Disrupting School Leadership-A Leadership of Disruption

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

Abstract

This thesis examines the concept of school leadership and its importance to the dynamics of power, micro-politics, and relationships while embracing an ontology *of becoming* formed in schools and the current milieu of global neo-liberal education reforms. It has been undertaken as a (re)reading and (re)engagement with data generated from a 7-year school research network that brought together principals, teachers, students, academic researchers, policy makers, and teacher union leaders from Alberta and Ontario, Canada; Finland; New Zealand; Norway; and the United States. The Alberta-International (AI) partnerships initiated and supported school (principal, teacher, and student) action research projects that explored ways of improving the schooling experiences for participants.

This thesis aims to (re)read the broader AI partnership efforts engaging with the analytical apparatus, tools, and concepts drawn from the philosophical orientation of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari (1983). This work was focussed on a schizoanalysis of the leadership practices, transversal relationships, and collective subjectivities produced throughout the AI partnerships. The overall goal was to describe the conditions necessary to produce micro-political sites of action and resistance that might open schools and education to a world-making beyond the current striations of intensified accountabilities, the narrowing of curriculum, and the "reengineering" of standards of practice—all powered by the mechanics of socio-technologization.

Using a methodological approach characterized as *excursions*, the study drew on the problematic of the subject working through the triad of self-reflection, self-reflexion,

and self-refleXion as constructed by jan jagodzinski (2008). While the original AI partnership work was focused on crossing boundaries conceived as geographic spaces, this study offers Deleuze|Guattari (1983, 1987) research cartographies as a way to move through the intensities of the AI partnership participants that might reignite *thinking* amongst the many absent voices in schools including (especially) students, teachers, and school leaders.

Dedication

For all the love, support, laughter, and fun I dedicate this work to my children, Christian, Jalen, and Sky, and my parents, Mike and Shirley.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to my PhD supervisor, jan jagodzinski. I don't know if I'll ever see the world in the way I did prior to studying with you. Not only did you inspire my thinking and challenge my views of the world, you taught me that perspectives change, morph, and grow throughout a scholarship. Your kindness and integrity are attributes I will aspire to further exemplify in my life. Your work is prolific and I am constantly amazed at your intellect and insights. Thanks for taking a "chance" on me.

I would like to express my deep gratitude to JC Couture for keeping "my feet to the fire" and for being instrumental to the inception and ongoing execution of the Alberta International partnership work. The work was joyful and I am extremely proud of all we accomplished as a team. Thank you for getting me on the path of academia at such a late stage of my career and supporting me throughout both my Masters Degree and the PhD work.

I would like to recognize the support I received from my committee, Olenka Bilash, Makere Stewart-Harawira, Cathryn van Kessel, Taylor Webb, and Randolph Wimmer. Your careful reading of the work and your insightful questions and feedback helped to guide my thinking, research, and writing of the dissertation. Both the candidacy and the defense exams will act as highlights of my academic journey. I appreciated the passion and deep understanding you all brought to the work.

I would like to acknowledge some friends and scholars who were instrumental to my thinking and execution of the dissertation. Dennis Shirley began with the Alberta

International partnerships and became not only an admired academic but also a close friend. Sam Sellar generously shared his thinking with me throughout my graduate work and also inspired me to pursue the work in a particular way. His work was seminal to my thinking and orientation of the research. Greg Thompson asked the best questions while I prepared for candidacy and the defense and has a special gift for how he articulates and views the world and "the work".

I would also like to thank Kent den Heyer for being a friend and engaging in the many conversations at the Next Act.

To my district, Edmonton Public School Board, I would like to thank you for the generous financial support I received for tuition and study. In particular I would like to express my gratitude to my superintendent, Darrel Robertson, and my assistant superintendent, Kent Pharis, for the generosity and support I received throughout this process.

Finally I would like to express my love and appreciation for my family, my children, and my parents for their ongoing understanding and support of me throughout the process. In particular, thanks Mike for your critical feedback on the writing and Shirley for being an ongoing inspiration in the world of education. Thanks to my children for being so understanding and supportive of a dream that came a little later in life than for many.

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Figure 1. Adapted from: Hoteit, L., Chadi, N., Hiltunen, J., & Sahlberg, P. (2012) Appendix A. 34

Chapter 1

Introduction – Thinking with Deleuze and Guattari

> [Philosophy] is imagination which crosses domains, orders and levels, knocking down partitions, co-extensive with the world, guiding our bodies and inspiring our souls, grasping the unity of mind and nature; a *larval consciousness* [emphasis added] which moves endlessly from science to dream and back again. (Deleuze, 1994a, p. 220)

This chapter will give an overview of the study, examine some of the research aims, delineate the research question, provide my personal background, and offer a summary of the chapters to follow. This thesis problematic[1] examines the concept of school leadership and its importance to the dynamics of power, micro-politics, and relationships, embracing an ontology *of becoming* formed in schools, and in the current milieu of global neo-liberal education reforms. It has been undertaken as a (re)reading and (re)engagement with data generated from a 7-year school research network that brought together principals, teachers, students, academic researchers, policy makers, and teacher union leaders from Alberta and Ontario, Canada; Finland; New Zealand; Norway; and the United States. The Alberta-International (AI) partnerships [2]initiated and

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[1] According to Deleuze (1994a), a "problematic structure is part of objects themselves, allowing for them to be grasped as signs, just as the questioning or problematizing instance is a part of knowledge allowing its positivity and its specificity to be grasped in the act of *learning"* (p. 64). So as Deleuze (1994a) explicates "a problematic does not have 'solutions' or 'answers' as 'problems' do; a problematic is the *question* itself (p. 68). Rajchman (2000) clearly articulates, "making visible problems for which there exists no program, no plan" (p. 8).

[2] These partnerships will be discussed in Chapter 2. In 2010, The Alberta Teachers' Association, the Finnish Board of Education, and the Center for Internationalisation and Mobility (CIMO) forged a partnership to bring schools from Alberta and Finland together to create networks of high performing schools that shared social justice goals and a commitment to providing "*great schools for all students"*. The Finland-Alberta (FINAL) partnership acted as the foundation of a broader strategic network of high performing jurisdictions around the world that advanced the teaching profession's authoritative voice in

supported school (principal, teacher, and student) action research projects that explored ways of improving the schooling experiences of students.

This thesis aims to (re)read the broader AI partnerships' goals and commitments, engaging with the analytical apparatus, tools, and concepts developed by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari through their extensive writings (1953–2004). The focus of this work considered a schizoanalysis of the leadership practices, transversal relationships, and collective subjectivities produced throughout the AI partnerships. The overall goal was to describe the conditions necessary to produce micro-political sites of action and resistance that might open schools and education to a world-making beyond the current striations of intensified accountabilities, the narrowing of curriculum, and the "reengineering" of standards of practice—all powered by the mechanics of socio-technologization.

Using a methodological approach characterized as *excursions*, the study draws on the problematic of my shifting subjectivity as a school leader, alongside the AI partnership participants, working as subjects through the triad of self-reflection, self-reflexion, and self-refleXion as constructed by jan jagodzinski (2008). Further, this *working through* of the triadic subject will be described within the trajectories of the contemporary global educational reform. While the original AI partnership was focused on "crossing boundaries" conceived as geographic spaces, this study will offer Deleuze|Guattari[3] research cartographies as a way to move through the intensities[4] of

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shaping school development. Subsequently, the Alberta Teachers' Association has developed partnerships with Ontario and Norway, (NORCAN) and New Zealand (NZAL).

[3] "Deleuze|Guattari" has become a common way of referencing Deleuze and Guattari's co-authored works and plays on the notion that the authors did not consider their work under this collaboration to be the product of two separate identities, but rather their collaboration created a third entity. As Deleuze

participants that might reignite *new thinking* amongst the many absent voices in schools including (especially) students, teachers, and school leaders. It is anticipated that this sensibility of "disrupting leadership" will result in opening possibilities for experimentation within schools that live within the impasse of the global education reform movement.

A postmodern critique of the instrumental-rationalist approach to leadership has been dominant for several decades; consequently, school leaders are increasingly under surveillance through the mechanisms of accountability regimes and governmentality as articulated by Michel Foucault (1977). Of course, there is acknowledgement in the field that educational leadership requires more than an objectivist, relativist, means-end approach to school leadership. Many postmodern theorists see the need to address ethical and political questions with a critical stance (Biesta & Mirón, 2002). Current research on school reform, and in particular the role school leaders should play in improving school culture, leadership, and pedagogy, tends to remain in an instrumental approach driven by increasingly sophisticated accountability measures that seek to establish performances and practices that will improve student outcomes. Governing and *surveillance by numbers* will be explored in more depth in this thesis, recognizing the rhetoric of "just fix those teachers, ensure they teach students the right things, giving the students the *right* knowledge to produce competent, productive workers for society" that is prevalent

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suggested, "[w]e were more like two streams coming together to make a third stream, which I suppose was us" (Deleuze, 1995, p. 136).

[4] Intensity is dynamism, it is a flow of variable strength and of differential processes, chiefly tied to sensation, but also to forms and concepts, and connected to becoming. Intensity is, therefore, a quantitative force. It can also be an overwhelming force as in the question of trauma.

throughout the neo-liberal education project[5] globally.

The contemporary global education change agenda has primarily focused on *what works*. A cottage industry of "edu-preneurs" (keynote speakers, researchers, and consultants) who travel the globe with advice and procedures for policy makers, education system leaders, principals, and teachers alike, has emerged to improve school practices in order that students achieve better results on so-called 21st century knowledge tasks so they might be deemed fit to become productive, knowledge[6] workers. Education has become one of the most lucrative business ventures of the 21st century. Stephen Ball writes extensively on the topic, "[e]ducation policy, education reform are no longer simply a battleground of ideas, they are a financial sector, increasingly infused by and driven by the logic of profit" (2012, p. 27). A quest for certainty and calculable progress in education is actualized by global economic and national and jurisdictional governing bodies in order to account for the investment of public funds in education to ensure students' human capital is being produced to meet the needs of the economic demands of the capitalist machinery (Sellar, 2015c). The education project, modulated by forces of capital and surplus value, has had a profound impact on student and teacher subjectivities and on school life in general. An increasing emphasis on "what works" has produced technical and instrumental solutions in the policies of school reforms by narrowing, restricting, and paralyzing school leaders in what they can effectively do and focus on in their school communities. This has, in large part, led to the foreclosing of any types of

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[5] The "education project" I refer to is the state of education globally as it is manifested through neo-liberalism. This refers to economic and social policies, forms of governance, discourses, and ideologies that promote individualism and unrestricted flows of capital. The education project manifests the values of efficiency and progress.

[6] A knowledge worker refers to anyone who spends their working days thinking, problem-solving, or handling large amounts of information.

experimentation or innovation other than meagre, non-risk, magic bullet approaches to change and innovation. Risk adversity and fear of failure is augmented at every turn: this (re)reading of understandings gained as a result of the AI partnerships endeavours to free time and space for new imaginaries of thought and action.

At a time in education where we need to acknowledge that the Anthropocene is already upon us (which raises a host of possible "endings"), it becomes necessary to consider the "end" of leadership as it is manifested in public school systems and how we might rethink education, school leadership, and pedagogy experimentally. It seems usual to live out our world through meanings and representations in schools, but it is unusual to inquire into the codes or systems of representation that infiltrate and determine our lives. This thesis problematic will endeavour to move beyond systems of signs and representations to inquire into the emergence of individual and collective subjectivities and the potential freeing of desire to escape or, at the very least, to resist our repression as coded by the capitalist machinery. For Deleuze (as cited in Colebrook, 2002), producing new ways of engaging in the world and the subsequent ability to mobilize other questions has less to do with solutions or answers and everything to do with questions and problems that might disrupt life and thinking. This is why my thesis is concerned with the "problematic" of leadership.

According to Julie Allan (2007), problems for Deleuze "do not exist only in our heads but occur here and there in the production of the actual historical world . . . The act of thought, for Deleuze (1994, WIP[7]), is a throw of the dice, a form of experimentation"

[7] While Deleuze wrote *What is Philosophy* with Guattari, many authors refer to Deleuze as the sole author as there was some question to Guattari's health and contribution. This work will be cited with WIP in further citations if Deleuze is the only person cited.

(p. 59). Where there have been shifts in "thinking" in the Alberta International (AI) partnerships is where the participants and facilitators have embraced "experimentation" and released themselves from any fixed ideas of specific expectations and outcomes. There are many examples where thinking has remained static and little has occurred or changed as a result of participating in an AI partnership, as the participants remained committed to searching for "magic bullets" or linear solutions to school improvement. Thinking, in the Deleuzian sense, means transformative change, not simple ideation that has no force behind it.

Thinking with Deleuze suggests thinking *difference* in a fashion that challenges the notion that "we know and experience the world through imposed structures of representation" (Colebrook, 2002, p. xxxi), rather "to get lost at the limits of representation is to encounter the radical discontinuity of modernism and the secularization that is its basis" (Lather, 2008, p. 21). To move beyond interpreting the world through representation, Deleuze compels us instead to recognize the forces of desire that give power to various forms of representations in order to trouble our common sense status quos into potential new ways of thinking (Colebrook, 2002). Deleuze (1994a) refutes readily-at-hand categorizations of *difference* (race, gender, class) that risk essentializing or erasing the possibility for the subject to think and be in new forms of life. This thesis problematic is concerned with what contemporary education assemblages *do or produce* and the conditions necessary to produce these education assemblages rather than simply what the assemblages might mean.

Acquiring a taste and a trust for thinking "unthoughts" is precisely what is foreign to most of the actors in the current field of education. In fact, throughout the partnerships

participants recalled an event when something or someone made them think *difference* and *creation*. Perhaps it was the awkward silences that drifted into consciousness when something was completely incomprehensible, irreconcilable, or strange. As Deleuze and Guattari (1994) maintain throughout their work, shortcuts to thinking can be lethal, thus process and engagement matter. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) caution that disrupting this type of common-sense thinking might be considered dangerous as it moves beyond the knowledge economy with its demand for evidence and calls for efficiency and progress where subjects have knowledge deposited into them as empty vessels waiting to be filled. In their book *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari (1987) describe the

> classical image of thought, and the striating of mental space it effects, aspires to universality . . . the nomad thought that rejects this image and does things differently. It does not ally itself with a universal thinking subject but, on the contrary, with a singular race; and it does not ground itself in an all-encompassing totality but is on the contrary deployed in a horizonless milieu that is a smooth space, steppe, desert, or sea. (p. 379)

This dangerous thinking supposes embracing vulnerability. Isabelle Stengers (2005b) offers, in her monograph "Deleuze's Last Message," a response and reaction to Deleuze and Guattari's (1994) last book *What is Philosophy* (herein WIP):

> The exercise of philosophy, "the art of forming, inventing and fabricating concepts" (WIP, 1994, p. 2), may be dangerous, is dangerous . . . . "To think is always to follow the witch's flight" (WIP, 1994, 41). The witch is an interesting figure if we remember that her broom had no motor, that it was flying because of forces that she was able to invoke and convoke, but not define as her own, as her

> property. If the witch is not cautious, if she thinks that what makes her fly belongs to her, if she ignores or forgets the required protection formulas, she will be swept away. (Stengers, 2005b, para. 22–23)

According to Jason Wallin (2014), the "majoritarian impulse of school has yet to produce the conditions for thinking in a Deleuzian sense whereupon thought proceeds through a violence to those habits of repetition within which thought became contracted" (p. 121). All this is to suggest that the paradoxical trajectories for school leaders today are living in between the binary of being impotent and omnipotent, which produces either paralysis on the one hand or privileges instrumentality and managerialism on the other. School leaders, as well as all members of a school's community, are trapped within the dichotomous tensions that produce the phantasms of impotence/omnipotence, impasse/"change everything", stasis/good life fantasies, slogans/grand narratives, fear to speak up/I know it all, and blindness/a law of silence.

The Roadmap Ahead

My research problematic stands as the following question:

> How can a schizoanalysis of the Alberta International (AI) partnerships offer new possibilities and potentialities for disruption and creation in the contemporary conceptions of educational leadership?

By considering the *performative encounters* of students, teachers, and school and system leaders in the AI partnerships, this thesis exploration considers the coefficients of transversality in case studies that will simultaneously engage with concepts from Deleuze and Guattari's (1983, 1987, 1994) toolbox through the mediating objects of curriculum,

assessment, indigeneity, and student-run spaces such as Global Café, student-run newspapers and TV stations, and student governing bodies (such as Math Councils and *EDSTAKE*). Ian Buchanan (2008) described Guattari as a gifted organizer, bringing people together to ignite creative sparks amongst them. Transversality, a concept invented by Guattari (2015), refers to the relationships between subjects and objects or subjects and subjects which are neither unifying nor totalizing, but offer an oblique line of flight through them (Buchanan, 2008).

Schizoanalysis, also referred to as assemblage theory, is to create new maps and cartographies "rather than trace the old routes" (Wallin, 2010, p. 41). According to Buchanan (2015), it is critical to realize that an assemblage is not a collection of things but is, in fact, an arrangement that is also temporary and subject to radical change. This doctoral work will conduct institutional[8] analyses where singular events might erupt into lines of flight (escape) to allow for the consideration of how the contemporary school machine is working, why it appears the way it does, what are the conditions underpinning its appearance, and what makes it appear (Buchanan, 2015). In practice, an assemblage is the productive intersection of a form of content (actions, bodies, and things) and a form of expression (affects, words, and ideas). Buchanan (2015) drew from Deleuze and Guattari's (1983) interpretation of the Danish linguist Louis Hjelmslev to explain that "[t]he form of content and the form of expression are independent of one another; their relationship is one of reciprocal presupposition (one implies and demands the other) but

[8] It is necessary to clarify the term "institution". The translation in French means *établissement*, referring to the establishment as a structure that is plunged into global society and which relates to state criteria; whereas *institutions* are something that can develop inside the establishment: they are quasi-infinite in number and variety. In these respects, exploring the issue of the institution has broader resonances. It not only helps elucidate the well-known theme of micropolitics, but it can help in the development of a more detailed consideration of questions of power (Goffey, Jan/Feb 2016).

does not cause or refer to it" (p. 390). Buchanan proceeds to illustrate that while a sunset is an

> array of colours produced by the diffraction of light, this does not cause us to see it as beautiful or melancholic; by the same token our concepts of beauty and melancholy do not compel us to apprehend sunsets in this way. (2015, p. 390)

Buchanan (2015) queries whether the multitude of Deleuzian studies done in recent years by Deleuze and Guattari scholars might be radically different if Massumi (1987) had chosen a different translation for *agencement* in his foreword and in his translator notes to *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*? Buchanan posits that a more accurate reading of the French term *agencement* might be "arrangement or pattern" (2015, p. 383).

According to Guattari (1998), schizoanalysis cannot be considered a general model but is, however, "an instrument for deciphering systems of modelisation (sic) in various other fields or, to put it somewhat differently, as a metamodel" (p. 433). Schizoanalysis is "the analysis of the incidence of assemblages of enunciation among semiotic and subjective productions within a given, problematic context" (Guattari, as cited in Savat & Thompson, 2015, p. 281). Schizoanalysis consists of three tasks that must be considered simultaneously: "destroying Oedipus or the representational territorialities of desire, discovering the desiring-machines operating outside of representation, and reaching the investment of unconscious desire in the social field, as distinct from preconscious investments of interest" (Sellar, 2015c, p. 426).

Research Aims

This thesis problematic endeavours not just to study and understand the forces that produce individual and collective subjectivities within the education project, but also offer a critique to change schools and their institutions. By producing conditions where the common-sense assumptions that underpin current practices of education and schooling might be troubled, such practices attempt to unsettle conventional views of schooling produced by means of both the State control and the capitalist machine. My aspiration is to produce thinking to problematize the contemporary education and school leadership project. In large part, I endeavoured to engage in a number of *thought experiments* while undertaking the processes involved with schizoanalysis. This involved an analysis of the interactions throughout the AI partnerships in the context of the social field that included opportunities to interrogate foundational concepts such as *what is school, what is success, what is teaching,* and *what is leadership?* Employing Deleuze and Guattari's (1983) analytical tools of schizoanalysis and Guattari's (1966) operative logic of transversality[9] and putting them to work amongst the subject groups and subjugated groups[10] of the AI partnerships, this thesis exploration encountered both open and closed spaces for the emergence of new subjectivities and relations while engaging in world-making for change.

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[9] A more in-depth discussion of the concept of transversality is found in in Chapter 4. The concept has practical tasks to perform in a specific institutional setting and is also a philosophical concept (Genosko, 2002). The key points that are discussed are transference, the coefficients of transversality, the affinity of the concept to Sartre's sociology, and how the concept was put to work at La Borde, a private psychiatric clinic in France (Genosko, 2002).

[10] Guattari distinguished between two types of group subjects. According to Guattari (1984), *subject groups* "or a group with a 'vocation', endeavors to control its own behavior and elucidate its object, and in this case can produce its own tools of elucidation" (p. 14). Contrastingly, *subjugated groups* are organized such that "the way it hierarchizes is subject to its adaptation to other groups" (p. 14). The subject groups of the AI partnerships were groups organized around common research questions and mediating objects such as student-run newspapers and cafes.

Such a *practical* philosophical approach focuses on new social practices in the AI partnership schools, which sought to break with the crystallisations of the serial nature of organizational power and the fixed role hierarchies in schools. Allan (2007) suggests that

> modes of existence are evaluated in terms of their power, but it is not the amount of power they create for individuals that is important; rather it is the extent to which the power can be deployed to push the limits that is significant. (p. 59)

By mapping the cartographies of the complex operations of power in the schools in which social codification, ecologies, and capitalist regimes mutually produce one another, I attempted to discover the sites of latent power and how these might become micro-political sites for resistance and becoming.

The series of encounters launched by the AI partnerships held no aspirations of permanent unification or final resolution/solution. They merely acted as *performance encounters*, acted out to live more desirable conditions, thereby rupturing the status quo to think *difference* in educational settings. AI partnerships' performative encounters had the primary intention of acting/action. As such, these encounters produced and explored a range of processes of collaboration including public workshops, action research experiments, learning institutes, large participant summits, research groups, conferences, and much more. The experiments aspired to move beyond pre-scripted, ideological based narratives to forge new connections, inviting participants to examine the effects of structural forces on their everyday lives. As such, the operating logics of *transversality* acted as a mutational force generating new aesthetic functions.

Through a series of performative encounters, the AI Partnership's transversal movements attempted to unfold the radical political potential lying dormant in many

schools. Performative in this sense refers to actionable and experimental movement within a world-making dispositive[11]. In an attempt to open space for the self-determined engineering of collective and singular subjects, these performative encounters activated new relations between people, space, and time. The mobile nature of the encounters within the international partnerships made possible multiple *becomings* for the participants involved.

The chapters that follow will be both theoretical and practical, engaging a range of conceptual resources to explore the relational and micro-political dimensions operating within and on the schools with a particular interest in leadership. Some chapters will be strongly theoretical, while in others theory will be built around the data generated by working with and reflecting on the projects with project participants—students, teachers, principals, and teacher union leaders. For example, the literature review surveying the current ideations that give force to contemporary conceptions of educational leadership will be challenged throughout the thesis by the vast body of literature of Deleuze and Guattari and the scholars that have taken up their work. These theoretical interventions are affirmed and illustrated through the performative encounters of students, teachers, and school leaders experimenting to create new worlds in their schools and potentially

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[11] Dipositive translated from the French term *dispositif* is a term commonly referred to when engaging Michel Foucault's work. However, Deleuze (1992) devoted some time engaging with the concept as illustrated in his chapter, What is a dispositif? in *Michel Foucault: Philosopher*, pp. 159–168. Foucault used the term *dispositif* while explaining his theory of power and discipline societies, as an "ontological reckoning of power as a multiplicity of forces" in various institutions, physical and administrative mechanisms and knowledge structures which enhance and maintain the exercise of power within the social body (Bussolini, 2010, p. 92). Deleuze elaborates (1992) that "we belong to social apparatuses (dispositifs) and act within them . . . The new is the current. The current is not what we are but rather what we are in the process of *becoming*-that is the Other-our *becoming-other*" (p. 164). He goes on to suggest that "the disciplines which Foucault describes are the history of what we gradually cease to be, and our present day reality takes on the forms of dispositions of overt and continuous control in a way which is very different from recent closed disciplines" (p. 164). Deleuze is referring to the differences between discipline societies and what he discusses as societies of control, which is elaborated on at some length in the chapters that follow.

systems.

Multiple sources of data analyzed in this study were generated while participating and thinking refleXively[12] about the AI projects with participants and fellow researchers and academics. The methodology draws on the inter-play of the subject (researcher) moving through three registers of self-reflection, self-reflexion, and self-refleXion (jagodzinski, 2008) as are mapped in detail in Chapter 3. Examples of the perspectives collected from participants in the partnership as performative encounters are drawn from multiple sources produced during the course of the 7-year AI partnership projects.

This data was collected and produced from a variety of group meetings and encounters that were conducted in the public domain (focus groups, facilitated "goldfish-bowl" discussion activities, group and individual presentations of action research findings, and multi-media productions in the participating schools) as well as from many artefacts produced by AI participants including videos, paintings, photo collections, and participant reflections that exist within the public domain (Internet, publications, reports, and annual partnership summaries). As a member of the AI partnership steering committee since the inception of the partnerships, and as the principal of the anchor school to the partnerships, I contributed to the collection and analysis of this data set and much of the AI proceedings evolved in relation to the findings that emerged. As a participant in the AI partnerships I observed key moments in its methodological and conceptual development.

[12] This is a term to be elaborated on further in Chapter 3 when describing a methodology for this study.

My Background

In this section, I outline my professional and academic background and describe how and why the theory and concepts developed by Deleuze and Guattari (1983, 1987, 1994) have become integral to my research focus. I come from a family of educators that dates back to my grandmother in South Africa. Both my parents and three of my siblings have been educators at one level of the education system or another. I have grown up knowing, talking, thinking, and dreaming school, including the dream-like *schoolmares* that happen before every new school year or term. I have often claimed that within 3 to 5 minutes of entering a school, I can tell more about the school than any school report card or school mission statement, vision, or strategic operating plan might offer. My experience has been that upon entering any school one has an immediate sense of the "feel" of the school, ranging from feeling the hairs on the back of my neck rise to a warmth on the skin that is produced "ordinary affects"[13] (Stewart, 2007, p. 1).

I had long been committed to ideals of social justice and engaging multiple voices, especially those of students, in conversations about life in schools. For years these commitments were central to my work as a school leader. At a time when I was becoming mildly concerned about my agency as a school leader and that of my principal colleagues in Alberta, I was afforded the opportunity to become a participant in an exploratory partnership between Alberta and Finland (FINAL). I was eager to embrace the unknown and the novel. I was well aware that everything about life in schools held great uncertainty, but it was the slips, stalls, stops and starts, successes and failures, and the messiness that made it invigorating and captivating for me. The international

[13] Affect and in particular Ordinary Affects, Kathleen Stewart, (2007) is explored in more depth in Chapter 4.

partnerships proved no different. Linear plans and goals were insufficient for the networks of school leadership teams of students, teachers, and principals committed to experimentation. These AI partnerships' performative encounters included opening the doors of schools and classrooms for "friends" to examine school culture and pedagogical practice and pose many questions, all in an effort to improve lived life in schools. Participants travelled across the province and around the globe to live with one another's families and visit one another's schools.

