cinema, Colebrook suggests, can “transform life, by disrupting sequences” (31). But many of these techniques have analogies in poetry. To structural devices already mentioned – enjambment, caesura, line length – I would add the sequencing of stanzas, perspectives, images which integrate multiple juxtapositions at a speed and movement much more intense than what is typically found in prose. For example, in Dumont’s poem *the shape of water* (2001,35), subtle allusions to literal violence emerge from the line “on certain nights when/ grown-ups/ take the form of jackals,” while at the same time, spawning affective reverberations which are further intensified through the enjambment of all three lines and the isolation of ‘grown-ups.’ The signs of multiple layers of distress are also exacerbated in later lines “the proximity of siblings/ knowing the flinching/ in each other’s veins,” in which not only the imagery works on the reader, but the placement of the caesura, a blank space, operating much like affectively weighted silence in the play *Scorched*.

Such line cuts and matches, both cinematic terms, produce challenges to the reader not unlike those Bogue associates with the image-interstice-image sequences of film, “since the sequences are not readily assimilable within standard interpretive schemas” (2004, 338). It follows, then, that images in poetry might be read similarly, “in the sense that they must be construed through an active interrogation of the forces connecting the images” (338). The affective elements in *the shape of water* are heightened in what might construe a becoming animal with the metaphor of the jackals extending to the hunt for a yearling later in the stanza as “in high grass/ pins its body the length of it/ feels its life shiver/ then feels nothing.” With the title of the poem, *the shape of water*, repeated and enveloping the sequence of violent

inferences in the interchange of child to yearling to child, suggests a fluidity that is both alarming yet hopeful as it conjures both a sense of the ephemeral and the transformational. As Deleuze argues for a cinema, that “doesn't just operate by linking things through rational cuts, but by relinking them through irrational cuts too” (N, 149), the same seems true of poetry, but in particular, poetry that is more lyrical in character. This is poetry that, depending on the degree to which it displays such qualities, ignores narrative sequencing completely, stitching images together in a way that surprises, but also confounds the reader's expectations. Lyrical poetry works almost entirely through the senses, and even when it does contain narrative elements, as in the poems already discussed, various grammatical or stylistic elements break up the possibilities of easy chronologies. Consider, for example, the poem *I am five* (2001,32), which paints a picture, with the camera eye/ear/nose of the speaker panning from one focal point to another:

*grasshoppers clack
snapping their hot wings
near my ear and
I am five
and breathing the body smell of this place
the skin of fruit-warm cedar, while
adolescent pines wrestle the wind;*

Memory, sometimes nostalgic, sometimes implied, is present here as in many of Dumont's poems. But as evidenced in the short snapshot, it is rarely chronological and works as a bloc of sensations. As Deleuze and Guattari explain,

Memory plays a small part in art ... It is true that every work of art is a monument, but here the monument is not something commemorating a past, it is a bloc of present sensations that owe their preservation only to themselves and provide the event with the compound that celebrates it. The monument's action is not memory but fabulation (WIP, 167–8)

Their observation that “we write not with childhood memories but through blocs of childhood that are the becoming-child of the present” is especially applicable in this poem. And the line, “I am five,” working in conjunction with the density of the images surrounding it that belie a child's facility them as such, draws more intrigue and intensity each time it is repeated. Again, disturbance in the poem is especially furtive as the inviting mood is disrupted in the more reflective consciousness of the final lines in which the speaker wrests the percepts and affects

out of what might otherwise have seemed like a daydream, and brings them to bare on the present, with a reverberating sense of absence and loss, poignantly punching through in the single and this time surprising, and somewhat bitterly ironic isolated word, “loneliness.” Arguably, it is this final line and word that works as a sign which instigates the search. In the sudden shift and contrast in mood and tone from the earlier lines it demands attention and in doing so, perhaps points to further questions.

Even more directly related to time itself is Dumont’s poem, *Memory* (2007, 39), which speaks not only to time as *aion*, but shadows or affections of memory as a virtual force, sometimes traumatic in nature, in the now and future, even as the lines are fragmented horizontally across the page.

<i>memory</i>	<i>this water that moves this sight trailing back</i>	<i>sighing within us like our wake</i>
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Though here, the play on the word /wake/ is haunting, the poem ends somewhat more optimistically, albeit ambiguously so, with memory understood as fluid and changing with time:

<i>memory</i>	<i>this place we can mend</i>	<i>over and over</i>
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Memory here speaks as well to the conceptualization of time shared by many Indigenous peoples, wherein past, present and future are not understood as chronological, but rather simultaneously present. And while the process of reading film may differ from that of reading poetry, many of the questions Bogue proposes for the audience apply here to readers of poetry: “What specific difference motivates this connection? What new movement is created through this juxtaposition? How does this sequence interact with other sequences? How do the sequences form part of an assemblage of multiple image-interstice-image units that maintain a certain?” (2004, 338). But it is worth remembering that, despite the temptation to readily employ such questions for interpretive purposes, a methodology of sorts, the focus always remains on the search, and these questions are only examples of those which might emerge

through intensive reading and the affective nature of the signs. As such, they have the potential, in the stilling space of reflexion, to both recognize symptoms of colonial settlement, and disrupt them.

Disrupting the Colonial Tongue

Finally, as a minor literature, we might anticipate ways, many already mentioned, in which Dumont's poetry serves to deterritorialize the language of colonization. In doing so, once again we might look to how words, phrases and sentences are made to stutter and stammer, perhaps even more prevalent in poetry than other genres. The poem *Letter to Sir John A. MacDonald* (2015, 9) provides one of the best examples of the consequential deterritorialization of language, written in a way that demonstrates the potential for language to both colonize, and resist. It is this sense of collective resilience that is established in the opening lines, where words and associations are deterritorialized – literally broken across lines and within lines:

*We're still here
after Meech Lake and
one no-good-for-nothing-Indian
holdin-up-the-train,
stalling the 'Cabin syllables / Nouns of settlement,
/...steel syntax [and] / The long sentence of its exploitation'
and John, that goddamned railroad never made this a great nation,
cause the railway shut down*

Here the racist and derogatory voice of colonial governance are subverted through multiple disturbances: dripping irony, broken syntax and shifts in metaphoric and literal senses of the train which both derails and deterritorializes the myth of progress surrounding Canada's railway. Dumont borrows lines directly from Canadian socialist-leaning poet, F.R. Scott's *Laurentian Shield*, echoing but also intensifying his questioning of industrial Capitalist progress. Deleuze and Guattari suggest that minor literature "must break forms, encourage ruptures and new sproutings [and] when a form is broken, one must reconstruct the content that will necessarily be part of a rupture in the order of things" (K, 28). Here Scott's lines, himself a settler, are employed productively to shift emphasis and interject fresh associations and lines of inquiry. In their more concentrated form, the sibilance and consonance of the 't' sounds further

accentuate the stuttering of language, this time drawing attention not only to a questioning of cold 'steel' progress, but also to the violence against Indigenous peoples. The phrase 'Nouns of settlement' is made much more shocking in its inferences, particularly in a poem highlighting the resilience and courage of Indigenous populations standing against government and private interests. In this context, Scott's words take on a whole new life and degree of affective conveyance which directly align with a minor literature's ability to use the dominant language to dis[order] its common sense.

As with any discussion of affections, but especially those coming from a colonial settler, it is important to remember that my observations and experiences are not intended to be generalizable statements of effect, but rather, by default, are limited to my own encounters. These are but explorations into how selections of Dumont's texts appear to have worked on my own constitution. And while I might venture to read specific elements or constellations of elements as signs or symptoms, I have tried as much as possible to reserve such pretensions to my non-Indigenous symptomatology of colonial conditions.

Schizoanalysis: Breaking Down Molar Identities and Colonial Codes

As discussed previously, Deleuze and Guattari emphasize the ways in which art, in connection with other machinic components, is capable of generating forces of both philosophic and political urgency. As they explain,

As an assemblage, a book has only itself, in connection with other assemblages and in relation to other bodies without organs. We will never ask what a book means, as signified or signifier; we will not look for anything to understand in it. We will ask what it functions with, in connection with what other things it does or does not transmit intensities, in which other multiplicities its own are inserted and metamorphosed. (ATP, 4)

In this section I propose a kind of schizoanalysis, consider ways in which Dumont's poetry functions with the political challenges faced in dismantling the constraining and often violent forces of colonization, and in particular, those residing in subjugated groups of colonial settlers. Speaking to the condition of colonization, Bignall summarizes that Deleuze [and Guattari] proceeds according to two important questions. The first, critical in nature, asks: "what virtual forces have made the present what it is?" while the second, more 'speculative' and constructive asks: "if the actual present is to become an alternative present of a particular preferred type (e.g., postcolonial), what forces of actualisation are needed to bring it into being?" (2008, 129). Both questions align with the negative and positive tasks of Deleuze and Guattari's process of schizoanalysis.

In the interests of relational conciliation, it is worth noting that this process appears commensurable with that proposed by Marie Battiste, who suggests two pillars of decolonization: the first which is deconstruction: "a term used for dismantling cognitive and cultural colonialisms and education, a reflexive process of unlearning, recovery and transforming the education and knowledge systems while ameliorating, unpacking and unsettling the discriminatory discourses and patterns of Eurocentric colonialism and institutions, organizations and associations and academic disciplinary traditions" (2021). Battiste's second pillar, to be discussed further in the next section, refers to reconstruction which involves "addressing the processes needed to recover and restore and rebuild from the

erasures and marginalization of indigenous peoples, knowledge systems, languages and self-determination as well as all the cross-cultural or crosscutting issues that colonialism has inflicted on diverse groups of women, gay, lesbian, trans, two spirited peoples as well as the multiple abilities and disabilities of people across Canada” (2021).

Turning to the first pillar, this seems to align with Deleuze and Guattari’s emphasis that “schizoanalysis must devote itself with all its strength to the necessary destructions. Destroying beliefs and representations” (AO, 314). As well, the deconstruction process also relates to Deleuze’s conceptualization of violence to thought, in this case, initiated through the medium of poetry. As a non-Indigenous Canadian, not only do I accept my ethical and democratic obligation to support Indigenous movements of resurgence and cultural reclamation in the interests of conciliation, but I share a concern for all life and *a life* that is best supported, in my mind, by active dissolution of those forces of colonization and capitalism that threaten the survival of the planet. It is worth noting that while non-Indigenous subjects have lived with many privileges and avoided the suffering experienced by many Indigenous peoples, the maintenance of these advantages have not been without heavy costs. Stated more emphatically, we might look to the title of Coulthard’s article: “For Our Nations to Live, Capitalism Must Die” (2013). As non-Indigenous, in our conscious or unconscious complacency, denial or ignorance of how colonialism and capitalism have shaped our lives, we have also been denied access to experiences, encounters and imaginaries of alternative ways of living. Guattari expresses a similar sentiment in the realization that “One must admit that a certain universalist representation of subjectivity, as it had been embodied by the capitalistic colonialism of the West and the East, is now bankrupt, and we are unable to measure fully the consequences of such a failure” (1996, 194). Such failure has consequences for all life.

In contrast to the violence explored in *Scorched*, which was largely historical in nature, albeit with clear residues of personal and collective trauma, in considering the work of Marilyn Dumont, wide ranging in content and expression, readers are confronted with both narrative and affective violence of another kind. In the case of settler colonialism in Canada, not only do

we recognize the atrocities that were committed throughout our history, but as Patrick Wolfe points out, “settler colonizers come to stay: invasion is a structure not an event” and that “elimination is an organizing principal of settler-colonial society rather than a one-off (and superseded) occurrence” (2006, 388). Structural or systemic violence is woven into the habitus of daily life, embedded in virtually every layer of society: colonial impositions on child-care and parenting, language, education, media, justice and jurisprudence, etc. From the standpoint of a colonial settler, all of us are implicated in this majoritarian monoculture and fully territorialized into the ontological and epistemological norms that come with it. As Donald exclaims, colonization has imposed “an extended process of denying relationships. Everybody has been colonised. It doesn’t matter what colour your skin is, or where you’re from” (2010). And while we may now be at a point where we can acknowledge the harm that was done in the name of our European ancestors, we, too bare, the questions and ethical challenges that come with our continued place of privilege and continued enjoyment of the spoils many of colonization. The processes of colonialism generated colonized subjectivities, and by doing so, many colonial settlers have either become complacent or have actively supported the propagation and reinforcement of the very forces that further actualize colonial subjugation.

What John Dewey saw as the ‘function’ of art to “to break through the crust of conventionalized and routine consciousness” (1927, 183), is deepened by Deleuze and Guattari’s focus on art’s work at the level of the unconscious level of the virtual assemblage. The crust of convention, or what Vandana Shiva refers to as the monolith of the monocultures of the West, characterizes the majoritarian positionality of the colonial settler as well as many who have been assimilated into the world view and ontology that dominates so many of the institutions and practices of our society. As she contends,

Emerging from a dominating and colonising culture, modern knowledge systems are themselves colonizing. The knowledge and power nexus is inherent in the dominant system because, as a conceptual framework, it is associated with a set of values based on power which emerged with the rise of commercial capitalism...Dominant knowledge also destroys the very conditions for alternatives to exist, very much like the introduction of monocultures destroying the very conditions for diverse species to exist. (1993, 2)

If, as Shiva observes, colonialism and capitalism define the majoritarian socius of our time, then the introduction of Indigenous literature offers one way to disturb the assemblages responsible. And as it disturbs, its fabulating function seeds conditions for connection with the outside, potentially opening the assemblage to the vitality of difference and new desires to flow. As Arun Saldanha states,

What makes the concept of assemblage compelling is precisely the unexpected, jarring, non-local elements it uncovers. The 'so what?' question theoretically ambitious geographers often get should by assemblage geography be straightforwardly answered 'to disturb hegemonic desire! to better intervene!' (2012, 197)

Pam Alldred and Nick Fox also remind us that the ways in which we respond to questions of “how social continuity is sustained and how change may be effected” (2017, 1165) are largely determined by the social theories we apply. For most, theories of social justice posit macropolitics promoting strategies such as education or awareness campaigns, protests, blockades, lobbying, subversive, and noncompliance. Importantly, these projects are commonly aligned with identity politics whereby individuals ‘identify’ themselves as sharing common characteristics and concerns and act together to demand justice, often in relation to the majoritarian status quo. In the case of colonization, Indigenous populations have a long list of grievances: direct and systemic racism; inequities reflected in lower standards of living conditions, undrinkable water, unequal opportunities and resources for education, limited access to and provision of healthcare; lack of rights to prohibit extraction and further environmental degradation; minimal reparations or compensations for the violence and losses they have suffered under years of colonialism; and justifiable claims to restoration of land and cultural rights – including rights to language, self-governance and education. At the core of these injustices are tensions between populations past and present who self-identify as Indigenous and non-Indigenous, the latter who have settled on these lands and consciously or unconsciously adopted colonial infrastructures and practices. At the risk of oversimplification, this encapsulates the dynamics of the identity politics at the centre of virtually all colonized countries in which colonizers maintain primary social controls and decision making.

Once again it is worth emphasizing that though there may be a place for macropolitics, my emphasis here is on micropolitics. While I think of macropolitics as working with proverbial hammer – at the level of cognition and the conscious subject, micropolitics works with the file, at the molecular level, at the conditions or forces which fuel the unconscious and preconscious. Some will argue that because of the clarity and concreteness of action, and the speed of galvanization, macropolitics are better suited for the urgency of today's demands. But in so far as they are attached to specific identities, many of these strategies are unfortunately also subject to both short- and long-term limitations, and the prospect of continued conflicts in the future along axes of 'us' and 'them' divisions. One way of distinguishing the respective theories that drive these two levels of political response is according to the ways they think about difference and therefore change. As Bignall points out, while difference is often central to critique and action, "the way difference is itself conceptualized shapes the way a problem is defined and so also sets parameters for the sorts of critical actions that may be taken in response to the perceived problem" (2007b, 199).

Difference in Degree: Comparison to what? The epistemic challenge to identity politics

As discussed, identities, molar in nature, are based on perceptions of differences by comparison. Conceptualized by Deleuze as difference-by-degree, identities are distinguished and judged in reference to the majoritarian status quo. Binary and dialectical in nature, 'otherness' is, as Bignall suggests, measured in terms of "perceived degrees of inequality or disadvantage calculated as deviance" (2007b, 199) from what is often considered the 'positive standard,' or what Jagodzinski refers to as a "monolithic transcendent empty signifier that structures the critique" (2020, 111). Historically, the 'other' is identified through characteristics relative to a centre of power – white, male, heterosexual, Christian, able-bodied, middle-upper class etc. Difference-by-degree, with respect to any identified 'other,' hinges on lack, or negative difference, "a 'not-'... defined in relation to a primary and positive norm" (111). In consideration of Canada's history of colonization, these judgements, including racism, have been used to justify not only violence to Indigenous populations, including a residential school system aimed at cultural and ethnic genocide, but also expropriation of land and breaches of

treaty agreements such as extraction rights. Issues of inequity are verifiable by striking statistics in virtually every institution, including justice, prison, healthcare, food and water provisions and, of course, education. Today, representations of identities are, as Jagodzinski points out, prone to forces of opportunism, marketing, electoral campaigning targeting special interest groups, such that populations “can be transformed through the spread of a viral ‘emotional contagion’ that mimics a swarm mentality” (2020, 110). We have seen examples of this in movements such as *Me Too*, *Black Lives Matter* which quickly caught the attention and both positive and negative emotional reactions of people around the globe. Inevitably, questions begin to circulate as to whether these political actions truly represent all those who share an implicated identity and who are implicated in the charges made. As lines are drawn around opposing camps, several concerns arise which should be considered regarding a macropolitics resting on identity, many of which are insinuated through affective signs emerging from Dumont’s poetry.

Identity as Confinement

The first and perhaps most significant of these is the limited and limiting nature of representation: what characteristics become associated with a labelled identity, which are deemed ‘essential,’ and how much deviation is ‘acceptable.’ As identities become more and more sedimented in the wider population, and more officially recognized by authority bodies, those ‘identified’ become subject to either misrepresentation or imposed representations both from without and from within. As Dumont herself acknowledges, the “19th Century notion of culture as static . . . is founded on the belief that there exists in the evolution of cultures, a pristine culture which if it responds to change is no longer pure” (1993, 47). She points to both directions of policing identity in her prose poem, *Circle the Wagons* (1996). It opens with the line, “There it is again, the circle, that goddamned circle, as if we thought in circles, judged things on the merit of their circularity, as if all we ate was bologna and bannock, drank Tetley tea,” and leads to the question “is there nothing more than the circle in the deep structure of native literature?” The blunt force of the question, along with the heavy sardonic tone of the preceding words, affectively challenges the reader with the unexpected. What does a reader do

with such an assertion? What is the deep structure to which the speaker alludes? Dumont does not make the reader's position easy, and in some ways, they cannot help but sense the contempt in her voice for any who come to this encounter with essentialist expectations. But the force of representation that figuratively 'circles' and 'cages' her, is also imposed from within, as the speaker recognizes the threat of judgement and rejection should she not adequately perform certain cultural identifiers: "There are times when I feel that if I don't have a circle or the number four or legend in my poetry, I am lost, just a fading urban Indian caught in all the trappings of Doc Martens, cappuccinos and foreign films." With boundaries seemingly fixed, she is confronted with a choice of allegiances – *us* or *not us* or *not quite us*. The poem echoes statements Dumont makes elsewhere with respect to the pigeonholing of Indigenous writers, and how identity politics factors into the expectations of readers, interpreters, and publishers:

If you are old, you are supposed to write legends, that is, stories that were passed down to you from your elders. If you are young, you are expected to relate stories about foster homes, street life and loss of culture and if you are in the middle, you are supposed to write about alcoholism or residential school. And somehow throughout this, you are to infuse everything you write with symbols of the native world view, that is: the circle, mother earth, the number four or the trickster figure. In other words, positive images of nativeness.(1993, 47)

In this way, identity politics territorialize codes and expectations that limit both creation and reception of art and in turn the degree to which it can stray from common sense or habituated images of thought.

Failure to account for Differences within the group: Hierarchies of Identity

In another poem, *Leather and Naugahyde* (1996, 77), Dumont draws our attention to further tensions emerging from intragroup judgements, not unlike the panoptic gaze inferred in *Circle the Wagons*. Here, however, we encounter factions based on hierarchies within the group, according to which members are scrutinized in terms of measures of purity, as in this case between the Métis speaker and a so-called 'treaty guy' with whom she is having coffee and "laugh-/ing at how crazy 'the mooniyaw' are in the city." But even with the shared antipathy towards a common target – the white man – the tone and mood dramatically shift at the point

they introduce themselves to each other: “I say I’m Métis like it’s an apology and he says, ‘mmh,’ like he forgives me, like he’s got a big heart and mine’s pumping diluted blood.” Ironically, such degrees of hierarchies, according to oral records, did not exist pre-colonization and the distinctions, including the allusion here to blood quantum, have largely been generated, propagated and maintained by the colonial government. Recognizing “the arbitrariness and contingent nature of all representation,” Jagodzinski suggests that “identity is always already subject to transformative change within the dialogue of power and resistance, as well as refusal and recognition. Identification and disidentification are in constant play in this way of thinking” (2020, 109).

Dumont’s poem also points to another concern within identity politics, which is that it often fails to adequately address differences within. While both Métis and Treaty or First Nations share similar histories and complaints, as the poem suggests, this does not prevent tensions from arising. Divisions are created, even if not necessarily acknowledged, across arbitrary borders, often through affective gestures: “he’s got ‘this look,’ that says he’s leather and I’m naughahyde.” Citing Uma Narayan, Renée Hulan emphasizes that “failing to account for differences within groups is a danger of talking about cultural difference. While those with the power to label, in fields such as the academy, government or media, cast this reductive gaze, the internal characteristics and differences of groups are either ignored or exaggerated” (2000, 78). Identity labels, no matter how much they proliferate in attempts to address each new group, simply cannot address all of the differences within identity groups, particularly as they continue to change over time. Pry into any named identity label, and we will find countless variations of expression experienced or in the process of formation. We might consider, as suggested earlier, that over the history of ‘queer’ identities, the binary of heterosexual/homosexual has continuously expanded to the abbreviated catch-all 2SLGBTQIAAP⁶. In an earlier work foreshadowing and lamenting the rise of identity politics, Stephen Epstein: “Gone were the dreams of liberating society by releasing ‘the homosexual in everyone.’ Instead,

⁶ 2SLGBTQIA+ : the current acronym for two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex and asexual and the add + includes other ways individuals might express their sexuality and gender outside of the gender binary or heteronormativity

homosexuals concentrated their energies on social advancement as homosexuals” (1998, 129), to which Jamie Heckert adds, “The goal of liberation was traded for an ideal of equality between homosexuality and heterosexuality” (2005, 11). Though some may find the analogy to decolonization lacking, and by no means do I wish to insinuate how Indigenous peoples ought to address identities, it highlights my concern with the process initiated by colonial instruments of control such as the *Indian Act* (Gov. of Canada, 1985/2019), as well as underlying questions raised through the debates around Indigenous rights and blood quantum.