As an educator for 35 years and a principal for 24 of those years, my interests and personal commitment revolved around school leadership and the impact it had on school climate, student engagement in learning, and policy decisions for the education community at large. I now realize these idealistic goals might have been better served "understanding the rules of the new game" within the education project, and also perhaps discovering some escape routes from the promises of "a brave new world of continuous education and motivation" (Savat & Thompson, 2015, p. 274).

I completed a Master's program in Secondary Education at the University of Alberta in 2016. My Master's thesis and research centred on the belief that a narrow focus on grades and graduation rates prevented school leaders from engaging in meaningful ways to create equitable learning communities and more successful school cultures (including the culture created by and surrounding curricular programming), as well as affect student success.

My Master's research tested the notion that school leaders can and should evaluate how their schools nurture students' abilities to learn, grow, create, and thrive in social, academic, and professional settings. My research contributed to current

understandings that engagement and equity within learning environments directly affect student outcomes. I believed that schools that pursued and attended to a broad range of goals experienced improved academic results and promoted citizenship, health, resiliency, and life-preparedness. My Master's research project drew on a multilateral accountability framework that tracked how schools developed and used broader measures of success to enhance their adaptive capacity.

A central element of the research that I worked through was the acknowledgement that the school site was part of a complex ecosystem, a system of relationships that was nested in the community, the Province, and the broader socio-political milieu. This conceptual frame positioned this research as both a critique of current accountability systems and the neoliberal "commodification" of education and a manner to perform or dramatize a way forward through experimentation and thinking.

From 2010 to 2018 I served on the steering committee of international school partnerships (AI partnerships) between Finland and Alberta (FINAL); Alberta, Ontario, and Norway (NORCAN); and Alberta and New Zealand (NZAL). These international partnerships received both recognition and some mistrust. There was an attempt to demonstrate that the internationalization of education was not just about sharing ideas and facilitating congenial school visits. As research initiatives, data and analysis from these partnerships were about *reflecting* on practice, seeing immediate realities through new eyes, and thinking beyond *what is* to *what could be*.

As a result of the FINAL and NORCAN partnerships, I initiated and supported numerous action research projects in my school and I worked with 17 Alberta high schools, 10 Finnish schools, 2 Ontario schools, 4 Norwegian schools, and 3 schools from

New Zealand. These initiatives were the subject of numerous publications, videos, and presentations.

I re-entered academia as a mature educator where I felt confidence in my craft as an educator and had experienced much *success* in my roles as teacher, learning consultant, and principal of many schools ranging from Kindergarten to Grade 12. My re-entry to university began with a Master's project and swiftly morphed into coursework and preparation for a PhD in Secondary Education. My engagement in this academic work seemed a straightforward undertaking, and I had every intention of demonstrating how my practical work in schools, as a principal and educator, could be further developed into an academic dissertation. Considering myself an innovative practitioner, the action research initiatives done at the schools in which I worked, and throughout the 7-year duration of the AI partnerships, seemed an obvious way to proceed, demonstrating how things *actually work* in schools. I was filled with exuberance that it would merely be a matter of time before I completed the requirements of a doctoral degree. This definitely was not the case and I have numerous academic friends to thank, in particular jan jagodzinski, who offered courses on the theory and tools of Deleuze and Guattari. I swiftly realized that all I thought I knew was to be dismantled and I was to embrace spaces of risk, uncertainty, and messiness in my pursuit to (re)think the education project. Many scholars, including Deborah Kidd (2015), a British educator and teacher activist, have described a very similar process once being introduced to the tools and concepts of Deleuze and Guattari (1987), in the context of neoliberal educational reforms in the England.

While I thought I had grasped the Foucauldian (1977) workings of panoptic

power and subjectivities in a discipline society, I was naïve to the extensive reach of Deleuze's (1992a) control society and the machinic capacities and modulations of the Capitalist machine. Married to ideology and values of social justice and critical theory, I was consistently amazed and stupefied at the appropriation of our "good work" and "initiatives" by the forces of capitalism. I believed, naively, that mere manoeuvring against the forces of instrumentality and the capitalist capture would produce the positive intended impacts. Unfortunately it was not until I began to engage with the theories of Deleuze and Guattari (1983), and in particular the revolutionary, practical thinking of Guattari (2000), that I began to realize the range of forces continuously modulating and controlling desire and subjectivities within the field of education.

For me, learning and struggling to apply the Deleuze|Guattari (1983, 1987, 1994) apparatus has been similar to the experience of learning French as a second language. Initially it is not the words or the vocabulary that one easily attaches to, but the mimicking, repeating, and sensing of the new concepts. However, it is in the application and performance, the living of the "language", where one might acquire an enhanced proficiency. Deleuze and Guattari (1983) do not make the task of "fluency" easy, as they are philosophers who lived the belief of their craft and their commitment to *non-representation* by offering their concepts with a variety of names and meanings.

Deleuze and Guattari shaped my thinking and acceptance along with other scholars (Buchanan, 2014; Massumi, 2015) that power and the spaces and impetus for resistance, the micro revolutions, reside in the ordinary. So it is not a matter of merely seizing power, but rather understanding how it is possible that desire acts against its own interests; how is it that we desire our own repression (Buchanan, 2008). According to

Wallin (2014),

> education has always been a matter of producing people, yet certainly not of the nomadic and experimental quality that Deleuze and Guattari (1987) connect to the creation of a war machine or "outside thought" transversally poised to break with the doxa of an age. (p. 117)

This would involve repositioning students as human capital, teachers as performative teaching machines, and school leaders as omnicompetent.

Chapter Summaries – The Excursions

Chapter 2 provides a background to the initial thinking that led to the inception of the Alberta international partnership work. A history of the initial planning and goals of the AI partnership work are coupled with some insight into where I (re)thought the initial aspirations of the project to (re)read the work through Deleuze|Guattari lenses.

Chapter 3 describes efforts of deploying a set of practices (ethical, aesthetic, political) that put to work the analytical tools of schizoanalysis drawing from jagodzinski (2008). This methodology involves proposed performative encounters for me, as a "triadic subject" who is circulating through the three registers of self-reflection, self-reflexion, and self-refleXion. This chapter offers an example of engagement with this methodology in an attempt to illustrate both possibilities and challenges.

Chapter 4 surveys the field of literature of educational leadership. Framed as *The End of Leadership,* this chapter outlines the poverty of current conceptions of educational leadership that are circulated and mobilized in the field of my work as a school principal. An expansive body of literature of Educational Leadership, Management, and

Administration (ELMA) reveals how the field remains fairly conservative, primarily concerned with an instrumentality of mobilizing the "best" practices, behaviours, and traits of principals as "instructional" leaders to ensure schools change and reform to meet the needs of a neoliberal vision of 21st century learning.

Chapter 5 explores the international trajectories of school leadership, signalling the ongoing efforts by the OECD to equate student achievement with the performance of school principals through standards of practice. The chapter outlines how the cultural capital of the school leader globally has been variously constructed through the OECD school improvement policies and programs. Through a series of examples including Alberta, Norway, Finland, and New Zealand, the chapter examines how these global leadership assemblages have been mobilized and played out in various ways. The resulting effects are recognized in the collective assemblages of enunciation produced by school leaders in the particular case studies of the countries involved in the AI partnerships.

Chapter 6 opens with a review of the promise of a schizoanalysis to disrupt current efforts to territorialize and foreclose the definition and work of school leaders. This involves an examination of leadership within the transmission of affect and how bodies affect one another to re-machine the OECD's project of enframing the imaginaries of school leadership. Through two performative encounters of school leadership I offer a deep engagement with the Deleuze|Guattari (1983) tools and concepts that enable me to transverse the assemblages of enunciation that both limit and enable my psychic investments in what it means to be a school leader.

Chapter 7 examines how the Alberta International partnerships served, at times, to

interrupt the Future Ready curriculum reforms initiated by the Alberta Government in 2016. As explored in chapter 2, the Global Educational Reform Movement (GERM) mobilizes 21st century competencies and the articulation of an imagined neoliberal frozen global future where students, teachers, and school leaders are positioned within territorialized, striated spaces of deficit. These processes have the effect of advancing an imaginary of a "back to the basics and majoritarian man" while also being tempted by the "designer capitalism" inherent in personalized learning and 21st century narratives. The three performative encounters of Remaking Finnish Teachers, The Philosophy Café, and Powering the Future illustrate where the Alberta International partnerships offered opportunities for recoding neoliberal curriculum reform as multiple becomings rather than the desiring production of a universal claim for a single future.

Chapter 8 takes up the experiences of students, teachers, and school leaders as they reflected on their involvement in the Alberta International partnerships focussed on the meaning of success in school. Given the encounters over the 7 years of the partnerships, the chapter offers examples of how AI participants interrupted the dominant prevailing imaginaries of success in school and the indicators that circulate and construct global accountability infrastructures of datafication.

The final, concluding chapter develops my thoughts and conclusions that addressed the problematic of my thesis and revisits the adventures of thought this work has suggested for reimagining school leadership as more than the performative instrumentalities of delivering the neo-liberal agenda of the OECD. What began with the intention of evaluating the successes and failures of the Alberta International partnerships has morphed into a reimagining and re-enactment of the contemporary education project

and the role of school leadership. At a time where a culture of trepidation, fear, and silence permeates the halls and offices where the trajectories of school leaders are enacted, I continue with a sense of hope. I am not naïve to believe that suggesting a disruption of leadership to experiment with a leadership of disruption will not be met with raised eyebrows, suspicion, and perhaps even consequence; but I am more convinced than ever that neither impotence nor omnipotence are the ways forward. Moving beyond moral callings that gesture the possibility of transcendence rounded in the immanence of liberation, I hope to offer a tentative promise of world making that finds and mobilizes the courage to engage in dangerous thought, which is precisely what I have seen students do within the partnerships.

Secondary Data Analysis: Ethical Issues and Challenges

The data used for analysis in this dissertation will not involve the collection of new data, but will be drawn from an extensive data set that was generated during the 7-year Alberta International school projects. As mentioned, the multiple sources of data to be analyzed in this study were generated while participating and thinking refleXively about the AI projects with participants and fellow researchers and academics. Examples of the perspectives collected from participants in the partnership as performative encounters were drawn from multiple sources produced during the course of the 7-year AI partnership projects.

Secondary analysis refers to the use of existing research data to address questions that differ from the original research questions undertaken in the AI partnership work. While the fundamental ethical issues related to the secondary use of research data remain

the same, they have become more pressing with the advent of new technologies. While data sharing, compiling, and storage have become more efficient, there remain concerns about data confidentiality and security. Ethics approval from the University of Alberta Research Ethics Board (REB 2) for the use of the secondary/extant data from the AI partnerships was satisfied.

As previously mentioned, this data was collected and produced from a variety of meetings that were conducted in the public domain (focus groups, facilitated goldfish-bowl discussion activities, group and individual presentations of action research findings, and multi-media productions in the participating schools) as well as from many artefacts produced by AI participants including videos, paintings, photo collections, and participant reflections that exist within the public domain (Internet, publications, reports, and annual partnership summaries). As a member of the AI partnership steering committee since the inception of the partnerships and as the principal of the anchor school to the partnerships, I contributed to the collection and analysis of this data set and much of the AI proceedings evolved in relation to the findings that emerged. As a participant in the AI partnerships I observed key moments in its methodological and conceptual development.

To this end, the work represented here is only one part of a larger work conducted over the 7-year AI partnership work. The writing of this dissertation is based upon extant data that was gathered as part of the ongoing, everyday work of schools and the public meetings from the AI partnerships. The work discussed here has already been completed, has been distributed publically within the broader community, and has become part of the public records of the AI partnership. As part of AI partnership records, it has been shared

between teachers, students, and the broader community prior to the genesis of the study presented here. Teachers, students, and the community were invited to participate in and provide feedback upon the work we had engaged in. It is important to note that the thesis written here began only after the AI partnership work being discussed was completed. Thus, the further study represented in the thesis contains insights about the depth of what the work that had already been done and how that work might be moved forward in the future. However, there are certain ethical issues pertaining to secondary data analysis which will be taken into consideration.

Issues in Secondary Data Analysis

As in all use of data, secondary data use must consider concerns around any potential harm to individual subjects and issues of consent. The data in this set does have identifying information, but is freely available on the AI partnership websites, publications, conference presentations and papers, and other public forums, thus permission for further use and analysis is implied. All data was pulled from the public domain. The origin of the original data will be acknowledged where appropriate and the participants have posted or written under their actual names. In all other cases, the speaker/writer identities were concealed. Ethics approval was obtained for the use of the data considered for secondary analysis in this study. An ethics application for the study was reviewed as required by the University of Alberta, University's Research Ethics Boards (REB). A REB2 application was submitted and it was concluded that the "Ethics Application has been deemed Outside REB Mandate" (Appendix A). As such, the application passed the ethics review.

Chapter 2

Evolution of the International Partnerships

Because this doctoral work morphed from a broader project intended to assess the impacts of the international partnership work on school leadership, I feel it is necessary to establish an understanding of the initial thinking that led to the inception of the international partnership work. This chapter offers an overview of the initial planning and goals of the AI partnership work in 2010/2011 and provides some initial insight into where I have (re)thought the initial aspirations of the project to (re)read the work through Deleuze|Guattari lenses.

The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), a global study by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), evaluates and ranks educational systems by measuring 15-year-old school pupils' scholastic performance in mathematics, science, and reading (OECD, 2000). PISA was first enacted in 2000 and has subsequently been administered every 3 years. Its stated aims are to analyze comparable data within countries in the hopes that through this analysis, countries might improve both their education policies and outcomes. PISA measures and compares student academic performance, problem solving, and cognition in daily life. The next administration of PISA included measures of student well-being and student motivation (OECD, 2013) for participating nations which, to date, number 80 nations (OECD, 2018).

The OECD (2000) established the rationale and premise for PISA accompanied with the following claims, questions, and purposes:

How well are young adults prepared to meet the challenges of the future? Are

> they able to analyse, reason and communicate their ideas effectively? Do they have the capacity to continue learning throughout life? Parents, students, the public and those who run education systems need to know the answers to these questions. Many education systems monitor student learning to provide some answers to these questions. Comparative international analyses can extend and enrich the national picture by providing a larger context within which to interpret national results. They can provide direction for schools' instructional efforts and for students' learning as well as insights into curriculum strengths and weaknesses. Coupled with appropriate incentives, they can motivate students to learn better, teachers to teach better and schools to be more effective. They also provide tools to allow central authorities to monitor achievement levels even when administration is devolved and schools are run in partnership with communities.
>
> For these reasons, governments and the general public need solid and internationally comparable evidence on educational outcomes. In response to this demand, the OECD has launched the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). PISA represents a new commitment by the governments of OECD countries to monitor the outcomes of education systems in terms of student achievement on a regular basis and within a common framework that is internationally agreed. (p. 3)

Much will be discussed about the performative nature and impacts of PISA and similar national and global tracking mechanisms on the individual and collective subjectivities in education throughout this study but suffice it to say that PISA is an

excellent example of the capitalist machine producing individual and collective subjectivities in the contemporary global education context.

The initial PISA shock in 2000 surprised the world when Finland's overall ranking was first amongst all participating nations in all academic areas (Sahlberg, 2011). Alberta ranked first of the English speaking jurisdictions in the domains of literacy, numeracy, and scientific problem solving (ATA, 2011c). As a direct result of PISA and the initial world rankings of countries in 2000, and with serious trepidation about the performative nature of Global Education Reform Movements (GERM), a number of educational scholars including J. C. Couture, Andy Hargreaves, Pasi Sahlberg, and Dennis Shirley found themselves in discussions about why Alberta and Finland had fared so well on the international benchmarks, while the United States had not. These scholars were invested in discussing national school systems in terms of equity and trust in the teaching profession. The discussions eventually led to the idea of forming an international school partnership to counter the neoliberal agendas of standardization and rankings.

In 2010, the Alberta Teachers' Association, the Finnish Board of Education, and the Center for Internationalisation and Mobility (CIMO) forged a partnership to bring schools from Alberta and Finland together to create networks of high performing schools that shared social justice goals and a commitment to providing *great schools for all students*, considered a foundational imperative of public education. The Finland-Alberta (FINAL) partnership acted as the foundation of a broader strategic network of high performing jurisdictions around the world that advanced the teaching profession's authoritative voice in shaping school development.

Origins of the Alberta-International Partnerships

An international partnership was considered to represent strategic opportunities for Alberta and Finland on two fronts. First, the partnership would build and foster networks of high performing schools and systems that would share social justice commitments, with the stated intention of improving schools to reduce inequities and revisit broader purposes of school than those that seek to merely enhance the human capital of youth. Secondly, the educational partnership would aspire to become the foundation of a broader strategic network of high performing jurisdictions around the world that could advance the teaching profession's authoritative voice in shaping school development.

The rationale for the Alberta-Finnish partnership developed in part because both Finland and Alberta had fared extremely well on PISA with both jurisdictions ranking within the top three nations that had participated in the OECD tests. While both jurisdictions shared important successes, the challenges perceived by the education leaders from Finland and Alberta were eminent. Discussions with these education leaders were held to analyze the reasons for the success of PISA, alongside a caution that countries that saw advancement in PISA as a systemic objective might be engaged in toxic competition (Sellar, Thompson, & Rutkowski, 2017).

Representatives from both jurisdictions participated in the inaugural Finnish-Canadian Education Forum in Helsinki on May 21, 2010 (Documented notes from Conference Proceedings). Pasi Sahlberg, the forum Chair, opened the meeting by outlining the opportunities that lay ahead for a potential international partnership.

Several speakers, including Andy Hargreaves, stressed the importance of sustaining an international dialogue that would build on the divergent strengths of the Finnish and Alberta experiences. Hargreaves outlined the risks for high performing jurisdictions to continue to rely on the "third way" that focused on standardization, technology, and system-level reforms. Instead, he urged participants to move to a "fourth way"—building capacity at the school level, enhancing teacher professionalism, and creating conditions of practice for enhancing teacher professionalism. Pasi Sahlberg, the executive director of the Finnish Center for International Mobility Organisation (CIMO), advanced the view that the Finnish experience moves alongside the promise of the "the fourth way", representing "another way" to counter the Global Education Reform Movements (GERM) that privilege system level reform over school-based reforms.

These conversations were powerful catalysts in shaping the scope of the proposed partnership. Leaders from both jurisdictions deemed it critical that for any change to be truly transformative, it must be focused on building leadership and pedagogic capacity at the school level while being supported by powerful networks of teachers and policy makers who could learn from each other.

While the education leaders stated tremendous capacity for innovation and ingenuity within the respective jurisdictions, it was acknowledged that much could be learned from the experience of others facing similar challenges, and who were succeeding at capitalizing on the opportunities for change offered by technology, globalization, and other forces. To this end, the proposed partnership was to attempt to have a broad enough focus to allow for flexibility and reciprocal benefits for any and all participants. The work was to endeavor to be experiential, practical, and focused,

offering tangible short- and long-term deliverables.

Launching the Partnership

Based on the initial commitments made in May 2010 at the Canada-Finnish Summit, a collaborative team was invited to Boston College to develop a proposal for framing the first steps in initiating the partnership. The team included Stephen Murgatroyd and J. C. Couture, co-authors of *Rethinking School Leadership: Creating Great Schools for all Students* (2012) and *Rethinking Equity: Creating a Great School for All (2013)*; Andy Hargreaves and Dennis Shirley, co-authors of *The Fourth Way: The Inspiring Future for Educational Change* (2009); Pasi Sahlberg, Director of CIMO and author of *Finnish Lessons – What the World Can Learn from Educational Change in Finland* (2014); Michael Podlosky; Alberta Teachers' Association staff members; and school representatives from Alberta jurisdictions. I was one of the principal representatives invited to Boston to participate in the plenary work.

From the perspective of the Alberta team, the partnership could provide a catalyst for developing a better understanding of the emerging global educational policy discourses framed by "informed transformation" focused on the meaningful "personalization of learning" and the development of students' "21st century skills" (Alberta Education, 2010).

From the perspective of the Albertans initiating the partnership, such reform efforts were to consider school-based examinations of curriculum outcomes, school structures, and organization by teachers whose professional responsibility and capacity could be enhanced by:

- providing public assurance *of* and *for* student learning
- supporting teachers' professional learning within the context of optimal conditions of practice
- innovation through applied action research
- capitalizing on changes to the structures of schools and schooling including high schools
- social responsibility and community

The focal question and related activities for the partnership were to be established within the context of a commitment to public education and responsible school innovation, both intended as points of departure for the partnership, but also within the context of the broader societal principles of:

1. Innovation and creativity
2. Economic competitiveness
3. Civic engagement and social responsibility

While it was recognized that these questions and principles reflected the Alberta context, the Boston meeting reinforced the possibility that these principles could become an acceptable point of entry for initiating the on-the-ground work of the partnership: the school visitations and an international symposium was to take place in the spring of 2011.

Central to the Boston meeting was a commitment to involve an international research team led by Dennis Shirley and Andy Hargreaves who would document and analyze the efficacy of this approach to international collaboration in order to advance school development. Both Alberta and Finland had much to learn from each other, given the opportunities and challenges facing both jurisdictions. The overriding question

became: how to practically sustain and advance this lateral networking of high performing jurisdictions?

The Framework of the Alberta-International Partnerships

> When something new and different is coming about, when the lines of flight are created and activated in practices, it is never taking place as a relationally planned and implemented change by specific individuals. Rather, there are from time to time magic moments where something entirely new and different seems to be coming about. (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 63)

The Alberta-International partnerships (FINAL, NORCAN, and NZAL) were established in 2011, 2014, and 2015 respectively, with the principle assumption being that school improvement could be advanced by supporting three domains of leadership: student, teacher, and principal. A "Theory of Change" was developed in collaboration with Pasi Sahlberg, the Centre for International Mobility, and Booz and Co. to promote crossing institutional and system boundaries in order to support the "internationalization of education" (Sahlberg, 2011). Networks of teachers, principals, and students were to engage thinking to employ leadership strategies through three transformational strategies at the school level. The various strategies of the theory of change agenda were described for participants as follows (of note, none of the participants were involved in creating the change theory or describing the functions to be undertaken):

1) Thinking Ahead -principal, teacher, and student leaders (both at the local and system level) being boldly committed to the values of equity, community, and

responsibility while being visionary and forward-thinking in aspiring to create a "*great school for all students*";

2) Delivering Within -materially supporting and committing to the goals one sets while avoiding the distractions of "doing business as usual". Sustained support for local innovation while avoiding "the perniciousness of the present";

3) Leading Across –

princip d other

jurisdi

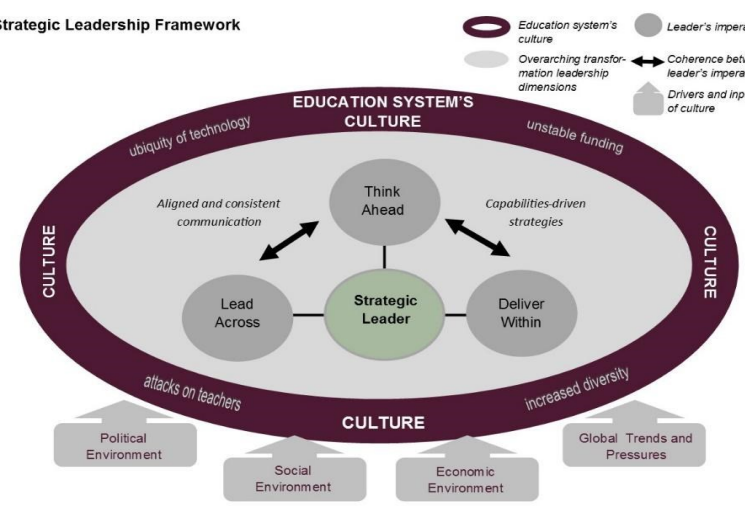

Figure 1. Adapted from: Hoteit, L., Chadi, N., Hiltunen, J., & Sahlberg, P. (2012) Appendix A.

Enacted together, these three leadership dimensions illustrate the initial planning for the implementation of the ongoing design frame for the Alberta International partnerships—to sustain the work of leadership in high performing schools across the globe. A key requirement involved building a culture of trust to sustain principal, teacher, and student leadership in the daily work of risk-taking and innovation while remaining focused on the need to nurture human relationships.

The *Strategic Leadership Framework* recognized the political, social, economic, and global trends and pressures that impact the work of school development. These factors were considered in an attempt to avoid the simplistic appropriation of educational policies and programs while reminding us of the need to be mindful of "context," including cultural histories and social and political circumstances.

The activities of *delivering within* and *leading across* involved school reform from the inside out by linking students, teachers, and principals as agents of change. For 7 years (2010–2017) principals and the organizational leaders involved in the AI partnerships drew on their international experiences to reconceptualize curriculum design, assessment practices, and fundamental assumptions (such as the need for high stakes exams to determine grades in high school and the mistaken belief that "seat-time" is equated to educational success). International and Alberta colleagues were focused on big-picture policy issues aimed at bringing about structural reforms and strategic shifts in their work.

For example, the Finnish education system, in contrast to Alberta's current emphasis on choice and competition, "has been built upon values grounded in equity, equitable distribution of resources rather than competition and choice" (Sahlberg, 2011, p. 96). For Alberta school administrators the focus on "excellence through equity" that drives Finnish education has been a powerful reminder that foundational to educational success is systematic attention to the outside school factors that contribute to student success. In Canada, for example, according to recent PISA data, about 42% of the variation seen in student test scores is related to outside-the-classroom factors (Berliner &

Glass, 2014).[14]

Despite naïve aspirations to plan and implement change through the AI partnerships and acknowledging the words of Deleuze (as cited in Foucault, 1977) about reform efforts and planning, there were many moments that produced puzzlement and hesitation as participants from across the globe lived in each other's homes and visited each other's schools as interested groups to assess problems and develop processes to think collectively and experiment with new roles and responsibilities. In many cases there was no change at all that could be measured or felt in the partner schools, and at other times things erupted opening pathways to new *becomings*. Often these moments of creation and opening were shut down and things went "back to normal"; however as the dissertation work will adumbrate, sometimes original individual and group subjectivities were freed and processes of singularization persisted. According to Guattari (2007):

> [W]hat characterizes a process of singularization (which, at one time, I called the "experience of a subject-group") is that it is self-modelling. In other words, it captures the elements of the situation, it constructs its own types of practical and theoretical references, without remaining dependent in relation to global power, whether in terms of economy, knowledge, technology, or segregations and prestige that are. (p. 62)

From the inception of the AI partnerships, everything has existed in a state of flux, constantly changing and evolving with the ebb and flow of different members joining, renewing, leaving, attending, and travelling. The activities of the partnerships have been different from year to year and from partnership to partnership. The

[14] David Berliner has undertaken extensive review of the latest PISA data from Canada and has written and lectured extensively on this topic. See, for example, Berliner, Glass, & Associates, 2014.

partnerships are constantly in movement and flux. There have been instances where subject groups within the AI partnerships, constituted in multiple ways, have acquired a freedom to "live their processes" (Guattari, 2008, p. 62), affording them the ability to analyze their own situations. "It is this ability that will give them at least some possibility of creation and make it possible to preserve this very important character of autonomy" (Guattari, 2008, p. 62). The question is therefore, to what extent were AI partnerships possible "subject-groups" in Guattari's sense?

I consider my introduction to the international partnerships an interesting adventure. Upon reflection I realize that it was a personal *shock to thought* that had led me to the adventures of these partnerships. As principal of a large, urban high school, I had been a member of a high school principal cohort for a number of years. This group met on a monthly basis and spent at least 1 week of the year in retreat to ascertain objectives of the group, to decide whether the group had the will to continue to meet, to suggest collaborative projects for high school teachers and school staff, and to outline professional learning goals and activities for the principal group. Of note, there was no directive from senior officials that the group meet, nor was there any requirement that meeting minutes be disseminated to senior officials.

Within this perceived open space of trust and freedom, the high school principal group declared a unified commitment to pursuing idealistic, pragmatic ways of ensuring that each student in the jurisdiction within the group's care had access to a first rate education. This *excellent* education was to be one where the postal code (indicative of socioeconomic status) of where a child lived did not limit their educative experience. While there existed an ethos of trust and an appreciation for innovation as "left over"

from the previous superintendent, there were indications that many jurisdictional principal colleagues and senior administrative officials considered the high school principal group to be mavericks and radicals in the jurisdiction we inhabited. Members of the high school principal group commonly heard rhetoric such as "the rules don't always seem to apply to them" and "they always seem to justify their behaviours". However the high school principal collective response was always: "if it moves the agenda forward for students, we'll take any heat on any issue". As site-based decision makers who had emerged from a system of choice and competition, moving resources from "have" to "have not" schools created great turbulence and some consternation in the system.

At one of the numerous retreats in which I was a participant, a valued colleague and critical friend of the high school principal collective shared that as a high functioning team of principals who were endeavoring to push boundaries in the interests of social justice, it would be wise to "watch our backs." She was convinced of a precarious future; the power that was circulating amongst the group would be deemed threatening and would have repercussions. My response was one of complete but naïve bewilderment. How could we be deemed dangerous when we were so committed to ensuring a quality education for each and every district high school student? How could moving funds and personnel between our different schools to assist those at a disadvantage be seen as a threat? Finally, how could the senior administration consider dismantling a high performing team of committed principals? As wisely predicted by our critical friend, the high school principal group was disbanded amidst questions of the necessity and economic carelessness of retreats outside the district, and the purported reckless disregard

for district protocols about human resources and financial rules.

Despite the decision to formally disband the meetings and agendas of the high school principal group, many members were still committed to discovering processes, time, and space to push thinking and practice forward in the role of the principal. As a result, a number of the high school principals were particularly interested in a presentation (the proceedings documented in *Changing Landscapes* [ATA, 2013]) given by an Alberta Teachers' Association staff member at a 2010 summer institute. As one of the co-chairs of the recently disbanded high school group, I offered to contact the ATA staff member to ascertain if he or one of his colleagues might be interested in sharing his presentation with colleagues who might have missed it and/or wished to continue the conversation during future monthly high school principals' informal gatherings.

While the ATA staff member did respond to the request, he dismissed the offer, instead suggesting an alternative way to connect the principal group with work that was potentially brewing in the association. The ATA had long championed school development by supporting incubator action research projects at the school level led by teachers and principals. The ATA had been instrumental in securing government funds for schools to lead innovation and the project was known as the Alberta Initiative for School Improvement (AISI). There is evidence to suggest that AISI made Alberta "the envy" of many teacher unions and educational researchers globally (Shirley, 2011, personal communication).

The ATA staff member explained that as a result of the initial PISA shock and the subsequent world rankings of countries in 2000, a number of educational scholars, including Couture, Sahlberg, Hargreaves, and Shirley, had found themselves in regular

discussions as to why Alberta and Finland had fared so well on international benchmarks and the United States had not. As previously noted, these scholars were invested in discussing their school systems in terms of increasing capacity for equity and trust in the teaching profession.

The ATA staff member invited me to join the inaugural meeting in Boston, with the officials mentioned, to plan and coordinate the FINAL project. I obtained permission from the superintendent and travelled to Boston. The education leaders present at the meeting were foreign to me, and I was uncertain of my role during the proceedings. The meeting progressed with a discussion centering on how the partnership might act as a catalyst to questioning and informing policies to counter the neo-liberal Global Education Reform Movement (GERM) discourse fostered by transnational agencies such as the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

I was fortunate to be included in the initial discussions about the terms of the partnerships in Boston. It was clear that the organizing scholars had many of the variables of the partnerships decided and agreed upon. Thus I received quite a reaction when I suggested that *students* should be an integral component of any discussions about school reform. The reactions to my suggestion were palpable, and those who had spent countless hours discussing and planning the proposed partnership did not seem overly enthusiastic to the idea. This was a time that one could "cut the air with a knife"; atmospheric affects pervaded the room. Realizing I had entered unchartered waters and had thrown a major hurdle into the mix, I experienced a sense of panic and trepidation. Sahlberg (representing the Finnish interests in the partnership) pondered the suggestion. After long, awkward moments of silence, he agreed that Finland would indeed only move

forward with the partnership if students would be involved. Be assured that my initial foray into this group was met with differing reactions (from hostile to shocked), and it seemed quite possible that it might be my *only* contribution to the international partnership idea. To make a long story short, the students were included, and in my humble opinion it was the distinguishable event of the partnership's inauguration. My lengthy experience in schools had taught me and solidified my belief that actively engaging students in policy discussions about pedagogy and life in school is an integral aspect to changing both life in schools and finding the means to disrupt status quo assumptions of how a school life should be led. Including students can offer new, creative ways to explore the institutions within schools and potentially reveal cracks and incongruities so as to plug into new *becomings.*

With the foundational elements in place and the research team alongside, plans were put in place to facilitate the initial visitation of the Finnish delegation to Alberta to visit the selected high schools and to participate in the invitational symposium, *Educational Futures—International Perspectives on Innovation from the Inside Out* at the Sutton Place Hotel in Edmonton, Alberta, March 18–19, 2011 (ATA, 2011b).

Development of the Partnership

Following the Boston meeting, a delegation of 13 Finnish high school principals and ministry officials visited five Alberta schools, focused on *The Challenge Dialogue: What does the Future of Education Look Like?* (ATA, 2011a) (the discussion developed at the Boston meeting, refined by the research team and focused on the question for each site visit "What makes a great school for all?").

Following the site visits, the Alberta and Finnish delegations participated in the *Educational Futures—International Perspectives on Innovation from the Inside Out* (ATA, 2011b). Staying true to the title for the event, symposium moderator Stephen Murgatroyd encouraged the 300 symposium participants in attendance to focus on the growing body of research that showed that meaningful educational development flows not from external system-level reform and bureaucratically determined mandates, *but from building the capacity of schools to work together through networks that spur innovation*. Throughout the 2 days Murgatroyd stressed, "The school, not the system, is the locus of control in shaping educational development" (2011, personal notes from the symposium).

The symposium included an international panel of experts that included Jorma Kauppinen, Director, Finnish National Board of Education, Finland; Fern Snart, Dean, Faculty of Education, University of Alberta; and Dennis Shirley, Boston College, Lynch School of Education responding to the symposium's theme question, "what makes a great school?"

Over the 2 days of presentations and roundtable discussions, both Andy Hargreaves and Dennis Shirley, co-authors of *The Fourth Way* (2009), further developed the symposium theme by stressing the importance of creating lateral capacity among schools sharing similar opportunities and challenges and supporting "mindful teaching" that privileges process over content and passion over compliance. Pointing to the growing rhetoric of personalized learning and the development of student 21st century skills, often driven by technology vendors that position young people as clients, Hargreaves and Shirley reinforced the message that public education ought to be focused

on the higher goals of building upon the gifts and talents of young people and how nurturing these talents might help foster stronger communities and a richer democratic society. Yong Zhao, Presidential Chair and Associate Dean for Global Education, College of Education, University of Oregon, reinforced this message by illustrating how technological advances are creating "the death of distance" (2011, personal notes from the symposium) and driving down the costs of production and distribution. These realities make the work of teachers even more important—helping students identify and build on their unique talents and abilities rather than pushing them toward achieving on standardized tests.

Rather than the continued imposition of externally determined policies and programs far-removed from teachers and schools and driven by what he calls the global education reform movement or GERM, Pasi Sahlberg (2015), Director of Finland's Centre for International Mobility, called for schools and communities to explore global partnerships that might build trust in the teaching profession and capacity for teachers to use their professional judgment to help students learn "what we know to be the best of the best ways to help students learn".

Inviting Deleuze|Guattari into the Conversation

I was intrigued, excited, and motivated to work with colleagues from Alberta and Finland, to challenge our thinking about schools and the role leadership plays in shaping teacher, student, and community life. In fact it was a novelty to be able to meet with colleagues from across Alberta, as the 62 Alberta school jurisdictions typically remained very isolated from one another with varying cultures and norms. As mentioned

previously, my academic intents were to survey the actions and results generated by the action research initiatives of the AI partnerships and assess and evaluate the impacts of the work. This however was not the case; Chapter 4 will survey current literature of the field of Educational Leadership and Management and develop the premise for why the philosophy and toolbox offered by Deleuze and Guattari (1983) have become the central focus of this academic practical philosophical work. According to Deleuze (1972),

> [a] theory is exactly like a box of tools. It has nothing to do with the signifier. It must be useful. It must function. And not for itself. If no one uses it, beginning with the theoretician himself (who then ceases to be a theoretician), then the theory is worthless or the moment is inappropriate. We don't revise a theory, but construct new ones; we have no choice but to make others. (para. 5)

In *What is Philosophy* (WIP), Deleuze and Guattari (1994) critically engage and develop their philosophical thinking of the concept, the plane of immanence, conceptual personae, and geophilosophy. Philosophy for them is the creation of concepts, taking note of the questions, the specifics of their context (time and space), including their conditions, and considering their unknowns (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994). Deleuze and Guattari (1994) in fact believe that engaging in conversation and dialogue is a waste of time and will not lead to change or transformation. In fact Deleuze and Guattari (1994) go on to explicate that philosophy does not

> find any refuge in communication, which only works under the sway of *opinions* [emphasis added] in order to create "consensus" and not concepts. The idea of a Western democratic conversation between friends has never produced a single concept. (p. 19)

For them it is a matter of creating and forming concepts that are always new and do not lay waiting for us "ready-made, like heavenly bodies. They must be invented, fabricated or rather created and would be nothing without their creator's signature" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994, p. 19). Ironically, naively and representing the aims of the "marginalized principals, teachers and students" so they might push back against the reform agendas of the neoliberal policy directives of the GERM, the entire background work to the partnership had centered around dialogue and ideological, collegial conversations. My only hesitation and shock to thought was introducing the concept of the student and their importance to the concept of leadership that was trying to be created within the partnership problematic. I'm unsure whether this concept was put to work until the physical presence of the students arrived in the partnership activities, however the hesitation and affect felt amongst the group when I mentioned students joining as equal partners to the work was palpable.

Perhaps this was both of Deleuze|Guattari's (1994) "idiots," old and new, joining the partnership conversations. For Deleuze|Guattari (1994) the old idiot wants *the truth* and the "new idiot wants to turn the *absurd* into a higher power of thought" (p. 62), where sense is pushed to the limits in a search for the outside of thought, the nonthought or "unthought." According to Deleuze and Guattari (1994), concepts require conceptual personae that have a number of features intrinsic to them, including but not limited to "pathic features" (p. 70) which have the task of pushing the absurd into the highest power of thought, "relational features" which have qualities of collegiality or friendship (p. 69), or "dynamic features" that refer to the strength or dynamics in thought (p. 70). Stengers (2005a) in her *Cosmopolitical Project* sees the *idiot* as an important conceptual personae,

as the relayor of miscommunication and a figure that disrupts communication and, in some cases, produces hesitation. Deleuze and Guattari (1994) question

> is there is something between the cogito and the presupposed image of thought? Actually there is something else, somewhat mysterious, that appears from time to time or that shows through and seems to have a hazy existence between concept and preconceptual plane, passing from one to the other . . . It is the idiot who says "I". The idiot is the private thinker, in contrast to the public teacher (the schoolman): the teacher refers constantly to taught concepts (man-rational animal) . . . The idiot is a conceptual personae. (p. 75)

Given what Deleuze and Guattari (1994) say about the "idiot", I wonder what sort of idiot I was to introduce student participation in the AI partnerships? Perhaps I was the "new" idiot pushing the absurdity of a *wild* idea, suggesting students joining conversations and experimentations alongside school leaders and policy officials might change life in school.

Old Idiots and New Idiots, Reforms, and the Truth

Suffice it to say that the intended goals, aspirations, and reform efforts intended for the AI partnerships did not materialize as planned. In many cases it was the unplanned, surprising shocks to thought and even the dead weight of nothing new happening that produced the best problems and thus forced the most dangerous thinking. Deleuze (1972), in a conversation with Michel Foucault, cautions that reform attempts cannot be achieved by enacting universal ideals as they seldom, if ever, achieve intended outcomes:

> Either reforms are designed by people who claim to be representative, who make a profession of speaking for others, and they lead to a division of power, to a distribution of this new power which is consequently increased by a double repression; or they arise from the complaints and demands of those concerned. This latter instance is no longer a reform but revolutionary action that questions (expressing the full force of its partiality) the totality of power and the hierarchy that maintains it. This is surely evident in prisons: the smallest and most insignificant of the prisoners' demands can puncture Pleven's pseudo-reform (5). If the protests of children were heard in kindergarten, *if their questions were attended to, it would be enough to explode the entire educational system* [emphasis added]. (p. 209)

And so, as predicted by Deleuze (1972), the AI proposed reform efforts were indicative of the two scenarios he outlined; the reform was being planned for those who had yet to speak (partnership principals, teachers and students) and any ground up, revolutionary action of the participants yet to be realized. Although well intentioned and married to ideals of equity and social justice, with the sentiments of rallying against the neoliberal agendas prevalent globally in education systems, perhaps Deleuze's idiots, both old and new, had entered the room.

As I close this chapter, I wish to signal my further exploration in my thesis of how the focus on equity and social justice in the partnerships, and the ongoing risk of colonizing these school-level efforts with universal ideals, could take up the Deleuzian

inter-play between a major and minor languages[15]. For Deleuze, the two uses of language (major and minor) offer a way to see how a major language (not to be confused as form of dominance) is used to extract and mobilize constants and universals that then serve to occlude and foreclose difference and possibility. Through my case studies regarding the international partnerships, I explored how the global reform efforts mobilized through agencies such as the OECD and international bench-marking were circulated by major languages that created striations, binaries, and circularities back to the State and the seat of power. (Ironically, as I point out in Chapters 3 & 5, the AI partnerships also mobilized their own major languages.) As I further pursued the *logic* of a minor language in examples from the case studies, I drew on several resources such as Gilles Deleuze's (1994b) "He Stuttered" in *Gilles Deleuze and the Theater of Philosophy* (Boundas & Olkowski, 1994, pp. 23–29).

The Deleuzian concept of "the stutter" gestures to openings throughout the AI partnerships where instrumental conceptions of leadership were interrupted and participants were released from the impasse they occupied in schools. While there were moments when the language system of leadership destabilized (Deleuze, 1994b) and was brought to its limit (largely through the inclusion of students), it was apparent on many occasions how *leadership* was enclosed within the perfomative infrastructures of late capitalism.

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[15] I develop Deleuze| Guattari's concepts of a major and minor languages later in my dissertation. For Deleuze a majority (language) is linked to a state of power/domination and assumes a standard measure (White, middleclass, male). Minor (languages) are the cracks or fissures that veer from the dominant constant, minor languages have three characteristics or functions; deterritorialization of language, the connection of the individual to a political immediacy, and the collective assemblage of enunciation.

Chapter 3

Methodologies – Breaking Open Images of Thought

> Those who do not renew the image of thought are not philosophers but functionaries who, enjoying a ready-made thought, are not even conscious of the problem and are unaware even of the efforts of those they claim to take as their models. (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994, p. 51)

Mapping out Deleuzian and Guattarian possibilities for the gathering up and representation of encounters, of (naively) thinking of gathering evidence for this dissertation, necessarily presupposed the need to interrupt conventional notions of subject and object, researcher and the researched. For Deleuze and Guattari, opening new ontologies of *becoming* involves excavating notions of resemblance and recognition that reproduced taken-for-granted assumptions, or that simply borrow other concepts that stand in as avatars of something actually new, occluding the possibilities for the "unthought". As posited in the theory of change outlined in Chapter 2, positioning students, teachers, and school leaders as agents of change installed them into a transcendent order from above while projecting onto them the possibility of *becoming* human agents of change. As elaborated in Chapter 2, these liberal humanist assumptions included aspirations around building adaptive capacity. As change agents they mobilized strategies in a cartography they construed as a complex ecology of school communities nested in systems within systems. These assumptions grounded a theory of change that were perceived to be transformational strategies such as "boundary crossing" and mobilizing student agency as catalysts for educational development. The structures and agency I envisioned on students, teachers, and school leaders inserted them into a line of

flight to construct a *particular world,* one that circulated desires to liberate them and their schools from neoliberal educational policies and hegemony as circulated by the Global Education Reform Movement. Yet, based on my research aims outlined in Chapter 1, I have described efforts at deploying a set of practices (ethical, aesthetic, political) that put to work analytical tools of schizoanalysis drawing from jagodzinski (2008, p. 34) to foreground my proposed methodological excursions (adventures) as a "triadic subject" circulating through the three registers of self-reflection, self-reflexion, and self-refleXion.

As elaborated in detail by jagodzinski (2008), this movement in and through these three registers also offers a theoretical coupling of the work of Lacan (1973) and Deleuze (1972) in a way that offers promise for moving beyond both the naive instrumentality of a narrative reflection and the bricolage of reflexive poststructuralist critique, to instead, open the possibilities for the "inhuman" though self-refleXion. Thinking as the "unthought" is inhuman as it points to a realm of the Outside, drawing on a world-in-itself that exists "outside" human understanding. Thinking, in this sense, as the creation of concepts when we encounter "something" that "makes us think" becomes truly a creative act. This, then in self-refleXion, (the "X" referring to a recognition of the new, which, in turn deterritorializes the "self") disturbs thinking and places it into a realm of indetermination so that change (as becoming) can take place. This move points to encounters with the Lacanian Real[16] and the "positive power" of the Deleuzian *becoming* "one of the multiple" (jagodzinski, 2008, p. 44). It is in this *becoming one of the multiple* that there is an opening of the "the realm of the non-human and Deleuze's interest in

[16] The Lacanian Real is comparable to Deleuze and Guattari's dimension of the virtual, it may also be called a virtual Real (jagodzinski, 2005), the place of puissance (potential) as mentioned in Chapter 4. While Lacan and Deleuze|Guattari differ in the way they theorize the dimension of the Real, these theorists recognize the non-representational aspects of the Real where affective transference occurs between bodies.

these forces such as animals, objects and plants that offer positivity for difference and heterogeneity" (jagodzinski, 2008, p. 44). These forces are generated on the plane of immanence, the space-time of the virtual Real, of *puissance*, where the X of self-refleXion resides, recalling from Deleuze and Guattari that the inhuman inhabits the human, and that the human partakes in the world that is not human, the Outside. As human, *always becoming,* we cannot be anything but implicated in the cartographies of location in the world, which already always include the non-human and in-human (technological) interactions as in the relations of power that attempt to regulate and police us. The universe each of us inhabits is a *partial* world, what Deleuze (1993), drawing from Leibniz called a "monad" that is complete only in regards to the perspective we cling onto caught by particular lines of flight.

There are rich affordances offered by the coupling of Jacques Lacan and Deleuze|Guattari[17] when tracing the AI international partnerships and the experiences of those involved. Foregrounding all of this is what might be described as my initial naive assumptions about the possibilities for educational change within the architectures of neoliberal regimes of "power over" that are expressions of a Lacanian symptom or "fantasy that fills the gap of/in the symbolic" (jagodzinski, 2008, p. 29). As I navigated through my recollections and writing and considered the dividing lines that I authorized in these pages, I was continually drawn to the compulsions and resistances of *becoming other* in all its multiplicities (think *women, child, animal, imperceptible*). As I worked through the methodological problematic of documenting examples of my engagements with the participants in the partnerships' work (as productive encounters), I saw

[17] Guattari remained a Lacanian until his death, despite having major disputes with the 'Master.' Deleuze, too, in his *Logic of Sense,* engaged with Lacan's Oedipal (1972) theories. For further elaboration see jagodzinski (2014).

productive possibility as a researcher striving to both make meaning as an ego invested in the project of *A Great School for All*, all the while taking up the invocation by jagodzinski (2008, p. 31) that "psychoanalysis in its Lacanian and Deleuzian forms provides such a possibility to '(un) ground desire at both the molecular and molar levels'".

In this regard I had to attend to the snare of representations that occluded and/or disembodied the voices of the many participants I encountered. Such efforts were characterized by extracting and installing the decontextualized "voices" of participants and insinuating them into a project of global educational reform that mobilized "disembodied individuation" (jagodzinski, 2008, p. 34), and the trope of the heroic reformer or agent of change. As outlined by jagodzinski (2008), this simply reinserts the master signifiers through the Lacanian Symbolic register that amplifies the "sociotechnologization" of educational reform efforts. Such a move reinserts the participants into the ideal plane of transcendence, the plane of organization, and development of idealized transcendent values as implied by the "Great School for All" which itself reverberates a transcendent view. Furthermore, my hesitations were more than existential hand-wringing over "getting to what people *really* felt" (the domain of reflection), nor were they the neurotic symptom of self-reflexion, of getting to the ecology of a deep phenomenological intervention caught in a "subject-object dichotomy" (jagodzinski, 2008, p. 33), where a string of representative signifiers based on sex, gender, class, age, ethnicity, bodily ability and so on, contextualized, both socially and politically, where a subject found "itself" in various milieus. This is the poststructuralist subject of self-reflexion. Instead I struggled toward the gesture construed by self-

refleXion, moving toward the schizoanalytic practices, what might be consonant with Jacques Lacan's *sinthome*[18], which breaks apart the subject-object dichotomy characterized by Guattari as the "ontological iron curtain between being and things" (Guattari, 1995a, p. 8). The following matrix offers a tentative scaffolding of parallels between the Lacanian and Deleuze|Guattarian three registers of the triadic subject in action.

Table 1*: Scaffolding of parallels between the Lacanian and Deleuze|Guattarian three registers of the triadic subject in action.*

Register	**Lacan mode of psychic organization**	**Deleuze|Guattari's mode of psychic organization**
Self-reflec*t*ion	Domain of the Symbolic and the Social Law (naïve reflection, common sense)	The subject exists within striations through the processes of territorialization and de-territorialization, and reterritorialization. (molar subject of common sense)
	Subject to the Oedipal ordering of the ego and Other.(symptom)	Anti-Oedipal (n-sexes)
Self-reflex*i*on	Domain of the Imaginary where culture functions as a prosthetic device for continual "self-remaking". (poststructuralist subject of difference as variation)	Logocentric metaphysics that moves between the possible and virtual where the human and inhuman are intertwined. (molecular subject as assemblages)
	The subject "doomed by the metaphysics of desire" (p. 34) of the Other, morphed into irony and contingency tied to multiple representations and diverse logos. (fundamental	Possible actualized: (as if) retroactively recognizable of what already exists. Virtual: actualized: (not if) through creation and difference.

[18] jagodzinski is making a distinction between symptom – which characterizes poststructuralist work, and *sinthome* - introduced by Lacan late in his writing (Seminar 23) when he realized that James Joyce (the artist) was his own "symptom" – in other words Joyce was developing an Imaginary outside the established symbolic order; this was Lacan's response to Deleuze|Guattari who had already developed this possibility with their "virtual Real" (jagodzinski, 2005).

	symptom)	
Self-refle*X*ion	Domain of the Real grounded by the uncanny and sublime where *Object a* is a virtual partial object. Living with the fear that "I am not well" - the madness of not being able to contain the excess, namely paranoia. (*sinthome*)	The Virtual where the intensities and becomings are driven by multiplicities, a "virtual Real". The machinic functioning of BwO where the singularity invites subjectivity to exist in nomadic difference, namely schizoanalysis. (subject of "flight")

This methodological schema involves moving through and breaking open images of thought while writing through the snares of the representations that often foreclose and lock the subject into the Symbolic Order or an Imaginary. The result is the limitation through self-reflexion and/or the naivety of self-reflection that brings the subject to continually look back onto itself. This psychic refuge often returns the subject through a desire defined by *lack* as activated by the Other (Symbolic Order), and the continuous appropriation of anything "new" as innovation and variation, claiming "difference" through the markets of "designer capitalism" (jagodzinski, 2010). For Deleuze (WIP 1994), the subject moves beyond continually addressing desire as *lack*, to instead mobilize intensities and potential for "unthought"; that is to say, *thinking* that creates productive spaces for transformative change as indeterminacy emerges and ruptures molar striations.

The work involved a high degree of indeterminacy both for my writing in and writing of the participants as I developed my own metamodel to work out this schizoanalytic problematic. Key to this work were my efforts to describe the array of *performative encounters* in the following chapters that identified a *stuttering* of the

striated spaces and boundaries that were traversed. As Deleuze and Guattari (1987) illustrate in *A Thousand Plateaus*, the act of writing in the spaces of this dissertation risked abject failure by producing new hierarchies and foreclosures, or other stratifications and reterritorializations that recolonized possibilities for something new and useful. In short, failure is certainly not something that may be dismissed, but rather only recognized as the problematic unfolds, but the "risk" here was worth taking.

The opportunity was for acknowledging the dangers of "the transcendent" that were everywhere. Such dangers always accompany experiments and adventures in thinking immanence and perhaps are necessarily impossible to avoid. It is part of the schizoanalytic process. In this respect Simon O'Sullivan's (2006) Deleuzian invocation to think in new registers that are questioning established representations picks up the challenge for the triadic subject circulating within the three registers of the self-reflection, self-reflexion, and self-refleXion. What follows is an encounter with this AI partnership reflection activity data that illustrates how this circuit operated and flowed through various intensities that simultaneously gestured towards the Deleuzian X of the gap of various *becomings* (jagodzinski, 2008, p. 39), while at the same time being driven by the Oedipal impulse to reset the evidence (in this case student narratives) into a Superego imperative that denied the possibility of the BwO or the Real (p. 42). This is to say, I (nervously?) attempted to recognize my own complicity in the AI's more hierarchical and conservative endeavours (as inadvertent representatives of the Symbolic Order), at the same time – through these performative encounters of self-refleXion (my "methodological" adventures) – culled out those instances when the unthought emerged that made a true "difference" and was not simply an innovative repetition that

characterized self-reflexion.