The challenge of authority: who has the right to define identity or represent an identity?

Arising from concerns of intragroup differences and colonially inspired hierarchies, are questions such as ‘who is or isn’t represented?’ and ‘who has the authority over representation?’ As Jagodzinski observes, “deconstruction raises impossible issues as to who has the ‘right’ to represent (speak and artistically address) its ethnic or cultural group. Who indeed ‘belongs’ – via bloodlines, linguistic ties, and so on?” (2020, 111). While many of Dumont’s poems disrupt notions of authority, the affective voice is especially forceful in her poem, *WHAT WE DON’T NEED*, in which she challenges not only the paternalistic ‘need’ for ‘experts’ but the conceptualization of such expertise. Whether it be with regard to “direct action,” “languages,” “how to be farmers,” “creation stories,” or “to sell us script as our homeland,” the speaker rejects outsiders who falsely proclaim their intentions as representing the interests of Indigenous populations. In the closing line she justifiably implies the forces at work arguably as both despotic and capitalist: “no, what we don’t need is another expert who can be bought by industry and government to lead us to our own destruction.”

Which voices are loudest and which voices are not heard?

The question of authority over representation – who speaks for the group and for what concerns do they speak – raises important concerns of intersectionality. It should not be surprising, as the history of identity movements confirm, that the interests advocated by spokespersons for a movement, often self-selected, do not always ‘represent’ all members of the group. Not only does focus on any one category of identity fail to account for other

differences within the group, but it tends to, as Heckert states, “occlude discussion of the other key social divisions including race, gender and class” (2005, 11). As William Davies points out, referencing Nancy Fraser, “the inflation of recognition as a political category risked the displacement of material injustices, and the reification of simplistic identities, which could become increasingly insular” (2021, 85). Likewise, decades earlier Epstein notes the “peculiar paradox” of identity politics: “while affirming a distinctive group identity that legitimately differs from the larger society, this form of political expression simultaneously imposes a ‘totalizing’ sameness *within* the group” (1987, 156). A commonly cited example is the case of feminist struggle, in which interests of Black women and non-binary women were overshadowed by the dominant representation of white heterosexual women.

More recently, we might consider anti-racism movements such as Black Lives Matter (BLM), recognizing that within the population of those who self-identify as Black, the concerns of affluent, male, black citizens are different from those of single mothers living in poverty. Yet rarely are issues of economic inequities targeted for redress. As Sarah Ahmed illustrates so eloquently in her book, *On Being Included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life*, “the arrival of the term “diversity” involves the departure of other (perhaps more critical) terms, including “equality,” “equal opportunities,” and “social justice” (2012,1), and that “responsibility for diversity and equality is unevenly distributed” (2012,4). Likewise, Walter Benn Michaels observes, correctly I believe, that, “What the right wants is culture wars instead of class wars because as long as the wars are about identity instead of money, it doesn’t matter who wins. And the left gives it what it wants” (2006, 109). It is indeed troubling that many associating themselves with the BLM movement have largely ignored the intersections of poverty and gender, and that the self-identified founders of the movement have become financially wealthy over the course of the past few years (Morrisson, 2021). With an estimated 49.5 billion endowed to “addressing racial equality,” as Jan et. al. point out, the “analysis of unprecedented corporate commitments toward racial justice causes reveals the limits of their power to remedy structural problems” (2021). As Michaels observes, “in a world where the gap between the rich

and the poor keeps on getting worse—the obsession with identity distracts us from that gap or, worse still, tells us a false but comforting story about it” (117).

With respect to colonization, affective imagery of poverty is especially evident in Dumont’s second collection, *Green Girl Dreams of Mountains (2001)* which includes a number of poems shedding light on the homeless in Vancouver’s downtown, but also depictions of what are presumably family memories, contracted into vignettes of poverty. For example, in the poem *ghosted (33-34)*, she describes her mother leaving her father, knowing that “the whiskey will loosen his anger/ at the whiteman who is always boss/ at his own cheap labour/ at the money that never goes far enough.” Of course, different priorities within the same identity group does not, or should not mean that multiple battles cannot be fought at the same time. But with competing appeals for attention, the audience will often choose to endorse and rally behind positions which require the least sacrifice of their own privileges. With respect to education, while there is now widespread observance of special event days, such as Orange Shirt Day, most shifts have been token gestures, and have done little to address issues of poverty, clean water on reserve lands, and sexual violence. A resurgence of supports for cultural events have done little to alleviate more profound and demanding inequities largely attributable to colonial violence.

It should not be surprising then, that Dumont also draws our attention to the unique order of systemic, verbal, and physical violence experienced by women, as well as their misrepresentation and underrepresentation in political struggle. Evident in several poems such as *Spineless* and *the dimness of mothers and daughters*, it is especially striking in the poem, *if we are pictured too easily (2007, 4-5)*. Here, the speaker figuratively, but more directly, points to misrepresentation and the corresponding mistreatment of women, acknowledging how “brown flour and salt women/ know intimately the look of reproach and desire/ some men hold for us,” and how a woman’s appearance “in a certain light unsettles them/ threatens their ambitions/ if they take us anywhere, but/ the backseat of a Chevy.” In my discussions with Indigenous Elders, several have mentioned the irony that although traditional views held

women in the highest regard, many colonially prescribed band council members and national Indigenous spokespeople are male. Meanwhile it should not be surprising that Indigenous women in Canada have concerns which are often neither shared nor voiced by those acknowledged as 'official' authorities. In *SQUAW POEMS* (1996, 34-35), Dumont examines how one of the most prominent racial and colonial slurs becomes internalized, leaving in its wake profound psychological wounds: "Indian women know all too well the power of the word/ squaw.... /As a young girl, I held the image of that woman in my mind and/ she became the measure of what I should never be."

As Dumont observes in one interview, "settler colonialism and the patriarchy have denied the power that Indigenous women hold because acknowledging it is dangerous. Before the first contact, many Indigenous nations ascribed power to the life-giving powers of women. Women held influential positions in decision-making; however, the patriarchy and colonialism deferred to male power" (2021). Dumont's poem *if we are pictured too easily* draws our attention to this diminution in both respect and value, emphasizing that "our denigration/ started long ago/ a tradition of gentlemen/ explorers, fur traders, company men/ investing little more than the fickle heart of commerce/ in our company." Once again there is the underlying allusion to the oppressive forces of capitalism and economic inequities, often overlooked in today's focus on race and identity. In so far as patriarchy is very much associated with the majoritarian territorializations of colonialism and at least partially rooted in the axiomatics of capitalism, the dominance of the masculine that is rooted in Euro-western culture is very much a target of Dumont's expressions of resistance. As she shares in one talk, "I watched my mother and aunties hold all the threads that kept us together as an extended family through poverty, colonial racism, ill health, addictions and personal tragedy. We held our communities together, along with others who identified as women, not as goddesses or earth mothers, but as tough women who were capable of getting things done (2018, 19). It is in fact the Cree word for woman, *Iskwew*, from which the title "Fire Brings Us Together" derives; as she explains, *iskwew* is related to the word for 'fire,' *Isko'teui*, *And fire brings us together* for warmth for food for connection emotional, spiritual connection to other animate beings of earth: plant, animal"

(2018, 19). Later, she adds, “Perhaps this femalecentric knowledge is part of a genetic, intergenerational transference of collective resistance, a collective consciousness of action, of cooperation in the face of obstacles.... just as Indigenous rights are often framed around colonial and patriarchal notions of man as leader or man as hunter, there also exists the conception of man as writer, which overlooks the efforts of Indigenous women over the centuries in maintaining our familial connections and community-sustaining efforts.” (31)

This presents a stark contrast to the most visceral images in these poems which project images alluding to sexual brutality. The poem *if we are pictured too easily*, for example, concludes with a brief allusion to three specific incidents of gendered violence: “a twelve-year-old Indian girl is raped in Saskatchewan,” an Indian woman is set on fire in Edmonton” and “many Indian women disappear on a pig farm in Port Coquitlam,” each as moving in their brevity as in the images they might conjure. Similarly, the title of the poem *HELEN BETTY OSBORNE* (1996, 36) points to another horrific depiction of gender-based exploitation and cruelty, a kidnapping and murder that took place in 1971. The case, interrogated and extrapolated in the poem, is conditioned by the historical devaluing and misrepresentations of Indigenous women which, as the opening line implies, is a much more universal experience of women: “Betty, if I set out to write this poem about you/ it might turn out instead/ to be about me/ or any one of/ my female relatives.” The repeating hypothetical, “it might be about,” ironically sets up the actualization, albeit inconclusive, of a multiplicity of imaginings revolving around the word ‘about.’ As the speaker continues in the next stanza, “it might even turn out to be/ about our grandmothers / beasts of burden in the fur trade/ skinning, scraping, pounding, packing/ left behind for 'British Standards of Womanhood,’” she implicates colonial exploitation and judgement deriving from less respectful Eurocentric patriarchies. The final lines of the poem reveal a sharp escalation in tone and imagery, in its depictions of further defilement of bodies reduced to targets of violence and abuse, “it might turn out to be/ about hunting season instead/ about 'open season' on native women...it might be about the 'townsfolk' (gentle word)/ townsfolk who 'believed native girls were easy' / and 'less likely to complain if a sexual proposition led to violence.’” Such images beg the question: is it any wonder that today our

nation is dealing with the crises of missing and murdered Indigenous women, a crisis that can no longer be ignored, even by colonial settlers and the colonial government?

Politics of Recognition

The politics of recognition, related directly to identity politics, is most commonly associated with or is in reaction to Charles Taylor's influential paper of the same name, which holds that identity,

is partly shaped by recognition or its absence, often by the misrecognition of others, and so a person or group of people can suffer real damage, real distortion, if the people or society around them mirror back to them a confining or demeaning or contemptible picture of themselves. Nonrecognition or misrecognition can inflict harm, can be a form of oppression, imprisoning someone in a false, distorted, and reduced mode of being. (1994. 25)

The intention of a politics of recognition, according to Hasana Sharp, is to acknowledge that “the damage produced by histories of conquest, genocide, slavery, colonialism, cultural and linguistic imperialism, and millennia of patriarchy is not healed by formal equality, greater access to jobs, housing, and social services alone” (2009, 86). In the Canadian context, Coulthard suggests the politics of recognition refers to “the now expansive range of recognition-based models of liberal pluralism that seek to reconcile Indigenous claims to nationhood with Crown sovereignty via the accommodation of Indigenous identities in some form of renewed relationship with the Canadian state” (2007, 438). However, as positive as this might appear, ‘accommodation’ remains under the control of the state.

Though questions of recognition appear throughout Dumont's work, it is her prose poem *it crosses my mind* (1996, 78) that perhaps best conveys issues of recognition, introducing signs of tension that weigh not only on the Indigenous speaker in the poem, but for the non-Indigenous reader who likely lives with the privilege of never having to face the questions she asks. Nor their implications. Reflecting on whether to assume the identity of ‘Canadian citizen’ the speaker reflects “will it / matter that we call ourselves Métis, Métisse, Mixed Blood or Aboriginal, will sovereignty matter or will we just slide off the level playing field, / echoing their

self absorbed anthem in the wind...” Each of these questions, rhetorical or not, deserves an essay unto itself. Intensifying the poems affective impact are the images of division, assimilation, iconic identifiers of patriotism, capitalism and colonial order, and interrogations of belonging and exclusion as exemplified in the line, “It crosses my mind to wonder where we fit in this ‘vertical mosaic,’ this color colony; the urban pariah, the displaced and surrendered to apartment blocks, shopping malls, superstores and giant screens.” Notably, we sense how recognition comes at the deeply disturbing cost of colonial assimilation.

Not surprisingly, Coulthard rejects the politics of recognition, which Taylor grounds in Hegel’s master-slave dialectic of reciprocity, arguing that in its current form, it “promises to reproduce the very configurations of colonial power that Indigenous peoples’ demands for recognition have historically sought to transcend” (439). In any identity groups pursuit of ‘recognition,’ or appeal for equality, there is always the possibility of “replicat[ing] the society which they attempt to criticize” (13). This recalls Audre Lorde’s often echoed words, highlighted in a citation from Riki Anne Wilchins: “I cannot escape the nagging suspicion that gay liberation has disregarded Audre Lorde's oft quoted dictum that 'the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house,' and has, instead, contented itself with simply building a small, yet tastefully furnished addition out back” (in Heckert, 3). Drawing from Frantz Fanon, Coulthard argues that “the purportedly diversity-affirming forms of state recognition and accommodation defended by some proponents of contemporary liberal recognition politics can subtly reproduce nonmutual and unfree relations rather than free and mutual ones.” (2014, 17). Referencing Fanon’s earlier critique, he adds that “when delegated exchanges of recognition occur in real world contexts of domination the terms of accommodation usually end up being determined by and in the interests of the hegemonic partner in the relationship” (17). This, it seems to me, is consistent with Deleuze and Guattari’s usurpation by despotic regimes of signs and majoritarian territorializations. Similarly, Sami Atassi refers to a kind of false or ‘delusory decolonization’ resulting from acts ‘against,’ which as he points out, are “still a response to information that has colonized the mind. ... Those who experience delusory decolonization must come to realize that they are both the subjects and objects of oppression within the hegemonic world order

(2013, 99). As Deleuze and Guattari might argue, while lines might have taken flight, they have immediately been reterritorialized into the same structural confines.

No doubt there is considerably resistance to this conceptualization of decolonization, especially for those who have reaped the richest spoils and enjoyed the most privileges. Grosz emphasizes, in agreement with others here, that we must begin to imagine a future that is “not the past and the present in idealized form,” one in which “subjects and social categories privileged or subordinated in the past or present have a future in which that social status has no guarantees” (2011, 95). As she states, the question facing all political struggle is “how to transform the present, not just reproduce its privileges?” (95), a topic I will return to later.

Faciality

Consistent with processes of schizoanalysis, in examining issues through Deleuze’s theory of actualization, Bignall draws attention to the underlying conditions which challenge conciliation:

the underlying political problem is not the 'difference' of Indigenous society and its relation of disadvantage, deficiency or opposition to mainstream ('White') society. The problem is precisely that 'race' relations were shaped in the context of colonial conquest which inflected the initial attitude of orientation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous bodies, and that the present has subsequently been actualized through this imperial mode of sociability. It is the established nature of the relation between these two identities that constitutes the actual. (2007b, 204)

This distinction points to Deleuze and Guattari’s conceptualization of faciality, which helps to clarify not only the grounds for racism, but the successful normalization or territorialization of Eurocentric socialization in general. The ways we talk about race, what Sam Opondo refers to as ‘race-habits’ “rely on the recognition of individuals and types, and how such recognition is used to configure the world as a stable distribution of places, times, identities and competencies, that is, of people who are already ‘formed’ and always already ‘in place’” (2013, 248). As Bignall explains elsewhere, following Deleuze and Guattari, “Faciality corresponds with a politics of representative identity, in which the recognition of difference is achievable only in relation to that identity” (2012, 396).

From an Indigenous perspective, the title of Dumont's first collection, *MEMOIRS OF A REALLY GOOD BROWN GIRL*" (1996, 28-31), sardonically challenges the implications of faciality. These are further illustrated in the associated prose poem which traces the life of a young Métis woman who struggles to live up to the standards of her classmates: "I am a foreigner, I stay in my seat, frozen, afraid to move, afraid to make a mistake, afraid to speak... so I don't talk, don't volunteer answers to questions the teacher asks. I become invisible" (1996, 29). Likewise in the *SQUAW POEMS*, mentioned earlier, the speaker, fearing judgment, "became what Jean Rhys phrased, 'aggressively respectable.' I'd/ be so goddamned respectable that white people would feel/ slovenly in my presence" (34). The work of faciality is especially stark in the later line, "I would become the Indian princess, not the squaw dragging/ her soul after laundry, meals, needy kids and abusive husbands." The Eurocentric image of princesses and the fantasies of the Disnified Pocahontas are conjured as market-driven images of desire, charged by the 'lack' infused within the despotic Colonial regime of signs and the codifications of faciality.

Patricia MacCormack clarifies that, "When we are facialised, we are made visible only within one dominant system and in the only manner the dominant system understands" (2004, 136). In other words, she adds, "certain bodies are read and valued according to how they differ from the majoritarian face" (136). But judgements do not stop at the signification of body and face; as Deleuze and Guattari point out, the "social production of face" or the 'facialization machine,' – "performs the facialization of the entire body and all its surroundings and objects, and the landscapification of all worlds and milieus" (ATP, 181), meaning that by inference, all things cultural are also captured in affective irrationality: "racism operates by the determination of degrees of deviance in the White-Man face" (ATP, 178). And while discrimination becomes an obvious consequence, they also associate faciality with the deleterious role played by the scapegoat in subjugated groups: "In a signifying regime, the scapegoat...is charged with everything that was 'bad' in a given period, that is, everything that resisted signifying signs" (ATP, 116). And sadly, the most identifiable scapegoats today are those most visibly different in appearance. Ahmed, for example, relates the declarations of the Aryan nations with the various "representations of both the rights of the subject and the grounds of the nation as already under threat.... the emotional reading of hate that works to bind the imagined White subject

and nation together” (2001, 10). Sadly, closer to home the majoritarian imagination, territorialized within Canada’s problematic grand narrative, is quick to point the finger of accusation at both refugee populations and Indigenous peoples.

The Challenge to Belong

The focus thus far has been on various concerns with identity as defined through difference by degree, including, but not limited to issues of representation and overgeneralization. However, the argument would lack integrity without acknowledging the important role identity plays in generating the affective warmth of affirmation and belonging, which for many today, has become a necessary safe harbor, paradoxically, to escape issues already raised regarding majoritarian denial, exclusion, and disenfranchisement. If there is an argument to be made for the potential benefits of retaining some notion of identity it is in favour of victims rather than oppressors. In an interview with Di Brandt, Dumont explains, “I wrote about “brown” as a way to learn how to resist negative images of myself. It helped me have some inner resources to accept and love myself” (2018). Likewise, Dumont herself speaks of this in terms of her family’s annual pilgrimage to Lac Ste. Anne: “the affirmation of belonging — spiritually and ancestrally — was what sustained my parents through their physically demanding work and uneasy life in a southern Alberta town where Aboriginals were a disdained minority” (2015, 5). In the context of education, there are now several studies, as cited earlier, which reveal how students often respond to acts of racism and discrimination by seeking out and embracing affiliations with their own cultural or race groups (e.g., Stephen Quintana et. al, 2010; Maciel Hernández et. al., 2017). Despite the issues associated with it, identity becomes a necessary lifeline, a reinforced spine from which to resist the violence of faciality perpetrated by majoritarian groups. As Colebrook states, “*either* one subjects one’s desire to social norms *or* one falls back into the dark night of the undifferentiated” (2010d, 84), a daunting choice especially for many youth exposed to the turbulent pressures of adolescent social life.

It should be reiterated, however, that the necessity for such spaces of acceptance and safety have been generated by the kinds of identity problems associated with problematic relations with subjugated groups such as colonial settlers who propagate the crimes of abusive identification intrinsic to the colonial project, territorializing malicious codifications that have fabricated many of the us/them divisions that now define our world. Ideally, removing identity groupings would remove polarized camps of belonging and classrooms would be places where belonging is mutually sensed across all groups. Instead, welcoming classrooms are more often than not performative only, especially under the umbrella of multiculturalism, often amounts to nothing more than state mandated and colonial controlled conditions for recognition.

Beyond Identification: Difference Reconsidered

Against territories formed over generations of immersion within dominant representations of white-positive society, white-normalization, white-friendly, white-washing, white-colonizing, and white-domination, to which we might add further adjectives of patriarchal and capitalist, the process of schizoanalysis challenges us first to recognize and acknowledge and then destroy such representations. Not only because they are damaging, but primarily, as I will discuss shortly, because they are so limiting to the relationality and difference necessary to nurture life ... *a life*. My contention here is that Dumont's poetry potentially accomplishes both through the accumulation of affective connections to the reader. In the final lines of *it crosses my mind*, the speaker considers what the future will hold for her niece who, another generation removed, is one step further removed in terms of blood quantum, but "what will she name herself and will there come a time and can it be measured or predicted which she will stop naming herself." In these final words, Dumont intensifies both the limits to identity but also, I believe, the need to recognize difference in other ways. Recalling Deleuze's notion of pure difference, that which he associates with time and becoming, he states, "Difference becomes an object of representation always in relation to a conceived identity, a judged analogy, an imagined object or a perceived similitude.... For this reason, the world of representation is characterized by its inability to conceive of difference in itself;" (DR, 138)

With my focus aimed at the schizoanalysis of non-Indigenous readers, a micropolitics of decolonization stirred by Dumont's poetry turns our attention to the underlying conditions of subject creation. This is not intended as an antagonistic or contradictory move to strategies of macropolitics. As Sharp observes, "Although it would likely be cruel and foolish to abandon political efforts in the realm of representation that aim to repair the effects of genocide, slavery, and colonialism, a commitment to resist the gravest forms of injustice need not entail the eclipse of other creative and affirmative collective endeavors" (2009, 91). At the same time, many anti-colonial Indigenous scholars across the planet have started to shift strategies in the direction of resurgence, reclamation, and decolonization of subjectivities. As Walter D. Mignolo suggests,

For identification to be framed decolonially it would necessarily have to be articulated clearly in relation to coloniality. If, for example, coloniality describes the hidden process of erasure, devaluation, and disavowing of certain human beings, ways of thinking, ways of living, and of doing in the world – that is, coloniality as a process of inventing identifications – then for identification to be decolonial it needs to be articulated as "des-identification" and "re-identification," which means it is a process of delinking. (2014, 198)

Having outlined certain limitations of a politics of identity and recognition constructed around often unacknowledged assumptions of differences-by-degree, explicitly or implicitly measured with reference to a white, patriarchal, Eurocentric standard, an alternative strategy evolves from considerations at the level of the underlying assemblages responsible for the colonizing subjectivities.