Invited/Incited to RefleXt:

A Case Study from the Alberta-Norway International Partnership

> In every shift of attention, there is an interruption, a momentary cut in the mode of onward deployment of life. The cut can pass unnoticed, striking imperceptibly, with only its effects entering conscious awareness as they unroll. (Massumi & McKim, 2009, p. 1)

The psychic project of the unraveling of the State/*Urstaat* of reforming our schools to create *A Great School for All* is a helpful interrogation of the worlds coming together in our international partnerships, and one example of many encounters I had with students, teachers, and school leaders. In January 2016, students, teachers, and principals from Alberta, Finland, and Norway involved in the AI partnership network for *A Great School for All* participated in a 2-day workshop retreat in Jasper, Alberta that explored their previous experiences with learning and teaching mathematics. Included in this workshop were reflection activities that had participants attempt to recover, share, and interrogate their early experiences with being isolated or marginalized in school. For this activity, students, teachers, and principals were asked to reflect on this question when prompted by the video "Birds on the Wire" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k2PJ6T7U2eU):

> Looking back on your experiences in school, what is one "take away" from this video that speaks to you?

This video offered possibilities for intersecting the representations of the cartoon

bodies of birds with the experiences of students in mathematics classes. The short video depicts a group of birds happily chirping on a telephone wire, only to be interrupted by a large gangly bird that is not only a misfit size-wise but sings a very different tune. Although ostracized by the group, the misfit attempts to insert himself into the middle of the group, only to cause further isolation by the flock. The video culminates with the flock attempting to push the unwelcome bird off the wire only to have themselves sprung off their roost and flung to the ground in humiliation, leaving the misfit perched safely on the wire.

It is important to contextualize the reflective agency being invited/incited in the video and the workshop. Foregrounding the workshop was the cartography of the partnership itself: an interest in improving student performance in mathematics. This psychic investment by the school leaders and teachers in the project of increasing human capital performativity (a neoliberal impulse in the Global Education Reform Movement) illustrates an encounter of desiring subjects (educators wanting to help students coupled with students wanting to please their teachers). The video, which provided an example of the inhuman (the technology) by depicting the birds as a stand-in for the social organization of mathematics classrooms, exemplified "the technologies of culture (that) provide inhuman prosthetic machines" (jagodzinski, 2008, p. 31). I considered the use of the video as a *prosthetic device* for animating student reflection, I saw the flock of birds (and the misfit)

> in a way that concepts need conceptual persona, a friend, the idiot, or the sage. "They" no longer stand(s) in for an extrinsic persona, an example or empirical circumstance, rather they stand for a presence that is intrinsic to thought, a living

category, a transcendental lived reality. (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994, p. 15)

What can this video and students responding to the question tell us in relation to the triadic entwinement of the subject: self-reflection of the symbolic, the self-reflexion of the Imaginary (as in poststructuralist), and the self-refleXion of the potential of the virtual to actualize change?

Considering how we brought participants together on a recurring basis to reflect/reflext on their experiences, I realized how the facilitation process and invitations to write reflective pieces could do little more than incite the students to migrate between self-reflective/reflexive plateaus on a plane of transcendence in an established symbolic order to reveal their "true" selves. Rather than freeing them in the active possibilities of lines of flight and deterritorialization, the student responses to the video shifted between positioning themselves either inside/outside or on/off the wire, by inscribing themselves in terms of the binary of being successful or failures in school and in mathematics in particular. It seemed, at first glance, that only two subject positions presented themselves.

To open this space of interrogation and disrupt a naive reflective reading of the students' work, I drew from an interview with Brian Massumi and McKim (2009) that explored the implications of *affect*. The commentaries that follow are intended to supplement my reading of *affect* provided in Chapter 4 and to draw on the analysis of affect offered by jagodzinski (2012).

Birds on a Wire: Snared in Self-Reflection/Reflexion

The reflections of the students, teachers, and school leaders offer compelling

signals of "the agential cut"[19] (Barad, 2003) in their subjectivities as they offered up gestures towards memory lost and memory found, living embodied in the present and past entwined together as students on the plateau of self-reflec*t*ion/reflex*i*on; where symbolic striated space and times met with imaginary space and times of self-reflex*i*on to form the actualizations of their responses. These intersections also pointed to the power of *affect* conceived not as emotions or feelings but as unformed and unstructured intensities brought forward in their writings and oral commentaries during the workshop. The force of the media (in short, the force of affect of the cartoon) and its content (in short, the simplicity of a wire and birds in a simple narrative) hark back to the first Chapter where I commented on assemblages, namely the form of content (narrative) and the form of expression (birds, wire) are always already in a *disjunctive relation* with each other. Throughout the student reflec*t*ions, I saw the stringing of their bodies suspended on the wire, affording opportunities for fleeting openings, for recollections of memories, and forebodings of being *Birds On A Wire*.

In the following, a student illustrated the disjuncture of attempting to maintain stability within their own subjectivity and a relationship with their peers in their processes of individuation that Simondon (1994) would recognise as being undermined by the multiple pulls and pushes that typically configure a normalised ideation of a "typical" student.

> There were times in elementary school that I had been both the lonely bird and the little birds. I attended multiple schools as a child, so I was almost always known as the new kid. At times, kids would make fun of me because of the clothes I

[19] Barad is referring to the subjective investment made in any assemblage, which requires a commitment to inclusion and exclusion. The phenomenon then becomes defined as the cut "creates" the phenomenon (Barad, 2007).

> wore and the fact that I actually liked school. It was so hard for me to go to school at times and that, I believe, has led me to now be more confident in myself and to stick up for others. Before I had that outlook on myself and had the ability to stand up to others I used to be like one of the little birds. Not that I condone any of the behavior I exhibited, but I had just been so glad it wasn't me who was being picked on. I felt that if I didn't join them, they would make fun of me too. No child should ever have to experience that. (Student A, 2016)

This student's experience signals the disjunctive relation, or disjunctive synthesis in Deleuzian terms, offering a sensing of a cut or recognition by the student of the potentialities of two heterogeneous bodies that while apart can still communicate without synthesizing into something else. The student had recognised the disjuncture of becoming both bullied and the bully/the perpetrator and the victim. There is both an admission of being victimized, but at the same time of being able to find protection in the tactical move "to be like one of the little birds". Yet the student was able to see past their initial experiences as nomadic[20] to come to grips with the ecology that influenced her experiences of being othered by her clothing and the irony that she still enjoyed school. In one sense the student endeavored a self-remaking where she reconstituted herself in a narrative as someone who reached out to help those students who are othered. Her moral injunction concerning the marginalizing of students signalled the retroactive recognition that her then-current ego structure was brought forward from the past experience of being a bird on a wire. As I recalled my individual debriefing with the student and her recollection of the moments of feeling marginalized, I was reminded of Massumi and

[20] Nomad in Deleuze|Guattari's problematic is a description of a way of life that veers from the rigid and static boundaries (rules and laws) of the State. Nomadism is characterized by movement and change and is always inter mezzo - in the middle beyond rigid stratifications (laws, rules, codes).

Kim's (2009) observation regarding the in-between spaces needed to construct *the event*:

> So there's a reactivation of the past in passage toward a changed future, cutting transversally across dimensions of time, between past and future, and between pasts of different orders. This in-between time or transversal time is the time of *the event* [emphasis added]. (p. 3)

The video prompt aspired to offer teachers and principals in the workshop the opportunity to be *affected* and live again in the relation between time, space, or what Massumi (2009) described as the "bodily capacitation, felt transition, quality of lived experience, memory, repetition, seriation, inclination . . . in dynamic relation to each other" (p. 4). At the risk of over-determining the student reflections, I pick up Massumi's (2009) sensibility of the past memories that the body carries forward into the present that offered a way of reading this bird on a wire moment, and as a way to "start in the middle" (p. 5) of the phenomenological[21] work of reflection with participants in the project. The student's virtual memory enabled a both/and logic of the disjunctive synthesis to emerge, quite "outside" the expectation of the use-value of this video for the teaching of mathematics. To what extent the student was then "changed" by this "event", I was unable to say, unless there had been follow-up.

For another student, the capacities and incapacities of the body in motion were signalled in a reflection about a fellow student who was subject to marginalization:

> When a student changes high schools mid-semester or in between years, they often arrive at the new school and feel alienated because every student has already found their own specific "niche." Arriving in a brand new environment can be

[21] Lived experience only – need to consider (eventually) the inhuman means of this lived experience (namely, that this is a stylized cartoon) and the non-human becoming (the fall of the bird, the standing alone and so on where the affective content is at work) – becomes a media issue as well.

> very difficult and many groups of friends are so close that they won't let you in, they will simply look past you. During Grade 9, a girl had moved into my school and it was clear that the moment she arrived she had no friends and no one to talk to.
>
> I think an easy way to solve this is just by having more group work in class and letting students struggle through problems together, helping build bonds and it also levels the playing field. A forced seating plan is also a great way to get to know the students around you. Students could choose a friend and then the pairs would all be mixed together allowing for mingling and more connections to take place. Students could also learn that socializing with different groups will also easily solve the problem. Keeping to what they know is safe and not willing to go outside the box are blockades they are setting up that stunt their growth/potential. (Student B, 2016)

What the reflection activity continued to open up were spaces for bringing forward a past where marginalization was experienced, but alongside possibilities for individual agency and capacity. The student being able to imagine possibilities for the student who felt marginalized illustrates Massumi's (2009) signalling of the body in "commotion, microshock, or welling event-suspense" (p. 8) that offers up a line of flight for an eventful re-beginning, (that) carries tendencies reviving the past and already striving toward a future. Here, we have then, the *potential* of the future opening up as the collapse of past and present offers a change in actual attitudes, behaviors, and actions that are more consonant with what self-refleXion might look like; a recognition that memories enable a re-visiting, or a counteractualization in Deleuze's terms (1990), that enable a re-

imagination and action for transversability (line of flight) to occur. Should this happen, we can then claim a disruption did take place, a stuttering of the imaginary (self-refle*X*ion did take place). By this I suggest that through our processes of disruption and eruption we were risking reinserting the humanistic project of identifying and locating a fixed and coherent "student" self that was *true* to itself. So here I am suggesting that some of the responses to the video were *events* as they opened something "new" rather than being mere descriptions of a past memory; that the memory that the video triggered was intense enough for a new possible action to be suggested. In both cases this remains only a potential actualization. Depending on the individual this video "stuttered" and a response that was self-refleXive might have emerged, but that would be for the participant to ascertain, either at the time or in past/future (re)collections.

What remained compelling throughout the students' sharing of their reflections was the continual return to the sense of impasse, of bodies being surveyed and monitored by both their peers and their teachers. Time and again the specular economy of the school as a place of striation and order and re-inscription, both through the acknowledgement of the Other (Symbolic Order) as well as the interiority of a body self-regulating and self-monitoring, was baldly evident. While there were numerous invitations by myself and other facilitators in the workshop to focus on learning experiences in school subjects, the students invariably returned to reflec*t*ions and reflex*i*ons about their fluid identities in relation to the complexities of trying to remain an organized body, not in pieces but *always with the potential of becoming*. So while space-time may open up for future change, the actualization of that change remains in balance. It may *not* occur. In this regard, unfortunately, I see the facilitation process and the trope

of the *Bird on a Wire* as the construction of a major language that had the effect of foreclosing the minor language(s) of the students. Consider the following student reflection:

> Just like right now I [am] stressing about what to write and having writers [*sic*] block. This is one of the biggest issues I have in English and Social Studies. I get flustered and clammy and red and it's hard for me verbally to answer [the] question even though I know the answer. This makes me feel like a "Bird on a wire" because as everyone else is writing and succeeding at the task, I am not and I feel alone. I don't know why I've put myself in a shelf and it is not a feel to be wrong. It is a fee [*sic*] that Its [*sic*] not perfect or completely right. (Student C, 2016)

The process of eliciting/demanding students to speak of their marginalization in school acted as a language of the major that gestured towards the project of school improvement, particularly in the NORCAN case of improving math scores. In this respect I wondered about the degree to which we restricted possibilities for new minor languages that might have emerged, allowing the full counter-actualization of the events to lead to openings that were not intended by utilizing *Bird on a Wire* for more instrumental and pragmatic means. Another way of thinking about this process of actualization is as problem solving—the problem we framed in our major language ignored or set aside the X, the gap, or the singularity that might breathe new life into the psychic organization of students that refutes being named. To quote Deleuze (1994, WIP): "the virtual possesses the reality of a task to be performed or a problem to be solved: it is the problem, which orientates, conditions and engenders solutions, but these

do not resemble the conditions of the problem" (p. 211).

Students on the Cusp of *Always Becoming* More Than the Evidence

The data or evidence of impacts of the international network of school development offer examples of what Massumi (2009) sees as

> the separation-connection between feeling and activation situates the account between what we would normally think of as the self on the one hand and the body on the other, in the unrolling of an event that's a becoming of the two together. (p. 2)

As I reflected on the artefacts and dramatizations from the students involved in the international work, I was also aware of the challenge offered by the various discourses that framed the psychic experiences and capacities produced by our interventions with students involved in the international network of schools as we interrogated their personal experiences with mathematics. In effect we were complicit in creating a flat, homogeneous cartographic space defined by the idealized "mathematics classroom" and the flattened image of the *student in math class* who was implicated in our reflection activity.

jagodzinski (2012) captures the challenge of what is the "affective turn" that is at its core:

> an exploration of an "implicit" body. It is worth the risk to claim that affect can be at times synonymous with *jouissance*, libidinal energy and *zoē* (as opposed to bios which is already under the level of the signifier) depending on the discourse one finds oneself in. (p. 1)

From this I understood that any effort to scoop up data from participants in the partnership as determinate evidence of this or that thing was, from a Deleuzian frame, a project that was fraught with the risk of locking-down and permanently freezing in place forms of representation that served to solidify the fluidity of the experiences of participants. The risk again was continually looking for what was underneath the collective assemblages of enunciation made by the students, their conditions, and possibilities within their potentialities as self-refleXive agents of experimentation. In this sense, as a school leader invested in the horizon of AI partnership's theory of change, I ran the risk of construing and constructing the foundations for their liberation from their entrapments as students *subject to* and *subject of* mathematics. In this respect, the risks of representation that were "reductive" is a focus that Massumi (2002a) takes up in his previous work including the enigmatic claim, "the skin is faster than the word" (p. 9). In different ways, he and other Deleuzian scholars have taken up the "affective turn" where they distinguish from emotion or feeling as a pre-personal and pre-linguistic entity about which they nonetheless attempt to speak, despite its non-representability. These and other threads run through the fabric of the data I engaged with throughout the AI partnership work.

Throughout the 2-day workshop, participants were invited to build capacities in between the spaces of "birds on a wire." As I reflected on this effort and possibility for world-making in a Deleuzian sensibility, we pre-empted a "start from a world in which there are already subjects that are preconstituted, or a pregiven structure of subject positions ready for subjects to come occupy" (Massumi, 2002a, p. 6). What was in play in the work with student bodies suspended as a "birds on a wire" was the possibility for

the emergence of the subject within "its primary constitution" in order to offer possibilities for "its re-emergence and reconstitution" (Massumi, 2002a, p. 6).

As I looked back at the exchange over, above, on and below the *Birds on a Wire*, I acknowledged my own triadic subjectivity as we attempted to establish some stability in our processes as individuals. As a complementary to the triadic subject shifts previously outlined in the opening of this chapter, I took up Simondon's (1994) distinction between individualisation and individuation and the ontogenetic shift he invites through interrogating stories and figurations needed to tease out new worlds that shift to the "unity of becoming" (Simondon, 1994). In the following example we see the wire "broken" as the student moved beyond the typical "marginalized" student experience to recall a mistaken subjectivity by the teacher's articulation that attempted to *fix* the position of the student on the wire as "Metis". As in many classroom encounters at the time of this writing, students in the Canadian milieu of addressing the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015), teachers struggled to locate agency for students and themselves in the process of becoming complete and identifiable subjects who took up coherent subjectivities.

> When I was in seventh grade my Social teacher thought I was a Metis student and would always ask me questions about the Metis because she thought that because of my name that I was half French and half White. I didn't know the difference back then but she helped me strengthen my own culture. She doesn't know that I, just because she mistaken me as a Metis student, it helped me be proud of who I am and what my culture means to me. It is because she wasn't trying to be mean

but instead show support for MNMI students and I am grateful. (Student D, 2016)

In the (mis)recognition of the teacher and student exchange of what is "difference" that sits on the wire, the student's reference to MNMI (Metis Nations, Metis and Inuit) stands as an effort to be acknowledged as an "other"' in the dominant framing of what was then FNMI (First Nations, Metis, and Inuit). This is an expression of re-emergence and reconstitution that Massumi (2002a) signalled in his effort to entice agency and social change.

Engaging with data in this dissertation is challenged by the need to maintain the indeterminacy of the texts and representations offered in activities such as *Bird On A Wire*. As I continued to further my analysis of evidence, I shared in Massumi and Manning (2010) possibilities for reading the evidence gathered in the student reflection activities in a manner that will (de)termine any foreclosure of the participants' experiences.

This simultaneity of living within movements of territorialization and deterritorialization, and the need to conceive of the "occasion" of evidence as residing always on the cusp of *always becoming,* was perhaps signalled as we wrapped up the workshop when I overheard one student comment: "Well, whatever we write or say from here on in, just like in school every day, we will always be more than the evidence." As *researcher* I considered the student's comment: did this point to a self-refleXive excess that refuses to be named? Did the focus on enhancing performance in school not further occlude the entanglement of students' self-reflections/reflexions and attempt to territorialize them within striations of success and failure? Was I gathering de-terminated

evidence in what was the process of the BwO's intensive deterritorializations that were always in danger of re-organization by attempting to reinsert the students into the major language of *Birds on a Wire* rather than a minor language where disruption and creation were possible? The idea here was that there is a restoration - a change happens, but that is already somewhat predetermined by the ideal behavior as a mathematic student fixed in a particular milieu. For students, teachers, and school leaders who are variously situated in the narrative of the birds on the wire (above, on, fallen), we all remain implicated in the work by our presupposition that performance in mathematics is the calculus that will produce a coherent subjectivity.

A Schizoanalysis of Leadership Assemblages

As a school leader, while I remained complicit with the OECD's project to improve schooling, I remained committed in my attempt to disrupt its force, working with the triad of self-reflection, self-reflexion, and self-refleXion to do so. In this way I also remained constituted in the interrogation of the students' AI experiences as a wolf in sheep's clothing - committed to a world-making in the AI partnerships and this dissertation to address this promise: "futures are inscribed in the present as immanent possibilities, not as necessary developments of a code" (Berardi, 2017, p. 20).

> Something in the world forces us to think. This something is an object not of recognition but a fundamental *encounter* [emphasis added]. . . . 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* [emphasis added]. In this sense it is opposed to recognition. (Deleuze, 1994a, p. 139)

Deleuze's (1994a) statement refers to the difficulties of this research "methodology", the struggle to identify the performative encounters of self-refleXion that then are "sensed" as the "occasions" that open up new created worlds. Briefly then, in an attempt to move from the current impasse of current education reforms, in particular considering the school leader assemblage, the following chapters of this dissertation endeavour to produce conditions to dehabituate thinking, to trouble the status quo that might open schools and education to a world-making beyond current striations of the *reengineering* of the practice standards for leaders, a narrowing of the curriculum, and the intensified accountabilities powered by the mechanics of socio-technologization. Again, these chapters anchor the investigation of my thesis question:

> *How can a schizoanalysis of the Alberta International Partnerships (AIPs) offer new possibilities and potentialities for disruption and creation in the contemporary conceptions of educational leadership?*

Chapter 4 resonates with what Deleuze and Guattari (1994) invoke as an imperative for the research: *that to think is to experiment.* Their collective work demonstrates that revolution and transformation are possible if one is open to experimentation and working with possibilities that are not already given. Moving beyond the frozen future of a "good life", driven by the OECD's architecture of 21st century competencies and other imaginaries that project one determinate future, and fuelled by the aspirations of continuous progress and a global culture of competitive comparison, I suggest that the AI partnerships entered "zones of indeterminacy" that were largely hidden in most forms of organization and institutions (Rajchman, 2000, pp. 5–6). In an attempt to do something new or novel, particularly for localized

circumstances and in the social field of our school networks, the AI partnership leadership assemblages acquired a taste for uncertainty and the unknown (Rajchman, 2000, pp. 5–6). Again, the following chapters will explore the conditions and forces where AI participants had encounters that compelled thinking, bringing forth a "shock to thought"[22]. The partnerships offered potential to move the leadership assemblage from what worked to look for conditions under which something new and as yet "unthought" arose (Rajchman, 2000).

Through a (re)reading, a schizoanalysis of the educational assemblages of the AI partnerships is offered. The following chapters provide opportunities to break with already established frameworks of leadership in the education project to consider new ways of thinking in and of education. As Deleuze (1994a) theorized, *universals* dilute difference thereby there is a need to move beyond ideology and representation, beyond the realm of reforms with set agendas and static plans of what works. Using the concepts of power and desire, I uncovered the micro-political sites of resistance and agency where there had been a move from leadership actions of "power over" to the "power to affect and be affected". These were the performative encounters that I sensed and identified as events in the AI's history of exchanges.

To reiterate, schizoanalysis is focused on the manner in which the unconscious is situated in any given social field, as well as how this social field structures thought and action in particular ways. Dominant approaches to school leadership work to organize life in schools. Through performative encounters of AI partnerships, leadership was, in some cases, repositioned, exposing potential "lines of flight" (escape) as events that had

[22] The expression "shock to thought" refers to the title of a book on expression and affect in the work of Deleuze and Guattari (Massumi, 2002), edited by Brian Massumi, and entitled, *A Shock to Thought; Expression after Deleuze and Guattari* (London, Routledge, 2002)

the capacity to rupture or interrupt common sense thinking and habitual responses to life.

The following chapters explore concepts that will be further developed through a (re)reading and (re)engagement with the extensive body of data generated through the history of the AI partnerships, in particular where fluid *subject-groups* were formed and had a sense of autonomy. These I identified as the performance encounters of AI partnerships. Many of the AI partnership performance encounters were that of group pedagogy, concerned with the promotion of human relations that troubled and disrupted typical role and leadership stereotypes within education.

Considered as learning excursions, students, teachers, principals, teacher union leaders, and researchers embarked into territories as "nomads" with inquiries into the unknown. Of interest in this thesis is where experimentation led to a dehabituation of practice and thinking; and while the AI partnerships offered opportunities for experimentation, this does not suggest that there were not many examples where the student, teacher, school leader, and teacher union assemblages remained or returned to habituated modes of operation and adopted strategies without experimenting themselves. However, there were enough instances where certain "lines of flight" can be identified, which is teased out and discussed in Chapters 6 to 8.

Chapter 4

The End of Leadership: Surveying the Current Ideations of Educational Leadership, Management, and Administration

This chapter framed as *The End of Leadership* outlines the poverty of current conceptions of educational leadership that are circulated and mobilized in the field of my work as a school principal. For example, the expansive body of literature that the canon of Educational Leadership, Management, and Administration (ELMA) has inspired has primarily been concerned with instrumentality and mobilizing best practices, behaviours, and traits of principals as instructional leaders to ensure schools change and reform to meet the needs of neoliberal vision of 21st century learning. These instrumental leadership models have largely been driven and guided by the neoliberal, economic goals of global corporations and world economic actors such as the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) creation of an environment of growing accountability, surveillance, and *datafication*[23] that locates students as human capital.

The chapter continues with a case study that offers an exemplar of these instrumental assumptions that were amplified by the introduction of practice standards for Alberta school leaders. The discussion then turns to the analysis of a recently published national study of school leaders that I played a key role in - *The Canadian School Leader: Global Forces and Future Prospects* (ATA, 2017). This study interrupts

[23] Datafication is a term coined by Sam Sellar to describe the growing infrastructures of data in the field of education. According to Sellar (2017), *datafication* is the use of "data in various forms—from attendance and behaviour records to grades and standardized test results...we have moved on from the time when data were collected and stored locally in notebooks and filing cabinets to a time in which data are rapidly passed through networks that connect schools, education systems, private companies and other organizations. Crossing boundaries to research the impacts on public education computerization of administration, learning and assessment has created conditions in which large volumes of digital data are produced in standard formats and flow from one place to another" (p. 14).

current dominant discourses of school leadership by identifying the incommensurable nature of the work of school leaders. The end of the chapter then draws on Deleuze and Guattari's (1983) tools to offer the field of Educational Leadership, Management and Administration (ELMA) opportunities to disrupt the status quo in an attempt to experience a life within the education project, less committed to efficiency and progress and more open to molecular revolutions and the courage to singularize. Stated differently, new social movements might act as both a resistance to a general, serializing subjectivity, but also as attempts to produce original, *singular modes of subjectivity*, processes of subjective singularization (Guattari & Rolnik, 2007).

The Meaning of Educational Change at the "End of Leadership"

As I considered my 20 years of experience as school principal against the backdrop of the highly variegated educational leadership literature, I approached the review of the literature with hesitation. I recalled the old marketing joke that it is appropriate that most business books on leadership are purchased in airports, since most were written in airport lounges. It is with a bit of this ironic sensibility that I approached this review of educational leadership and change with both ambivalence and hope. While initially this chapter outlines assumptions and critical influences that delimit the possibilities for school leaders to affect meaningful change, the discussion concludes by exploring the post-modernist turn in emerging literatures that map hopeful possibilities for school leaders.

Leadership has been dissected, probed, and interpreted throughout contemporary history with many definitions, claims, and counter-claims—all of which have had

implications for how educational leadership is understood and the assertions that can be made for what is regarded as "appropriate, valued and honoured" in school change efforts (Cro & Grogan, 2011, p. 255). Leadership is also defined in relation to management and headship, but should be understood as a complex interplay of personal, organizational, and broader social contexts rather than as attributes of persons or positions (Cristie & Lingard, 2001). The purpose of educational leadership moves beyond exploring particular tasks and behaviours of leaders to realise that leadership is a social and socializing relationship that should include more than formally designated leaders in education change efforts to include students, teachers, and community members (Ribbins & Gunter, 2002).

The Alchemy of Educational Leadership, Management, and Administration (ELMA)

The field of educational leadership, management, and administration (ELMA) has been largely conservative, and as such remains a "modernist" project (Niesche, 2013, p. 33). To a great extent the field of ELMA has been influenced by industrial psychology and management literature (Cro & Grogan, 2011) and has relied on theory making and developmental models that critics have regarded as narrow in their theoretical and research base (Gorard, 2005; Muijs, 2011). The conventional modernist narrative of educational theories is "based on causal relationships, views of a single reality, and other features of positivism that have been critiqued in regard to their value for understanding leadership in a postmodern world" (Cro & Grogan, p. 259).

The field of educational research remains contested, as much of the evidence has

come from what has been described as poorly designed or advocacy driven studies (Gorard, 2005). The field of ELMA has relied on models or theories that described observable, rational practices with profound influences by political, bureaucratic, and organizational management approaches (Niesche, 2013). Traditionally, accounts of educational leadership and change have been framed in a linear fashion with the goals of creating clarity and conceptual inclusiveness and have tended to exclude or ignore feminist, critical theorist, and postmodern perspectives (Cro & Grogan, 2011).

Rost (1991) offers a critique of ELMA based on five categories of theories: 1) an orientation towards goal achievement; 2) a focus on micro relations rather than macro social relationships; 3) androcentrism; 4) utilitarianism; and 5) excessive rationalist, technocratic, and scientific assumptions underpinning the field (p. 27). According to Cro and Grogan (2011), Joseph Rost (1991) claimed that despite a narrative that there have been gains in leadership thought, there is a lack of literature to support that leadership theory has influenced practice.

Contemporary Trajectories of Leadership and Change

According to many scholars (Blackmore, 2006 & 2016; Cro & Grogan, 2011; Niesche, 2013), the development of leadership theory and practice can be classified into four broad categories regarding the attributes of successful leaders: trait theory; behavior, situational, and contingency theory; excellence and transformational theory; and distributed leadership as an organizational quality. These four categories are embedded within the three historical models of leadership and change outlined by Hallinger (1992):

(1) Managerial. During the 1960s and 1970s, school leaders were considered

change agents for government initiatives and the principal's role focussed on managing the implementation of externally devised initiatives;

(2) Instructional. By the mid-1980s there was an emphasis on instructional leadership where the principal was considered the primary source of knowledge for developing and managing a school's curriculum and instruction; and

(3) Transformational. During the 1990s, conceptions of leadership evolved to view schools as the units responsible for initiating change, not simply implementing externally generated change.

There are many alternative and competing models of school leadership and change, all hinging on design principles regarding the nature of change and nexus of control (i.e., top-down vs. bottom up) and assumptions about human nature and motivation. In this section, I review a number of these theories, drawing heavily on Leithwood, Jantzi, and Steinbach (1999) and Bush (2011). This analysis is not intended to be exhaustive but rather illustrative of the trajectories that leadership literature has taken. As we can see in the following, ELMA has had multiple adjectives to describe leadership.

1. Managerial Leadership Model: Managerial models of leadership assume that the focus of leaders ought to be on functions, tasks, and behaviours and that if these functions are carried out competently, the work of others in the organisation will be facilitated (Leithwood & Duke, 1998). Managerial leadership approaches suppose that the behaviour of organisational members is largely rational and that influence is accrued as a result of the formal authority of leaders in terms of their capacity to leverage change

(Bush & Glover, 2014). As Rost (1991) suggested, there is evidence in the literature to support that managerial leadership continues to be a highly regarded model in education, although this support and the meaning of such leadership often has to be inferred. As a whole, these functions convey an orientation to leadership similar to the orientation found in the classical management literature (Leithwood & Duke, 1998).

2. Instructional Leadership Model: Instructional leadership models view the principal as lead teacher and the key holder of knowledge of instructional and curricular practices in a school. Instructional leadership models presume that the critical focus of the school leader should be the behaviour of teachers as they engage in activities directly affecting the growth of students (Leithwood, Jantzi, & Steinbach, 1999). It is in the arena of instructional leadership that the achievement of students becomes the focus of the leadership activities and teachers become causally linked to this activity (Blackmore, 2016). Instructional leadership has the longest history linking leadership and learning, however, several other terms have been used to describe this relationship, including pedagogic leadership, curriculum leadership, and leadership for learning (Bush & Glover, 2014). The critiques of instructional leadership rest in two areas: that the leadership is largely concerned with teaching rather than learning (Bush, 2013), and the predominant focus is on the principal as curricular expert and centre of all power and authority (Hallinger, as cited in Bush & Glover, 2014). Recent versions of instructional leadership have focused on additional organizational variables (e.g., school culture) that are believed to have important consequences for teacher behaviours that improve student learning (Leithwood & Duke, 1998). However, most conceptions of instructional leadership

continue to allocate authority and influence to formal administrative roles (usually the principal), and assume that considerable influence is exerted through the expert knowledge on the part of those occupying such roles (Leithwood & Duke, 1998).

3. Transactional Leadership: Transactional leadership refers to the everyday management of schools (Blackmore, 2016) where the relationships between leaders and teachers are based on the exchange of valued resources; teachers provide educational services (teaching, pupil welfare, extra-curricular activities) in exchange for salaries and other rewards (Bush & Glover, 2014).

4. Transformational Leadership: Transformational leadership or fundamental social, economic, and cultural change leadership (Blackmore, 2016) attempts to provide a normative approach to school leadership that describes the processes by which leaders influence school outcomes (Bush & Glover, 2014). Transformational leadership has been conceptualized along eight dimensions: establishing school vision, determining school goals, providing intellectual stimulation, offering individualized support, modelling best practices and important organizational values, demonstrating high performance expectations, creating a productive school culture, and developing structures to foster participation in school decisions (Leithwood, Chapman, Corson, Hallinger, & Weaver-Hart, 1996). Despite recent popularity, critiques of the transformational leadership model suggest that much of the transformational language has been co-opted by governments to coerce leaders to adopt and implement centrally determined policies (Bush, 2011).

5. Moral and Authentic Leadership: Moral leadership distinguishes itself from transformational leadership by emphasising integrity and the assertion that the focus of leadership ought to be on the values, beliefs, and ethics of the leaders themselves (Bush & Glover, 2014). Authority and influence are to be derived from defensible conceptions of what is right or good (Leithwood, Jantzi, & Steinbach 1999). Many additional terms have been employed to describe values-based leadership (Bush & Glover, 2014) including ethical leadership (Starratt, 2007), authentic leadership (Begley, 2007), and spiritual leadership (Woods, 2007).

The leadership models previously mentioned referred to individual leadership, typically in the role of principal. There are several contemporary models that attempt to include more actors in the leadership domain of the school and are considered shared approaches to leadership (Spillane, Camburn, Pustejovsky, Preja, & Lewis, 2009).

6. Distributed Leadership: Acknowledging the increasing complexity of the work of a school leader there has been recent interest in a distributed leadership model (Gronn, 2003). In a distributed leadership model, leadership and management involve both leaders in formal leadership positions and individuals who do not hold designated leadership positions, defining leadership as a set of organizational functions rather than tying leadership to a particular administrative position (Spillane et al., 2009). Distributed leadership is leadership that engages expertise wherever it exists within the school and is not dependent on a formal leadership position or role (Harris, 2009). Distributed leadership engages both vertical and lateral dimensions of leadership practice and considers formal and informal forms of leadership practice within its framing, analysis,

and interpretation (Harris, 2009). The literature on distributed leadership has developed to consider both what distributed leadership is and descriptions of whether and how leadership is distributed (Camburn & Han, 2009). Alma Harris (2009) cites Peter Gronn's (2002, p. 657) analysis to describe three forms distributed leadership may take:

- Spontaneous collaboration: From time to time groupings of individuals with differing skills and knowledge capacities, and from across different organizational levels, coalesce to pool their expertise and regularize their conduct for duration of the task, and then disband
- Intuitive working relations: This form of concertive distributed leadership emerges over time "as two or more organizational members come to rely on one another and develop close working relations" and, as Gronn argues, "leadership is manifest in the shared role space encompassed by their relationship" (p. 17)
- Institutionalized practice: Citing committees and teams as their most obvious embodiment, Gronn describes such formalized structure as arising from design or through less systematic adaptation.

Critiques of distributed leadership centre around whether in reality this leadership model merely maintains a strict hierarchical structure to leadership (Blackmore, 2016), with limited understandings of democratic practices despite a democratic appeal (Court, as cited in Blackmore, 2016). Gronn (2010) cautioned against a view that distributed leadership means any reduction to the scope of a principal's leadership role (Gronn, as cited in Bush & Glover, 2014). Gronn (2010) argues that principals within a distributed leadership model retain considerable power (Gronn, as cited in Bush & Glover, 2014).

As such, he proposes a "hybrid model of leadership" that might "harness the best of both individual and distributed approaches (Gronn, as cited in Bush & Glover, 2014).

7. System/Network Leadership: Leadership models traditionally consider schools as independent units within a broader hierarchical structure (Bush & Glover, 2014). The past decade has witnessed the trend of "increasing the opportunities for heads to learn from one another" through visits, networks, or clusters (Barber, Whelan, & Clarke, as cited in Bush & Glover, 2014, pp. 562–563). In Hargreaves' (2010) discussion of a "self-improving school system, he suggests that four main tenets be upheld: clusters of schools, adopting local solutions, stimulating co-construction between schools, and expanding the concept of system leadership" (Bush & Glover, 2014, p. 563). System leadership in this sense constitutes boundary crossing and inter-visitations by school principals between schools, school jurisdictions, provinces, and countries. The emphasis in this type of leadership is collaboration through partnerships, such as those referred to in Chapter 2, where my high school principal group came together to learn from one another and attempt to infuse systems of fiscal equity throughout our collaborative group of schools.

8. Contingent Model of Leadership/Adaptive Leadership: This model of leadership acknowledges that all models of leadership that have been explored are all partial; that none of these models provide a complete picture of school leadership (Bush & Glover, 2014). This model assumes that leadership is situational and responsive, with a variety of differing contexts requiring principals to continuously adapt various leadership models and approaches. Principals are situated in complex ecosystems and must continuously

adapt their behaviour and actions in response to emerging issues or as dictated by a particular situation. It is assumed in a contingent model that there is no "one size fits all" approach to leadership and no "magic bullets" as there is recognition that a range of approaches can be valid.

The "Unfinished Selves" of Canadian School Leaders

> The quasi-religious belief in leadership all too often offers a Disneyland vision of organizations. (Alvesson & Spicer, 2016, p. 125)

As well as the considerations outlined previously, what remains striking in current research on Canadian school principals is the widening gap between the complexity of their work and the effort to recognize the limitations of the position called "the principal" (Alberta Teachers' Association, 2017). The national study, *The Canadian School Leader: Global Forces and Future Prospects,* reaffirms what ought to be an obvious (but too-often forgotten) recognition of the quintessential *moral* character of the work of school leadership. While school leaders report high levels of commitment to the social justice values of equity and to the aspirations of public education, and they feel their school district shares in this commitment, "worryingly, this study indicates that almost a quarter of school leaders do not believe their school district trusts the professionals working in schools" (Alberta Teachers' Association, 2017, p. 5).

In *The Canadian School Leader: Global Forces and Future Prospects* study's Foreword, Carol Campbell, one of Canada's leadership researchers, observed, given the growing tensions facing principals, that there is an urgent need to address the "increasing intensity, complexity and volatility" of school leadership (2017, p. 4). The national study

also points to what Alvesson and Spicer (2016) characterize as the "functional stupidity" of organizational life where too often innovation and initiative are rhetorically valued, but are systematically marginalized by "bounded rationality, ignorance and other intellectual traps" (p. 17). Consider the findings of *A National Study of the Impact of Electronic Communication on Canadian School Leaders* (Lanctôt & Duxbury, 2017), which primarily attended to how digital communication tools such as e-mail are influencing principals' work. One of the remarkable findings of the study was that despite the ubiquity of catch-words in the leadership literature reviewed, evoking "transformation," "risk-taking," and "instructional leadership," the typical Canadian school leader was spending 17 hours out of a 61-hour work week pouring over email. Indeed, an earlier study indicated that Alberta principals were only able to commit to 6 hours a week in classrooms given the many conflicting managerial tasks they were increasingly called upon to do (Alberta Teachers' Association, 2014). If anything, these studies point to the modernist vision we might have of school leadership—rather than a day marked by making critical decisions and rich pedagogical moments with students and teachers, a school leader's day is too often dominated by the ubiquity of email, administrative details, and other interruptions that draw them away from the highly relational human activity that might impact the quality of the school as an organization. All of these influences have contributed to the rise of stress and the diminishment of work-life balance (Pollock, 2016). Indeed, as far back as 2009, psychiatric disorders (stress, anxiety) in Ontario accounted for 50% of the cases on Long Term Disability leaves for principals (CPCO, 2009). As well, the high level of stress that is associated with the principal's job was reported as a barrier to becoming a school administrator in two

studies in Ontario (CPCO, 2009; The Learning Partnership, 2008).

As previously outlined in relation to the recent re-deployment of practice standards, the risk remains that Canadian school leaders work in rule-bound school systems where management tasks, driven by accountability and surveillance infrastructures, increasingly limit the possibilities that leadership might impact organizational effectiveness. Instead, as the study concludes, presently, in a climate of increased school accountability, school principals are too often viewed as "key agents in the chains of accountability for student learning between governments and classrooms" (Leithwood, 2013, p. 10).

The study also points to the end of the modernist trope of the omni-competent and omniscient leader. This theme is also reinforced by research across all sectors of society by Kellerman (2013) who heralded in *The End of Leadership*, a growing recognition that the age of the leader as the expert in addressing public policy is giving way to the need to consider the deeper and nettlesome challenge of garnering community support through civic engagement and a commitment to developing community and "followership". From the failures of the Obama presidency to the growth of the leadership development industry, Kellerman argues that we have forgotten that sustainable leadership is a highly contextual and relational exchange where a public emerges around a leader to build a shared commitment to address increasingly complex challenges.

Yet, in all of this mix the paradox persists: in our western culture we consistently over-estimate the capacity of leaders to save us, while at the same time underestimating our capacity to make a difference as individuals. As we grow more and more focused on the hope that leadership is the key to organizational success, we are blind to the fact "that

70 per cent of corporate performance is driven by situational factors rather than CEO characteristics" (Alvesson & Spicer, 2016, p. 121). It is time to move past the popular literature that continues to "mystify leadership" (Alvesson & Spicer, 2016, p. 119).

Thinking Ahead and "World-Making" for the Unfinished Selves of School Leaders- A Schizoanalytic Excursion

The field of ELMA has provided few tools for understanding leaders and their shifting subjectivities, as relatively little of the ELMA literature has explored leadership at the level of practices. Rather, the field has been built on existing or prescribed sets of behaviours or characteristics that all too often hover over top of the granular field of action and local contexts (Gillies, 2013; Niesche, 2011). Analyzing leadership discourses through a critical lens might re-position leadership as a site of political struggle and open alternative ways of seeing the world (Niesche, 2014). As described previously, the field of ELMA suggests numerous leadership models (Blackmore, 2016), and recently a great deal of critical ELMA work has been devoted to interrogating official government leadership agendas and reforms (Blackmore, 2016; Gronn, 2003; Gunter, 2005, Niesche, 2014; Thomson, 2016) while developing a critical exploration of the field of ELMA by trialing, documenting, theorizing, and advocating for alternative practices.

World Making and School Leaders to Come

The introduction to the toolbox of Deleuze and Guattari's "world-making" and "school leaders to come" to follow in Chapter 5 is an effort to acknowledge the multiplicity of "teacher, student, and community subjectivities" and endeavors to

decenter traditional centers of power and control in school leadership. The role of the principal must evolve from managing the school culture and teachers to conform to the principal's or system's vision, to finding micro-political sites of resistance, freeing desire from the codification of the capitalist machine while avoiding revisiting the past where schools existed within Foucault's (1980) disciplined society.

Many of the current leadership theories and practices are constituted within what Foucault and Deleuze described as Discipline Societies, societies structured via organized surveillance techniques and institutions of enclosure, such as schools, prisons, hospitals, and factories. However, as will be discussed in Chapter 5, Deleuze (1992a), in his *Postscript on the Societies of Control*, suggested that while the disciplined society created students as defined forms, constituting subjectivities through recording, assessment and supervision, in a control society the subject is never finished creating an entirely "formless student" (Savat & Thompson, 2015, p. 279), ripe for modulating forces of neoliberal capitalism.

Chapter 5

Global Cartographies:

Collective Assemblages of Enunciation of the School Principal

The school leader remains a central figure in the educational development policy mobilizations of the OECD. As outlined in Chapter 1, the neoliberal global education reform movement (GERM) continues to focus on enhancing the performativity of human actors in education systems. In this regard developing the human capital of the school principal is key. The following chapter traces the collective assemblages of enunciation produced by the OECD and school leaders in the selected countries that were involved in the AI partnerships. It was through the sharing of different perspectives amongst school leaders involved in the AI partnerships that I came to a better understanding of the ways that OECD's policies intersect to form an ensemble that encloses leadership practices in distinct ways that are specific to each jurisdiction, given the culture, history, and circumstances. For example, the growing prevalence and intensities attached to leadership practice standards, signals efforts to create a common global architecture that enframes the subjectivities of school leaders. However, as we will see in the various AI jurisdictions, school leaders responded and refracted to these efforts in distinctive ways. As the chapter illustrates, with the exception of Finland, the AI partnership jurisdictions were relatively unsuccessful in distancing themselves from the OECD's discursive framing of descriptors of school leaders as being *effective, excellent, and evidence based decision makers.*

For Deleuze and Guattari (1987), language can be described as a "site of social forces", leading them to conclude that "language is a political affair before it is an affair

for linguistics" (p. 68). Collective assemblages of enunciation do not speak of things, but among things, "in the midst of facts, states of affairs and subjective states" (Lecercle, 2002, p. 92). Globally, the growing interest in school leadership as a site of human capital formation is evident distinguishing the work of the principal from that of other education workers such as teachers and educational paraprofessionals. This effort powers policies and practices that see school principals *always becoming* leader through collective assemblages of enunciation. In this respect principals are always in process to achieve metastability through assemblages that can and do transform or actualize into new formations (Simondon, 1994). As we will see in the pages that follow, within each jurisdiction involved in the AI partnerships, the collective assemblages of the idealized school leader continued to implicitly and explicitly circulate the phantasm of the onmicompetent and omnipotent school leader.

> Every statement of a collective assemblage of enunciation belongs to indirect discourse . . . the collective assemblage is always like the murmur from which I take my proper name, the constellation of voices, concordant or not, from which I take my voice. (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 84)

Twin Peaks: Collective Assemblages of Enunciation

As a direct result of the Alberta International partnerships, conferences and summits were planned and executed to bring participants (teachers, school leaders, academics, and teacher union officials) together to discuss emerging global issues in education. The summits frequently demanded actionable undertakings from the participants that might assist in producing counter forces and strategies to neutralize or

ameliorate conditions circulating from global entities such as the OECD. There was a strong belief amongst the AI partnership organizers that school reform efforts were best left to schools, and in particular it was school leaders that had the agency to effect change within their schools, especially when multiple stakeholders (including students) were involved in school reform experimentations. This expression of the critical role that school leaders played in educational reform was perhaps not unlike the views held by OECD. However, in the AI partnership participants' views, the school leaders' agency involved moving beyond global forces of control and surveillance of bodies' typically executed subtlety through the machinery of performativity and *datafication*.

In 2018, a group of academics, school leaders, and teacher union officials gathered in Banff, Alberta to participate in the 3rd annual *Twin Peaks* research summit. This was a summit that I moderated and assisted with the organization and planning of, alongside participants from the AI partnerships, particularly officials from the Alberta Teachers' Association, who had taken a lead in all of the AI partnership work. This summit considered education reforms focused on personalized learning, data analytics, large-scale assessments, and indigenous education among others (Alberta Teachers' Association, 2018). I introduced the summit and the outlined contemporary challenges faced by school leaders, historically caught between the hierarchical structures of the institution of school—that of control and surveillance—and the impending promise of the future that was repeatedly described as perilous and uncertain. I then described the predicament of school leaders caught between the two as an impasse, described by Berlant (2011) as:

> a stretch of time in which one moves around with a sense that the world is at once intensely present and enigmatic, such that the activity of living demands both a wandering absorptive awareness and a hypervigilance that collects material that might help to clarify things, maintain one's sea legs, and coordinate the standard melodramatic crises with those processes that have not yet found their genre of event. (p. 4)

As I reflected back on the deliberations among the AI international partners at *Twin Peaks*, I attempted to interrogate the ways in which the AI partnership countries had experienced a variety of ways of *becoming-policy* among the jurisdictions in the AI partnerships. In the sections that follow, I read the efforts of the AI participants to navigate and mediate the neoliberal reform efforts examined in *Twin Peaks* through a myriad of ontologies (Blackburn, 1990) that can be understood through the intersections of affects that un/veil the ways that subjects make sense of the inconsistencies and ambiguities of policy to "fill in these spaces affectively" (Webb & Gulson, 2015a, p. 60).

Increasingly, the OECD's ongoing efforts to mediate and redefine the role of the school leaders exemplified many of the attributes of *policy prolepsis*. This is a condition where education actors attempt to mobilize somewhat conflicting "semiotic desires" through a host of emergent policy apparitions that give rise to multiple formations and deformations (Webb & Gulson, 2015a, p. 53). In their ground-breaking move, Webb and Gulson (2015a) coined the term "policy prolepsis" to describe the profusion of often-times contradictory concepts and practices that sees "the representation of a thing as existing before it actually does or did so" (p. 51). Drawing on what Deleuze (1990) would describe as the intersections of "affect, becomings and encounters" (Webb &

Gulson, 2015a) the authors see *policy prolepsis* in the education sector as characterized by "a category of becoming-policy that actualizes educational practices within the spaces of desired, yet not fully developed, policy initiatives and policy implementation" (p. 53). As we will see in the growing intensities focused on leadership standards globally, the impulses to construct architectures to frame the work of principals is fraught with challenges, whether practice standards have been formally adopted and implemented or not.

As described in Chapter 4, school leadership has become a powerful tool for leveraging policy agendas and goals across the OECD since the first iteration of PISA in 2000. Perhaps no other organization or network of researchers has had more influence in constructing the major language of school leadership than the OECD, with the avowed predominant role of the school leader as a critical influence in shaping student outcomes. The culmination of the OECD's initial work, the publication of the report *Improving School Leadership* (Pont, Nusche, & Moorman, 2008), presaged much of the territory the OECD would later claim regarding the significance of the school leader in advancing educational development. Of school leadership, the report observed:

> It plays a key role in improving school outcomes by influencing the motivations and capacities of teachers, as well as the environment and climate within which they work. Effective school leadership is essential to improve the efficiency and equity of schooling. (p. 32)

The report goes on to identify the trends and drivers reshaping the work of principals including the growing diversity of school populations, the increasing quality assurance and accountability pressures, the changing conceptions of teaching and

learning, and the increasingly complex managerial functions—while in many countries butted up against role ambiguity, an overburdened workload, and an aging principal cohort. The report also identifies contradictory reform impulses playing out across its member countries: some moving towards more autonomy and distributed leadership, while others increasing bureaucratic control and regulation (Pont, Nusche, & Moorman, 2008).

Examining this research 20 years later, the OECD observations appear uncontroversial and reflect many taken-for-granted assumptions about school leadership. Yet given the highly contested and complex body of research on school improvement that emerged during this period, the report represents a nascent effort by the OECD to establish a construct of school leadership as a thing that leads to another thing, school outcomes. This seminal claim formed the basis of much of the OECD's subsequent efforts to construct an elaborate apparatus that links school outcomes to teaching quality and effective school leadership. Yet the internal dynamics and contradictions in the complex ecology of global education reform were already evident, even at this early stage. For example, while the report provided what appeared comprehensive and irrefutable arguments for the central role of school leadership in contributing to school and system performance, a key conclusion remained tucked away early on in the document's 194 pages:

> A review of the OECD Improving School Leadership country background reports and a review of the existing research found no large-scale study providing results of a direct link between leadership, student learning and school outcomes that was

> accepted by policy makers as nationally representative and generalizable. (Pont, Nusche, & Moorman, 2008, p. 34)

In light of this finding, undaunted, the OECD continued with their stance that effective school leadership is key to large-scale education reform and improved educational outcomes. The OECD subsequently commissioned research specifically about school leadership in 22 of the 30 member countries. The proclaimed aims were to support policy development by providing in-depth analyses of different approaches to school leadership. The key questions explored were about role and responsibilities of school leaders under different governance structures, the "promising" policies and conditions for making school leaders most effective in improving school outcomes, and how to best develop school leadership (Pont, Nusche, & Moorman, 2008).

Global Assemblages of the School Principal

Of great interest is the myriad of ways that policy is anticipated, embodied, and enacts particular desires (Webb & Gulson, 2015a). As a triadic subject circulating through the case studies of school leadership within the AI partnership jurisdictions, I was privy to the emerging subjectivities of AI participants via the collective assemblages of enunciation of the teachers, students, and school leaders caught in the absent spaces of policy which, at times, touched on the virtual Real to gesture to the "inhuman" ethos of the milieu in which the various subjectivities were being framed and were circulating.

The following examples offer brief forays into the "worlds" of the school leaders of the various AI partnership jurisdictions and the emergent collective assemblages of enunciation of the school leaders. These illustrations are offered as an attempt to situate

the school leaders within their current *mise-en-scènes* to ascertain from where they might deterritorialize the assembled desire through experimentation.

"Cracking the Nut' of the Harried Unconscious of the Alberta School Leader

The globalizing impacts of neo-liberalism on effective school leadership, teacher *quality,* and teacher *effectiveness* are apparent with the growing international movements to regulate leadership and teaching processes and principal and teacher identities through professional standardization and accountability mechanisms (Fenwick, 2003). These have been thoroughly embraced in the Alberta school leaders' context. The Alberta Department of Education has mirrored the OECD statements claiming that:

> [s]chool leadership is now an education policy priority around the world. Increased school autonomy and a greater focus on schooling and school results have made it essential to reconsider the role of school leaders. There is much room for improvement to professionalise school leadership, to support current school leaders and to make school leadership an attractive career for future candidates. The ageing of current principals and the widespread shortage of qualified candidates to replace them after retirement make it imperative to take action. (Pont, Deborah, & Hunter, 2008, p. 3)

Compulsory in Alberta since 1998–99, the Teacher Professional Growth Plans (TPGPs) and the subsequent Principal Professional Growth Plans (PPGPs) introduced in 2009 produce particular norms of *good* leadership and *good* teaching, illustrating how Foucault's (1977) analysis of power circulates to become embedded in everyday activities, rendering the individual "knowable" (Fenwick, 2003, p. 5). These control

mechanisms normalize behaviours to adhere to pre-constructed standards (Fenwick, 2003) that are driven by the neo-liberal propensity towards progress and growth. The results are individuals who begin to self-regulate and measure themselves according to these pre-established standards, eradicating authentic choice and autonomy of practice (Fenwick, 2003). Ironically, according to Foucault (1977), the power of normalization imposes both homogeneity and the inference of some standardization while individualizing enough to make it possible to measure and detect difference.