Indeed, within the English classroom, regardless how subversive teachers may be, the micropolitical practice of schizoanalysis is perhaps the only true war machine they can ethically and effectively avail themselves of. Less pedantic in nature, and therefore less subject to accusations of social justice indoctrination such as those targeting teachers under current conservative regimes, a pedagogy of disturbance aims at expanding affective capacities and opening lines to possible futures, heretofore denied, or concealed through neo-liberal regimes of power, state and corporate. It is a pedagogy, however, that nevertheless demands a dismantling of colonial striations that limit the free movement of desire. From a non-

Indigenous perspective, realizing how we have initiated, assumed and often perpetuated many of the most deprecating representations against which Indigenous populations have struggled, we are faced with the question Deleuze and Guattari ask, particularly with respect to faciality and how bodies are marked by signification: “How do you dismantle the face?” (ATP, 186). A question which in turn leads us back to the focus on schizoanalysis, micropolitics, and their equally germane question related to how we can make a body without organs: “how can we unhook ourselves from the points of subjectification that secure us, nail us down to a dominant reality?” (ATP, 160). More directly related to decolonization, Bignall suggests that, “The task is to disrupt this problematic colonial actuality, and to reconstruct an alternative, postcolonial present” (2007b, 204).

While I have been relating the capacity of Dumont’s poetry to trouble identity politics, primarily in cognitive terms, as an artwork, its potential to disrupt and disturb at the micro level lies in its aesthetic or affective properties. In so far as it connects us to the Outside, it is capable of generating problems in the unconscious virtual, perhaps what Bignall refers to as the “capacity to problematize an existing social structure (colonialism)” (2007b, 198). This, she explains, “relies upon a concept of difference which raises the possibility of 'thinking otherwise'” (198). While politics of identity and recognition are constructed around often unacknowledged assumptions of differences-by-degree, explicitly or implicitly measured with reference to a white, patriarchal, Eurocentric standard, a search for an alternative strategy requires a different way of thinking difference. Rather than relying on comparative difference, the project of dismantling colonial sedimentation – a process of counter-actualization – requires recognition of what has been discussed earlier as difference-in-kind and thus targeting the underlying conditions of colonial settler assemblage.

Building from a metaphysics and ontology of difference by process, pure difference arises through gradients of intensity in the furnace of the unconscious, fueled by virtual connections that make up the unique assemblage of each organism. As stated, identity labels, understood from an ontology of immanence, cannot account for the molecular becomings that fall outside

language's ability to represent them. If we consider instead the world as May suggests, "composed not of identities that form and reform themselves, but of swarms of difference that actualize themselves into specific forms of identity" (2005, 114) we begin to recognize the metaphysical limitations behind conceptualizations of difference-in-degree. And by relying on the latter, we deny the steady flow of differences-in-kind, swarms of difference which "assure that the future will be open to novelty, to new identities and new relationships among them" (114). Bignall argues that what we perceive as actual reality is better understood as "an illusion about being which affirms the apparent 'given-ness' of existing bodies and obscures our better understanding that things have come to be as they are only through the productive process of actualization" (2007b, 201). As the virtual 'differentiates' across the immanent plane, it is in constant flux, contingent on connections across the multiple components of the assemblage. Responding to these two views of difference, it follows that while methods of macropolitics might work on identifying and undermining or eliminating specific sites of injustice perpetrated by identifiable sources of power, a micropolitics works on the underlying conditions that emerge or actualize into either reinforcing colonial mindsets or dismantling them. While colonization and decolonization may have their recognizable villains and heroes as well as identifiable movements and resistances, until the assemblages construct or actualize these subjects and subjugated groups are deterritorialized, *us* versus *them* relations will likely remain adversarial for years to come. The example Alldred and Fox offer of 'gendered expressions of power and oppression' that can be observed between students in schools cannot, they contend, "be explained by invoking abstracted structural forces such as 'patriarchy' or 'hegemonic masculinity' as explanations. Rather we need to explore the micropolitics of material forces and intensities operating within the daily round of events in and out of the classroom ... and how these establish relatively stable social forms" (2017, 1166). Forms which remind us once again of Wilhelm Reich's challenge: "why do people still tolerate being humiliated and enslaved, to such a point, indeed, that they *actually want* humiliation and slavery not only for others but for themselves?" (AO, 29, original emphasis). Again, it is worth remembering that though this question may apply to everyone, I am specifically and purposefully orienting my attention to colonial settlers enslaved by the dominant and dogmatic

colonial images of thought in which they are immersed and therefore of which they are largely unconscious. It is not surprising that Deleuze and Guattari associate these concerns with the “goal of schizoanalysis” which is “to show how, in the subject who desires, desire can be made to desire its own repression” (AO, 105). Elaborated,

The task of schizoanalysis is that of tirelessly taking apart egos and their presuppositions; liberating the prepersonal singularities they enclose and repress; mobilizing the flows they would be capable of transmitting, receiving, or intercepting; establishing always further and more sharply the schizzes and the breaks well below conditions of identity; and assembling the desiring-machines that countersect everyone and group everyone with others” (AO, 362).

Here, perhaps even more-so than with *Scorched*, I am aware of the political function of a minor literature, and how many Indigenous writers can use language, consciously or unconsciously, to collectively enunciate and either subvert assimilation or challenge colonial authority and subjugation. As Guattari contends, “to learn the intimate workings of this production [of subjectivity], these ruptures of meaning that are auto-foundational of existence - poetry today might have more to teach us than economic science, the human sciences and psychoanalysis combined” (C, 21). Encounters with art have the potential, then, to loosen (disturb) rigid structures that bind subjectivities and subjugated groups to limited ways of living in relation to human and non-human ecologies. As Ingrid Johnston notes,

A curriculum of English language arts that relies on canonized Western texts and standard forms of English may appear universalist and apolitical on the surface, yet is in reality culturally specific. Historically bound and embedded within a Eurocentric framework, this static kind of curriculum reflects a narrow view of a democratic society by authorizing narratives that consciously or unconsciously work towards a single voice, thereby repressing understanding of difference.” (2006, 78-79).

Considered at the molecular level, it is perhaps intuitive that a steady diet of majoritarian voices in literature narrows and excludes more generative encounters with difference and for difference. As these previous discussions suggest, text selection defined by relatability, *relevance*, or popularity not only helps to retain a static sense of identity within the reader’s *comfort-zone*, but serves also to reinforce the conscious and unconscious persuasion of grand narratives and normativities of despotic colonialism and the alluring axiomatics of capitalism through codifications of dominant territorializations. Conversely, limiting or excluding voices

conducive to affective relations of difference, serves to further sediment the complacent *settlement* of majoritarian subjectivity. Until recently, those which have been most obviously missing in our curriculum, especially in the interests of more expansive learning encounters, are the literary/artistic enunciations of affective difference produced by this land's Indigenous writers. As Taiaiake Alfred and Jeff Corntassel point out, "[T]here is a danger in allowing colonization to be the only story of Indigenous lives. It must be recognized that colonialism is a narrative in which the Settler's power is the fundamental reference and assumption, inherently limiting Indigenous freedom and imposing a view of the world that is but an outcome or perspective on that power" (2005,601).

Schizoanalysis as Destruction

In the process of schizoanalysis, the first positive task asks us to consider what machines drive us. More specifically in this case, what machines serve to perpetuate the structures, attitudes and relationships of colonization: not only how did we get to this point of privilege but how do we maintain it. Why is it that so many of us do not seem concerned, let alone curious? As Deleuze emphasizes,

[T]here are two ways to appeal to 'necessary destructions': that of the poet, who speaks in the name of a creative power, capable of overturning all orders and representations in order to affirm Difference in the state of permanent revolution which characterizes eternal return; and that of the politician, who is above all concerned to deny that which 'differs', so as to conserve or prolong an established historical order, or to establish a historical order which already calls forth in the world the forms of its representation. (DR 53)

As English teachers, I would contend that, knowingly or not, we are in a position to either reinforce colonial order and representation, or open students to the kind of differences that can break them down. As Simpson explains, colonialism has become so engrained in our lives that many do not even realize its machinery at work, let alone recognize the invidious nature of its crimes:

Colonialism or settler colonialism or dispossession or displacement or capitalism didn't seem complicated anymore. The mess I was wrapped in at birth didn't seem so inevitable. It seemed simple. Colonizers wanted the land. Everything else, whether it is legal or policy or economic or social, whether it was the Indian Act or residential schools

or gendered violence, was part of the machinery that was designed to create a perfect crime—a crime where the victims are unable to see or name the crime as a crime.
(2017,15)

Sadly, as much as it has been invisible to many of its victims, it has also been invisible to many of those complicit in and responsible for its domination of our society. Colonial settlers, particularly those such as I who have grown up immersed in the waters of Eurocentric values, privileges and ontologies. It is, of course, this ‘settlement’ which Dumont’s poetry has the potential to *unsettle*, in its affective capacity to disturb all molarities of colonization. While the TRC has definitely inspired changes to curricula across the country and differences in historical memories are coming to light, it is the aesthetic weight of Dumont’s poetry, its capacity to work on the unconscious assemblages, which confronts the non-Indigenous reader.

In the poem *Otipemisiwak* (2015, 7-8), for example, she contrasts the sardonic luxuriating image of the first prime minister, Macdonald, “swilling spirits” while ensconced “in some crystal case of glory”, to the images of Métis leader Louis Riel who wakes to “Gatlin gun sorrows/bullets, crosses and misguided soldiers” but nevertheless continued “envisioning/ what was inside the dimness/ how he dreamt of it ascending/ on its unseen limb/ how he wanted it to reflect/ like water.” The poem’s force is augmented with the mythos embedded in the title, which Dumont translates as “the Free People,” leaving the ambiguity of tone for the reader to work through; is it hopeful, naïve, foreboding?

It is worth keeping in mind that the positive tasks of reconstructing the body without organs or reworking the assemblage, occur simultaneously with the negative task of deconstruction, as Deleuze and Guattari suggest: “In its destructive task, schizoanalysis must proceed as quickly as possible, but it can also proceed only with great patience, great care, by successively undoing the representative territorialities and reterritorializations through which a subject passes in his individual history... there are several layers, several planes of resistance that come from within or are imposed from without” (AO, 318). In its affective capacity to disturb, Dumont’s poetry does, for the most part, proceed with careful destructions, tending to provoke questions rather than preach answers. In so doing, it disturbs the assemblage’s fixation on one territory. For

example, questions and tensions emerge from the poem discussed earlier, *Letter to Sir John A. Macdonald* (2015, 9-10), in which the myth of 'progress' associated with railroads and manifest destiny is challenged by "one no-good-for-nothin-Indian/ holdin-up-the-train." Disrupting the myth are images of Métis who "were railroaded/ by some steel tracks that didn't last/ and some settlers who wouldn't settle/ and it's funny we're still here and callin ourselves halfbreed."

When considering the conditions that have generated colonial subjectivities, it is relatively easy to find sources of myth and propaganda propagated by government agents encouraging settlement. But more influential in maintaining conditions of colonial subjugation, at least at the molecular level, is the absence of rhizomatic appendages that were denied both Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations. These include what Coulthard calls the 'grounded normativity' of "modalities of Indigenous land-connected practices and longstanding experiential knowledge that inform and structure our ethical engagements with the world and our relationships with human and nonhuman others over time" (2014, 13). Likewise, Simpson also condemns colonialism for its destructive assaults on these same modalities:

Colonialism has strangulated grounded normativity. It has attacked and tried to eliminate or confine the practice of grounded normativity to the realm of neoliberalism so that it isn't so much a way of being in the world but a quaint cultural difference that makes one interesting. When colonialism could not eliminate grounded normativity, it tried to contain it so that it exists only to the degree that it does not impede land acquisition, settlement, and resource extraction. (2017, 24-25)

This contrast in ways of being in the world is beautifully, albeit disturbingly, expressed in Dumont's poem, *OCTOBER 1869: TO SMOKE THEIR PIPES AND SING THEIR SONGS* (2015, 18-21). Here, the progression of colonization and grounded or "rooted" normativity is countered by the animism and vitality which characterize many Indigenous peoples' world views, a difference that is somewhat analogous to Deleuze and Guattari's distinction between striated and smooth space. With both literal and figurative associations with land, the speaker asks, "did the survey record in its calculations/ witness whose lives were fragmented by these precise/ coordinates?" And a few lines later, "where did this penchant for measuring and marking derive? / this desire to count and delineate this land / account for it." Here the resonance with questions of

schizoanalysis are especially clear as the speaker acknowledges that this Eurocentric way of viewing and living in the world must derive from somewhere. And reading it today, the questions are more relevant than ever, demanding an interrogation into the conditions from which such subjectivities derive, capable of “conjuring ‘empty’ land into property.” Explicitly acknowledging “the long root of capitalism,” the metaphor is disturbingly charged with the activity of “boring mineral veins” and “extracting dark thick fluids/ stabbing the land-belly/ sucking every seam/ and filling the gaping holes with/ with the toxic unseen.” Described through an Indigenous lens that values the animacy of all life, the poem draws our attention to the affective collision of world views, starkly contrasting ways of knowing and being in terms of a living breathing organism, mother, who endures the violence of cold extraction. These lines can’t help but stir even the most rigid of colonial minds, potentially loosening the ‘grounded normativity’ of Eurocentrism.

Conditions of Subjectivization: Colonization of and through Language

Considering education was designed as one of the foundational instruments of assimilation in the interests of colonization, of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations, it should also be one of the first targets for dismantling it. I can think of no other institutional machine more effective than education in for effective territorialization of bodies, beginning with language: the colonial inculcation, control, and maintenance of both content and expression. As a primary source of representation, of order words and of the many networks of codification, including racial slurs, language produces the dominant hierarchies of both organisms and values. As Bogue explains,

language’s purpose is less to communicate than to impose order. Language enforces a codification of the world according to orthodox categories and classifications, its various speech-acts shaping, guiding, and policing thought and behaviour. Hence the regular patterns of socially sanctioned practices effected by language may be said to constitute a regime of signs, a power structure that forms individual subjects and places them in social and political relation to one another. (2003: 83)

Though one potential strategy for deconstruction would be introducing Indigenous languages as a core requirement in education, until that happens, teachers are forced to work within the curricular opportunities open to them. Once again, I look to examples of Dumont’s poetry for

its capacity to disturb, many of which highlight the shaping forces of language. The poem that gives its title to her third collection, *that tongued belonging* (2007, 1), for example, concludes with the lines “no matter which way/ we turn to the light/ it will always exist/ on our cold side/ and ache/ like a phantom limb,” viscerally conveying the enduring sense of loss felt by those no longer able to speak their heritage language, in this case Cree. Both in interviews and poetry, Dumont laments her own loss of language, directly and indirectly a consequence of colonization, most directly due to the imposition of English in colonial education and the simultaneous denial of Indigenous languages. But indirectly due to her parent’s belief that English would lead to success and protection against an otherwise difficult life, and subsequent distancing her from Michif and Cree. The latter is expressed in her poem *kindling* (2001) which describes the mother’s letters as “crippled, blunt-/ fisted and left hanging at the edge of a sentence-fragment,” ‘c’s’ are personified as “cramped like fingers holding onto/something too long” and finally “her ‘l’s’ and ‘t’s’ were left / broken twigs on the page/ as kindling/ for me.” Intended or not, the poem strikes me as depressing, with the metaphor of ‘kindling’ projecting multiple layers of disturbance, and both exhaustion and promise in the mother’s notably ambiguous gift to her daughter.

In my own limited experience, recognizing the deep structural differences between English and Cree offers some insight into the profound impact colonization of language has potentially had on the conditions of subjectivization, helping to account for differences in relationality, world view and imagined futures. It is then that we also might appreciate how much has been denied Indigenous children through years of systematic assimilation into English through programs such as residential schooling and the 60’s scoop, as well as non-Indigenous children by denying encounters with a broader ecology of difference. Marie Battiste refers to cognitive imperialism as “a form of cognitive manipulation used to disclaim other knowledge bases and values” and which, “empowered through public education...denies people their language and cultural integrity by maintaining the legitimacy of only one language, one culture, and one frame of reference” (2005).

My own minimal exposure to Indigenous languages has given me respect for not only how the language embodies and opens towards relations with land and culture, but how access to the rich linguistics of languages such as Cree would avail all learners to alternative worldings. As but one example, I recall the day Cree activist Lewis Cardinal visited my class and shared several cultural teachings. But it was his emphasis on language that has stayed with me, as he explained to the class that the word moccasin, originally Algonquian but with corresponding terms in Ojibwa (makizin) and Cree (maskisin), is not, as it is often translated, simply a shoe. If we consider its original meaning, or sense, the word is better translated as ‘to walk gently on the earth.’ Unlike English and most romance languages which are noun/subject based, Cree teacher Ralph Morin explains that “Cree is organized around verb-based descriptive phrases...plac[ing] an emphasis on relationships—rather than floating alone as separate units of meaning, the words for people, animals, and objects are embedded with narratives about how these things interact with each other and the environment” (in Nadeau and Dumais, 2018, 6). As I now ask my students, imagine what your life would be like if, rather than putting on your shoes every morning, you put on your ‘walk-gently-on-the-earth’? Extrapolated over an entire language, how might this continuous orientation, being in relation to the world around you, with you – the subject ‘I’ – decentred, shift your way of knowing and being in the world. We might wonder, too, how such blocs of sensation and manner of orientation as enunciated in the language might implicate our virtual assemblages – the ecology that conditions our becoming and potentially generates novel actualizations of different relations with our world, not to mention different worlds. Considering the intrinsic qualities of many Indigenous languages, we should not be surprised to learn that an Indigenous education, according to Stephanie Nadeau and Doug Domais, “is learning through doing. A single concept is always understood as existing within a network of relationships and meanings—one that includes nature as a relation rather than something we have dominion over” (2018, 7).

As an exemplar of minor literature speaking back, Dumont’s poem, *The Devil’s Language* (1996, 73) offers not only an encounter difficult to forget, but one that demonstrates the charged disturbance of a clearly collective enunciation, and though first person, nevertheless a

collective expression of resistance. As the speaker announces in a tone that is simultaneously angry, proud, and sardonic, “I have reconsidered Eliot/and the Great White way of writing English/standard that is/the great white way/ has measured, judged and assessed me all my life.” With stark effusive sarcasm, the speaker conveys the experience of what amounts to a cultural genocide through the imposition and oppression of the Queen’s English, the sense of dignity and personal worth being sacrificed in the demands for proficiency in the colonial language. The containment and confinement of ‘a life,’ conditions of vitality, is intimated through metaphors of “lily white words” and “picket fence sentences,” and “manicured paragraphs,” which conjure images of false promises, control, and artifice while ironically tarnishing the appeal of the so-called white way and seeding further resistance to assimilation. In relation to poems such as this, Spokane poet and scholar Gloria Bird’s words clearly resonate with Deleuze and Guattari’s conceptualization of minor literature’s reterritorialization of language: “‘Reinventing’ in the colonizer’s tongue and turning those images around to mirror an image of the colonized to the colonizers as a process of decolonization indicates that something is happening, something is emerging and coming into focus that will politicize as well as transform literary expression” (1998, 22).

As the poem unfolds, the speaker reveals the fuller implications of this imposition of language and the force of violence endured by generations of children assailed during their colonial education, describing the way the “great white way” is capable of silencing “us all,” and how “it’s had its hand over my mouth since my first day of school/ since Dick and Jane, ABC’s and fingernail checks/ syntactic laws.” With the help of the stylistic sculpting of language, including variable line lengths, layering of enjambment, and sudden jolts of caesuras, Dumont effectively deterritorializes the very language that has confined her. Further in the poem, the speaker turns the perspective 180 degrees, challenging the imaginary English judge: “is there a Received Pronunciation of Cree, is there/ a Modern Cree Usage? / the Chief’s Cree not the King’s English.” Challenging value systems, the speaker opens us to another possibility, drawing together the constellation of references to Cree, mother, love, and song, in the final lines, and the ‘devil’s tongue’ taking her and the reader, “back(words) / back to your mother’s sound,

your mother's tongue, your mother's language." The image of the mother is then accompanied by a series of ecological and cultural references which enhance and intensify affective signs of underlying disturbance: "back to that clearing in the bush / in the tall black spruce/ near the sound of horses and wind/where you sat on her knee in a canvas tent/and she fed you bannock and tea." At its climax, what might seem like a nostalgic lullaby is shattered in the final realization listening to the mother, "and syllables/that echo in your mind now, now/ that you can't make the sound." It's hard to imagine a more subtly tragic scene, as the reader bares the full weight of the denial of the mother's tongue that is no longer just a language, but life itself.

A final instance of the poet's exploration of language is found in her poem *these are wintering words* (2015, 16) where we read Dumont subtly problematizing and gesturing towards another alternative to essentialist policing of identity. Once again, the entanglement of language and culture is evident, but here the relationship is much more complex. In the opening line, "Michif problem family among the nuclear language types" she plays with the homonyms of Michif and mischief, echoed later in the poem where she emphasizes language and culture as "mixta, not mixed-up, nor muddled." But it is in her closing that her words, exemplifying a productive stuttering of language, that most reverberate with the potential to energize difference-in-kind and affirmative desire:

*neither Cree, Salteaux nor French exactly, but something else
not less not half not lacking.*

As many of Dumont's poems make clear, as a process and a practice, colonization proceeds on the basis of judgements, many of which aim at identity and representation, that justify the many instruments of subjugation employed, including language. Once established, assessments of the kind introduced in Frantz Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952), and Coulthard's related volume, *Red Skin, White Masks* (2014), continue to operate, both from within and without the identified groups. While some may be of a positive form, many of these, I would suggest, produce what were referred to earlier as sad affects; in other words, they reduce the affective capacity of their targets. Following Nietzsche, it is worth recalling that Deleuze

vehemently opposes judgment in so far as it imposes a transcendental or moral ruling rather than allowing immanence to locate the passive forces of vitalism capable of expanding or extending life. It is not, he argues, that 'renouncing' judgment will deprive us of ways to distinguish between 'existing things' or 'modes of difference.' Nor will we necessarily collapse into relativism whereby all things are valued equally. The judgement that concerns Deleuze is that which "presupposes pre-existing criteria," limiting not only its orientation, but its scope of perception,

so that it can neither apprehend what is new in an existing being, nor even sense the creation of a mode of existence? Such a mode is created vitally...Judgment prevents the emergence of any new mode of existence.... If it is so disgusting to judge, it is not because everything is of equal value, but on the contrary because what has value can be made or distinguished only by defying judgment" (ECC, 134-135).