A current illustration of these forces of normalisation and regulation is in the recent efforts of the Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA) and Alberta Education to establish and implement new practice standards for Alberta's school leaders. This initiative was launched on June 22, 2016 when Alberta's Minister of Education announced, "Alberta training educators to teach Indigenous issues" (Lamoureux & Trynacity, 2016, para. 1) in an effort to address the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report. Gesturing toward the historical significance of the government's initiative, Minister Eggen said, "it's very important for everyone to have this type of education to turn some unfortunate past into a positive future for all" (Lamoureux & Trynacity, 2016, para. 15). Eggen's (2018) enthusiasm for the work ahead signaled a surety and confidence in his government's ability to achieve its instrumental-rationalist project of cultural reconciliation that would be achieved through the reform of Alberta's curriculum and the development and mobilization of new quality standards for teachers, principals, and system leaders.

> These new standards reflect our expectations for education professionals, while recognizing the amazing work already happening in our classrooms. This will lay

> the groundwork for much of our work to continue to improve Alberta's incredible education system. These standards set a common vision for what it takes to deliver high-quality education in Alberta's classrooms. (Himpe, 2018, para. 3)

The historic partnership between the ATA and Alberta Education represented an effort at human capital formation and legitimation of the profession of teaching circulated through the apparatus of standards of practice.

It is in this policy assemblage that the nascent Alberta practice standards will find their meaning through a multiplicity of productive spaces and processes. However, the deployment of regulatory practices and standards related to school leadership presents significant challenges given the growing intensification of principals' work across the OECD jurisdictions, including Alberta in the neoliberal impulse to control and survey principals as human capital (Naylor, 2018). These tensions within the leadership assemblage for Alberta principals can be contextualized through the following observation:

> The Alberta Standards sit somewhere between the ideological divides apparent in Canada. On one side there is a version of accountability, with neo-liberal governments stressing the need for greater accountability within the public sector. On the other side sits the Finnish and Scottish examples of autonomy and respect for the profession of teaching. Alberta seems to have its preferred stance within the Finnish and Scottish frames, but will it last? (Naylor, 2018, p. 67)

In this respect, drawing on the theory of Deleuze and Guattari (1983) "the social machine is identical with the desiring machine" (p. 151). For Deleuze and Guattari (1983)

> The social machine's limit is not attrition, but rather its misfirings; it can operate only by fits and starts, by grinding and breaking down, in spasms and minor explosions. The disfunctions are an essential element of its very ability to function. . . . on the contrary, social machines make a habit of feeding on the contradictions they give rise to, on the crises they provoke, on the anxieties they *engender*, and on the infernal operations they regenerate. (p. 151)

The collective subjectivities of Alberta principals are currently produced and mobilized around "optimum learning" (typically measured by provincial testing programs), with an emphasis on the discourse of "good principal", internalized and self-regulated through technologies of the self (Fenwick, 2003, p. 1). This builds on the notion that principal professional identities are pivotal to their pedagogical and leadership approaches, school relationships, and ability to identify and address student and teacher needs with confidence.

In the case of Alberta, as the previous dismantling of the Alberta school principal subjectivity suggests, the collective assemblage of enunciation might be that of the harried squirrel, "we don't know which nuts to collect or save as we attempt to do everything and anything to meet the demands of a global framework of comparison". However, underneath these sentiments were potential sites of resistance to these utterances, articulated by the Albertan principals within the AI partnerships. There seemed many instances of refusal by principals to perform as harried squirrels while embracing the harried nature of the squirrels (the superintendents, the Alberta Education policy bureaucrats, and eventually, even the leadership officials of the Alberta Teachers' Association). Their distracted performance and nature, generated by conflicting policy

demands with little ability to be operationalized in the field, opened spaces for the Alberta AI partnership principals to be creative, experimental, and innovative. This image of the harried squirrel keeps returning to me as I recall, during a principal's retreat in Jasper last year, watching a squirrel frantically gathering acorns for his winter cache—all the while stopping mid-stride to check on potential predators. Amidst the cacophony of nuisance magpies and ravens nearby, the squirrel continued its frenzied labours of nut gathering. I wondered to myself if my colleagues were whispering our collective assemblage of enunciation as: "in reality, who is 'really watching whom?' A feeling of paranoia?"

Could these ruminations as a school leader in the midst of the policy prolepsis of the newly minted Alberta practice standards be an expression of a self-reflexion—of a returning of the gaze of the disciplinary potency of standards of practice powered by the pre-emptive move by education actors such as the Alberta Teachers' Association and the government? In what follows I hope to shift from such reflexion to open possibility for refleXion.

"Happiness" Offers no Respite to Competency in Math: Current Conceptions of School Leadership in Norway

Norwegian universities and colleges offered no formal programs for school leaders until the early 1990s (Møller & Ottesen, 2011). In-service training programs to recruit and train school leaders were encouraged by the municipalities and subsequently endorsed by national authorities (Møller & Ottesen, 2011). At the time, the Norwegian teacher unions strongly recommended that formal training offered by universities and

colleges was not needed as, “according to them, earlier experience as a teacher was a sufficient and a substantial qualification condition for a position as principal” (Møller & Ottesen, 2011, p. 619). The option of leadership as a career path for teachers was available and possible. This stance has changed radically. At the outset of the millennium, the teacher unions changed their purview, insisting that the universities and colleges begin to offer graduate courses in the areas of school leadership and management (Møller & Ottesen, 2011). This change in the teacher union motivation directly correlates with the rise and impact of international large-scale assessments (ILSAs).

PISA results appear to be of great concern in Norway due to the relatively low standard of achievement and ranking on PISA as compared to the high investment of public funds in education (Møller & Ottesen, 2011). To date there are no mandatory programs for credentialing principals, “but influenced by the international OECD project Improving School Leadership, the Norwegian Minister of Education and Research launched a national education programme for newly appointed school principals in 2009” (Møller & Ottesen, 2011, p. 619). While not yet specifically determining the practice standards and indicators for effective school leadership, the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training developed a framework that outlines the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for school leaders “to develop a deep understanding of the leadership role in education; to develop confidence in the role as educational leader; and to develop courage and strength in leadership” (Møller & Ottesen, 2011, p. 620).

The Norwegian contingent of the NORCAN (Norway, Alberta, and Ontario) project was largely funded by the Union of Education Norway, Utdanningsforbundet,

with some financial assistance from the school municipalities. The Union of Education Norway, Utdanningsforbundet officials were instrumental in pursuing an international project with jurisdictions in Canada and subsequently were very active members of the steering committee. The Utdanningsforbundet intended from the outset of the partnership that this was a joint partnership with Norwegian school municipalities, and as such, the municipalities raised half of the funding for the project involved. Additionally, the Utdanningsforbundet was adamant that the AI partnership include more than the province of Alberta and the Alberta Teachers' Association. They were interested in a national collaboration which would include more than one province. While this proved challenging, as Canada has unique education mandates for every province and territory, the Ontario Teachers' Federation did join the AI partnership with the assistance of the Ontario Department of Education funding the involvement.

A topic raised by Norwegian Utdanningsforbundet officials throughout the NORCAN partnership was the support needed for school leaders to succeed. Heavily involved in Education International (EI), Utdanningsforbundet officials and elected representatives actively voiced concerns about the negative potential of global education reform movement (GERM) initiatives, and in particular initiatives to standardize practice and curriculum as defined by the OECD. In a letter written to the congress of the Union of Education Norway to continue funding for the experimental work of the NORCAN project, a Utdanningsforbundet union leader claimed:

> Global datasets and measurement which have led to competition and commercialization in the lower education sector has worked to rob the teaching profession of its core mission which is to make professional judgments of how the

> work of teaching and learning should be done with the unique children and pupils they are responsible for. How can we defend the core values for education and for the profession? . . . The teaching profession must set itself in the driver seat for this cultural struggle for the soul of education. (Roar Gottvik, More Than Your Evidence Summit, 2017)

Despite the efforts and calls to action from the Utdanningsforbundet, there is evidence to suggest that edu-preneurs are well situated to colonize the Norwegian school leadership education terrain. A growing pressure on school leaders to raise PISA scores and the Norwegian ranking amongst its peers has led to a heightened need to recruit, retain, and influence school leaders to impact teacher efficacy and student achievement (personal communication, 2018). Taken from the OECD Background Report for Norway (2007a):

> Teachers and school leaders are now subject to pressure from the Government to improve national rankings in mathematics and reading. Managerial models of administrative reform are making a strong claim on the definition of accountability, and language is becoming an agent of ideology in shaping understanding. These changes influence the way administrators at municipal levels comprehend and establish issues of accountability. However, a national survey amongst school leaders in Norway, conducted in 2005, demonstrated that although external demands for results-driven curricula and other forms of bureaucratic accountability are increasing in the Norwegian context, they are not yet at the same level of intensity as they are in the US and UK. (Møller, Sivesind, Skedsmo, & Aas, 2006; OECD, 2007a)

At the end of the day, the AI partnerships exposed the existing subjectivities amongst the principal cohort, exposing anxiety and paranoia that insisted on increasing expectations on school leadership in Norway. Despite having no formal practice standards for school principals to date, Norwegian principal subjectivities as human capital are being determined in large part due to a national frenzy entrapped by the ILSA rankings of Norwegian schools against their counterparts, particularly Finland. While Norway is considered the "happiest" place to live in the world as determined by numerous global indexes (Dregni, 2017), and despite support and "persuasion" from the Utdanningsforbundet to think and "action" differently, the Norwegian AI partnership principals repeatedly and emphatically announced, "That's great we are the happiest place to live in the world, if only we could get our math scores to improve!"

New Zealand School Leaders: Committed to Cultural Recovery over Test Scores

In the New Zealand case, formal credentialing for school principals has not had a lengthy history, and performance standards have not played a major role in the policy settings for New Zealand school leadership (Wylie, 2011). Recently, however, practice standards have been developed drawing from research in the *Kiwi Leadership for Principals* framework document (Wylie, 2011). They are framed in terms of four areas of practice of the *Kiwi Leadership for Principals* framework, emphasizing adult learning as a means of enhancing principal capabilities to improve principal competency through self-evaluation processes (Wylie, 2011). Unlike many countries, including their neighbor Australia, practice standards in New Zealand do not yet exist in such a scale that they can

be used to “make comparative judgments of principal quality or performance”; they are not tightly linked to performance pay (Wylie, 2011, p. 655).

The standards are intended “to provide a baseline for assessing satisfactory performance within each area of practice” and “form part of a principal’s performance agreement, which will reflect the school or board goals, the principal’s job description, more specific objectives, and the New Zealand Education Council’s criteria for registration as a teacher” (Ministry of Education New Zealand, 2018, para. 1). Aside from the predicable mandates and statements that one might see from across the OECD, such as the need for collaboration, supporting professional growth of teachers, and effectively managing the school, two of the key areas of practice reflect the historical legacy of the Treaty of Waitangi: “Promote the bicultural nature of New Zealand by ensuring that it is evident in the school culture” and “[a]ctively foster relationships with the school’s community and local iwi” (Ministry of Education New Zealand, 2018, para. 4). The New Zealand approach remains based on “capability improvement through adult learning, and the use of processes and tools that spur self-evaluation and ongoing data-using inquiry cycles, rather than relying on formal accountabilities and measurements, including the ultimate ‘shame and blame’ to spur school leaders on” (Wylie, 2011, p. 581).

In the OECD New Zealand country report, Improving School Leadership (2007b), it is substantiated that the school self-management policy setting allows principals real decision making power in relation to the needs of their school communities alongside a robust accountability regime (Wylie, 2011). According to The Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) which asks teachers and school leaders about working

conditions and learning environments at their schools, New Zealand TALIS data suggests that principals spend more time than their OECD counterparts on administrative tasks. These managerial functions include meeting with their school boards more than supervising or evaluating teachers (Robinson et al., 2009). Principals still enjoy the freedom to pursue professional learning and engage their teachers in learning activities according to the contextual needs of the school community. There is no "one size fits all" mandate as of yet and professional learning remains voluntary.

The individual school remains central in the New Zealand context, with the overriding assumption that school communities are unique and as such the decisions and priorities for each school should differ from those of another. Each principal is subject to the conditions of employment and performance as outlined by each individual school board that governs each individual school. The school board is comprised of members of the school community and, as such, there is an overwhelming allegiance on the part of New Zealand school leaders to address the specific needs of their unique school communities.

There is, however, a growing expectation in New Zealand that school leadership is paramount to school effectiveness and "for the first time, there is a description of effective school leadership which is both convincing and challenging for New Zealand principals, and which also provides a consistent framework for government funding for leadership development" (Wylie, 2011, p. 660).

The AI partnership work with school leaders and teachers in New Zealand revealed an overwhelming commitment to the role education plays within the larger New Zealand socius. Apparent throughout the AI partnership work was the urgency on the

part of school leaders to acknowledge the values of the different communities they served and to respond to the moral challenges of acknowledging the Maori and Pasifika forefathers of the country. Every school leader within the AI partnerships seemed equipped and motivated to share the Maori traditions and culture as integral to their leadership activity within their individual school cultures. The collective assemblage of enunciation is that "there is work to be done in New Zealand, and there are different ways of knowing that need to be acknowledged and addressed with the different students that we serve". While the policy architecture of the previous government created a policy prolepsis of fear and misgivings (as witnessed in a principal meeting on a recent visit to New Zealand), the new government seems to have changed the dial, circulating new trajectories of hope and agency. The Deleuzian sensibility of "difference in itself" remains "alive and well" constituting the school leader subjectivities that emerged throughout the AI partnerships with New Zealand school leaders.

Ever the Outlier: Finnish Stories of School Leadership

As noted in the *School Leadership for Systemic Improvement in Finland: A Case Study Report* for the OECD activity improving school leadership (2007) by Andrew Hargreaves, Gábor Halász, and Beatriz Pont:

> The Finnish example is an interesting and unusual one for the study of systemic leadership and improvement. It provides a context for recent specific innovations in systemic change . . . At the same time, the entire country, its culture and its educational system itself constitutes a particular, prominent and high performing instance of systemic leadership and improvement. In its distinctiveness and

> departure from the predominant global educational reform movement of the past 15 years, that has emphasized testing and targets, curriculum prescription and market competition, high performing Finland might in this sense be regarded as one of a number of outlier examples of positive deviance from which other nations can learn as they rethink their own reform strategies. (Hargreaves et al., 2007, pp. 10–11)

While a key component of Finland's success might be attributed to the high quality of teacher training and the high public regard for the teaching profession as a whole, it is perhaps more pertinent to consider that the

> the Finnish model cannot be copied wholesale, for it is a model or strategy that arises out of alignment between and integration of a deep set of cultural and social values, a particular kind of social and economic state, and a distinctive approach to educational reform. (Hargreaves et al., 2007, p. 11)

As explained by Dennis Shirley (Helsinki Summit, 2011), "the only way to reproduce the Finnish education system would be to repeat their entire cultural and economic history". Shirley is referring to the fact that, as a nation, Finland has had a history of centuries of control by either Sweden or Russia, and only achieved true independence within the last three generations.

Finland remains a puzzling paradox of learning performance where the world leader in measured student performance has placed little or no emphasis on individual testing or high stakes measurement-driven accountability (Hargreaves et al., 2007). While Finland receives superior scores on ISLAs for reading and mathematics, it has not adopted a curriculum where these skills are delineated and taught as discreet subjects, nor

are they delivered through prescriptive, standardized programs and approaches to teaching or learning (Hargreaves et al., 2007).

There seems to be no appetite at the current time to introduce teacher or school leader practice standards in Finland. As Pasi Sahlberg (Finnish education spokesperson) has noted throughout the past decade, teaching is a highly regarded profession in Finland and only one in 10 applicants are successful in their applications to education faculties. According to Sahlberg (2013):

> Four aspects of teacher education in Finland distinguish it from teacher education in the rest of the world and enable Finland's teachers to be leaders in their profession. First, a rigorous graduate degree and at least five years of full-time study serve as the foundation of the teaching profession in Finland. Teachers are highly respected as professionals because their basic education and training compare with that of other professionals—doctors, lawyers, architects, and engineers. Second, the academic graduate degree is based on research. Teacher education in Finland systematically integrates scientific education knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, and practice to enable teachers to enhance their pedagogical thinking, evidence-based decision making, and engagement in the professional community of educators (Sahlberg, 2011). Finnish teachers' knowledge of research is integral to the decisions they make in the classroom. Third, teacher education has its own department in Finnish universities, giving it equal status with all other departments. It's also treated the same way as other departments in reviews and evaluations of Finland's universities. This guarantees that students have access to a rigorous academic environment. Fourth, all

> universities that prepare teachers in Finland have a clinical training school similar to the university teaching hospitals that are part of medical education. Students do their practical training in these schools under faculty who have advanced credentials in education. (pp. 38–39)

Finnish principals must have a teaching degree and there is a requirement that they continue to teach classes while maintaining the role of school leader. This ongoing connection to the classroom and their affiliation within the same union as teachers means that Finnish school leaders do not assume the same hierarchical structures as in many OECD countries (Hargreaves et al., 2007). Most AI partnership principals described their schools as resembling the "typical family", and it should be noted that in many cases, teachers and school leaders remained in the same school throughout their entire careers.

Salhberg (2013) maintains that while other national systems ramp up accountability measures to ensure teacher efficacy, Finnish teachers are empowered to design curriculum, have autonomy over the determination and measurement of student success, and have ample time to collaborate on a consistent, regular basis with colleagues both within their schools and amongst laterally formed networks across the country. The AI partnership work with Finland and Alberta (FINAL) has confirmed irrefutably that the Finnish Ministry of Education includes teachers and school leaders in all their policy activities as meaningful, critical participants. While the media has attempted to make the PISA results of interest to the public, there remains a solid respect for the teaching profession and the education system as a whole. The teaching profession exhibits a

resounding indifference to PISA or the OECD claiming, “the PISA results matter not! We have the lives of the students in our schools to consider”!

Of great interest for the overall implications of AI partnerships were the immediate changes to national policy directives that emerged from principal, teacher, and student participation in the Finnish FINAL partnerships. After the 3-year project “officially” finished, the Finnish schools participating in the FINAL partnership submitted their final reports to the Finnish Ministry of Education. Each school was afforded the opportunity to share their reflections and learning at the school level in addition to a synthesis of the overall recommendations from the FINAL partnership activity. It cannot be stressed enough that within the emergent national lower and upper secondary curriculum documents, each and every recommendation made by the Finnish FINAL partners was absorbed and is reflected in its entirety. The Finns seem to remain open to the “theory of an incomplete world, theory of the new, indeterminism, theory of the possibility”[24] (Pelbart, 2011, p. 78). It would appear that the Finns believe that education is always becoming and as such they are connected and open to a world that is as yet undefined (Pelbart, 2011). As per Guattari (2008), the FINAL partnership served as a method for creating new potentialities within the education milieu. According to the school leaders, “this is the Finnish Way”!

The Global Incitements of Standards

The preceding four country examples to provide backgrounds of school leadership in the AI partnerships afforded me the opportunity to move from reflexion to refleXion

[24] W. James as cited in J. Wahl (2005, p. 198).

by allowing a glimpse into the ways that the pre-emptive impulse to mobilize standards of practice with a control society is not a predetermined future. Both the Finnish case and less emphatically the New Zealand case point to these possibilities. Yet categorically, the cultural capital of teachers and school leaders across the OECD (as we see very pronounced in Alberta and Norway) has diminished in recent years due to the overarching reach of the global education reform movement driven by international benchmarking and large-scale assessments. Ultimately there has been a submission of the local sphere of influence of the teacher in the classroom and school leaders to the authority of what Stronach (2009) refers to as the "global language of Education" that results in a "discursive convergence through 'hypernarratives'" (Stronach, as cited in Lingard, Sellar, & Baroutsis, 2015, p. 25) of efficiency, progress, and measurement.

Revisiting the prescience posited in Deleuze's (1992a) account of societies of control, the development of practice standards mobilizes a number of changes to the characteristic operations of power. It is crucial to note that rather than power acting as a

> normalising imperative which would work to ensure each individual's complicity with a strictly defined set of social and ideological norms, it implies the propagation of a social logic according to which agencies collect specific kinds of information with the aim of adapting their own procedures in anticipation of changes in the behaviour of populations. (Gilbert & Goffey, 2015, p. 12)

Additionally, populations become more than "aggregations of individuals to be monitored and administered by a single central authority, but as aggregates of "dividuals", defined by their complex sets of relations with others" (Gilbert & Goffey, 2015, p. 12). Aside from Finland, it can be claimed the "dividuals" of the school leaders,

as signaled by the collective assemblages of enunciation (*the effective, excellent, evidence based decision maker)* in AI partnerships are increasingly subject to being shaped through their relationships with data, the teacher effectiveness rhetoric, and school improvement agendas formed by national interests and global mechanisms.

This has rendered the field of teaching and school leadership as one that is paradoxically framed as building human capital while at the same time diminishing the professional capacity and autonomy of teachers to meet the educational challenges they encounter. This challenge is evident across Canada (Naylor, 2018) and in most of the AI partner jurisdictions, as growing efforts to develop and deploy practice standards have been taken up with enthusiasm by teacher organizations and governments. As I consider reflexively-refleXively for myself in all of my years as a school principal, the resulting policy prolepsis will present many incommensurable and paradoxical expectations for my work. While clearly the force and intensities of the OECD's reform agenda is apparent, the previous examples and the case studies to follow demonstrate the possibility that other worlds are possible.

Perhaps I am so drawn to the policy prolepsis argument offered by Webb and Gulson (2015a) because I recognize within myself and my colleagues the constructed desires and subjectivities produced daily through the mere mention of policy, be it curriculum reforms, additional accountability measures, or the never ending rhetoric about improving results in literacy and numeracy. There seems a pervading fear amongst educators and the public to question or offer an opinion that might be counter to the global policies dictated by progress and efficiency.

Chapter 6

Leadership Excursions: Transversing Contemporary Leadership Through International Partnerships, Experiencing Another World Together

In this chapter I will explore my shifting subjectivities by profiling two performative encounters in the AI partnership. The hope lay in experimenting in a Deleuzian aesthetic, ways forward *to disrupt leadership and engage a leadership of disruption.* The first performative encounter involves disruptions in my subjectivity as school leader catalyzed by a long-standing relationship with a Finnish principal colleague. The second performative encounter examines students disrupting boundaries around what was defined as learning, and who got to lead the conversations around what counted as students *becoming* citizens. I took these two "occasions" as directly addressing the potential of self-refleXivity where "thinking" emerged for transversal change.

To foreground these two performative encounters, the following discussion offers a theoretical overview of the ways that a schizoanalysis of leadership can contribute to our appreciation for the realization that we indeed are in a time of impasse in the global neoliberal education project. It is in the impasse where the problematic of school leadership circulates between repeating past habits driven by a sense of omnipotence and a pseudo power to discipline teachers and students within their charge, a habitual return to control, and a sinking realization of their impotence in any attempt to escape the ever-present forces of global neoliberal capitalist forces through governing by numbers. This is a blaring contradiction that informed my dissertation problematic. School leaders, in fact *all* members of a school's community, are trapped in scenarios of impotence and

omnipotence amidst demands to "change everything," a fear to speak up, and a law of silence.

Caught in the Muddle: Discipline and Control

As described in Chapter 4, collective subjectivities produced in and by the institution of schooling are undergoing a passing from "one closed society to another, first the family, then the school and so on" (Deleuze, 1992a, p. 177). One of the interesting aspects of control societies is what seems "open" is really closed; it looks open because one "can" pass given the right status and money. For instance, one can "theoretically" own what one wants (regardless of sex, gender, race, etc.) provided that the money is there and used in such a way that coding cannot hamper its flow. So, the paradox is that control societies are open but "controlled". Within institutions that constitute environments of enclosure, such as prisons, schools, and hospitals, we are currently living in states of crisis, vacillating between control society "passwords" and disciplinary "watchwords" (Deleuze, 1992a, p. 179). While the disciplined society created students as defined forms, constituting the positions of the individual through recording, assessment, and supervision (Wallin, 2010, p. 54), in Deleuze's (1992a) conception of the control society, the subject is never finished, creating an entirely "formless student", ripe for modulating forces amidst slogans such as "motivation" and "lifelong learning" (Savat & Thompson, 2015, p. 279). We are faced with "activating and experimenting with lines of escape (*lignes de fuite*) that are as generative as they are dangerous" (Wallin, 2010, p. 54), thus creating conditions for the exposition of other possible worlds (Buchanan, 2008). The difficulty of *escape* will be to find the middle

ground not yet "anticipated by the state or submitted to the capitalist law of general equivalency" (Wallin, 2010, p. 160). Wallin (2010) states that the task, according to Deleuze, is to render a line of flight "endurable, workable, thinkable" (p. 159) resistant to the capitalist machining of the novel and new. Put another way, it is here that the AI partnerships might produce events and experimentations that for a moment remain unyielding to forces of recapture and the modulations that just enhance the old forces of capitalism more fiercely.

The field of education, and schools in particular, provide constant reminders and exemplars of how we are stuck in the *glue*, seemingly impotent. As I reflected over my 24 years as a school principal, I sensed that life in school was increasingly harried and frenetic, characterized by a saturated life of instrumental tasks to be taught and learned by certain dates, to insure the over-burdened curriculum is covered—all guided by the over-arching and answering to the ticking of the clocks and the ringing of the bells. Although the education project has become the favoured child of the neoliberal economic machines, it is hard not to challenge the motherhood statements of "equity through excellence", "education for all", and "preparing our children for the 21st century". These slogans, while well-meaning, can become empty in their impossible idealizations.

The impotence and omnipotence of contemporary school leaders bring to the fore questions, problems, and concepts of power, desire, relations and affect, difference and singularity, and the Body without Organs (BwO)[25], the touch stones of Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) challenging philosophy. The pressing problematic that currently sat and constituted my thinking about the concept of school leadership was that while school

[25] BwO (also referred to as the plane of consistency) exists within stratified fields of organization and simultaneously signals and alternative mode of being-*becoming*- something not yet present.

leaders were facing issues of stasis, trapped within the everyday status quo of the past within a history of disciplinary society, they were also faced with hyperactivity, the omnipotence of governance by numbers, and the formless subjectivities constituted throughout the field of education. Many of my principal colleagues were in a quandary about how to handle the overwhelming demands of "learnification" (Biesta, 2015) produced by capitalist assemblages, manifested through mediating objects such as global and national curriculum competencies, teacher and school leader practice standards, the technology of email and personal devices, and the commercialization of all things education. On the flip side, many school leaders longed for the days of past when students knew their place and role, when teachers were "worker bees" with healthy work ethics, had a sense of purpose as expert professionals instilling knowledge into students, and the perceived simplicity of the principal being the "boss" and in charge. As we know, such a past is a romanticized idealization. According to Deleuze and Guattari (1983), effectuating any type of change will not be through planned and executed reform agendas, but perhaps through micro-political acts of resistance and courage, mobilizing action, and experimentation. Disrupting leadership requires thinking, experiencing, and *experimenting with a leadership of disruption*.