In other words, judgment, and especially that associated with the territorializations and codifications intrinsic to colonization, forecloses on sources of vitalism that would otherwise be open to all life. And sadly, these foreclosures have denied both Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations from opportunities to either encounter or experiment with alternative visions of being in the world. African philosopher Achille Mbembe, asks us to consider colonial thinking, in the broader global context,

as the set of techniques and sciences, myths, knowledge and skills that, from the fifteenth century onwards, made possible the destruction of the conditions of renewal of life on Earth. The deployment of this assemblage (myths, science, knowledge, skills) over the course of more than four centuries has, moreover, led to a profound destabilization in both many distant societies and natural processes in general. (2021)

In North America, the success of the emergent monoculture which circumscribes the vast majority of non-Indigenous colonial settlers, reinforced by the bureaucratic institutionalization of many forms of judgement and the ambitions of profit-motivated capitalist ambitions, not only conditions the perpetuation of the colonial mindset, but presents a particularly daunting challenge for educators, many of whom, like myself, are themselves mired in their own unconscious attachments to certain habits. As Goodchild points out, if there is a sense of 'liberation' in Deleuze and Guattari's proposals, it "is less a liberation from social expectations than a liberation to enter into social relations" (1996, 2). The obstacles that stand in the way of a more expansive experimentation with social relations, including those between colonial

settlers and Indigenous peoples, ideas, values, etc. include, according to Goodchild, “conventions, values, expectations, economic structures, and political entities [which], whether real or imaginary, provide a script for social agents who merely play out the roles” (2). But as formidable as the prospect of transformation of hearts and minds might be, no change is likely without prioritizing the underlying conditions of subjectivization, opening assemblages to novel encounters with the potential to not only disturb habitual connections, but open possibilities for affirmative becomings through new lines of flight.

Affirmative Becomings

Poetry can break open locked chambers of possibility, restore numbed zones to feeling, recharge desire (Adrienne Rich, 1993, xiv).

A focus on change through affirmation, then, recalls Battiste's second pillar of decolonization, reconstruction, which resonates, as did her first pillar, with the process of schizoanalysis, in which the conditions fueling the unconscious are shifted, and the virtual is exposed to forces of fabulation with the potential to ignite visions and becomings of a 'people yet to come.'

To clarify once again, my interest thus far has been to consider the ways in which poetry such as that of Marilyn Dumont is capable of disturbing colonial mindsets through the affective means of a minor literature. But while a deeper understanding of identity and difference provides a more critically nuanced understanding of variance across Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations, by no means do I intend to question the autonomy of Indigenous peoples to self-determine and self-identity. Thus, while the continued distinction of Indigenous and non-Indigenous may contradict what I have said regarding the continual movement of differences-in-kind and implicates a residue of the *us-them* binary, I have chosen to retain the labels out of respect for Indigenous peoples who have the right to choose, for reasons already stated, to maintain some degree of dissociation, especially as many continuing strategies of macropolitics depend on it. With my overall focus on closing the gaps between divisions of 'us' and 'them,' my focus remains on the requisite shifts in colonized assemblages of non-Indigenous as a necessary step towards opening lines of flight potentially freeing desire towards alternative visions of kinship and ethical or good relations for a 'people yet to come'. In this regard, I have deferred the terms suggested by Indigenous thinkers such as Dwayne Donald, who states that ethical relationality,

is an ecological understanding of human relationality that does not deny difference, but rather seeks to more deeply understand how our different histories and experiences position us in relation to each other. This form of relationality is ethical because it does not overlook or invisibilize the particular historical, cultural, and social contexts from

which a particular person understands and experiences living in the world. It puts these considerations at the forefront of engagements across frontiers of difference. (2009, 6).

Notably, this broader sense of relationship, emphasizing the inclusion of what Coulthard calls other-than-human relations is, I believe, consistent with an ontology and ethics of good relations that is 'grounded' in immanence, and therefore open to the vitality of a full ecology of life relations. As writer Luanne Armstrong so poetically puts it, "the realization of the aliveness of the non-human is the crack in the paradigm, a shift from understanding nature as passive, unfeeling, and mechanical, to seeing the non-human all around us as aware, a huge something in which we, as humans, participate but can never control, that we can study, become aware of, learn about and find many patterns of translation" (2021).

Though this might seem to some as overly romanticized, the beauty of this conceptualization of relationship lies in the attention it pays to a difference which does not exclude the more fluid nature of difference-in-kind and the potential of fluid becomings. According to Battiste, et. al., Indigenous humanities, which are perhaps best conveyed through writers who "perform an animated and animating curriculum that can educate us all, if we allow it to," offer alternative expressions of 'how to be human:'

Ecology is the animating force – derived neither from theological nor political ideology ... Ecology privileges no particular people or way of life and requires a respectful outlook to ensure human survival. Like ecologies, heritages or cultures should play a key role in education. They honour and nourish a respect for diversity rather than fetishising narrow preferences and needless authoritarian hierarchy. Indigenous concepts of humanity relate a certain style of being human, of doing important tasks, and overcoming the forces of doubt and inertia." (2005, et. al., p. 12)

Importantly then, while the previous discussion has focused on the negative, destructive or deconstructive tasks of schizoanalysis – the violence to thought necessary to disturb habits of perception and understanding rooted in colonial regimes of signs – we need to also consider the alternatives which, as mentioned, have largely been denied to or concealed from both Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. Importantly, while the emphasis thus far has been on Dumont's darker poems of 'resistance,' many of her poems are more lyrical and therefore experiential or contemplative in nature, depicting beauty and kinship in relations inclusive of human and non-human worlds. The balance in her writing resonates with Deleuze's notion of

writer-as-physician introduced earlier, whereby a symptomatology serves both a critical and a healing function. Similarly, for Métis scholar Jo-Ann Episkenew, Indigenous writing, “is simultaneously a political act and an act of healing that provides the foundation for the process of decolonization” (2009, 12).

Suspending Damage

I am especially mindful of the comments by bell hooks, who, writing from the perspective of the disenfranchised, recognizes that “the forces that silence us, because they never want us to speak, differ from the forces that say speak, tell me your story” (2015, 234), only to condition their invitation by adding “do not speak in a voice of resistance. Only speak from that space in the margin that is a sign of deprivation, a wound, an unfulfilled longing. Only speak your pain” (234). Not only does this serve to tame or silence voices of resistance, but it forecloses on “that space in the margin that is a site of creativity and power, that inclusive space where we recover ourselves, where we move in solidarity to erase the category colonized/ colonizer” (234). This same concern is shared by Eve Tuck who refers to the dangers of *damaged-centered research*, which is not only likely to exacerbate the tendency to assume deficit based representations – “frameworks that emphasize what a particular student, family, or community is lacking to explain underachievement or failure” – but “looks to historical exploitation, domination, and colonization to explain contemporary brokenness, such as poverty, poor health, and low literacy” (2009, 413). As she admits, while on the surface this would appear to be ‘a good thing,’ “the danger in damage-centered research is that it is a pathologizing approach in which the oppression singularly defines a community” (413). Echoing Tuck, Daniel Heath Justice observes that, “Perhaps the most wounding way in which this story of Indigenous deficiency works is in how it displaces our other stories, the stories of complexity, hope, and possibility” (2018, 4). Elaborating further, he adds,

Indigenous writers continue to produce work that articulates and even anticipates our potential for transformative change, if only we bring to it the best of our imaginative selves. Freedom of love, of desire, of life, culture, and political survival—these are only realized through the linking of our courage to our imaginations. We can’t possibly live otherwise until we first imagine otherwise. (2018, 156)

As these comments highlight, a central concern with all literary texts, but in particular those engaging with otherness of one kind or another, is the need to balance experiences of injustice, which I have addressed above, with encounters that allow readers to experiment with images of fullness and alternative visions of life. We need to also provide different encounters as well as the time, and space to allow the differential intensities room to unfold, and the generation of new sites capable of drawing investments of desire away from their territorialized habitus. As Sam Okoth Opondo notes, the “ethico-political and aesthetic possibilities to be found in [Deleuze’s] experimentations with empiricist ethics and cinema.... points towards the promotion of lines of flight and encounters that interrupt the habitual individualities and moralising tendencies that impose a limit to life, experience and thought” (2013, 250). But as the precepts of schizoanalysis suggest, while interruption and destruction is part of the process, we must also attempt to change the conditions from which such habits were formed and are maintained. This, then, must take into account Deleuze and Guattari’s emphasis on desire as affirmative, and the consideration of productive machines capable of siphoning off flows towards more expansive options. In order to generate such difference, a process of experimentation akin to making a ‘body without organs,’ Deleuze explains “one has only to replace the actual terms in the movement that produces them to bring them back to the virtuality actualized in them, in order to see that differentiation is never a negation but a creation, and that difference is never negative but essentially positive and creative” (B, 103). It is this possibility, initiated by chance or circumstance, that Bignall refers to as critical counter-actualization. She argues that it is “Deleuze’s primary concept of critical practice, which facilitates a capacity for ‘thinking otherwise’” (2010b, 113).

The question Bignall asks, extrapolating from Deleuze’s philosophy of Spinoza and affective encounters of agreement, recognizes the necessity of joyful affects for expanding receptiveness to shifting conditions and connections: “how might a body actively create postcolonial encounters with other bodies, occasioning care and an affective feeling of joy?” (2010a, 84). It is important to note that the prospect of actualizing differences in the interests of decolonization and conciliation relies on an underlying micropolitics that is likely more

positively responsive to affirmation than to opposition or negation. As Alldred and Fox insist, such a focus allows us to “conceptualise resistance not as a ‘negative’ reaction to power; instead it should be seen as an enhancement of body capacities to act or feel....[capacities that] are the outcomes of introducing new affects into assemblages, in ways that reduce existing forces (‘power’), and open up new possibilities for action and subjectivity, of becoming—other and lines of flight away from earlier constraints on capacities” (2017, 1170). In this way, as alternative visions are potentially generated through literature’s mechanism of fabulation, not only is desire less likely to be captured by or invested in colonial territories, but bodies begin to experiment with new possibilities, ones which may be more conducive to agreeable affective relations and to expansion rather than contraction.

In thinking about Indigenous voices with respect to the process of schizoanalysis, I am especially sensitive to the words of Leanne Simpson who, recognizes that all of us, including Indigenous children, are currently forced “to live in a hyper capitalistic system” (2014, 23). But, and here she addresses Indigenous peoples, “if we are going to survive this as Nishnaabeg, we need to create generations of people that are capable of actualizing radical decolonization, diversity, transformation and local economic alternatives to capitalism” (2014, 23). We, as non-Indigenous, who are threatened by the same environmental and socio-ecological crises, would do well to follow her advise. Considering the economic and social power of the majoritarian non-Indigenous population, decolonization will be difficult without non-Indigenous sharing in the burden. Writer and activist Harsha Walia states:

Given the devastating cultural, spiritual, economic, linguistic and political impacts of colonialism on Indigenous people in Canada, any serious attempt by non-natives at allying with Indigenous struggles must entail solidarity in the fight against colonization. Non-natives must be able to position ourselves as active and integral participants in a decolonization movement for political liberation, social transformation, renewed cultural kinships and the development of an economic system that serves rather than threatens our collective life on this planet, (2012)

There is clearly a need, then, for a kind of solidarity. But the importance of the molecular work of alternative visions, work that is most capably exercised by art/literature, cannot be understated. As Bogue explains, in making “visible new possibilities unencumbered by the

past...the hold of history, of the forces that have shaped our present, is broken, and the actual of what we are becoming surges forth” (2007a, 105). Not only do works such as the poems of Dumont have the force to “break historical continuities and disrupt conventional narratives,” (105), but they also have the capacity to fabulate new possibilities, new openings, and new lines of flight.

Animism

In addition to their potential to stimulate virtual problems, emphasized in the preceding discussion, many of Dumont’s poems expose non-Indigenous readers to ‘sensations’ that not only disorder habit, but affect new visions and novel worldings. For as Bignall suggests, “The existence of potential alternatives to established ways of being unsettles assumptions about received truth, calls into question the habitual 'Tightness' of social practices, and disrupts the apparent 'given-ness' of existing social worlds” (2007b, 198). One of many such alternatives, consistent with world views of many Indigenous peoples, is the sense of animacy that is apparent in many of Dumont’s poems, a sense that reflects a very different ontology and metaphysics of relationship that contrasts the anthropocentric characteristics of most non-Indigenous peoples. This is not simply personification, I would suggest, but rather an animism that touches on expanded vitalism and draws from a much broader ecological assemblage. It is in these poems that Dumont is arguably most experimental with language, stretching words, space, sound and form in multiple ways, opening up not only the world beyond the limits of language, but releasing forces beyond the human. In this way, it is reminiscent of Audre Lorde’s words:

And where that language does not yet exist, it is our poetry which helps to fashion it. Poetry is not only dream and vision; it is the skeleton architecture of our lives. It lays the foundations for a future of change, a bridge across our fears of what has never been before. (2012, 34)

In Dumont’s poem *Nipiy* (2017), for example, though the title is commonly translated as water in Cree, it is also associated in the language to aspects of death, life and sleeping. The poet intimates the movement of water “from earth to vessel to table/ vessel to vessel poured out/ poured through/ one vessel to another.” Here, water is timeless, fluid, and shared again and

again. Tension is generated through the epigraph borrowed from Emily Dickinson, beginning with “Water, is taught by thirst,” echoed in Dumont’s opening lines that suggest a disconnect, or forgotten lesson of sorts, implied by the gap between “gratitude dr[ying] parched” but nevertheless “think[ing] nothing of water.” There is a sense in which the poem balances this lost relationality as calls to water, working both as a beckoning and a recognition of benefits, are repeated in a series of short lines. Fittingly, the subject once again remains ambiguous, allowing the animacy to further saturate the affective senses aroused in these lines: “call water cold/ call water fast/ call water clean/ call water medicine.” There is, in poems such as this one, a noticeable resonance between Deleuze and Guattari’s recognition of assemblages that include the non-human world and the kinship models of many Indigenous ecological worldviews. As Daniel Wildcat states,

Hopefulness resides with the peoples who continue to find their identities emerge out of what I call a nature-culture nexus, a symbiotic relationship that recognizes the fundamental connectedness and relatedness of human communities and societies to the natural environment and the other-than-human relatives they interact with daily. Just as importantly, hopefulness resides with those who are willing to imaginatively reconstitute lifeways emergent from the nature-culture nexus. (2009)

These qualities are also emphasized in the poem *If Cree; If Water (2017)*, also ostensibly dedicated to Nipiy. Here the lines and coherence are also fragmented, generating a sense of rapid movement. Here, too, Dumont opens with an epigraph, this time from poet CJ Evans: “If the water, everywhere, and if she is.” Echoing the syntax, though relying on spacial gaps rather than punctuation, Dumont reverses the position taken by Evans: “If nipiy is if she is not praised.” In just four lines, Dumont not only engenders a sense of fluidity, but she fuses water with character, ending with the words “and if we are one,” suggesting not only interdependence of relationship, but a desirable unitary vision of life. These poems concur with Braidotti’s comments regarding literature as an ‘intensity machine’ and a ‘transformative machine’ (2017, 177; 178). Elaborating further, she points to literature’s strength and ability to “engage with the outside world and all its complexity—linguistic, geological, ethnic, biological, political, technological and zoological” (178-179). In particular, Braidotti emphasizes that poets, more so than novelists “are immersed in the world...Poets condense intensity into as few terms

and selected rhythms as possible" (180). In Dumont's expressions of what strikes me as akin to many Indigenous world views, the reader is immersed in a very different experience of life. For elder Willie Ermine, this connectedness, perhaps touching on what Deleuze might refer to as 'a life', albeit in a more romanticized imaginary, is all-encompassing:

In the Aboriginal mind, therefore, an immanence is present that gives meaning to existence and forms the starting point for Aboriginal epistemology. It is a mysterious force that connects the totality of existence the forms, energies, or concepts that constitute the outer and inner worlds. (1995, 103)

There is an uncanny sense, though not unexpected, that Cree, like many Indigenous cultures, embodies certain understandings of affect and its relation to vitalism, long before Deleuze or Spinoza had theorized them. Though one might argue that this is a more active vitalism in contrast to the passive vitalism described earlier, Ermine also states that "The Cree word *mamatowisowin*...describes the capability of tapping into the 'life force' as a means of procreation" (1995, 104), which to me privileges an immanent encounter with *a life*.

Contrasting dominant Eurocentric ontologies which emphasize the distance between the human, at the top of the hierarchy of material existence, from other-than-human, it is also no surprise to discover in many of Dumont's poems a blurring of lines between human and animal, what Deleuze and Guattari might refer to as becoming animal. For example, In *throatsong to the four-leggeds* (2001, 96-98), it is unclear from the opening lines ---- "but slowly/ we sniff each other's airs, noses flare/ jaws drop to the shape of 'o'/ in the mouth/ then "Ahhh" / in the throat" – who or what the speaker is. Here we find not only the persona animated, but communication, too, is expressed as physical vocalizations rather than words. As subject-object and human-nature binaries dissolve, language is further deterritorialized, and the collective of the minor literature extends to entire ecologies. In what he refers to as *art*, John Dewey reminds us that "common things, a flower, a gleam of moonlight, the song of a bird, not things rare and remote, are means with which the deeper levels of life are touched so that they spring up as desire and thought" (1927, 183-184). While highly romanticized, his belief in art's capacity to "break through the crust of conventionalized and routine consciousness" (183) coheres with Deleuze's notion of passive vitality and the pre-subjective contact with the Outside, 'a life,' as

opening to pure difference. And it is this contact with ‘a life’ which speaks to a kind of relationality that has the capacity to keep in check the egoism of the subject. And it is this sense that some readers might encounter further on in Dumont’s poem, as the speaker laments, “I do remember it sometimes, but/ only fleetingly behind shyness that hums/ through my nose and larynx/ the tune of animal remembrances/ and single notes of gratitude/ for those mammals that sustained me” and how, in “days of plenty,” she sadly no longer “put[s] to good use/in song or bellowed back refrain/ of gutsong and throatsong to our relatives.” These visions of animal, song and life are not only expressions of kinship, but also the humility and reciprocation it embodies.

Place vs. Space

Importantly, this kinship extends beyond what we might normally consider to be forms of life to include, for many Indigenous peoples, a very distinctive relationship with land, one that is particularly remarkable to the non-Indigenous reader. This is especially true for those of us who have been territorialized by Eurocentric images of progress, the dominance of man over nature, and a relationship with land that is as much about possession and consumption as it is of destiny. In this regard, Donald distinguishes concepts which many non-Indigenous use interchangeably – space and place – the former which he observes “has taken precedence” over the latter. The result is “a general curricular overlook of the intimacy and specificity of place to life and living... place has been displaced by space—a move that effectively encloses human experience and knowing within an Enlightenment-based imagination” (2019, 156). In proposing possible amendments designed to address this oversight, Donald recommends a curriculum comprised of more stories that “teach of the enmeshment of all lifeforms in a network of relationships that make life and living possible” (161). As he stresses, “Consistent acknowledgement of the animacy of places is not just a neat idea – it honours life and nurtures its continuance” (161). Such a curriculum, I would add, might very well include poems of Dumont.

One of the most intensive and most compelling expressions of this relationship to land is evidenced in Dumont's *Not just a platform for my dance* (1996, 65). While the title alone implies a contrast of visions, the poem begins with two couplets forcefully declaring that "this land is not/ just a place to set my house my car my fence," or "just a plot to bury my dead my seed." Alluding to Eurocentric instrumental uses of land, these images are contrasted by a series of lyrical appeals sensually embracing land as extensions of the body: "this land is/my tongue my eyes my mouth.... my prayer...my medicine...my song." By the last line, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous readers are likely drawn to the affirmation of the dance, as well as the offensive nature of the repeated title. As Coulthard explains,

"[T]he theory and practice of Indigenous anticolonialism, including Indigenous anticapitalism, is best understood as a struggle primarily inspired by and oriented around the question of land—a struggle not only for land in the material sense, but also deeply informed by what the land as system of reciprocal relations and obligations can teach us about living our lives in relation to one another and the natural world in nondominating and nonexploitative terms." (2014, 13)

Envisioning a Settler Co-Conspiracy as Relations Yet to Come

A critical component of my own conceptualization of a pedagogy of disturbance is the realization that, as May points out, it is not enough to consider the world "as difference," as this is neither the goal of Deleuze, nor should it be our goal as educators. He reminds us that,

The world as Deleuze conceives it is a living world, a vital world. This is true even of the world's inanimate realms. But it is not only a living world; it is a world to be lived in. The task is not merely to think the world differently, but to live it differently. (2005, 116).

This is consistent with Dorries and Ruddick's conclusion that,

merely including Indigenous thought in scholarly praxis is not itself inherently anti-colonial. While making space for Indigenous thought in the academy is overdue, the work of decolonization necessarily extends beyond the academy and, perhaps more importantly, originates in places outside it, beginning with the shift in relations that must come with true acknowledgment of and respect for the sovereignty of Indigenous peoples. The survival and proliferation of Indigenous intellectual traditions are dependent on the integrity of land-based relations. (2011, 633)

What might this imply for pedagogical encounters with Dumont's poetry? As stated at the outset of this section, part of my inspiration for this work, no doubt encouraged by my own

reading of Dumont as well as other Indigenous literature, is the potential role of literature in classrooms to affect relations in the territory of and dismantling of colonization. I have also been inspired by Leanne Simpson's notion of *visitation* which she draws from Nishnaabeg Nanabush stories apparently told to her.

Visiting within Nishnaabeg intelligence means sharing oneself through story, through principled and respectful consensual reciprocity with another living being. Visiting is lateral sharing in the absence of coercion and hierarchy, and in the presence of compassion. Visiting is fun, enjoyable, nurturing of intimate connections and relationship building. Visiting is the core of our political system (leaders visiting with all the members of the community), our mobilization...and our intelligence (people visiting Elders, sharing food, taking care). (2014, 18)

Thinking about visitation in this way, I wonder how this ethos might inform not only the way non-Indigenous students encounter Indigenous literature, such as Dumont's, but taken further, how such literature might alter the conditions that shift directions of becoming. Like the lessons Simpson's learned from the Nanabush stories offered her by the Elders, readers, entering into the proximity of such fundamental differences and affective visions projected in many of Dumont's poems, might also begin to imagine a very different non-Indigenous people yet to come. A people moving in the direction of becoming co-conspirator settlers and at the very least, away from 'colonial' and 'still colonizing' settlers. The term co-conspirator has most commonly been attributed to Feminista Jones:

I am not interested in white allies. What we need are co-conspirators ...The definition of ally-ship is to mutually benefit and support. Black people are not obligated to provide support to people who are dominant...We are not working together on a mutual goal. My goal is to live. You don't have that same goal. (in Hackman, 2015)

Similar to this Simpson's understanding of visitation, but with a focus on non-Indigenous and Indigenous relations, Haudenosaunee scholar Ruth Koleszar-Green conceptualizes a Guest, as "someone who is traveling down this 'river of life' in their own vessel.... [who] actively engages Onkwehonwe people with a reciprocal process of Peace, Friendship and Mutual Respect." (2018, 175). Likewise, Métis scholar Janice Cindy Gaudet, uses the term 'visiting way,' from the Cree *keoukaywin*, as a concept that inspires decoloniality, as thinking about coming to another's world view: "to slow down, take time, make the effort, knock on the door, sit down,

listen, share, go to the land, meditate, empty myself, and be present” (2019, 48). The term also relates to another Cree concept, *Wahkohtowin*, which refers to “the shared responsibility to kinship relations, both human and non-human” (48).

In conceptualizing potential becoming, I imagine what might unfold as readers encounter the affective force of works such as Dumont’s poetry. I am thinking not only a destruction of certain tenets and habits of Euro-Western paradigms, but also a shift in desire towards a different kind of relationality. As actualized through differences-in-kind, in the most receptive readers this could ideally involve a dissolution of ego, of hierarchies, and individualism, but at the same time an expansiveness of humility, differences, and reverence (awe and respect) towards all relationships, human and non-human. This could conceivably be a relationality not unlike that described by Bignall as “a ‘kind of restorative love’, an immediate form of communion that corresponds with care and results in a form of satisfaction that is suggestive of Spinozan joy: the experience of a mutually compatible, affirming and empowering affective relations between bodies connected in concrete relations of engagement.... [and] reject[ing] the ambivalent and implicitly suspicious attitude towards difference” (2010b, 82). As many of these poems hopefully confirm, the affective encounter is hopefully a positive or joyous one and as such, the encounter will increase rather than decrease the body’s capacities for further affective relations. Coincidentally, similar to Bignall’s restorative love is Cree cultural theorist Karyn Recollet reference to a ‘radical decolonial love.’ To be ‘truly decolonial’ she explains,

it would be a love that took into account all our relationships—the varied manifestations of love coming from a place of acceptance towards all of our differences....“Radical decolonial love can be perceived as an ethical way of life, whereby we acknowledge each other’s differences and gifts and let those manifest into creating new world(s) of possibilities. Radical decolonial love requires a shift in focus away from heteronormative, settler colonial practices of ownership and control over Indigenous lands and bodies, into a space that produces the vocabulary and language to speak of its impact on our relationships with other sentient beings. (137)

Adding to this, as Cree writer and scholar Billy-Ray Belcourt points out, her conception of decolonial love is a “future-making project....promis[ing] not only to chip away at the corporeal and emotional toll of settler colonialism as such, but also to gestate a wider set of worlds and

ontologies, ones that we cannot know in advance, but ones that might make life into something more than a taxing state of survival. (2016, 4).

Thus, in conceptualizing a different kind of settler, a people yet to be, becoming through encounters with poetry such as Dumont's, I imagine a settler that embodies an affirmative desire, inspired by a kind of 'radical love' or decolonial love, which unconsciously invests in new possibilities: a becoming woman, becoming animal, becoming imperceptible. This is, I believe, a settler-come -co-conspirator capable of realizing the Cree vision of *Wahkohtowin*, of good relations, which today, as Cree writer Maria Campbell emphasizes,

is translated to mean kinship, relationship, and family as in human family. But at one time, from our place it meant the whole of creation. And our teachings taught us that all of creation is related and inter-connected to all things within it. Wahkotowin meant honoring and respecting those relationships (2007).

Whether or not the Indigenous scholars, writers, poets to whom I have deferred are fully representative of all Indigenous peoples, I am in no position to say. But as a non-Indigenous settler on this land, one sincerely invested in experimenting within the current, albeit limited, education system, I can only hope that I have adequately allowed their words and ideas, and specifically Dumont's art, to set the terms for the difficult challenges ahead.

Chapter 10: An Ethics of Disturbance

*We must be still and still moving
 Into another intensity
 For a further union, a deeper communion
 Through the dark cold and empty desolation,
 The wave cry, the wind cry, the vast waters
 (T.S. Eliot, Four Quartets, 2009)*

I began my doctoral studies inspired and provoked by my classroom experiences to further further explore the rather relentless questions surrounding the potential impact of literature that students might describe as either tragic or disturbing. Against what might be a more intuitive prediction, my sense was that paradoxically these encounters seemed to produce a kind of ‘softening’ or opening. Though whether this was associated with increased humility, vulnerability, empathy, compassion, or openness, I was not certain. Nevertheless, these felt experiences were strong enough, remarkable enough and interesting enough, to use Deleuze’s words, that I was motivated to inquire further into what was happening.

Like Elizabeth Dutro, I, too, am provoked by questions such as: “how difficult experiences—exposed wounds and the exposing of wounds—functioned in literacy classrooms,” and how such experiences of literature (presumably) “might foster the kinds of relationships and stances necessary to challenge entrenched inequities and privileged assumptions about Others’ lives and facilitate engagement and intellectual risk-taking for students and teachers” (2011, 194). And, like Dutro, though from a more immanent and affective perspective of what I have called a pedagogy of disturbance rather than trauma studies, I’m especially driven by the potential in ‘the difficult’ to “be productive pedagogically and relationally within literacy classroom” (194), though in truth, my interest extends well beyond classroom walls and students in front of me to the wider socius and the challenge of an ethics, posed by many Indigenous peoples, which consider impacts for seven generations, not so unlike the notion of Deleuze’s notion of ‘a people yet to come.’ When stating this, I am also well aware of the fears and discomforts of many educators as they confront a proposal grounded in a pedagogy of disturbance. In this final section, I wish to allay such concerns while at the same time recognizing their potential validity

in certain classroom or student-teacher contexts. The core of this thesis is both relational and, by definition, ethical. However, in thinking through Spinoza, Nietzsche and of course Deleuze and Guattari, a certain reversal is suggested: what is ethical is necessarily 'more' relational, as that which opens the possibility of connection to others rather than reduces, neglects or denies such connection, especially on grounds of social coding, social affect and the territorialization of individualism. In highlighting the relational, an underlying consideration remains inescapable: that student subjectivities neither exist in isolation from other bodies – human and other-than-human – nor can they be altered without disturbing their assemblage with other bodies.

Ironically, as Daniel Smith (2012) observes, Deleuze never proposes a theory of ethics, per se. Yet inspired by Spinoza and Nietzsche, his work is saturated with concerns that are fundamentally ethical in nature. As Michel Foucault notes in his introductory remarks, *Anti-Oedipus* is “a book of ethics”. More specifically, he states that, not only does it suggest “a way of thinking and living,” but in doing so, it challenges readers with the questions: “How does one keep from being fascist?... How do we rid our speech and our acts, our hearts and our pleasures, of fascism? How do we ferret out the fascism that is ingrained in our behavior?” (AO, xiii). Applied to education, these questions present challenges to teachers who are both aware of them and courageous enough to confront them. With respect to the nature of an immanent ethics inferred throughout Deleuze’s oeuvre, Smith poses three questions: 1. How is a mode of existence determined? 2. How are modes of existence to be evaluated? and 3. What are the conditions for the creation of new modes of existence?” (2012, 153). In this final section of my dissertation, I feel compelled to address these questions, albeit reconfigured on the basis of what I anticipate to be the concerns conjured by the prospect of a pedagogy of disturbance. I have chosen to divide what follows into three sections: the first of which explores Smith’s first two questions, the second, expands on the question of evaluation by considering whether, within the context of education, the requisite disturbance of such a pedagogy can be justified, and third, relating to Smith’s third question, how a pedagogy of disturbance might seed the conditions of possibilities for immanent compassion, dissolution of us/them divisions, and a people yet to come.

An Ethics of Immanence in the Context of a Pedagogy of Disturbance

The question of whether a pedagogy of disturbance, including the selection of texts in the service of such a pedagogy, are ethical, requires a deeper consideration of what constitutes the ethical. With its focus on the potential work of affect or intensities within the aesthetic. It is intertwined with questions such as: ‘what is an ethical text?’ or ‘what is an ethical educational encounter?’ As Braidotti points out, ethics arguably has two concerns: “on the public side it calls into question the foundational violence of such a system and is thus intrinsically political. On the private side, it also inscribes issues of pain and cruelty at the core of the ethical interaction” (2012, p. 171).

Importantly, however, ethics conceived as immanent and fluid asks that we reconsider these questions from a very different perspective than that assumed by most classical and applied systems of ethics. Levi Bryant argues that an ethics developed from approaches such as Mill’s utilitarian or Kant’s deontological models, transcendent or rule-based, “are almost entirely useless with respect to genuine ethical problems” (2011, p. 22). Problems of an ethical nature encountered as they might be in life are rarely as static or simplified as they appear in case studies offered as exemplars. But, if we account for the complexity of variables that ought to be factored into the analysis, they are, as Bryant points out, characterized by uncertainties which need to be grossly attenuated or erased in order to apply such theories. As a result, they are not only prone to oversimplification, but they are largely limited to situations “where everything is known in advance,” and often only after something has already happened, prompting the ethicist to “to search for a rule that would allow him or her to evaluate whether the action is right or wrong” (p. 25). But rules that govern behaviour and codes of right and wrong ultimately rely on transcendental ethics, not unlike those associated with ‘morality’ (though the latter has often become so habituated that we no longer stop to analyze it). While these theories still dominate in the fields of applied ethics and politics (for example as applied to democratic processes (utilitarian) and constitutional statements of rights, freedoms, and

responsibilities (deontological)), their scope of debate revolves primarily around the liberal notion of a unified subject and anthropomorphic views of life. As Deleuze and Guattari argue,

There is not the slightest reason for thinking that modes of existence need transcendent values by which they could be compared, selected, and judged relative to one another... A possibility of life is evaluated through itself in the movements it lays out and the intensities it creates on a plane of immanence....A mode of existence is good or bad, noble or vulgar, complete or empty, independently of Good and Evil or any transcendent value: there are never any criteria other than the tenor of existence, the intensification of life. (WIP, 74)

In contrast, an ethics reliant on transcendent models or rule can, in certain situations, actually prove unethical from the perspective of an immanent or nomadic ethics of life. An ethics which operates by imposing rules and systems of judgement, as Bryant states, “restricts the ethical to the moment of reduction and normalization” (2011, 26), stifling potential trajectories of generation, creativity or flight. The wild, the animal, the more-than-human, constituting what Braidotti refers to as *zoë* ... ‘a life,’ are not only tamed but often threatened or denied.

While rarely explicit, I would contend that Deleuze’s entire project is driven by an underlying ethics. But arguably, it is in his exploration of and fondness for Spinoza from which he derives much of his foundational inspiration. Having “nothing to do with a morality,” Deleuze suggests that ethics is better understood, following Spinoza, as an ethology, a more-than-human study of bodies behaving in relation to one another on the plane of immanence: “the study of the relations of speed and slowness, of the capacities for affecting and being affected that characterize each thing” (SPP, 125), with each ‘thing’ unique in how it responds to relations. Suggesting a kind of active agency, sensing whether or not a relation will be agreeable or not, Deleuze also contends that entities,

select what affects or is affected by the thing, what moves it or is moved by it. For example, given an animal, what is this animal unaffected by in the infinite world? What does it react to positively or negatively? What are its nutriments and its poisons? What does it "take" in its world? ... So an animal, a thing, is never separable from its relations with the world. (SPP, 125)

As already addressed in earlier sections, understood from a conception of ‘immanence,’ Deleuze considers ethics through a compatible conceptualization of affect and differential forces on the body. Actions and events are consequently studied on the basis of the

assemblages and relations into which an organ enters and whether or not the assemblage, particularly if it endures, results in joyful or sad becomings which either increase or decrease the body's capacity to enter into further relations and assemblages. With this in mind, Dirk Postma suggests the following as a working definition:

Ethics is a response to the unfolding of events in such a way that we live up to the challenges and possibilities to enhance subjectivity. Ethics describes a certain mode of becoming as a particular way of existing in the world with others. At an ontological level it refers to the co-existence with many others which include nonhuman and 'non-living' things such as material objects and technologies. At a conscious level it entails the recognition of the multiple connections and dependencies between the self and others. The 'mode of becoming' is an ethics of existence in pursuit of a good defined by the responsibility for and obligation towards the other. At an affective level it refers to the powers to affect and to be affected. (2016, 318)

The formation of agreeable affective relations which enhance rather than contract the passage of life, points to an ethics which is removed from human subjectivity and human ego, grounded instead in a collective or ecological view of vitality and life. While transcendental ethics such as those surrounding rights and recognition do not take into account affective encounters between bodies, the immanent ethics focuses on relations and how *a life* as opposed to 'the life' of a specific organism, is either strengthened or weakened by the flow of sad or joyful affect. Bryant describes immanent ethics "conceived as the emergence of a problem and the re-composition of a collective undertaken in response to this problem" (2011, 22), or stated differently, "a question of ethical ecology or the composition of collectives in response to events that buffet collectives" (2011, 29). Rather than the individual, Braidotti observes, this is an ethics centred on "a multi-layered form of relationality" (2012, 181). Any standard of good, then, is not determined with respect to self or even one's close relations, but rather from an infinite view of life. As Deleuze asks, in recognizing that "It is no longer a matter of utilizations or captures, but of sociabilities and communities [then] how do individuals enter into composition with one another in order to form a higher individual, ad infinitum?" (SPP, 126). From the perspective of teacher and reader subjectivities, the practice of ethics becomes a consideration of positive/joyful and negative/sad affects. Pedagogical practices and text selections are then considered through the lens of immanence, or what Braidotti calls an ethics of affirmation, sustained by "the belief that negative affects can be transformed" (2012, 182),

which she contends rests on their ability to increase the positive/joyful that increase relationality at the level of life, and to reduce or ‘transform’ a body’s sad or negative affects. Not only are transformations subject to experimentation, recognizing every ‘body’ is unique, but also to a degree of sustainability or endurance. The positivity of an encounter becomes affirmative in an ethical way only, as Braidotti adds, “if the subject is capable of making it endure, thus allowing it to sustain its own impetus” (183). In this way, the ethical has both a temporal dimension, a period of duration, unique to each body and necessary for change to take place, and a spatial dimension, “to do with transversal relations and assemblages” (184). Of course, in the context of education, there is a lesson here for educators, as many of the actions we take, while perhaps intended to soften, tame, or avoid unnecessary pain, end up impeding the duration, and even with good intentions to rescue the student, end up dulling or prematurely choking off transformations that might be in progress. As I will elaborate further below, and as I have mentioned throughout this work, positive or joyful affect are not to be associated or conflated with positive or joyful experiences or emotions. Often, as is the case I am making here, it is just the opposite. Deleuze states it best in what I think might be his most passionate clarification, intentionally included here in its entirety:

Hence good and bad have a primary, objective meaning, but one that is relative and partial: that which agrees with our nature or does not agree with it. And consequently, good and bad have a secondary meaning, which is subjective and modal, qualifying two types, two modes of man 's existence. That individual will be called good (or free, or rational, who strives, insofar as he is capable, to organize his encounters, to join with whatever agrees with his nature, to combine his relation with relations that are compatible with his, and thereby to increase his power. For goodness is a matter of dynamism, power, and the composition of powers. That individual will be called bad, or servile, or weak, or foolish, who lives haphazardly, who is content to undergo the effects of his encounters, but wails and accuses every time the effect undergone does not agree with him and reveals his own impotence. For, by lending oneself in this way to whatever encounter in whatever circumstance, believing that with a lot of violence or a little guile, one will always extricate oneself, how can one fail to have more bad encounters than good? How can one keep from destroying oneself through guilt, and others through resentment, spreading one's own powerlessness and enslavement everywhere, one's own sickness, indigestions, and poisons? In the end, one is unable even to encounter oneself. In this way, Ethics, which is to say, a typology of immanent modes of existence, replaces Morality, which always refers existence to transcendent values. (PSS, 22-23).

Implied in this passage is the influence of Nietzsche on Deleuze's ethics, and in particular, the rejection of a slave morality which imposes transcendent incursions of values and judgments. When one does have the misfortune of a negative encounter, either through experimentation or by accident, how one responds demonstrates either a passive or active quality of agency. As in the work discussed earlier, in response to conflict, whether or not one becomes consumed by bitterness and desire for vindication or an attitude of hate, incidentally leading to further division and cycles of conflict, will depend on how one processes the encounter. In what is perhaps his most cited statement of ethics, Deleuze exclaims,

Either ethics makes no sense at all, or this is what it means and has nothing else to say: not to be unworthy of what happens to us. To grasp whatever happens as unjust and unwarranted (it is always someone else's fault) is, on the contrary, what renders our sores repugnant – veritable resentment, resentment of the event. There is no other ill will. (LS, 149)

Relating this to the preceding passage, Deleuze acknowledges that inevitably, proverbial shit happens. But rather than allowing it to defeat us, allowing negative affect to infect us and reduce our capacity to act, 'rendering our sores' with attitudes of regret, anger, resentments, guilt, shame, he challenges us to reject such self-involved and passive inclinations that are based on transcendent morals of right and wrong and instead, become worthy of what happens to us. This by no means suggests passive acceptance of what befalls us, which will only fuel further resentment. Recalling Nietzsche's parable of the ass, the camel and the lion, Deleuze states,

Affirmation conceived of as acceptance, as affirmation of that which is, as truthfulness of the true or positivity of the real, is a false affirmation. It is the yes of the ass. The ass does not know how to say no because he says yes to everything which is no. The ass or the camel is the opposite of the lion; in the lion negation becomes a power of affirming, but in them affirmation remains at the service of the negative, a simple power of denying" (NP, 184)

Rather, in quoting Bousquet, "Become the man of your misfortunes; learn to embody their perfection and brilliance," (LS, 149), what Deleuze has in mind is much more active in nature, concluding that, "Nothing more can be said, and no more has ever been said: to become worthy of what happens to us, and thus to will and release the event, to become the offspring of one's own events, and thereby to be reborn, to have one more birth, and to break with one's

carnal birth...(LS, 149-150). Returning to the example of *Scorched*, Nawal's silence as a force of counter-actualization to otherwise reactionary cycles of war. Constantin Boundas suggests, 'action' in the face of an encounter "reveals the true meaning of "becoming worthy of the event," the spinal cord of Deleuze's ethics" (2006, 410). Rather than passively accepting what happens, in becoming worthy we respond actively rather than reactively, in a way that is not out of 'self'-interest, or subjugated group-interest as in warring notions, but rather inspired by the ethics of a life. Likewise, as Braidotti reminds us, an ethics focused on the 'transformation' of negative to positive affect is "about moving beyond the pain...[not] denying the pain but rather activating it, working it through... to be worthy of what happens to us and rework it within an ethics of relation, without falling into negativity.... reworking these events in the direction of positive relations" (2012, 185). It is worth noting that resentment or bitterness that arise from a felt sense of injustice, is not one-sided. Arguably, despite good intentions, many on the traditional left also take on this tint of bitterness as they engage on various fronts of identity politics. And while the grounds for their anger are undeniable, as in the case of colonization and civil rights issues related to race, the attitudes of spitefulness may ultimately be inflicting even greater chasms of division and hatred rather than serving themselves nor a people yet to come. These attitudes ultimately foreclose on future possibilities of relating with agreeable affect. This is not about colour-blindness, nor about dismissing historical injustices that have led to the inequities of today. Instead, it is approaching these challenges through a more affirmative ethos. For ultimately, as Nietzsche and Deleuze would likely agree, those living in indignation are arguably twice victimized, condemned to suffer under the weight of an affective malignancy indefinitely.

Within the context of education, Bogue suggests that while we interpret this notion of worthiness as simply our reaction to what happens to us, it is also about a kind of education in becoming worthy. If, as Bogue states, we consider an event as a product of an encounter, then "the essence of learning, as well as thinking, resides in encounters" (2013, 33). Knowingly or unknowingly, teachers are constantly in the process of creating or denying opportunities for educational encounters, just as they are knowingly or unknowingly engaged in decisions of

political and ethical consequence. Understanding learning and becoming as a consequence of violence to thought, Bogue also emphasizes that “it is also important to do something with such violence, actively to become worthy of the encounters that occur,” but realizing that “one may also work to create encounters, to seek others with whom we may build ongoing encounters” (33). Within the context of a pedagogy of disturbance, then, literature assumes a central role as a potential source of encounters of such violence. In what might be my favourite passage in Deleuze’s work, he states that,

[T]here is no other aesthetic problem than that of the insertion of art into everyday life. The more our daily life appears standardised, stereotyped and subject to an accelerated reproduction of objects of consumption, the more art must be injected into it in order to extract from it that little difference which plays simultaneously between other levels of repetition. (DR, 293)

This then becomes the primary challenge of a pedagogy of disturbance. To allow the work of literature to infuse life with differences, borne by the writer in contact with the outside, and capable of contributing to counter-actualizations in subjectivities. It is, as Deleuze implies, the potential of literature to introduce affirmative differences into the cycles of repetition, which in turn contribute, quasi-causally to differentiated actualized differences in thinking and behaviours.