Deleuze and Guattari's co-authored book *Anti Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (1983) was written with an anti-capitalist sensibility (Buchanan, 2008). While Deleuze and Guattari were sympathetic to the Utopian goals of the May '68 student and worker struggles and uprisings in Paris, France, they were reluctant to accept that the way forward was merely license to accept the ideals of Communism (Buchanan, 2008). For them it was more a question of desire, not merely the liberation of desire by

disciplining, adapting, and socializing it, but rather "plugging" desire in a way that it could not be interrupted nor co-opted in the social body, and that its expression be collective (Buchanan, 2008). Ultimately, according to Buchanan (2008), the May '68 student and worker movements instigated a rethinking by Deleuze and Guattari of the political concepts of power: "power relations, groups, group identity, the event and so on" (p. 19), and as such *Anti Oedipus* is considered a May '68 book. It became evident that revolution is more than merely a matter of seizing power (Buchanan, 2008).

The concept of power involves more than simply determining whose interests are to be served or represented as there are many other variables at play (Buchanan, 2008). According to Massumi (1987) in his foreword to *A Thousand Plateaus*, power has two very distinct terms in French: *puissance* and *pouvoir*. They refer to two very different concepts. "*Puissance* refers to a range of potential" defined by Deleuze as the "capacity for existence", "a capacity to affect or be affected" (Massumi, 1987, p. xvii), referring to the connections or relations that any given body can realize. "Here*, puissance* pertains to the virtual (the plane of consistency)" and *pouvoir* to the actual (the plane of organization) (Massumi, as cited in Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. xvii). "*Pouvoir* is a force that is 'instituted and reproducible', 'a selective concretization of potential' " (Masumi, as cited in Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. xvii). Said another way, *puissance* is the power to affect and to be affected and *pouvoir* is power over something or someone.

The role of school leaders has typically been understood as the exercising of *pouvoir*, power over students and teachers, with the managing functions of the institution for which they are responsible. But in fact, as many will attest, it is the relationships and connections that are fostered in a school by the school leader that determine the

principal's eventual efficacy. This could be referring to the power to affect and to be affected, *puissance*. Deleuze follows Spinoza who spoke of the "powers to affect and be affected," thus rendering affect a political concept (Massumi, 2015).

Two Performative Encounters:

The School Leader as International Avatar and the Living Wall

As a school principal and member of the steering committee on the AI partnerships, through schizoanalysis I attempted to ascertain instances when affect and "shock to thought" interrupted my own tendency towards a self-reflective subjectivity as a "school leader", to one where I was compelled to shift from a logocentric view of a "progressive" school leader and reformer to one who fell into a subjectivity of "stuttering" and being lost for words. The encounters that follow in this chapter point to my shift away from a subjectivity that was focused on discerning innovative and adaptive school improvement strategies as described in Chapter 4 (driven by some of my own metaphysics of desire), to instead *becoming* the exemplar of a *leader* confronting interruptions and new imaginaries about what the partnership work offered. As I looked to these "occasions," I found myself in a better position to grasp these performance encounters of the AI partnerships that moved beyond a mere romanticism of the self-reflective/reflexive school leader by examining how these collective AI undertakings "changed" participants' identities (or lives), enabling a shift towards Deleuze|Guattari's spirit of potentially "stuttering" the flows of territorialisation within the assemblages of desire.

It became palpable to me how the partnership AI dramatically changed when

students entered the summits and school visits. This was apparent not only because the energy was heightened, as it does when young people engage in activities, but there was also a completely different energy amongst the participants that could potentially be described as affect. Affect is described as transformative and is what pre-exists feelings and emotions, existing independent of them. Affect is the change that occurs when bodies come into contact (Colman, 2005). Deleuze and Guattari (1987) explicate that "affects are *becomings*. Spinoza asks: What can a body do?" (p. 256) and

> we know nothing about a body until we know what it can do, in other words, what its affects are, how they 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 or passions with it or to join with it in composing a more powerful body. (p. 257)

Affect is not a personal feeling. Feelings are personal, biographical; they are sensations checked against previous experiences and so labeled. Emotions are social; they display or project a feeling. Affects are pre-personal; they are the non-conscious experience of intensity formed in a moment of unformed or unstructured intensity. Affect is abstract and always prior to and/or outside of consciousness (Massumi, 2002a). For Massumi (2002a) affects are equated to intensities. Affects remain unconscious and unformed and are aroused easily by factors over which the individual has little or no control. It determines the intensity (quantity) of a feeling (quality). The transmission of affect is how bodies affect one another. Although affects may be microscopic, non-representational and/or unnoticeable, there are times when we feel something on the skin.

In her 2007 book, *Ordinary Affects*, Kathleen Stewart describes the everyday,

ordinary affects as

> the varied, surging capacities to affect and to be affected that give everyday life the quality of a continual motion of relations, scenes, contingencies, and emergences. They're things that happen. They happen in impulses, sensations, expectations, daydreams, encounters, and habits of relating, in strategies and their failures, in forms of persuasion, contagion, and compulsion, in modes of attention, attachment, and agency, and in publics and social worlds of all kinds that catch people up in something that feels like something. (pp. 1–2)

As described previously in Chapter 2, including students in the AI partnerships was somewhat serendipitous, and unknowingly inviting the students to assume leadership roles within school policy decisions while pursuing action research questions of their own allowed for a transversality of roles in the partnership initiatives. Albeit with varying degrees of success and failure, and with a variety of mediating objects, including students in the AI partnerships led to fascinating changes in the schools participating and contributed significantly to the analysis in this dissertation.

For example, it was not uncommon for the participants, in particular, for the school leaders to become visibly emotional in the summits and meetings where students were present. This seemed to occur for the school leaders, often to their surprise, as they were speaking to the participants about the hopes and dreams for their student charges and their schools as a whole. Repeatedly during these public sessions, the school leaders were unable to continue in the quiet reflection of their own musings, caught off guard by their own emotive sentiments. Clearly they had been affected by the student presence.

The AI partnership activities had a profound impact on my sensibilities as well as my Albertan colleagues as we ventured into the Finnish worlds of school and life:

> We were walking around the Finnish school and visiting various classes to get a feel for the school and the ways in which school "worked" in Finland. In a religion class the teacher was quite engaged with the students and after giving a brief lesson to the students, opened up the discussion and welcomed questions from the students. All this took place in English, which was of a very high quality. The discussion led to one of the students posing a question about the meaning of various artworks typically found in the churches. The teacher began answering the question and threw her hands in the air saying, "this is silly", let's go down to the church and we can all take a look and I can explain better there". To my surprise the students all packed up their books, went downstairs to the coat racks (as none of their possessions were locked or hidden away in lockers), and grabbed their scooter helmets, bikes (which were also not locked up), and began to make their way to the church which was about 20 blocks away. The Albertan principals were aghast; we couldn't stop ourselves from launching a multitude of questions at the teacher. What, no fieldtrip forms or parental permission needed, no supervision of the students making their way via various forms of transportation, did the administration not have to approve them leaving the school, what about the classes the students might be late for on their return from the church, and finally how could the students' possessions have been secure without the necessary locks and security measures ensuring their safety from theft or vandalism?

It was the absolute unthought of what might occur in any one of our Albertan schools, an event of some significance. For me, and I am sure my Albertan colleagues, this was incomprehensible and I had never imagined schooling could exist in this way. This really shifted how leadership might operate in such a trusting society. Perhaps the role of school leader was radically different in Finland and very little time was necessary to discipline and control the students as we did on a recurring basis in our Albertan schools.

Occasions such as this reminded me that it was as if the school leaders were struck by the unassimilable and unusual, leading to a type of panic response. For school leaders like myself, in these and other encounters there are perhaps examples, one by one, of a small deterritorialisation signalling an ethic of a critique of individualism that is at the heart of the Deleuze|Guattari project that is "rarely embraced", and perhaps gestures towards the charge to seek "a politics, and an education, of affirmation rather than simulacra and repetition" (Savat & Thompson, 2015, p. 278). Through the encounters with each other and students, our subjectivities continually fell-out of the territorializations and striations that typically constructed our work, leading to feelings of a loss of control and certainty. Savat and Thompson (2015) succinctly emphasize that in Deleuze's control society, if control is functioning through continual monitoring and modulation, then the challenge according to Deleuze (1995, p. 175) is to "to create vacuoles of non-communication, circuit breakers so that we can elude control" (p. 280). The effect of the principals' witnessing such "occasions" throughout the partnership activities gave rise to employing schizoanalysis as a new weapon for both eluding control

without falling back onto an image of the institutions of "harshest confinement as part of a wonderful happy past" (Deleuze 1995, p. 175).

As described previously in Chapter 3, schizoanalysis does not come with a series of instructions but rather is to be employed in a manner as a metamodel, which Savat and Thompson (2015), drawing from Guattari (1998) conclude, "has the potential for becoming a discipline for reading other systems of modelisation" (Savat & Thompson, 2015, p. 281). They draw from Guattari's explanation to infer that schizoanalysis is "the analysis of the incidence of assemblages of enunciation among semiotic and subjective productions within a given, problematic context" (Guattari, 1998, p. 433).

It is with this uptake and understanding of schizoanalysis that I approached comments or activities within the AI partnership realms and attempted to come to terms with a performative encounter with a colleague, a Finnish principal, who had been a key player in the partnership from the first year. Well into our 4th year of the FINAL partnership, many of us had not merely undertaken numerous school visits and projects; we had become very close friends. Yet upon reading the Finnish principal's contribution to the final report presented to the Finnish National Board of Education, I was struck by her sense of frustration about the ambiguity of the work we had undertaken. She wrote

> There was the alienation of the "concept" of partnership. We set too high targets. The collisions started as clear action roles were unclear. We had too many opportunities. There were the normal business challenges. It was clear that many participants lost their minds initially, a lot, but on the other hand it opened up a vision of how many different interest groups the project served. Some of the actors in the project have been focusing energy to consider the project's core

> question: what is a good school for everyone? Some actors have used their energy to find methods of co-operation between teachers and students. The project concretized the same ideas on more than one level. This however has puzzled many of the participants in the project, because it involves different starting points and simultaneous thoughtful design as confusing. Sometimes they may be impulsive. (translated from Finnish National Board of Education, 2015, p. 13)

What initially struck me were the feelings I shared with her regarding the need to take time for experimentation and allowing the work with students and teachers to finds its own way. But then the Finnish colleague offered another striking observation:

> Of course we must admit that the connection is not practical. There has always been some kind of activity between ideas and action clear enough. This division was even more clear that cultural differences between Finns and Canadians exist and between the various schools. There was already in the Finnish schools a clear tradition of doing international cooperation at the level of students, teachers and management (school leadership). The Albertans, on the other hand, focused a great deal on the ideas to consider the question (a great school for all) of the project itself and to a certain extent to *build glamor around the project* [emphasis added]. The design might have well been too demanding and the courage to act suffered at the same time. There were screams and successes, wanting to understand one another, with many misunderstandings as the project progressed. (translated from Finnish National Board of Education, 2015, p. 13)

I was struck by her reading of desire and was given cause to reflect on my own complicity in being positioned as someone who was invested in the "glamour of the project", referring as she did to the enjoyment the Canadians had in visiting Finland and the "glamour" of working internationally with leading international educational academic experts such as Pasi Sahlberg and Dennis Shirley. As I looked back on the Finnish principal's observations about myself and my fellow Canadian colleagues, I wondered about the ways we may have "othered" the Finns in their own eyes by constructing them in our imaginaries as a difference to be learned. The very act of travelling so far to visit schools, and the sometimes exhausting planning efforts with dozens of students and teachers, may have meant our efforts were misconstrued as a project of educational tourism. As I wrote these words, I wondered through this interruption and shift to refleXion that if by default, the partnerships with the Finns was about locating and then suturing-in the imagined Finnish *difference* in order to advance the logocentrism of a school improvement – "a great school for all". Certainly, with a counter-actualization of this event, this may well have been the case.

It many ways the partnership work seemed much more exciting than it was in reality, as I personally returned exhausted and underwhelmed in some cases. However I was continually astonished by the deep relationships and impactful experiences that the exchange visits and summits produced. The concluding reflection from the Finnish school principal reinforced that disruptions to school leadership did occur through the partnership activities, though not those of predictability or in a sequential, lock step fashion:

> Action at the practical level began to expand and the schools clearly formed the operating models of how to cooperate from one continent to another, and yet the time difference remained challenging. That is how I would like to raise this after the end of the project, there are some good practices. These are not common in the project but debates have been great, but have been in practice significant to opening up what can be done in schools: *A lot of students have been consulted at joint meetings of the project and tried different ways of working on how students' voice and activity are highlighted in the activities of schools. It has not been about hearing one or two students but to build an opportunity around the students' "sound". We Finns have a lot to learn from Alberta the operation and maintenance of the various initiatives and groups of schools…especially to develop this activity and to strengthen the student's voice in schools* (emphasis in original). (translated from Finnish National Board of Education, 2015, p. 15)

Reading this commentary was an event for me in the Deleuzian sense, in that it unearthed my generally optimistic (naive?) view on the world, in particular my sentiments surrounding the AI partnership work. The shock/impact of this event forced me to consider how I might be complicit within the global forces at play of the OECD that promoted the internationalization of education reform through policy conferences and high level summit meetings and exchanges. In this "cut" of the reflexive encounter, I asked myself: have I become subject to a new role of power within the leadership paradigm of policy travel; mobilizing the "Finnish other" to become a "better leader" through the metaphysics of desire; becoming an avatar and exemplar of international expertise on educational reform?

I was given further cause to consider my *becoming* the avatar of an international "expert" when I and another Alberta principal chose to remain behind in Helsinki rather than join a group of students, teachers, and Finnish principals who attended a retreat in the countryside. (We decided to do so in order to meet a team of new principals arriving for the school visits the next day). I later learned that my Finnish colleague and the other Finnish principals regarded this as a bit of a snub, looking at our decision as an indication that I preferred working in Helsinki with other principals and not directly with the students and teachers in the schools. Were they right?

Unlike a "Badouian event where a Truth arises", Deleuzian "events are quite common occasions where creative and inventive actions occur, actions (both human and non-human) that then organize and structure the behavior around them" (deFrietas, 2013a, p. 588). According to deFreitas (2013a) who does an analysis of the event as described by both Bordieu and Deleuze, she suggested that the event in Deleuzian fashion from *A Logic in Sense*:

> travelling in time away from the present, moving infinitely back into the past and infinitely forward into the future. For Deleuze, the event is a change in intensity where the virtual and the actual re-combine and the effects of this change multiply and proliferate the many futures of the situation. This approach lends itself to the study of smaller actions at the micro-level of activity, tracing the way these fold into significant changes in a situation. (deFrietas, 2013a, p. 588)

For me, this event of recollecting the perceived desire of the "glamour-driven" decision to remain with colleagues in Helsinki was of significant interest as it came to later change the intensity of the connections with the Finnish colleague within the AI

partnership assemblage, and within my own subjectivity. I now reflect/reflex/refleX that I had become trapped within the international leadership assemblage. I personally and carefully kept my complicity and shame at such desires hidden until I read this commentary upon reviewing the extant data of the AI partnerships. I counter-actualized what was a virtual memory of that "occasion." Admittedly it was the more immediate appealing and pragmatic decision to remain behind and host the new people arriving in Helsinki, rather than persisting with the difficult work of organizing teachers and principal colleagues and supervising students at the retreat in the dorms of the Finnish retreat center. However to this day, I know it was the wrong choice, the irrevocably wrong leadership decision which disturbed the partnership at many levels. Writing about this event as I did signals my moment of being disrupted as a leader. It forced ethical questions and established possible future change. As described by Deleuze and Guattari (1983) it is in the non-production, the "shock to thought" where one might be opened to reviewing and ascertaining the forces at play and the productions of the desiring machine. Caught as I was momentarily in the romance of the international work and the impulse to "meet and greet the new arrivals" in Helsinki, I now see how I was "fucked":

> 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 . . . 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. A sort of art for art's

> sake in the libido, a taste for a job well done, each one his own place, the banker, the cop, the soldier, the technocrat, the bureaucrat, and why not the worker, the trade-unionist. Desire is agape. (Deleuze & Guattari, 1983, pp. 346–347)

As per Deleuze and Guattari it was necessary to question the smaller micro-actions that folded into the significance of the situation (deFrietas, 2013b, p. 282). It was an event that happened without me knowing that it happened. As Deleuze (1993) says, the event is about to happen, or has happened, not that it *is* happening. This occasion brought that home to me.

The Living Wall-The Desire to Grow

> A garden always exceeds its actuality but is unable to capture the whole or the virtual of what a garden can be, yet a garden can continue to draw on the virtual. (Piagione & Stengers, 2018, p. 17)

To highlight excursions that rendered transformed subjectivities, I offer another singularity as a token to many of the potentials that availed themselves to school leaders, and indeed all AI participants, as they opened spaces for the disruption of daily routines and habits within their schools. The Living Wall was a project conceived of entirely by two students who had been involved in the AI project work for 3 years. The inception of the project began as they embarked on the culminating trip from Alberta to Finland for their 10-day stay with a Finnish host family and to live life in a school visitation. This project is offered as a performative encounter to consider within an analysis of the formations of the assemblage of desire consisting of two students, their teachers, and the school leader who became involved in the project of building a Living Wall.

The Living Wall stands as an exemplar of the type of thinking and learning suggested by both Deleuze and Guattari. It is a singularity that gestures to the many lessons we might ponder while considering a way forward in the present milieu of education, and in particular for what might be suggested by disrupting leadership and a minor leadership of disruption. Again, this is not meant to suggest a formula or set of instructions, but perhaps an illustrative excursion which turned out to be an occasion that brought together the passions, curiosity, successes and failures, singular shocks to thought, and augmented affect in a Spinozian sense of agency and joy.

The living wall project is a strong expression of the questions John Rajchman (2014) poses in his foreword to Matthew Carlin and Jason Wallin's insightful collection of writings on Deleuze and Guattari, *Politics and Education: For a People-Yet-to-Come*. "How does one teach and how does one learn? (p. xiii) What are the spaces and conditions necessary to promote thinking and spur on learning, and in what company are we most likely to find these conditions?" (Rajchman, 2014, p. xiii). However, according to Rajchman's reading of Deleuze, there is reason to remain hopeful as Deleuze (1995) posited that "what counts is that we are starting something new" and that rather than lament our current situation, instead we might consider that "there is no need to fear or hope, but only to look for new weapons" (p. 178).

Guattari's (2008) suggestions, according to Rajchman (2014), are that we focus on rethinking our definitions of ecology and expand on them to include information, subjectivity, and art. This is well defined in the small but influential book that Guattari (2000) published called *The Three Ecologies*. He suggests that the way forward through the current crises, where the human species is at risk of destruction and individual and

group subjectivities are being threatened and co-opted by the forces of an Integrated World Capitalism (IWC), is to embrace a "radical reconsideration" and bring together the three ecological registers of social, mental, and environmental through an aesthetic-political-ethico articulation.

> Children are potentials for teachers that can help them disturb, disrupt and challenge the fixed (pre-existing) identities that they often get from policies, procedures and programmes. Children and teachers' own experimentation with children can free life from stifled and hierarchized spaces. It can help us free ourselves from our own want for "servitude" and the desire to live in systems run by orders. (Mercieca, 2012, p. 55)

Mercieca (2012) goes on to suggest that "the forces that make up the teacher link and connect to the forces of the students, giving the possibility to teacher and students to 'surpass' (Deleuze, 1998, p. 18) the idea of themselves and the kind of life they live" (p. 43). The Living Wall was an occasion for such an event.

The impetus for the Living Wall was inspired by some humour and curiosity on the part of the two AI partnership students as Student E described in a reflection of the Living Wall action research project:

> Now as I like to say, one can never know where a spark of inspiration can come from. Therefore nobody could have expected that the first major idea that I would receive from my own trip to Finland would come from the Edmonton International Airport. As that is where the idea for the Living Wall first originated.

> As we were waiting for our flight my friend Alex and I couldn't help but stare at the two story green wall in front of us, debating whether or not the plants were real. Finally we noticed a lady doing what we thought was watering and maintaining the plants. Upon closer examination we found out that she was merely pretending with an empty watering can, plucking of random plants, leading us to believe the wall was fake. In our frustration at such a trick we decided right there that we needed to make our own wall. (Student E reflection of Living Wall project, 2017)

It is prudent to note here that the two students had become well versed in new ways of thinking and doing school prior to the inception of the Living Wall project. Both students had been enrolled in and participated fervently in an alternative type of program and schooling called InSight[26] in their Grade 11 year. These students had been extensively involved with numerous interdisciplinary projects on curriculum and assessment that ranged from permaculture[27], living food forests[28], indigenous medicine

[26] InSight was a program that ran as a school with a school where two teachers taught 25 15- and 16-year-old students ranging in ability from elite honors students enrolled in International Baccalaureate, Advanced Placement programmes to special needs students coded with Autism, Learning Disabilities, Physical Disabilities, and everything in between. The students were formally enrolled in ungraded classes of science, biology, social studies, and any combination of fine arts (music, music technology, drama, theatre design and technology, painting, and sculpture), career and technology studies (including design, media studies, culinary arts, construction, welding), and a variety of independent study courses that emerged from their extra-curricular involvements (leadership, Global Café, aquaponics, permaculture, and intergenerational gardening). The class of students and teachers worked on interdisciplinary action research projects to meet a variety of curricular outcomes. Students demonstrated their learning through blog entries and classroom presentations both individually and in groups. Oral assessment was an important strategy for evaluating the students' progression and achievement. Failure was accepted and discussed.

[27] Permaculture is an agricultural system or method that seeks to integrate human activity with natural surroundings so as to create highly efficient self-sustaining ecosystems.

[28] A food forest, or forest garden, is a type of garden plan that mimics forest growth patterns to ensure better yield, maximum light exposure, and simpler management while fostering greater biodiversity.

wheel healing gardens[29], food security assessments, intergenerational gardening, brewery making and drink contests, aquaponic[30] systems, fish farming, and social justice initiatives. It was amidst this milieu that these two students were compelled to extend their AI partnership action research work to embark on the project of constructing a Living Wall from scratch.

Unbeknownst to the school administration or any of their teachers at the time, the students were inspired by their event at the Edmonton International Airport. They described being caught off guard by a woman watering the impressive installation of a Living Wall garden at the newly renovated Edmonton International Airport. This event led them to dream of, plan, and eventually experiment with their own project and bring their idea of building their own Living Wall to life within their school. Ultimately, according to the subsequent reflections offered by the two students, not only did the Living Wall project dramatically impact their school experiences, it changed their lives in ways they could have never anticipated. They were inspired by the idea of building their own Living Wall and wrote a grant proposal to the City of Edmonton to fund the project[31]. It seems the two students had no qualms that they could proceed with their plans; their only concern was to secure the appropriate funding necessary. There was no thought on their part that permission or assistance from any adults was required. As such, they put their grant writing skills to the test with no further ado. As one of the

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[29] The Medicine Wheel Garden follows simple, circular designs based around the number *four*, with natural materials used in both their structure and ornamentation. Most wheels are designed with *36 stones* to reflect the 'Sacred Path' that humans travel on Earth. From a central focus, four or more paths carve the garden into pie-shaped beds that are planted with perennial and annual herbs. The plantings are intensely personal. They represent and express both the spirit of the gardener and symbolize the essence of each of the Four Cardinal Directions, East, South, West, and North.

[30] Aquaponics is a combination of aquaculture, which is growing fish and other aquatic animals, and hydroponics which is growing plants without soil. Aquaponics uses these two in a symbiotic combination in which plants are fed the aquatic animals' discharge or waste.

[31] The grant proposal can be found in Appendix 1.

students commented in a reflection after the project was completed. In his write up to the action research initiative he stated:

> In retrospect, it was poor coordination with Julia (the community liaison) and yourself (the principal). We should have had you both involved to ask permission and to have your input far sooner than having received the funding and being ready to go. (Student F reflection, Living Wall project, 2017)

But was it poor decision-making or was this a substantiation of a "subject-group" that fulfilled their passionate curiosity by undertaking the Living Wall venture? If the teachers or school leader had been included in the decision-making, would all the policies and school regulations have interceded to thwart the project before it could even begin? In actuality, the processual character of this subject group attested that these students had learned the power of doing, and both had developed a confidence that did not include securing permission from adults to proceed.

If it is true that one really only learns in times of paradox or in times of problematization, then there is always a moment of unlearning. The Living Wall, as a singularity, uncovered the paradoxical "unlearnings" of the teachers and school leader, forcing new thinking, questioning, and experimenting. Here the "people yet to come" landed for a moment, although it was only for a moment, to then move on, but with the knowledge that magic is possible with connections: it is "always already" available. As with Guattari's (2008) emphatic claims, here it was critical to

> [t]rust in the people, in childhood . . . *I think the human masses will and must be radically deterritorialized so they can cease being masses and engender*

> *unaccustomed rhizomes of processes of singularization*. (Guattari & Rohlnik, 2008, p. 458, emphasis in original)

The Living Wall project as an initiative did not have an audience in mind. As a performative gesture it needed to be encountered to activate its affects. As "artists," the two students were performing an iteration of what had initially "moved" them. It was through their attempted actualization of The Living Wall that the potential of that event was realized . . . without authority. The idea of "subject-group" seems an appropriate descriptor of their initiative.

The Construction of the Wall

The students proceeded with the grant application (on their own), and secured the necessary grant to support their project. It was then that I, as the principal, was made aware of the project as I received a call from the City of Edmonton granting organization. The members of the funding body expressed to me their amazement that the grant applicants were high school students and that the grant application was of such a sophisticated quality. Quite like Guattari (2011) expressed about transformation at La Borde, the Living Wall had broken the traditional conceptions of leadership where students had become the vanguards of the project and their learning.