Risking Harm

Any efforts made toward addressing questions or concerns of social justice in classroom today requires accepting the risks of a dangerous pedagogy. But whether or not the danger is productive or detrimental demands a closer examination. A pedagogy of disturbance, as derived from Deleuze's conceptualization of the necessary violence to thought intrinsic to the event of learning and becoming, assumes students will be challenged to sustain periods of varying degrees of discomfort. It follows that in the literature classroom, learning begins with the affective sign of the text, something that strikes a reader with strangeness, uncertainty, or discord. Arguably, this implies that no learning takes place without the disturbance of affect. Hélène Frichot, in her review of Parr's book on memorial culture, points out that: "If a sign, let us say some traumatic event, is that which works a violence upon us, the ethical question that follows would be, how do you make the best of what happens to you?....we are always on the way, and in the midst of an apprenticeship, a study in ethical coping" (2011, 84). Reading is comprised of an encounter between the body of the reader and the body, or part of a body of the text. Both of which come together as components of a larger assemblage, in what Nathan Snaza refers to as a literacy situation: a "pre- or aconscious collision and affective contact" (2019, 4), or in other words "where nonhuman agencies and not-yet-human capacities and systems of the reading subject collide" (9-10). We do not know in advance what it will or can do. And because the best we can hope for is quasi-causality given the multiplicities of the virtual, we can only make our best guess as to which experiment to try. All are dangerous and, to be educational, perhaps all should be dangerous. As writer Neil Gaiman asks, "Are fictions safe places?" (2015, 7). But more critically he also asks, "Should they be safe places?" (7). As Barbara Stengel notes, accepting the dangers to self-concept, the challenge for teachers is to gently assume the challenge to overcome their resistance to the new or different:

There is no question that students sometimes shrink and separate from people, places and things that might provoke new ways of thinking, acting and being. But recognizing fear does not automatically suggest an antidote. Nor does it automatically imply that an antidote is needed. A student trading in fear (acting in ways that represent herself and others as fearful or fearsome) is shrinking from interaction that may be dangerous, but may also be educative. The educator who is able to freeze the fear, suspend the

shrinkage and interrogate the affect and its associations is the educator who can use that affect for educative purpose while respecting the potential danger to self and self-understanding. (2010, 539)

From the perspective of an ethics of immanence, the primary focus of literary pedagogy is the consideration of a literary work's potential to shift underlying conditions of actualization. In adding a new body to the assemblage, aesthetic experiences bring the reader into contact with the outside of thought, opening them to flows of intensities or difference. But in anticipating the educational potential in the circulation of differential forces in the virtual and their subsequent coalescence into problems, we must also come to embrace the affections of discomfort and even pain emerging in the actual.

Ironically, though from this understanding of learning, *success* may be paradoxically evidenced by affections of apparent discomfort or distress, these same signals are also most likely to be responsible for many of the challenges against such literature and practices. However, it should also be noted that harm as understood through an ethics of immanence is conceptually very different from harm disparaged by transcendental morality-based judgements, more-often than not fueled by traditional, cultural or paternalist views and disseminated through affective contagion of reactionary forces. I have often overheard teachers engaged in lively conversations centered on books they've recently read, only to conclude, "It was such a good book, but I wouldn't dare use it in my classroom!" Whether their fears are warranted or not, too often I find such remarks remain unchallenged. And, too often they are more reactionary and derived from trained and engrained fears fostered by tradition and institutionalized paranoia, than by conclusions of deep consideration. As a result, many books, including the selections I have chosen to discuss such as *Catcher in the Rye* and *Scorched*, have been denied to students, for reasons which I argue lack a truly ethical defense. Like many teachers, I have felt many imprecating fingers of shame pointed in my direction, exemplified by arguments such as those forwarded by journalist Meghan Cox Gurdon, whose article in the *Wall Street Journal* attacks teachers for choosing unreasonably 'dark' literature. Though primarily considering young adult readers, the sentiments Gurdon expresses in her article are not unlike those many teachers, including myself, have heard:

If books show us the world, teen fiction can be like a hall of fun-house mirrors, constantly reflecting back hideously distorted portrayals of what life is...Reading about homicide doesn't turn a man into a murderer; reading about cheating on exams won't make a kid break the honor code. But the calculus that many parents make is less crude than that: It has to do with a child's happiness, moral development and tenderness of heart. Entertainment does not merely gratify taste, after all, but creates it. (2011)

The sentiments Gurdon expresses in her article are not unlike those many teachers either hear or fear they will hear. While lack of evidence abounds on both sides, the arguments that assail twitter and blogs are frequent enough to maintain a steady paranoia on both sides of the debate. And, though I agree with Gurdon's comment, "If you think it matters what is inside a young person's mind, surely it is of consequence what he reads," I disagree with what she presumably believes matters. As Michael Berry notes, "There appears to be a pervasive presumption that all sanctionable pedagogy must be innocuous, a principle which seems to take the concept of 'harm' as self-evidently meaningful (and, hence, presuming it to require no further explanation)" (2008, 5). And while he directs these comments to the context of higher education, the same applies to secondary education. Intuitively there must be thresholds of comfort and thresholds of accountability to be considered. But in my experience, these are rarely justified, and as already mentioned, in most cases censorship is more about dread of noisy repercussions from parents or administration than about potential harm to students. As Berry continues, "Understood from a certain critical perspective, which avows the merits of discomfort, personal crisis, and even a certain form of subjective trauma, this harmlessness is both impossible and undesirable...harm – understood and defined explicitly, critically and circumspectly—is not only desirable, but *essential* for meaningful liberal arts and humanities andragogy" (5, original emphasis). Citing examples of Megan Boler's pedagogy of discomfort and Kevin Kumashiro's 'pedagogy of crisis,' he conditions his position with important cautions that 'harmful pedagogy' be approached with care. Nevertheless, he emphasizes, as I have here, that 'subjective harm,' or what I might refer to as infringements on ego-centric comfort zones, "is a vital outcome of critical thinking and reflective practice" (5). In as much as critical thinking is a 'deeply personal process,' to the extent that a reader might wrestle with the challenges of difficult or disturbing truths "One discovers oneself to be, varyingly, ignorant, egoistic, partial, prejudiced, and complicit in tremendous injustice" (10). It is with this in mind that Kumashiro

arrives at the conclusion of “learning that the very ways in which we think and do things is not only partial but oppressive involves troubling or ‘unlearning’ what we have already learned, and this can be quite an emotionally discomforting process, a form of ‘crisis’” (2002, p. 63).

The question therefore remains: are encounters with disturbances justifiable? Though the emphasis here is on asignifying or affective disturbance of sensation, as it is in all three of the selections here, these are often accompanied by discernable narrative disturbances. And as Gurdon decries, many of the texts she challenges contain elements of rape, multiple levels of violence, racism, sexism, gore, and profanity. We must also ask, then, at what point do texts deserve charges of inappropriate, excessive, or sensationalistic. Or stated differently, at what point do texts become clearly antithetical to the ends of social justice education or an ethics of immanence? All teachers must recognize and respect certain principles of professional ethics, often defined through the expectations of ‘in loco parentis.’ My own professional body, interprets the principle to mean “the teacher stands, in relation to the student, in the position of a caring parent, as an unofficial guardian... allow[ing] the teacher some of the privileges of a parent but also bring[ing] with it added responsibilities for the protection of pupils” (Alberta Teachers’ Association, 2009/2019, p. 27). Clearly this remains subject to interpretation, and a discretionary call for teachers who must consider what constitutes a ‘caring’ parent and what constitutes ‘protection.’ In the context of the ELA classroom we must then ask, what literary encounters might a ‘caring’ parent accept or welcome, and from what encounters might they require protection against?

There are, it seems, three important points to consider in more depth: a. what is the nature of harm? b. Is there a justifiable concern that harm will be produced through the encounter and c. Why the violence of disturbance is necessary and therefore justifies the risks?

What is the Nature of Harm?

In describing his own childhood encounters with disturbing texts, Gaiman describes what happens when "images or words or ideas that drop like trapdoors beneath us, throwing us out of our safe, sane world into a place much more dark and less welcoming" (2015, 6). His account emphasizes the visceral nature of affections which actualize, quasi-causally, during or following an encounter with certain texts, perhaps not unlike the way Deleuze conceives of affective signs violently seizing the reader: "Our hearts skip a ratatat drumbeat in our chests, and we fight for breath. Blood retreats from our faces and our fingers, leaving us pale and gasping and shocked" (6). And though he seemingly associates these reactions with past experiences, notably those which we were wanting to forget, "things that wait for us, patiently, in the dark corridors of our lives," these, too, operate as signs which compel what Deleuze refers to as the search. The question is whether or not the visible affections provide evidence of real harm, as no doubt, those with Gurdon's sensibilities would suggest. Or what many might interpret as symptoms of retraumatization, emerging from what Gaiman himself identifies: "monsters in our cupboards and our minds are always there in the darkness, like mold beneath the floorboards and behind the wallpaper, and there is so much darkness, an inexhaustible supply of darkness" (6). Once again, there is a distinctive difference depending on what ethical and moral lenses are applied. While outward affections of distress may constitute harm from certain moral and pedagogical frameworks, we must ask what it would mean to care and protect within an affirmative or immanent ethics. What harms might threaten the affective capacity of the organism at the pre-subject, pre-conscious level of the assemblage? The answers, unfortunately, may not necessarily lead to the kinds of literary encounters welcomed by parents or critics such as Gurdon.

In the interests of due diligence, an ethics of immanence should also ask what risks exist for either the penetration or perpetuation of negative or sad affects from either exposure or denial of certain pedagogical experiences. Importantly, Braidotti distinguishes negative in this context as "not a value judgment (any more than it is for the positivity of difference), nor is it a psychologically depressed state...rather [it] concerns the effect of arrest, blockage, and rigidification that comes as a result of an act of violence, betrayal, a trauma" (2012, 182). In

putting the social back into social justice, ethics demands a much wider view of harm than is generally considered in our society, let alone the institution of education. In accepting my role as preparing a child for life, I must also consider implications beyond the self-interest of parents, conceiving of life through the non-individualistic lens of a much more expanded ecology. As Jagodzinski notes, “‘experience’ does not belong to the self; it is always trans-subjective and a-personal” (2014, 12). From this view, caring and protecting carries a much broader and much deeper ethical accountability to bear on our decisions. As Braidotti explains,

Abusive, addictive, or destructive practices do not merely destroy the self but harm the self's capacity to relate to others, both human and non-human others. Thus they harm the capacity to grow in and through others and become others.... diminish our capacity to express the high levels of interdependence, the vital reliance on others, which is the key to a non-unitary and dynamic vision of the subject. What is negated ... is the power of life itself, as the dynamic force, vital flows of connections and becomings (the nomadic intensity of zoe). (2012, 182).

Keeping in mind the complexity of the event, and the near impossibility of determining causality or finding evidence of change in the unconscious virtual, as well as the unpredictable nature of any experiment with encounters, we unfortunately can only speculate on worse case scenarios. But as Braidotti observes, not unlike Gaiman's realizations, that acts and affections of resistance are unreliable:

Great distress follows from not knowing or not being able to articulate the source of one's suffering, or from knowing it all too well, all the time. People who have been confronted by the irreparable, the unbearable, the insurmountable, the traumatic and inhuman event will do anything to find solace, resolution, and also compensation. The yearning for these measures – solace, closure, justice – is all too understandable and worthy of respect. (2012, 181)

What may seem to be harm, especially from more reactionary perspectives, may paradoxically signal movement towards greater health, as the body shifts negative to positive states of affect. As Braidotti also notes, a key centrepiece to affirmative ethics is “the belief that negative affects can be transformed... impl[ying] a dynamic view of all affects, even those that freeze us in pain, horror, or mourning” (182). It is not surprising then, that teachers or ‘helpers’ might be tempted to intervene prematurely. This is by no means intended to point fingers of blame at those who err on the side of caution; only a plea that we might reconsider before doing so.

On the other hand, if pushed too far, and too quickly, there is always a risk that the organism will breakdown instead of breaking through. As Deleuze and Guattari warn, “‘staying stratified – organized, signified, subjected’ is not the worse that can happen: ‘the worse that can happen is if you throw the strata into demented or suicidal collapse, which brings them back down on us heavier than ever’ (ATP 161). In the context of arts education, jagodzinski notes that, “while learning is to take place by ‘dosages,’ risk cannot be discounted. Signs ‘wound,’ to echo Deleuze in his *Logic of Sense*” (2017, 7). Again, it is difficult to empirically determine how an event is proceeding or will proceed at the unconscious level. In considering her own questions, “how do we know when we have gone too far? How does the negotiation of boundaries actually take place?” Braidotti replies:

This is where the non-individualistic vision of the subject as embodied and hence affective and interrelational, but also fundamentally social, is of major consequence. Your body will thus tell you if and when you have reached a threshold or a limit. The warning can take the form of opposing resistance, falling ill, feeling nauseous, or it can take other somatic manifestations, like fear, anxiety, or a sense of insecurity. (2020, 252)

While it may indeed be difficult to discern when real harm is happening, as teachers we might find some comfort in knowing that rarely do these worse-case scenarios become a reality. As I turn to the second question, I might add that in my own experience of teaching literature for 27+ years, as well as working with teachers across a larger urban board and reading accounts of teachers across the world, I have yet to come across a case that comes anywhere close to what I would call a breakdown. Or genuine harm. At least not from exposure to literature.

Is There Justifiable Concern?

Because of the challenges of determining harm, as just discussed, it follows that there are no easy ways to determine whether or not concerns are truly justified. That said, it is worth noting that there is a general sense from much of what I have read to offer some reassurance to those willing to take more risks in their approach.

As a young boy, Gaiman recalls wishing he had not read certain books: “they upset me: stories which contained helplessness, in which people were embarrassed, or mutilated, in which adults were made vulnerable and parents could be of no assistance” (7). No doubt there are many,

including Gurdon, who would be alarmed hearing this, and ready to launch accusations of negligence. Yet as he grew older, Gaiman admits that these encounters with disturbance were ultimately not only safe, but beneficial: “They troubled me and haunted my nightmares and my daydreams, worried and upset me on profound levels, but they also taught me that, if I was going to read fiction, sometimes I would only know what my comfort zone was by leaving it; and now, as an adult, I would not erase the experience of having read them if I could” (2015, 7). In other words, what might have been construed as harm in the moment of the event, in time turned out to be pedagogically desirable. Had someone heeded his expressions of discomfort when he was younger, he would never have experienced the learning he did.

Far more concerning, perhaps, are symptoms of distress that may relate to or be interpreted as experiences of retraumatization. Though space does not allow for an extensive review of the empirical research addressing the risks of retraumatization due to exposure to literature or the efficacy of trigger warnings, Christian Jarrett offers a brief review of several studies. The conclusion he draws is that while research is “still in its infancy,” the results thus far “are surprisingly consistent in undermining the specific claim that trigger warnings allow people to marshal some kind of mental defence mechanism” (2019). Furthermore, studies such as those conducted by Heather Littleton et. al. (2007; 2010) offer “a solid evidence base that avoidance is a harmful coping strategy for people recovering from trauma or dealing with anxiety” (2019). Jarrett goes so far as to suggest that at this point the message from psychology appears to be that “trigger warnings should come with their own warning – they won’t achieve much, except encourage maladaptive coping and the belief that folk are sensitive and need protecting” (2019). Even more germane to my own work, in studying the impact of trigger warnings in populations diagnosed with PTSD, or qualified for what was probably PTSD, prior to exposure to passages from world literature, Payton Jones, et. al. concluded that there was “no evidence that trigger warnings were helpful for trauma survivors ... even when survivors’ trauma matched the passages’ content” (2020, 905). More significantly still, they “found substantial evidence that trigger warnings countertherapeutically reinforce survivors’ view of

their trauma as central to their identity” (905). Emily Johnston, also drawing on trauma studies, suggests

we can teach students to allow trauma to move us, to insist that we witness at the very moment we desire escape, silence, and ignorance; at the very moment we desperately try to just be left alone to go about our own lives. Communal witnessing is vital for recovery from trauma... [A]ny refusal to perceive trauma in others—and even in ourselves for that matter—not only revictimizes survivors, but also prevents healing from even becoming possible. (2014, 15)

Speaking specifically to literature which depicts violence against women, Amber Moore and Deborah Begoray note that “adolescents will likely face these issues in the role(s) of survivor, perpetrator, or ally or perhaps as a friend or family member of someone in these roles” (2017, 173). With this in mind, the argument is made for the necessity of exposing students of all genders to works that will challenge their imaginaries and their emotions (affect). Citing Dutro (2008), they emphasize that certain “[trauma] narratives showcase the power of story and provide opportunities to engage in the important work of witnessing and testimony (p.--),” which can trigger especially resonant and transformative emotions. Thus, studying trauma literature is significant because in any given classroom, there is bound to be at least one student who has dealt with trauma, and unfortunately, many who may in the future.

Far from stunting or paralyzing readers, texts that many students describe as sad or depressing are often the same ones they recall with fondness years later. And even in the moment in which they are immersed into the text, though tears may flow, it is nearly impossible to pull them away, even at a very young age. Massumi, for example, recounts research led by Hertha Strum in which one of three versions of the short, animated film, *The Snowman*, directed by Jimmy T. Murakami, was shown to a group of nine-year-old children (2002a, 23). In terms of perceived affections, not unlike the memories shared by Gaiman, the researchers found that at the highest levels of arousal, measured by equipment, the experience “made their heart beat faster and deepened their breathing” (24). The versions shown included the original wordless version, a voice-over version referred to as factual, and a second voice-over version referred to as emotional, “largely the same as the factual version but included, at crucial turning points, words expressing the emotional tenor of the scene under way” (23). Asked to “rate the

individual scenes in the film both on a ‘happy-sad’ scale and a ‘pleasant-unpleasant’ scale,” the results consistently evidenced a paradoxical desire to seek out and rewatch tragic films observed in older audiences, or that I observe in my students as they encounter disturbing literature: “The ‘sad’ scenes were rated the most pleasant of all; the sadder the better” (23). This led to the inference that, contrary to what we might expect, “the level of intensity is characterized by a crossing of semantic wires: on it, sadness is pleasant.” (24). One further observation of the study was that in reading ‘galvanic skin responses’ that supposedly measured autonomic reactions, “the original nonverbal version elicited the greatest response from their skin” (24). Of course, we have no way of knowing whether the processing of non-representational affective violence follows a different logic than that of the accompanying representational violence, or as in this case, whether affect decreases or increases with the observable ‘pleasure’ resulting from the sadness. One added note for sharing this brief account is that the research was apparently initiated after the film was shown on German television and “drew complaints from parents reporting that their children had been frightened” (23). In our current moment in which populations are even more hyper-sensitive to potential ‘dangers’ lurking in the pages of schoolbooks, we can only imagine similar reactions or worse. Ahmed emphasizes the necessity to pay attention to ‘bad feelings,’ or what we might call affections or discomfort due to some unnamed disturbance, “not in order to overcome them but to *learn by how we are affected by what comes near*, which means achieving a different relationship to all our wanted and unwanted feelings as an ethical resource” (2010, 216). This is not unlike the implications associated with Deleuze’s description of the apprenticeship in signs, the search initiated by something within a text that grabs hold – the violence to thought – but demands our patience and endurance. As Ahmed explains,

[W]hat is underestimated by affirmative ethics is the difficulty of giving our attention to — and sustaining our attention on — certain forms of suffering. The desire to move beyond suffering in reconciliation, the very will to “be over it” by asking others to “get over it,” means that those who persist in their unhappiness become causes of the unhappiness of many. Their suffering becomes transformed into our collective disappointment that we cannot simply put such histories behind us. Ethics cannot be about moving beyond pain toward happiness or joy without imposing new forms of suffering on those who do not or cannot move in this way. (2010, 216)

Rather than denying films or texts out of fear that they may disrupt education or harm the child, more often than not, these are the experiences which affect the course of their lives, pointing once again to the central paradox of this work: unconscious disturbance, quasi-causally surfacing as distress or ‘sadness,’ are often signs of an increase in joyful affect. And while readers may visibly reveal painful affections, many willingly return to what they perceive as the source ‘material’ of the tears. As Kafka apparently said somewhere (though I could not find where I originally read it), ‘I feel pain to know that I am alive.’ Or as Nietzsche states in the preface to *The Gay Science*, “I doubt that such pain makes us ‘better’; but I know that it makes us more profound” (1974, 36). Ethically, however, there is little doubt in my mind that certain kinds of pain or struggle do make us better, especially pain deriving from a violence to thought, the kind that ultimately brings us to struggle with the unthought, but also provides the fuel for our search, and for encounters with the passive vitality of ‘a life’. In the same text Nietzsche adds, perhaps inspired by Spinoza, that if we decide to “diminish and lower the level of human pain, [we] also have to diminish and lower the level of their capacity for joy” (86). This leads to what may be one of his most quoted provocations, “the secret for harvesting from existence the greatest fruitfulness and the greatest enjoyment is – to live dangerously! Build your cities on the slopes of Vesuvius!” (283). Though as Jagodzinski notes, before edging too close to the crater, it’s “better to have a good foundation” (personal comment, 2021).

It is worth noting that the disturbance most commonly targeted by censors is what was earlier referred to as literal or narrative. Jagodzinski describes a similar challenge at the post-secondary level with students opting out of assigned films presumably due to their inability to tolerate certain images of violence. Such resistance prompts the questions: “what precisely is good or necessary violence, loving violence, revolutionary violence, interpretative violence, or divine violence?” and “when is a particular form of violence justified?” (2018, 46). Except for the most extreme reactions, distress can just as easily be considered a sign of the event, evidence of a shock to thought or transformation of perspective.

Once again, we need to consider the organism, as above, in terms of an ethology and whether the impact of an encounter increases or decreases the organism’s affective capacities. As

jagodzinski explains, “ ‘Truth’ in this paradoxical case has nothing to do with right or wrong, only in the sense that destruction ‘verifies’ truth. It is not a question of verification through rational argumentation, verifiable proofs, or reasons. It is the way an image ‘asserts’ itself on the viewer” (47). Offering the example of the assignment of Gus Van Sant’s film *Milk*, he explains how the student would confront the ‘monstrous,’ the outside, and in the process, “the image undergoes a dynamic and energetic metamorphosis so as to deterritorialize the hardened clichés concerning gay life and values that are in place both socially and perhaps in my students’ own imaginaries” (47-48). The force of such an encounter, should it break through, would constitute “a force-sign that attempts to (violently) present (monstrously) another sensibility that is rarely shown” (48). This, I would add in answer to the questions he raises, has the potential to dissolve walls, a leaning in rather than leaning away from difference, and thus constituting a loving violence, a revolutionary violence of the kind that fully justifies its inclusion in the curriculum on the basis of increased affect.

Recalling my own experience with *Scorched*, the text creates an experience that far surpasses what is typically judged as “acceptable” for the classroom. But students consistently leave the classroom seemingly deep in thought or working through their feelings... and wide awake. Though fictional, it is very visceral and challenges readers in a way that an expository piece or a steady stream of factual news coverage on atrocities around the world simply cannot. For the very reasons others might argue it should not be brought into the classroom, the violence of texts such as *Scorched*, so unlike and so unrepresentative of anything students have encountered elsewhere, may provide the very reason they should be justified. As a side note, while I did not observe any noticeable signs of traumatized students, there was some recognition of the potential salutary impact of the work, movingly affirmed by one young woman who came to me at the end of a class bursting with energy. Though I had provided plenty of warnings before we began the unit and reminded students of their right to choose to work on something else in the library, this student had chosen to stay, even though, unbeknownst to me, she had lived through her own trauma of sexual assault earlier in her life. Needless to say, had I known, she would have been the source of my greatest concern. Yet

somewhat serendipitously, she explained how the play had allowed her to face her own trauma and that it was the best thing she had experienced in years. It ‘freed’ her.

Why Violence

Accepting minimal risks of harm and doing our best to circumvent it or intervene should the need arise, we can therefore feel somewhat justified in interpreting signs of discomfort as success rather than failure. Rather than protecting students from works that might cause distress, within reason, there are ethical grounds to warrant seeking them out. Analogously, in zealously overusing Lysol disinfectant we risk the incursion of infectious sources far worse than those we seek to avoid? We might then also ask, by choosing ‘safe’ books, those so agreeable, censored, or dulled to the point of posing little risk, do we achieve anything of real educational value? In a fuller consideration of harm, it is equally important that we attend to the reverse side of the question: what harm can be incurred, somewhat paradoxically in deference to risk-aversion, if we avoid, ignore, or deny such disturbances? In a statement that might very well stand as an incisive defense of art – including literature -- in education, Alfred Jarr states emphatically, “If I stick to the raw information, it’s not interesting as art, I want to be able to move you, challenge you, touch you. I want to be able to irritate you, provoke you; that’s a political task” (in Walker, 2010). Though not necessarily explicit, Jarr’s words imply an attack on the stagnating works that pander to populist demands that are so quickly folded into the already-known, already-understood, what Deleuze might refer to as representational. They also imply, for educators, the need to consider raising the proverbial bar, which ultimately means taking risks with literature.

Over the years, I have realized that even texts ostensibly intended or ‘marketed’ to raise issues of social injustices, are often selected for inclusion in anthologies or syllabi so as to comply with the most anticipated and most conservative community standards for safety and acceptability, while at the same time, also ensuring against ruffling any capitalist or neoliberal feathers. Not surprisingly, either due to the restrictions from above or beyond the walls of the institution, or

adopted practices of teachers who, often justifiably, fear battles with administration or parent complaints, texts selected with such concerns in mind not only fail to spark shift in thinking or action, but they fail to arouse any reaction, except the more than occasional dismissal and a continual monitoring of the clock. As Michael Richardson insists, “Seeing torture *should* affect us intensely, viscerally. Perhaps like Bush we should be disgusted, penetrated by what we have seen, or we should be shocked, or horrified, or angered” (2016, 82). In choosing to avoid or deny such images, we eliminate the affective capacity of literature to work.

If we accept the assumption, and admittedly not all teachers or administrators will, that education ought to, as Ann Berlak contends, “unsettle taken for granted views and feelings” then it follows both logically and ethically that “confrontation, with its attendant trauma, and reflection on the trauma are necessary...and the intense emotional repercussions that are likely to follow may be essential to the process of eroding entrenched cultural acceptance of injustices such as racism” (2004, p. 123-124). Berlak’s argument follows the realization that “‘democratic dialogue’ does not necessarily promote such shifts” (124), concurring with my own sense that discussion alone can do little to transform behaviour. Let alone the kind of pedantic, and often manipulative, rhetoric sometimes characteristic of certain environmental and social justice education and awareness campaigns. As Bignall points out, “[N]o great wrong is done when (some aspects of) an encountered body’s existing relation are destroyed in the transformative process of interaction, so long as the union creates the conditions of an increased capacity for affection” (2010a,88). This, as she also notes, is especially the case when “established ways of being” are potentially destroyed in the process. This coheres with the first task of schizoanalysis, a destruction which serves to open channels for difference to flow, free from enslavement to despotic regimes or capitalist axiomatics. These echo earlier statements regarding the the tyranny of deleterious forces in society. As Colebrook summarizes: “if immanence is philosophy for Deleuze it is also an ethics: not allowing experience to be enslaved by any single image that would elevate itself above others” (2002a, 79). Finally, as these assertions suggest, we must also consider the very real possibility that certain kinds of disturbance have the potential to counter-actualize other violences, both literal and

affective, that may be actually harming student bodies. In other words, before condemning disturbance of this kind, we must also challenge assumptions that other pedagogies are without harm. We might consider, for example, pervasive forms of bullying, exclusion or discrimination based on race, culture, language/accent, appearance, and socio-economic status. Both singular and systemic, these continue to be very real and point to harm regardless of which ethical principles might be applied. But with respect to immanence, they often result in negative or sad affects and thus decreases in the body's affective capacity to make connections. But additionally, we might also consider the harm related to common and institutionally adopted practices which promote hierarchies of self-worth and belonging, individualism, and unhealthy competition, as well as curricular materials which promote limiting and therefore unhealthy forms of representation, all of which contribute to exacerbated social divisions. Lynn Worsham (1998) has convincingly argued that 'pedagogic violence' is not only demonstrated in the dominant pedagogies of today, but everywhere around us, it is evidenced in the perpetuation of hate and division.

Adam Tenenbaum also highlights the hypocrisies of the modern world, as we boast of living in an open society "allow[ing] any one to enter our space of discourse under the assumption that the struggles within that space are handled without the use of manifest violence" (2000, 377). Like Deleuze and Artaud, however, he speaks of a kind of violence to thought, especially relevant to an education that might undeservedly pride itself as diverse and 'multicultural.' As he explains:

We let the other enter our space, but we do not listen to his violence. We activate "non-violent" forces, rhetorical and symbolic, semiotic and pragmatic; in order to mark positions for the other within our space. We delegate the other to the illegitimate or to the margins, we allow him to enter his voice into our discourse of humanity but we do not honor his voice if it is marked thus. (2000, 377)

In other words, in the interests of protecting spaces from untenable disturbance, we not only marginalize, but we deny voices which might threaten us as potentially difficult or disruptive. While teachers are largely in control of what literature they choose, it requires a special effort to seek out literature beyond the traditional, the canonized or the readily available. Often when these boundaries are breached, deference is readily given to texts that have already garnered

popular support. Until the recent movements initiated by the *Truth and Reconciliation* process, few if any Indigenous texts were introduced into the classroom, not only for the reasons Tenenbaum suggests, but for the absence of any motivating force, ethical or political, to include them. Cloaked behind excuses of protectionism, he contends that invitations, welcomes, and acceptances are conditioned or mediated, an amelioration deceptively performative of its own form of violence:

We are obliged to reason in order to censor any other one who is less obliged. We marginalize in the name of reason and humanity, and apply a variety of violences to purify them or at least to make them remain marginalized... We prefer our violences of reason, our violences of history, our violences of metaphysics. And we are very efficient in making our violences rule, and eradicating all other ones. (2000, 377)

Perhaps one not-so-subtle example of the kind of violence Tenenbaum identifies is found in the carte blanche avoidance of potential triggers and over-zealous implementation of 'safe-spaces,' presumably free from racialized or gendered slurs or demeaning comments. Although these may be well-intentioned, and on occasion even justified, the increased emphasis of such practices not only result in an over-sanitization of classroom materials and discussion, but a policing of these spaces that itself imposes a kind of violence, ostensibly to avoid imagined ones that may not even exist and, as with the disturbance of literary texts, may be more conducive to health than an artificially restrictive space.

A specific case of this is the extent of public shaming and administrative castigation recently directed at any and all uses of the 'n-word.' In light of current debates regarding the acceptability of literature in the classroom, including whether or not a work should be removed if it contains the 'n' word, the question that must be asked is whether or not the word serves to increase racial tensions and divisions, or paradoxically helps to alleviate them. Accepting that the word may justifiably hold title to one of the most harmful and demeaning in the English language, and that it should never be used against others, its appearance in literature, I would argue, still retains significant pedagogical value. It is because of the word's history and the racist violence associated with it that, when it is encountered in reading, it works like a punch to the senses, activating an asignifying or affective violence that disturbs in the most visceral way possible. As a sign, not only does it conjure images of wounding, but more importantly, to

recall an earlier comment, the word itself marks a kind of wound, leaving an imprint in the virtual that has the power to instigate a journey of apprenticeship as the reader processes the wound. And it is this process, a search beyond or beneath the symptom, that initiates movement towards health. Taken further, through the process of schizoanalysis, it offers an educational opportunity to begin eroding divisive molar identities and territories rather than maintaining or ignoring them, as a practice of avoidance would no doubt perpetuate? As Black Harvard Law professor, Randall Kennedy argues:

Feelings are, at least in part, influenced by the responses of others. The more that schools validate the idea that hurt is justified in the circumstances pertinent here, the more that hurt will be expressed, and the more there will be calls to respect expressed feelings of hurt by avoiding, prohibiting, or punishing what is said to trigger them. I insist upon pushing in another direction, advancing the message that, in circumstances in which “nigger” is aired for pedagogical purposes, there is no good reason to feel hurt. It does no favor to students to spare their feelings if doing so comes at the expense of valuable education. (2021)

As I tried to do in my discussion of Marilyn Dumont’s poetry, here, too, I try to defer to the voices of those who have not had the privilege of living without racism. Along with Kennedy, a brief survey of literature written by Black authors reveals many who in their work not only include the n-word, but viscerally use it in contexts of racial violence. So extensive is its appearance that while the usual suspects for censorship – *Huckleberry Finn* and *To Kill a Mockingbird* – might be easy targets of censors, to exclude all literary works that include the word would be tantamount to silencing the vast majority of Black authors, as well as the very aesthetic encounters most potently positioned to counter-actualize the very issues or racism that concern the censors. Education by nature, and literature in particular, should challenge us to reexamine our habituated opinions. This is a point Kennedy also makes in referring to an example of one of the most important Black writers in history:

Nothing better illustrates this point than the bowdlerization of James Baldwin. He insisted that “nigger” was the creation of white racism and that the term said more about those who wielded it malevolently than those who were its targets. He declared

that he was not your “nigger.” But an acclaimed documentary film transformed his statement into “I am not your Negro.” A white teacher at the New School, Julie Sheck, pointed this out, quoting Baldwin directly...referring her students to one of his essays in which he complained about the lies that had covered up “the darker forces in our history” and in which he urged “an unflinching assessment of the record. (2021)

And for her own unflinching courage in the classroom, the teacher mentioned, Julie Sheck, is one of many who have been publicly admonished (and though she eventually returned to her job) many in the profession have not recovered so easily. Given the threats now borne by teachers, it is not surprising that literary selections are increasingly scrutinized for any content that might signal conflict, creating a space that is perhaps safe, but now stagnant. Lynn Worsham points out, the institution of education functions to impose a majoritarian ‘framework of meanings;’ but more fundamentally, it also functions to shape and sustain emotions that either produce or perpetuate injustice:

Its primary work is to organize an emotional world, to inculcate patterns of feeling that support the legitimacy of dominant interests.... Pedagogy binds each individual to the social world through a complex and often contradictory affective life that remains, for the most part, just beyond the horizon of semantic availability, and its success depends on a mystification or misrecognition of this primary work. (1998, 223)

Fearing further scrutiny, condemnation and even job loss, teachers, administrators, and publishers are more inclined than ever to avoid any text that might draw unwanted attention from watchdogs, settling instead for works that are safe, sellable, populist and comfortably consumable. In the language of Deleuze and Guattari, they are representational and majoritarian. Sadly, I fear we are moving further towards a steady diet of texts (what some may struggle to call literature) stultified to the point of educational sterility. Such tendencies cohere with Sylvere Lotringer and Sande Cohen’s observation that for Deleuze and Guattari “the dominant modes of conceiving history and the subject were inadequate to the violence and terrorism of capitalism” (2001, 7).

Consistent with an immanent ethics of a becoming which defines the good as expansive rather than contractive, though initially more cognitively centred, Mark Bracher’s emphasis on

thickening schemas and therefore greying and complicating representational thinking, is ultimately compatible with Deleuze's notion of violence of thought. As he contends, the position of righteous morality, "is supremely ironic in light of the fact that the whole purpose of education is to change students in one way or another" (465). In fact, he admits, like Deleuze, that education involves some degree of what he calls, pedagogical violence, a term he borrows from Worsham. Lamenting, Bracher contrasts such education to what have become more normalized methods and materials:

As currently practiced, literary pedagogy, like many other elements of education, contributes to the production of docile subjects for global capitalism through, for example, enforcing classroom punctuality, reliability, obedience, and subordination. Moreover, any social criticism or pedagogy that aims to contribute to beneficial social change must assume that it is both possible and justifiable to change students' behaviors. (2006, 465)

While there may be, as some would perhaps argue, other texts that deal with similar issues of injustice, but with less probability of deep disturbance, I am convinced, along with Bracher, that if real, indelible change is to take place in the context of social justice concerns, then there really does need to be a certain shock, a certain dissolution of beliefs, and yes, even a certain experience of pain.

This is consistent with Braidotti's notion of sustainable ethics, drawing from Spinoza, Nietzsche, Bergson, Deleuze and Guattar, which focuses on the necessity of a certain degree of pain or anguish in order to move from a state of negative to positive affect, recalling the conceptualization of worthiness, amor fati, and the eternal return. In direct contrast to increasingly more reactionary trends in education, fueled by both progressive and conservative demands for censorship across the political spectrum, Braidotti suggests that 'ethical sustainability' encourages us "to take pain into account as a major incentive for and not only an obstacle to, an ethics of changes and transformations" (2006, 133). As she explains elsewhere, "moving across the pain and transforming it into activity, may seem counterintuitive [because] in our culture people go to great lengths to ease all pain, but especially the pain of uncertainty about identity, origin, and belonging" (2012, 181). Far from viewing pain as something that can

or should be avoided in education, she describes it as the “defining moment for the process of becoming-ethical: the move across and beyond pain, loss, and negative passions” (189).

The pain we experience, ‘the sobering experience,’ according to Braidotti, derives from “the humble and productive recognition of loss, limitations, and shortcomings” (189), which stems from our conscious and unconscious attachment to accepted and habituated representations of self and the world, what Deleuze would call ‘common sense.’ But the stickiness of attachments themselves are products of the social capture of desire and territorializations of beliefs, values and expectations, which draw us back in to their zone of constructed comfort. In relying on dogmatic images of thought while denying the violence necessary to disrupt constituent habitual or taken-for-granted representations, we do violence to potential ‘learning,’ effectively foreclosing on access to the creative chaosmosis of ‘a life’ and the infusion of difference we most urgently need in this moment of time. As O’Sullivan explains:

Rupture and affirmation are then two moments of the same encounter, two moments that only seem opposed if considered in the abstract, outside of actual experience. Art, in breaking one world and creating another, brings these two moments into conjunction. Art then is the name of the object of an encounter, but also the name of the encounter itself, and indeed of that which is produced by the encounter. Art is this complex event that brings about the possibility of something new. (2006, 1-2)

Disturbance to Compassion

Following O'Sullivan, we might ask once again but this time with a focus on ethics, what is it that art/ literature produces? And why does it matter ethically?

In addition to countering the harm of pedagogical violence perpetrated in many schools today, an ethics of immanence and affirmation is not limited to destruction or deconstruction of habits of thought and action, but also serves a constructive function by increasing affective capacity and attunement to 'a life.' As Olsson reminds us:

These encounters are particularly violent affairs since they open up thinking to the forces of chaos... It concerns a kind of vertiginous feeling of losing one's references. But at the same time it is a very joyful and affirmative affair, since it can give us access to universes we did not know anything about.... Before thought there is life (2009, 26,28)

A deeper appreciation of such ethics emerges from a consideration of how disturbance can potentially transform assemblages and, with respect to my specific interests in this work, how increased capacities soften or erode walls of division and seed the conditions for leaning into otherness rather than away. This is an ethics that, applied to encounters with literature, moves us beyond simplistic judgements of good or bad content. Choosing literature that rises to the level of art typified by what Deleuze and Guattari refer to as a minor literature, and pregnant with affective style and substance, we also condition the 'literacy situation' to increase the probabilities for events of learning. As Levi Bryant suggests "rather than thinking ethics on the model of judgment, it would be more accurate to think the ethical as a sort of construction or building [and] the question of ethics then becomes: 'given this event, how is our collective to be built?'" (2011, 29).

There are, then, two prongs of ethical consideration. On the one hand, we must also consider the ethical implications surrounding events of learning at the micro or molecular level. In this case, we confront the possibility and probably of student reactions of distress, pain or discomfort, as territorialized and subjugated patterns of belief and habit are disturbed.

Teachers must then balance the need for smooth spaces which allow students to grapple with the affective signs emerging from their reading and collective spaces of support necessary to

sustain the 'wounds' arising from these same signs, fostering affective becomings and breakthroughs rather than breakdowns.

As the ethical implications of student distress has been addressed in the previous paragraphs, I turn my attention back to the primary ethical consideration that has motivated this entire thesis: political, and therefore also ethical obligations of education, to address the urgency of global concerns, including multiple environmental, social and existential crises. The challenges of genuine and immanent harm, at the molecular level of affective capacities to foster life must rise in priority for educators, pushing past the state mandates for knowledge transfer. This is not, as I have already stated, an ideological move; at the immanent level of the virtual – pre-subjective, pre-conscious, pre-lingual – it is about creating fertile conditions for the generation and reinforcement of affirmative or positive affect. The forces of disturbance offered by certain literary works, or portions thereof, have the potential, as I hope this work has demonstrated, to erode molarities of social division – us versus them polarities – and seeding the conditions for a collective capacity necessary to address environmental or ecological concerns. As with the Indigenous concept of 'all my relations,' Dirk Postma explains:

[A] pedagogy of social justice rests on ethics. A posthuman approach to ethics guards against the individual and social derailments of desire and affect. It is not so much an ethics that claims rights and justice, but rather one that enhances and enables all to participate in the ongoing and unbounded processes of becoming. A posthuman ethics accepts a decentred subjectivity which is part of and responds to the unfolding of events. (2016, 317)

Through my own experience in the classroom, I have become convinced of literature's ability to soften or blur the striating lines of social and personal identities that have not only hardened zones of conflict and political opposition, but which make the collective task of environmental survival that much more insurmountable. Without infusion from the outside, education is doomed to recapitulation of individualist and capitalist subjugation, an eternal return of the worst kind. As Paul Thomas suggests:

Education today, in this time of high-stakes accountability, may at best be preparing students to make choices between buying a Honda Accord or a Toyota Camry (which is no real choice at all), but education today, in this time of high-stakes accountability, is

not empowering students to choose not to own or drive a car at all, not empowering them to imagine another world, a better world. (2014)

More specific to the English Language Arts, Bryant also speaks to an education which shifts student subjectivities, especially in their relation to a world beyond competition and economic status. As he implies, more than a game of numbers, curricular outcomes, and assessment, given time and space for affective or intensive reading encounters literature can and should have a considerable impact:

If there is a difference between the person who has gone through a literature program and one who has not, it is not simply that the former has read x number of novels and can tell you all about what occurs in Moby Dick, but rather something changes qualitatively in how such a subject experiences reading texts such as Ellison's Invisible Man or Pynchon's Crying of Lot 49. A new sensibility has been produced, (2007)

A 'literature program' that challenges itself to being more than simply regurgitation of plots and characters, aspiring to instill "a new sensibility," through multiple encounters, as Bryant contends, "a subject is inhabited by a receptivity for a specific set of signs that did not before exist" and "just as writers have a style, the good reader, too cultivates a style of receiving works and this style is an invention or speciation within the world... Something that did not exist before" (2007). There is a certain optimism in his comments here, suggesting that while readers may not arrive with certain dispositions, openness or worthiness to the event, they may develop it in spite of their resistance.

While not necessarily speaking, at least explicitly, to the immanent ethics of the virtual assemblage, I find Mark Bracher's contentions of 'reeducating the emotions' through the study of literature cohere with Bryant's. Prior to an encounter with otherness, what we commonly refer to as prejudices and stereotypes, and from a materialist perspective might be described as constructed through territorialized paranoid codifications, relate as well to Bracher's description of how cognitive schemas "exert a profound influence on perception and judgment and hence on emotion and behavior" (2006, 479) and operate by 'short-circuiting' "perception of the full battery of causes that are responsible for poverty, addiction, crime, and so on" (479). Encounters with literature, according to Bracher, ultimately replace or thicken distorted or deficient schemas. Although he may not discuss it or intend it, I would contend that the reasons

literature is capable of dissolving rigid classifications and judgments, while more expository texts or forms of ‘communication’ such as news reports or social sciences texts may not, is due to its affective charge, including the stylistic intensities of language and characterization. Added to this is the importance of orientation, Sara Ahmed’s work suggests that literary encounters can work to shift our orientation, alert us or turning our attention towards ecological elements, both human and nonhuman, which we would not have otherwise noticed in our habitual day-to-day lives. As she states, “what matters is itself an effect of proximities: we are touched by what comes near, just as what comes near is affected by directions we have already taken. Orientations are how the world acquires a certain shape through contact between bodies that are not in a relation of exteriority” (2010, 234). Bearing this in mind, we can no longer take for granted what texts are placed in front of the reader. As O’Sullivan states, an art practice must ethically include “the organisation of productive encounters ‘through’ art” (2006, 42); no less can be said for an English Language Arts practice. Because of this, intentionally or not, choices of orientation become both ethical and political acts owned by all teachers. Selecting literary encounters – learning experiences – may work to sustain or maintain a status quo; for example, not including Indigenous voices sustains passive acceptance of colonial majoritarian values and influences. Or selections can shift orientations by bringing readers into relation with otherness, a proximity that, through the affective work of the text, might propel becomings by, of and for difference.

Beyond Empathy

In considering the ethics of affective literature, it must be stated that exposure to difference is not necessarily about or limited to empathy building, as many might argue. Not only does empathy arguably reside more in the cognitive than aesthetic, but as several recent studies have revealed, empathy’s role comes with serious caveats that also need to be considered. Although, sometimes treated synonymously, a distinction can and has been made between the concepts of pity/sympathy, empathy, and compassion. Pity or sympathy are also considered the least demanding of emotions, and typically require very little on the part of the observer. One

can feel sorry for another without sensing any connection or relationship to their suffering. Empathy, on the other hand, is regarded as a significant step forward, requiring the reader to extend themselves into the lives / shoes of another. Megan Boler distinguishes these as follows:

What role does identification with the other play in definitions of altruistic emotions? Can we know the other's experience? ... "I suggest that in the definitions above, pity does not require identification; sympathy employs a generalized identification as in 'that could be me' or 'I have experienced something that bears a family resemblance to your suffering'; and empathy implies a full identification. In the cases of sympathy and empathy, the identification between self and other also contains an irreducible difference - a recognition that I am not you, and that empathy is possible only by virtue of this distinction" (1999, 157)

But it is this latter distinction that is rarely appreciated or understood. Instead, we often hear of empathy as allowing us to feel the suffering of others or to identify with what they are going through. Boler criticizes the 'Aristotelian' or 'passive' empathy forwarded by several influential scholars, including Rosenblatt, Nussbaum and even Dewey, suggesting that it "falls far short of assuring any basis for social change, and reinscribes a 'consumptive' mode of identification with the other" (1997, 253). Likewise, Carolyn Pedwell also cautions against the "liberal narrative of empathy... the conviction that, in a transnational and multicultural world, social crises, hierarchies and antagonisms can be addressed affectively through practices of empathetic imagination, perspective taking and engagement" (2014, 94). In fact, as any scan of the literature will reveal, philosophers (including cultural, educational and social theorists) often disagree agree on the capacity of empathy to shift behaviours, with many cautioning against placing too much emphasis on empathy, which they argue offers little more than pity and may on occasion even be dangerous. While teachers of literature might hope, as Boler states, "to resolve social conflicts and xenophobia, fear of the other, through empathy.... 'passive empathy,' as traditionally conceived, does not contribute to social change but encourages a passive form of 'pity.'" (1999, xx). Directed at a 'distant other,' she argues that it results in an insufficient pedagogy: "at stake is not only the ability to empathize with the very distant other, but to recognize oneself as implicated in the social forces that create the climate of obstacles the other must confront" (1999, 158). In other words, such empathy often lacks the critical examination required to implicate the self as partially complicit in the other's circumstance. In recalling her own teaching of Art Spiegelman's holocaust graphic novel, *Maus*, she concludes

that “Passive empathy produces no action towards justice but situates the powerful Western eye/I as the judging subject, never called upon to cast her gaze at her own reflection” (1999, 160).

Carolyn Pedwell takes this one step further, even suggesting the potential of empathy playing a role in maintaining institutional or territorial regimes currently in place: “it is not just that *discourses and rhetorics* of empathy are strategically mobilised to suit a wide range of political agendas and interests...[but that] the particular social, cultural and geo-political circuits through which emotions and affects are produced are constitutive of how empathy is *felt and materialised*” (2014, 183, original emphasis). In other words, even potentially positive emotions and affects can be quickly territorialized to serve both despotic powers and the axiomatics of capitalism:

neoliberal political appropriations of a feminist politics of care, whether in the form of Obama’s empathetic politics of hope or the popular business rhetoric of ‘the empathy economy’, have not functioned to empty such practices of feeling, but rather to ensure that empathy, care and compassion are generated in the interests of maintaining dominant social and economic forms, such as the nation and the multinational corporation (2014, 183)

This of course has occurred repeatedly on both local and international stages, where political and economic interests have coopted the orientation of media and the dominant narratives to direct observers to where they want them to focus their emotional labour. We might recall the codifications of judgments initiated under the Bush administration against the axis of evil as but one example of a campaign of political propaganda generated to ‘affect’ a population’s emotional alliances and at the same time, point their attention away from other issues they might otherwise be committed to (e.g., economic collapse at home). But even in the event of more benign intentions surrounding humanitarian crises, organizations and governments will utilize images and narratives to capture empathetic support for directing aid in one direction rather than another, even if the latter might be more urgent. As but one notable example, when the Tsunami hit South-East Asia in 2004, the global out-pouring of aid was enormous, amounting to an estimated 6.25 billion by the end of 2005. To put this in perspective, as Stephanie Nolan reported, while 136,000 had died (with a total count of approximately 230,000

by the end), in the same period and for every day following, 6500 were dying very slow and painful deaths each day in Africa. And while the Tsunami raised a total of 6.25 billion the amount raised for the entire previous year for Africa was only 3.6 billion. As Stephen Lewis commented, "I don't begrudge a penny to Southeast Asia," Lewis said, adding, "But what does it say about the world [when] we can tolerate the slow and unnecessary death of millions whose lives would be rescued with treatment?" (In Kweifio-Okai, 2014). This is not about comparing wounds; both were deserving of the world's attention. But the case is illustrative of how our affective and emotional energies are capable of being oriented and manipulated not simply in favour of pain and suffering, but in the interests of power and capital as it should come as no surprise that capitalist interests in South-East Asia far outweigh those in Sub-Saharan Africa. Drawing on similar concerns, Paul Bloom launches one of the most vehement extended charges in his book *Against Empathy*, contending that by focusing our attention on people 'here and now,'

[I]t makes us care more about them, but it leaves us insensitive to the long-term consequences of our acts and blind as well to the suffering of those we do not or cannot empathize with. Empathy is biased, pushing us in the direction of parochialism and racism. It is shortsighted, motivating actions that might make things better in the short term but lead to tragic results in the future. It is innumerate, favoring the one over the many. It can spark violence; our empathy for those close to us is a powerful force for war and atrocity toward others. It is corrosive in personal relationships; it exhausts the spirit and can diminish the force of kindness and love. (2016, 9)

Empathy's vulnerability to exploitation has clear implications within literature as well, though some would argue that texts indulging in sentimentality hardly count as literature. It is the ease with which empathy can be so easily engaged and therefore so easily territorialized that reveals its limitations as the proper or most ethical focus of aesthetic education. Similar to the proverbial 'love' hormone oxytocin, while seemingly benign and even appealing, empathy shares its shadow consequence of decreasing affection for, or in the case of the Tsunami, diverting attention away from others.

While empathy may indeed be an important product of the reading encounter, it is important to make the distinction between that just described, what Jill Bennet refers to as 'crude' empathy, and empathy which retains an appreciation for difference in the experiences of

others. In distancing her interests from the former, Bennett argues that art, “by virtue of its specific affective capacities, is able to exploit forms of embodied perception” (2005, 10), which she suggests entails both affect and critical awareness which is “understood to constitute the basis of an empathy grounded not in affinity (*feeling for* another insofar as we can imagine *being* that other) but on a *feeling for* another that entails an encounter with something irreducible and different, often inaccessible” (10, original italics). Likewise, Dominick LaCapra qualifies the role of what he calls ‘empathetic unsettlement,’ insisting that it “does not entail this identity; it involves a kind of virtual experience through which one puts oneself in the other’s position while recognizing the difference of that position and hence not taking the other’s place” (2014, 78). At the same time, implying a certain expectation of literature as art, not only does it produce an empathic unsettlement, but it “should have stylistic effects or, more broadly, effects in writing which cannot be reduced to formulas or rules of method” (2014, 41). In the art of literature, the irreducible and different emerge as affective signs of disturbance that knowingly or unknowingly capture the reader’s attention and forces them to grapple with this discomfort of unsettlement. It may arise from tensions in the text that are felt, but not understood, and that lack clarity or easy resolution. As discussed previously, it is this disturbance that percolates through style, including ‘thick’ characterizations that defy simplistic categorizations of good or bad. In contrast to the hopefulness that might otherwise satisfy readers’ expectations and desires for happy endings. LaCapra’s unsettlement disturbs by “pos[ing] a barrier to closure in discourse and places in jeopardy harmonizing or spiritually uplifting accounts of extreme events from which we attempt to derive reassurance or a benefit (for example, unearned confidence about the ability of the human spirit to endure any adversity with dignity and nobility)” (2014, 41-42). While this may disappoint many readers and educators who may be inclined to dismiss works unlikely to reach resolution, or worse, leave them in a state of discomfort or ‘sadness.’ Against the simplistic or crude adoptions of empathy, Dale Tracy argues that:

Literature does not help one to know what it is to be another. Rather, literature helps one to know what it is to encounter another. Reading, much like living, does not give the experience of another person’s experiences (even if they have been described exceedingly well). Literature is about meeting new people, not being them (2017, 4).

Yet, as he also points out, many students measure the worth or enjoyment of an experience of reading based on their ability to identify with the characters. Or, in the interest of ‘relevance,’ whether they can relate to characters. But though this may satisfy our appetite for comfort food, making literature easy to consume achieves little in terms of education. Conversely, to the extent that they are able to sustain their discomfort, works that disturb are far more likely to incite learning. It follows that, if our interest as educators is... education, then we must seek out literature that arouses rather than pacifies and disrupts and agitates rather than entertains and comforts.

Immanent Compassion

By this point, it seems to me that we have surpassed any kind of empathy, regardless how it is conceptualized. Either way, crude or unsettling, empathy retains a separation between ‘us’ and ‘them.’ Recognizing literature for its potential to engage readers in an affirmative ethics of immanence, however, suggests the possibility, an aspirational limit point perhaps, of removing subjective interests entirely, to enter into relationship with those with whom we struggle to identify. To the extent that identification is with characters with whom we are most likely to identify with, or even most likely to sympathize with, it distances us from those who are least like us... reinforcing the molar lines that separate. This is why, for example, they are so repulsed by the character of Nihad in *Scorched*, but often of other protagonists of better-known tragic works such as Blanche Dubois in *A Streetcar Named Desire*, or Willy Loman in *Death of a Salesman*. As Tracy contends, “It is the work done after the initial moment of identification (or lack of identification) that allows the expanded capacity to engage with others’ experiences” (4). The question then becomes, how might literary machines, plugged into the assemblage, affirm life, and in the process, serve to extend connections and actualized relations beyond a subject’s immediate circles?

I suggest that as a concept, compassion has much more affinity to an affirmative ethics of immanence and is ultimately demonstrative of actualized shifts derived from positive or joyful

affects. ... an openness to be connection with another body. Not only is empathy, especially of the crude variety, less likely to affect material transformation, but it is also, as Dale Tracy suggests, less likely to lead to an “expanded compassionate response” (4), a conclusion that might appear somewhat counter intuitive. And expansion rather than contraction. An inclination to overreach molar borders or boundaries of us/them. In contrast to pity or empathy, compassion is generally understood as embodying a more active inclination to being with another. As Braidotti suggests, the discomfort that might arise from realizations of “vulnerability and pain” is useful to the degree that “it forces one to think about the actual material conditions of being interconnected and thus being in the world” (2012, 186).

In considering these shifts as molecular in nature, we can only speak to a people yet to come, a people living on the smooth plane of immanence, attuned to amor fati, and an orientation to ‘a life’ rather than their individual life. This is the incursion of what Deleuze intends by health: “The ultimate aim of literature is to release this creation of a health or this invention of a people—that is, a possibility of life—in the delirium. To write for this people that is missing ... (‘for’ means less ‘in the place of’ than ‘for the benefit’)” (ECC, 5). Educationally and constructively, these experiences connect us, disorder us, with the discord of something wild or chaotic but therefore substantial in life. Although some will steer clear of these encounters, I have no doubt that when students share their reactions to certain literature – of the most difficult kind – many not only embrace these experiences but seek others of similar potential. They read to know they are alive and the sign wounds they sense and follow open them to difference.

Focusing on non-cognitive, non-representational, and ultimately more-than-human forces at work in education, encounters with literature are capable of shifting subjectivities towards a life lived immanently, perhaps reflective of the qualities in Spinoza that so enamored Deleuze. It is in relation to Spinoza that I also attribute this conceptualization of compassion and more specifically, a literary education dedicated to transforming negative affect to positive, and disarming the biases and antagonisms that obstruct connection. This is consistent with movement towards amor fate, a response to the event that dissolves the negative affects of hate and resentment. As Deleuze explains:

In a world consumed by the negative, he has enough confidence in life, in the power of life, to challenge death, the murderous appetite of men, the rules of good and evil, of the just and the unjust. Enough confidence in life to denounce all the phantoms of the negative. Excommunication, war, tyranny, reaction, men who fight for their enslavement as if it were their freedom - this forms the world in which Spinoza lives. In his view, all the ways of humiliating and breaking life, all the forms of the negative have two sources, one turned outward and the other inward, resentment and bad conscience, hatred and guilt.... He denounces these sources again and again as being linked to man's consciousness, as being inexhaustible until there is a new consciousness, a new vision, a new appetite for living. Spinoza feels, experiences, that he is eternal. In Spinoza's thought, life is not an idea, a matter of theory. It is a way of being, one and the same eternal mode in all its attributes. (1988, 13)

I also see this argument as commensurate with empirical studies in neuroscience and brain plasticity. As but one of many studies, Olga Klimecki et. al. have observed that “although empathy is crucial for successful social interactions, excessive sharing of others negative emotions may be maladaptive” (2014, 873). Compassion appears to be not only situated in a different location of the brain, but is capable of “strengthening positive affect and activation in networks associated to affiliation and reward [and] may, therefore, represent a very potent strategy for preventing burnout” (878). Even accounting for the different conceptualization of affect employed in psychological research, compassion seems more conducive to expansion rather than contraction.

Most importantly, however, this emphasis on compassion gels with my own experience of teaching literature, during which I have observed over and over how student encounters with what might otherwise be described as hard-hitting, tragic literature tends to soften what were, prior to the encounter, expressions of prejudice. Interestingly, this conceptualization of compassion as immanent and joyful also resonates with the aspirations of Buddhist philosophy, which differs considerably from the more ego/anthropocentric ways it has often been applied in the West. For example, compatible with the kind of territorializations which construct rigid walls of division, Pema Chödrön describes “protective walls made of opinions, prejudices, and strategies, barriers that are built on a deep fear of being hurt...fortified by emotions of all kinds: anger, craving, indifference, jealousy and envy, arrogance and pride” (2010). And similar to

Braidotti, she speaks positively of vulnerability as a kind of ‘soft spot,’ which operates “like a crack in these walls.” Her description is strikingly similar to the conceptualization of walls inferred throughout this thesis as rigid lines of molarity, divisions of ‘us’ and ‘them’ that might begin to soften in the confrontation or encounter with affective forces of disturbance. As Chödrön concludes:

[U]nder the hardness of that armour [the walls] there is tenderness of genuine sadness. This is our link with all those who have ever loved. This genuine heart of sadness can teach us great compassion. It can humble us when we’re arrogant and soften us when we are unkind It wakens us when we prefer to sleep and pierces through our indifference. (2010)

The immanence of such compassion is consistent with the ethology of Spinoza. Speaking to his ontology directly, ----- Ruddick notes that “humans must collaborate with one another to enhance their potentia, their power to act [and] in the maximization of this objective, a collectivity that would form for the purpose of exploiting another would lose the possibility of a still greater collective power” (2010, 25). Braidotti goes further still, viewing the affirmation of life as paradoxically “the suppression of the specific slice of life that ‘I’ inhabits,” which implies a process that “disintegrates the ego, with its capital of narcissism, paranoia and negativity” (2006, 147). From this perspective, compassion would not a definable goal of life, but rather a quality emerging from the process of becoming. “This is an ethics that also aspires to a kind of liberation from infringements on creative production, and as such, one that, at its limit point, equates to a becoming-imperceptible” (ECC, 1). In the passage of dissolving ego – becoming imperceptible is, as Deleuze | Guattari state, “to have dismantled love in order to become capable of loving” (ATP, 197). This, I believe, also approaches the conceptualizations of compassion found in many Buddhist texts, in which the duration of hardship in meditation or engagement are intended to free the mind-body from the delusions of attachment and ego. As Thich Nhat Hanh states;

With compassion you can die for other people, like the mother who can die for her child. You have the courage to say it because you are not afraid of losing anything, because you know that understanding and love is the foundation of happiness. But if you have fear of losing your status, your position, you will not have the courage to do it. (2013)

This is arguably what Braidotti emphasizes as Deleuze and Guattari’s ethics “locat[ing] the constitution of subjectivity in the interrelation to others, which is a form of exposure,

availability, and vulnerability...entail[ing] the necessity of containing the other, the suffering and the enjoyment of others in the expression of the intensity of our affective streams" (2012, 193). Resonating with an ethos of amor fati, Mouawad observes, that "you have to integrate suffering into your life. Become it. And let it move you into another country, so that it can become something else" (in Rubin, 2012, 8). Whether intended or not, his statement reverberates with the prospects of fabulation of or for compassion associated with a people yet to come.

Closing Comments

This proposal of a pedagogy of disturbance is principally borne of the theoretical provocations of a materialism of aesthetics and the overlooked or neglected constituent considerations of affect. At the same time, it is primarily motivated by the urgency of ethical and political challenges facing all educators. As O’Sullivan maintains, a project is ethical “inasmuch as it involves exploring our potential for becoming and our potential for self-overcoming” (2006, 37). While it is true that affects can be exploited for the purposes of designer capitalism or to manipulate political alliance, a pedagogy of disturbance relies on the potential for affect to open the body to difference...to new ways of thinking and becoming. It is, The responsibilities intrinsic to the vocation of teaching include endeavouring to create conditions for learning but also, as I have argued, to disturb students into processes of learning.

Not surprisingly, I have struggled with balancing the theoretical arguments and aspirational possibilities with more concrete pragmatic pedagogical possibilities applicable at this moment in time. As stated, the challenge in pursuing an argument of this nature lies in the elusive nature of affect. As Massumi reminds us, “it is not ownable or recognizable, and is thus resistant to critique” (2002a). But, it would be a mistake, as he also emphasizes, to ignore its presence and the nature of its flow and impact, particularly in the context of learning and education. It is ultimately for this reason that the proposal of a pedagogy of disturbance relies largely on theoretical and speculative considerations, while its intuitive persuasion rests on and to a certain degree have been affirmed by my own experiences with literature. For this reason, I have centred this work on texts that I have personally worked with in the classroom and which are accessible to a range of high school student. Such texts have demonstrated the aesthetic capacity to activate social transformation. The examples I chose, including the genres of novel, drama and poetry, are, as O’Sullivan states of his own selection of examples, “objects that I have chosen, or that in some senses, have chosen me” (2006, 2). These are all texts that “forced me to thought, in the sense that they have offered a moment of inspiration or enthusiasm, or have provoked a question – set a challenge – to what was already in place” (2). As they have done for me, I have personally witnessed similar effects in students.

It must also be emphasized that a pedagogy of disturbance, as I envision it, is not dependent on specific texts. Those selected for this student are intended solely as illustrative of the kinds of texts and the approaches I've taken. They are merely demonstrative of infinite possibilities in putting texts to work, with or without other 'things' that enhance engagement, and without restricting other possible trajectories. I am especially mindful of ---May's proposal to consider the world as "composed not of identities that form and reform themselves, but of swarms of difference" that subsequently, even upon actualization, "continue to exist even within the identities they form, not as identities but as difference" (2005, 114). From an educational standpoint, "these swarms of difference assure that the future will be open to novelty, to new identities and new relationships among them.... immanent expression" (2005, 114).

Experimenting with new swarms of difference is therefore a crucial element of pedagogical practices. As jagodzinski argues, ethical action requires that educators must "acknowledge and retain the unknowability of 'difference'" that they confront in educational contexts (2002, 85). Although my explorations are, by necessity, a result of my personal relationship with literature, I am sincerely hoping that the discussions offered provide some small evidence of their potential to foster the kind of ethical disturbance I have envisioned for education, . One that, as Braidotti, following Deleuze, claims of a nomadic ethics, "challenges the centrality of the notion of the individual and replaces it with an ethical commitment to social values conducive to a collectively well-functioning system" (2012, 175). At the very least, I hope that these selections spark the 'openness to others' which Braidotti contends would express "nomadic relational structure of the subject and a precondition for the creation of ethical bonds" (174). And while I share the concern of many others regarding the environmental crises unfolding as I write this, I believe it is largely up to humans, working collectively, to address the ecological destruction. In turn, our capacity to work collectively, both at the local and global levels, is conditioned by the dissolution of divisions, suspicions and antagonisms determined by us/them distinctions, many of which are arbitrary and without substantive justification.

In thinking about literature within the proposed context of a pedagogy of disturbance, we no longer limit our appreciation to what literature tells us about other experiences or cultures. Nor is it simply an invitation to enter into emotional landscapes conducive to empathy. As Wallin notes, Deleuze's adoption of amor fati as the "ethical impetus for philosophy and art," challenges us to reach beyond critique. Rather 'philosophy' and I would add literary study, "must also affirm the productive or expressive potential of thinking difference" (2010, 27). In returning to the curricular challenges stated in my introduction, if we accept the ethical implications of associated with literary encounters, the role of reading cannot be limited to instrumental values of learning how to read and write, but it is a central to the possibilities of learning, of ethical engagement with the world, and the continued expansion of life. There can be no imposition of ideology, method of interpretation, or expectation of outcomes aside from literature's potential to release life. Following Deleuze, as Smith observes "The 'Good' or healthy life . . . is an overflowing and ascending form of existence, a mode of life that is able to transform itself depending on the forces it encounters, always increasing the power to live, always opening up new possibilities of life, and must be evaluated not only critically but also clinically" (1998: xv).

If there is a charge in anything I have written, it is that in considering the urgent demands of the global crises upon us, English teachers, along with all others, must assume some role, not of indoctrination or pedantry, but in creating conditions of becoming, nurturing an affirmative ethics of amor fati, and sustaining the effort necessary to increase our students' affective capacities to receive flows of difference. Instead of settling for discussions of meaning, regardless our fruitful these might seem, teachers of literature must look to the ecological interests of a life beyond-the-subject and beyond the human, to consider more deeply the questions of what a literary selection does or potentially can do. How might a work energize new trajectories in thinking and becoming? How might it materialize? How might it 'matter'?

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