> La Borde made a series of small changes that had a certain degree of effectiveness in transforming the relations between specialists and patients, and also between the specialists themselves. . . . However, this process did not succeed in sweeping away the wall of the state; it ricocheted. The microprocesses experienced at La Borde did not lead to a more general process of transformation: they went on

> revolving in a vacuum, as it were, working upon themselves. (Guattari, 2011, p. 136)

The Time of the Wall is Finite

Projects are finite and just as a school functions on a 10-month clock, only to begin again after a 2-month hiatus, so too do students leave the school with projects incomplete while leaders transfer to new assignments. The life cycle of a subject-group is finite and imperative within the norms of a subject group. This is an acceptance of the limits of the group, and according to Guattari (2008) an acceptance of death of the structure of the subject-group

> The subject-group is defined by assuming its finite nature. It's an enormous problem for an individual to accept his finiteness. . . . However, this problem is part of any human undertaking, whatever its nature (political or aesthetic) . . . to find that it is a sequence, a process, and that this limitation does not decrease the importance of the undertaking but, on the contrary, increases its value. . . . It's what I would call the process of singularization: what makes it impossible to understand the meaning of the act. (p. 430)

The finite nature of the students' engagement with the Living Wall became more and more evident as they came closer to their graduation date and the wall was not finished. In fact, the structure for the Living Wall they had so painstakingly built with the assistance of the construction class, did not support the apparatus needed to water the plants. Realizing that time was an issue, and that there was a real possibility that the project might never be completed amidst all the delays and missteps along the design and

execution phases, the boys turned their attention to engaging with students who might help them in their efforts. Much of their energy and frustration became focused on soliciting a new group of students who might be able to assume the project as they embarked on their post-secondary journeys (one student who would enroll in a university in Denmark and the other student who had chosen to follow a path in a vocational college in rural Alberta). In the following excerpt from one of the student's *journals* we see that their failures and setbacks still provided them with fruitful learning experiences

> the Global Café was the space where Cody Anderson and I started a Living Wall project, which was inspired by our trip to Finland and our desire to bring a mixture of art and agriculture to the student space. Although this project wasn't successful on the large scale, we started it and we learned how to write grants, how to pitch our idea at competitions and how to manage large projects. All of these skills have been essential in starting up my company. When given the opportunity to take charge of their own projects in a space without barriers, students thrive. If spaces and opportunities to think critically, like those presented to us in the Global Café were made available to students at other schools I believe that it would bring us a step closer to the culture we need to *learn* in schools. (Student E, Reykjavik Summit, 2017)

The two students pleaded with their classmates in the student permaculture club to adopt their project as they were leaving school. The teachers, where the Living Wall was to be erected, remained burdened with a grant proposal that offered deliverables that they had not been a part of establishing or privy to engaging with in the original grant proposal. I was leaving the school, en route to a new assignment, and so the incomplete

Living Wall was in a state of crisis. I was feeling quite desperate and reluctant to share the project with the incoming principal to the school as it had many moving parts, a number of which I had little control over or even adequate knowledge about. I was certainly not exemplifying the normalized "principal Stature," that of being in complete control of all things school related. This project had definitely slipped out of my grasp and was being led by students who had assumed the leadership role, disrupting the normal ways of doing leadership business as usual. While there remained many unfinished aspects of the Living Wall project, including a new leadership construct that did not include the new incoming principal or myself, and it became apparent that a new Living Wall assemblage was formed. Forced by time constraints, changing personnel and new ventures to pursue, this small subject-group of two had to relinquish control of the Living Wall project and allow an entirely new group to form. This morphing Living Wall assemblage helps to illustrate Guattari's (2008) point that with subject-groups

> it is necessary to set up structures and devices that establish a totally different kind of contact. A kind of self-management or self-organization of a set of problems which does not start from a central point that arranges elements, inserts them into a control grid, or establishes an agenda, but that, on the contrary, allows the various singular processes to attempt a rhizomatic unfolding. This is very important, even if it doesn't work. (pp. 177–178)

Here I considered the possibility that these students were not controlled or daunted by any norms requiring them to seek permission to pursue a learning experiment, and neither were they motivated by any credentialing that might be attained as a result of all the work they had put into the project. They spent hours of their personal time

working on the Living Wall project outside of classroom hours, and both students maintained a rigorous academic schedule of "regular" classes necessary in order to complete high school with the marks necessary for post-secondary studies. This project, as Guattari suggested, was a rhizomatic unfolding in the most elevated sense and neither student claimed success at the end of their project but critical *unlearnings* through trial, error, and failure.

The Clock is *Always Already* Ticking

Time is always already a central theme for any and all school endeavors. School leaders and teachers always cite time, or a lack thereof, as the primary reason for why things cannot be addressed or how important educational tasks and issues are put on hold as management functions supersede them. Students are also caught in the time trap, as courses are time definite and learning is *expected* to occur within certain blocks of time or it does not *count.* Disrupting leadership would suggest finding new ways to consider learning and when and how it occurs. As illustrated in the Living Wall performance encounter, throughout the project the students experienced failure, but according to the student reflections and subsequent discussions with me, the learnings of the experiment were long lasting. It was not necessary for a credential or a teacher assessment that the students achieved that determined whether learning had occurred.

As Taylor Webb and Kalervo Gulson (2015a) so aptly surmise, drawing from Honig (2006), "time can also be manipulated through the (all too) frequent distribution of multiple policies to educators" (p. 61). Leaders are inundated with multiple, often-contradictory policies that keep them "busy" and unable to engage with the policies in

any meaningful ways. As a result, "multiple policies that are not accompanied with support structures to increase time position teachers to only "read" policy as sign-encounters. In effect, multiple policies on teachers' desks ironically ventriloquize the message "do not read" or "only encounter" as a result of reducing time" (Webb & Gulson, 2015a, p. 61). "In the end, the manipulation of time (reducing, accelerating, repeating habits, and memory) creates a myriad of affects, notwithstanding feelings of stress and inadequacy, which are prevalent affective orientations for policy prolepses" (Webb & Gulson, 2015a, p. 62).

Of great importance to the idea of disrupting leadership is the need for all school stakeholders to acknowledge and ascertain the affect that current global and local policies and contemporary machinations of school life bring forth. "The realm of affects is all around us and there are as many different strategies for accessing it as there are subjects" (O'Sullivan, 2001, p. 127). Following Deleuze and Guattari (1987), it is a question of making oneself "a body without organs: in this context, a strategy for accessing that which is normally outside yourself; your experimental milieu which everywhere accompanies your sense of self" (O'Sullivan, 2001, p. 127). For Deleuze and Guattari this is a pragmatic project: "you do not just read about the body without organs, you make yourself one" (O'Sullivan, 2001, p. 127).

The Living Wall illustrates the affect and desire of the students invested in experimenting with a project that fell outside the curricular demands of their high school experience. They were impacted by their own humour of realizing the actor at the airport was pretending to water plants on a wall. Largely because they had spent such time experimenting in areas such as permaculture gardening and aquaponics, they were

immediately intrigued with the idea of building their own Living Wall for their school in their student space of Global Café. They cited the failures and learnings of the project as having great impact on their subjectivities and on their quests of further learning activities beyond school. The events of the Living Wall project point towards the teachings of affect, which is not really

> about self-consciousness, the representation of experience to oneself; the self as constituted through representation at all. In fact we might say that the affect is a more brutal, *a*personal thing. It is that which connects us to the world. (O'Sullivan, 2001, p. 128)

As a student from the Living Wall project reminds us:

> Several key factors from my high school experience contributed to this belief. As a direct result of the first years of the FINAl partnership a program called InSite was created. This program was an innovative cross-curricular biology and social class that allowed students to approach and demonstrate curricular outcomes in any means they wished. I participated in this program during my grade 11 year. We were encouraged by teachers to create projects that reflected our own passions as well as verified our curricular learning. Given the student centered and creative nature of the InSite program, student-teacher relationships were created very easily. These student teacher relationships led to a higher level of student involvement, retained learning and self-motivation. By implementing these types of programs in Alberta schools Students will be given the opportunity to excel. (Student E, Reykjavik Summit, 2017)

For the students in question it was about producing their learning world as one of becoming. It was about the Living Wall acting as a portal to another *school* world, creating another one within it that could be experienced differently. The Living Wall project also provided the teachers and myself to experience the school world differently, as we were not driving the project or facilitating its success or failure as a learning endeavor. Just as Deleuze remarked in an interview:

> What we're interested in, you see, are modes of individuation beyond those of things, persons or subjects: the individuation, say, of a time of day, of a region, a climate, a river or a wind, of an event. And maybe it's a mistake to believe in the existence of things, persons, or subjects. (Deleuze, 1995, p. 26)

In this case the Living Wall reminds us of the power of transversal processes, of subjective becomings that deviate from the normal courses of action and the power of subject-groups that forge new pathways (Guattari & Rolnik, 2008). The subject-group of the two students had the potential to release them from stratification, even if only briefly, which deterritorialized their subjectivities. In this case the movement was from student as empty vessel to be filled by expertise and knowledge of curriculum delivered by instructor to student as explorer and scout on a journey of learning fully paved by their experiences.

The micropolitics of the Living Wall demonstrated that students could form as a subject-group and engage in a process of singularization, which sent them onto paths of becoming learner and becoming leader. The micropolitics of the assemblage of the Living Wall allowed processes to develop that disrupted our normal conceptions of student, teacher, and school leader.

As Guattari (2008) reminds us: “it is common to use the famous argument that ‘if politics is everywhere, it is nowhere’ ” (p. 190). He goes on to lament the fact that “politics and micropolitics are absent and it would be prudent insert micropolitics into every place possible” (Guattari & Rolnik, 2008, p. 190). He further suggests “[n]owadays, any important problem, even on an international level, is basically linked to mutations of subjectivity on the various micropolitical levels” (Guattari & Rolnik, 2008, p. 190).

The events surrounding *these performative excursions* were not an effort to fix or position student voice or leadership as the next tool for leveraging educational change. Rather the performative encounters indicated points of departure, where a commitment to disruptive educational processes over striated territorialized spaces that foreclosed possibilities for reimagining school leadership could be interrupted and populated with new ways of thinking.

Throughout these performative excursions (or occasions), leadership was disrupted by teacher, student, and school leader desire to break free from molar striations, to involve as many voices as possible (Boal & Schultz, 2007; Murgatroyd & Stiles, 2016), and to take full advantage of the nature of the rhizomatic nature of schools as complex assemblages.

Leadership excursions in the AI partnerships, moving in and through boundary crossings “involve[d] a creative violence—what Deleuze often described as ‘witch’s flight’—from which the thinker emerge[d]” (Sellar, 2015b, p. 43). This work, informed by a Deleuzian sensibility of world making, shares with Honan (2015) the aesthetic sensibility that “rhizo-textual analysis is not fixed in itself. Indeed, thinking

rhizomatically requires a movement away from Method" (p. 216) that represents the firm handshake between a leadership of disruption and the disruption of leadership. In this respect I close with the rejoinder highlighted by Charteris (2014b, p. 224) that freeing student desire in school environments is not unproblematic, and is disruptive to the ways that contemporary teaching and learning are constructed and lived. In a similar sense, the performative encounters experienced in the AI partnerships ought not be reducible to a strategy or technique that can simply be activated within the complex ecologies and micro-politics of schools. As we saw in both the Finnish and Alberta cases, the interventions and interruptions enacted by the students, teachers, and school leaders created instabilities and raised important questions about relations of power and identity.

> It can happen in love that one person's creative line is the other's imprisonment. The composition of the lines, of one line with another, is a problem, even of two lines of the same type. There is no assurance that two lines of flight will prove compatible, compossible . . . There is no assurance that a love, [a pedagogical,] or a political approach, will withstand it. (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 205)

Despite and because of these disruptions in the case of the Finnish school leader and the students, teachers, and myself in the Living Wall, I wondered if perhaps ultimately the work of the AI partnerships was also a rhizomatic style of recurring metastabilities (Simondon, 1994). Chapter 7 explores how leadership was disrupted through a series of thought experiments and curriculum encounters that navigated the instrumental approaches implicated in a neoliberal *Future Ready* curriculum reform agenda.

Chapter 7

A Curriculum Excursion

This chapter describes my efforts as a school leader to navigate the Alberta government's ambitious curricular reforms within the context of my involvement in the AI partnerships. The chapter outlines how the Alberta's government's curriculum redesign program, launched in 2016, exemplifies the qualities of policy prolepsis through its contradictory articulations of student learning within the OECD's problematic competency agenda (OECD, 2005). To remind readers, by policy prolepsis I am drawing from Webb and Gulson (2015) who argue "that *policy prolepsis* is a category of becoming-policy that actualizes educational practices within the spaces of desired, yet not fully developed, policy initiatives and policy implementations" (p. 53) so as to "map the constructions of policy subjects"(p. 54). In this case it was about constructing the desires and subjectivities of school leaders. For school leaders, teachers, and students alike, I read these efforts in the context of the intensities introduced with the ramping-up of practice standards for teachers and school leaders as outlined in Chapter 6. In a review of my own efforts to navigate the shifts to a neo-liberal-driven competency-focussed curriculum, I read the policy enclosures of professional practice standards previously outlined as foregrounding a "frozen future" for students—all inscribed by the government's branding of its reforms as a "Future Ready" program.

The first half of the chapter considers my own shifting subjectivities in the policy prolepsis produced while the international partnerships unfolded, (including my participation in a major curriculum conference). The chapter concludes with two encounters from the international partnerships that offered hopeful disruptions for the

promise of curriculum renewal in Alberta. These encounters include how interventions from the AI international network of partners produced new ways of thinking in those open schizo-spaces for disrupting my own limited imaginary for changes in school leadership within, given the seemingly empty horizon of Alberta's curriculum reforms mobilized by the OECD's competency agenda. In contrast to the centrally designed and managed curriculum development process put in place by Alberta Education (2016a), the AI partnership encounters offered examples where students, teachers, and school leaders attempted to problematize the neo-liberal agenda of competencies. There was a signalling toward agentic life-long learners, opened up by localized and rhizomatic interruptions and intensities (sustained through the networks of schools continually reaching across to each other), which questioned "what is a great school?" These were the performative encounters that I was particularly interested in as students and teachers populated the meaning of curriculum with their own *becomings,* and just how such encounters enabled and shifted my own self-refleXive subjectivity as a school leader as I revisited these events.

Enclosures in the Frozen Future of Student (In)competency

> *How and why did we agree to embrace the notion that we are all tiny little gods, diminutive Olympians slugging it out to win the right to monopolize the future? How did we come to agree on the present as an impediment, a piddling problem to be solved? (Niedzviecki, 2015, pp. 10–11)*

Many education policy analysts consider the province of Alberta, Canada as one of the most progressive and high performing jurisdictions today (Hargreaves & Shirley,

2012; Sahlberg, 2011). Although acknowledged as an incomplete measure of school and system performance, the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) has consistently placed Alberta in the top 10 jurisdictions in reading, science, and mathematics since the first administration of the global examination in 2000, including the often ignored indicator of educational equity (Alberta Education, 2016b). Even one of the most conservative Canadian media sources, the *Globe and Mail*, featured an opinion editorial article extolling Canada's successes on the 2015 PISA, albeit with a neurotic cautionary note, "Canadian students are excelling: Don't get complacent" (Schmidt, 2016).

It was in these contexts that on October 18, 2016, the Alberta government announced a series of reforms as part of a broader commitment by Alberta's New Democratic government to create a province that is "Future Ready." As outlined in Chapter 5, this initiative included a range of policy announcements including *Future Ready* programs with "[e]ducation, skills and training programs designed to ensure all Albertans can find rewarding work—today and tomorrow" (Couture, 2017, para. 8).

From the government's perspective, the scale and scope of the Future Ready initiative was not to be understated. The Alberta government's commitment to redesign Alberta's curriculum over a 6-year period included the revamping of all teaching and learning resources within the ambitious $64 million curriculum project (CBC News, 2016a, October 18). Introducing the program, Minister of Education, David Eggen, further promised learning resources that "will be developed to teach students financial literacy, climate change, the history of indigenous people and residential schools, and gender identity" (CBC News, 2016b, para. 6).

The alchemy of this curricular reform effort, articulating a *Future Ready* focus and addressing the ambiguously defined cultural recovery project of restoring "indigeneity" was knit together by infusing the over-arching OECD 21st century competencies agenda into the proposed revised curriculum. This ambitious policy architecture exemplifies what Bronwyn Davies (2009) has observed: "we are everywhere caught up in the molar, over-coded 'striations' of government, shaped as entrepreneurial subjects who will be productive in the service of capitalism" (p. 628).

The government's investment in the *Future Ready* reform was further advanced 3 days later when the Minister of the Environment, Shannon Philips, addressed education students at the University of Lethbridge, stating that "[c]ertainly among teachers and those who teach teachers there's an appetite to see good constructive changes that are going to make sure that the province is ready for the future" (Miller, 2016, para. 4). Echoing many of the pronouncements to follow, the Environment Minister's rationale for the curriculum changes enthusiastically embraced a focus for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM):

> The workforce has changed a lot, society has changed a lot, and the economy has changed a lot in the last 30 years . . . Our school curriculum and the tools that teachers have to deliver content have to change as well . . . We need to make sure that students have the right skills in math, science and technology so that they're ready for the innovative, creative economy that we know is going to require some of those really technological skills. (Miller, 2016, para. 4)

As with any curriculum reform, the government's announcement was met with a multitude of reactions ranging from indifference, to support, to vehement opposition.

While Alberta's curriculum had not undergone a comprehensive review in 40 years, how substantive changes could be made to address longstanding contested issues remained an ongoing question. For example, the media coverage surrounding these announcements ranged from revisiting historical issues, including how best to teach mathematics, to addressing an emerging public anxiety regarding climate change and a continuing "opposition from Catholic church leaders and some faith-based schools over mandating gay-straight alliances in schools and developing policies to support gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender students" (Bennet, 2016, para. 8–9).

The *Future Ready* frame the Alberta government attempted to mobilize in the public imaginary echoed cultural memes concerned with "winning the future" (Niedzviecki, 2015, p. 9). Through a wide-sweeping analysis of the coalescing futures discourses that have been driven by privatization and commercialization, Hal Niedzviecki (2015) described the current global narrative of "whoever gets to name the future owns it" first popularized by Jared Lanier (Maslin, 2013, para. 1).

For educators like myself, the ubiquity of the saturated policy space of preparing students for the "future" mobilized a generalized public anxiety around the problematic project of "chasing tomorrow"; meanwhile we struggled on a day-to-day basis with increasingly complex classrooms and the lack of material support from government. So I considered how a "Future Ready" reform signaled another form of enclosure that pretended to represent a horizon of (im)possibility.

Navigating the Leader(ship) of Subjectivities "Off the Charts"

A critical turning point in my efforts to come to terms with this work was as an

organizer and speaker at the international symposium "Off the Charts" in May 2014 (Alberta Teachers' Association, 2015). This event brought together our AI partners, including international experts in educational change, public policy, curriculum, and assessment. The summit was to engage educational thought leaders in the context of the framework originally advanced in *A Great School for All,* and as pointed out in Chapter 1, formed the basis for the AI partnerships (Alberta Teachers' Association, 2012). The symposium featured a number of international experts in curriculum reform and assessment including Sam Sellar (University of Queensland), Rosemary Hipkins (New Zealand Council for Educational Research), Arja-Sisko Holappa and Tiina Tähkä (Finland National Board of Education), and Kent den Heyer (University of Alberta).

As one of the principals invited to address this symposium, I was struck by the competing and often-times conflicting discourses deployed by the participants who attempted to navigate the narratives mobilized by the *Future Ready* program, and the anticipated changes to teaching and learning necessary to reconcile the fissures and gaps between the curriculum as intended, implemented, and attained. These contested spaces that emerged in the symposium were captured in the symposium proceedings (Alberta Teachers' Association, 2015). They will be taken up in the conclusion of this chapter as I map out my shifting subjectivity moving from reflexion and refleXion following a consideration of two performance encounters within the AI partnerships.

As I recollected the symposium, throughout much of my movement through self-reflexion and self-refleXion in these AI encounters, I struggled to cohere my shifting subjectivities as, unquestionably, my habituated BwO was undergoing subtle changes as new assemblages came together. These challenges were driven by my desire to make

sense of and map the ways that the Alberta government's curriculum reform was being defined and enacted within a dynamic field of forces that included the mechanisms of Deleuze's (1992a) control society (such as governmentality, bureaucratic functioning, data infrastructures, and the resulting intensification of teachers' work). As previously outlined, these efforts were driven by the New Democratic Party (NDP) government's education program to leverage educational reform within the frame of a post-Fordist capitalism to shift Alberta's dependency on primary resources in search of innovation where all Albertans were *becoming Future Ready*. In what follows, I further explore these articulations of policy prolepsis, including the continued capture of the OECD competency agenda as an architecture on which to stack the government's commitment to multiple investments such as addressing indigeneity, supporting marginalized sexual minorities, and a myriad of environmental issues.

The Policy Prolepsis and the Metastabilities of Student Competencies

The NDP government's rationale for adopting cross-curricular competencies was built on the foundational document, *Framework for Student Learning: Competencies for Engaged Thinkers and Ethical Citizens with an Entrepreneurial Spirit* (Alberta Education, 2011). The shift to consider a curriculum that included OECD competencies was announced by the Alberta Progressive Conservative government on May 7, 2013 (Alberta Education, 2013). The implications of the shift to 10 cross-curricular competencies had been the subject of much government activity and media scrutiny as well as concern expressed by teachers and school leaders, the academic community in Alberta, and the Alberta public. The ministerial order describes a *competency* as "an

interrelated set of attitudes, skills and knowledge that is drawn upon and applied to a particular context for successful learning and living, [that] are developed over time and through a set of related learner outcomes" (Alberta Education, 2013, para. 5).

The original ministerial order identified 10 cross-curricular competencies to realize an inclusive Kindergarten to Grade 12 education:

- *Know how to learn—to gain knowledge, understanding, or skills through experience, study, and interaction with others*
- *Think critically—conceptualize, apply, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate to construct knowledge*
- *Identify and solve complex problems*
- *Manage information—access, interpret, evaluate, and use information effectively, efficiently, and ethically*
- *Innovate—create and generate new ideas or concepts*
- *Create opportunities—through play, imagination, reflection, negotiation, and competition—with an entrepreneurial spirit*
- *Apply multiple literacies—reading, writing, mathematics, technology, language, media, and personal finance*
- *Demonstrate good communication skills and the ability to work cooperatively with others*
- *Demonstrate global and cultural understanding, considering the economy and sustainable development*
- *Identify and apply career and life skills through personal growth and well-being*

Alberta Education, under the NDP government, continued to adapt the Alberta curriculum to reflect this ministerial order, developing competency indicators informed by brain research, deciding how to assess and report student progress, and develop processes for mapping the modified competencies (reduced to 8 from 10 in June, 2016) against current programs of study (Alberta Education, 2016a).

Attempting to ensure a more holistic approach to curriculum design, which was the promise of competencies, invoked a variety of reform efforts and from some edu-preneurs, the caution to avoid the wrong drivers of reform (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). According to Hargreaves and Fullen (2012), education partners must not rely too much on technology to deliver programs or use inappropriate measures to demonstrate student and system performance.

While the ministerial order's overriding neo-liberal vision for students to become "engaged thinkers and ethical citizens with an entrepreneurial spirit" (Alberta Education, 2011) attempted to advance a holistic and socially responsible approach to student learning, the move toward stabilization and territorialization continued to be a site of contestation. For example, the government was criticized as moving too slowly as well as too fast, moving too far toward a constructivist curriculum as opposed to having a focus on the basics. Emblematic of these debates was the *Edmonton Journal* columnist and blogger, David Staples, whose blog is titled: David Staples' Great Math and Curriculum Debate. Characteristic of Staples' capacity to engage the Minister of Education and mobilize public debate was his ability to find "basic math" as a wedge issue that was well established and recognized in the media. While acknowledging

Alberta's lead scores in PISA 2016 (first in reading, second in science, eighth in mathematics), Staples launched a number of familiar memes:

> [i]t's also excellent that Eggen is now taking advice from actual mathematicians, as opposed to falling sway to the American and Eastern Canadian gurus and the army of education professors and consultants who shut out real math profs and rewrote the math curriculum with a strong discovery math focus in the mid 2000s. Real math experts grasp the need for students to master basic arithmetic, write out their answers and not be so reliant on calculators, all matters that some discovery math gurus have downplayed. (Staples, 2016, para. 10–16)

Within the ebbs and flows of Alberta *math-wars*, it was important to locate the competency-based learning model within the context of a maneuver towards renegotiating a space for productive capitalism within Alberta schools, driven by the corporate world's concern with striated time spaces of efficiency and progress, through the mantra of personalized learning (ATA, 2011a). Corporations had successfully framed the debate, promising that technology would transform education by offering inquiry-oriented, self-directed, and more personalized learning experiences (ATA 2011a). What has been called the "Pearsonalization of learning" (Shirley, 2016a) has perhaps had the effect of distracting Alberta's 62 jurisdictions from undertaking meaningful transformation. Shirley's ironic jibe refers to the corporatization of curriculum material by Pearson Education, a British-owned education publishing and assessment service firm with a global reach.

Equipping students with the rhetorically charged "21st-century competencies" is another expression of an economistic approach that views education primarily as a way to

prepare workers to function in knowledge-intensive economies. One might observe that the growing focus on competencies in education is driven by a parallel trend in business, where the notion exists that employees need a distinct set of generic skills and competencies for learning and life (Dede, 2007; Kalantzis & Cope, 2008). Such a view inhabits and mobilizes a space where "designer capitalism" modulates, ultimately attempting to embody students in "a better version of yesterday".

The complex articulations and contradictions of the policy prolepsis of curriculum redesign is illustrated by the consideration that at the time of this writing, Alberta remained the only province to use the results of their provincial exams as a key indicator for the evaluation of the students entering Alberta post-secondary institutions. All other provinces have developed formulas to augment a student's standing by omitting the Alberta exit exams from a student's average, or applying a formula to adjust the Alberta Diploma results. Furthermore, as seen in the government's reluctance to move away from the decades-old provincial testing programs, assessing broadly defined competencies is complex, and will explain why there continues to be a paradoxical push to retain a focus on a foundation of literacy and numeracy while deploying "21st century learning". Alongside the competency agenda was the resurgence of a renewed focus on the foundations of literacy and numeracy as discrete entities. In Alberta, perhaps this stemmed from a reluctance to abolish the 40-year commitment to a provincial testing program that included exams at Grades 3, 6, and 9 and administered high stakes exit exams for all graduating students. It is within these contradictory spaces that we might witness Alberta teachers, school leaders, and ultimately Alberta students circulating through the conflicting spaces of a "back to the basics and majoritarian man: while being

also drawn to the “designer capitalism” (jagodzinski, 2010) of personalized learning and 21st century skills.

How to navigate these metastabilities in the dynamic and fluid life of schools and Alberta’s policy prolepsis in the wider education sector had proven challenging in previous efforts by jurisdictions globally. The over-determining 21st century competencies, overtop of the chaotic and fluid social and economic changes wrought by globalization, had proven to be simply too difficult. For example, in 2005, the Australian Department of Education Science and Training (ADEST) rewrote its competency-based vocational training manual (which is based on competencies similar to those proposed by Alberta Education) because the broader “key competencies were too generic in their approach and no longer reflected the needs of contemporary workplaces” (ADEST, 2005, p. 160). Although this initiative promised to split the learning of complex concepts into manageable tasks bundled into credit modules, the resulting competencies were often too vague and general to become localized innovations with fluid adaptations. As Kent den Heyer (2013, 2014) has argued, the logics behind most competency-based education reforms has reflected the same strategic thinking involved in running a football team that could then be transferable to a team of curlers! Taking this view, one can see the tension between (re)territorialization and deterritorialization, with the central contradiction of competency-based education that claims to be generic and specifically applicable in situations that may have different cultural contexts and temporal frames.

Research in the United Kingdom has also suggested that competency-based education reduced the opportunities that students in disadvantaged communities have to acquire content. Under the guise of creating more economic opportunities for these

children and meeting external standards, schools focus primarily on "foundational literacy," absent of substantive academic content. Some practices were even more subtle, such as denying students, who wanted to study history, the opportunity to do so because they were unlikely to do well on standardized tests (Harris & Burn, 2011). While disadvantaged students received a content-poor, intellectually inadequate curriculum, students in wealthier schools continued to receive a strong, content-rich history education. One might consider this snare as signaled by den Heyer's (2013) analysis of the circulation of Alberta's curriculum redesign in terms of what Connell (2008) takes up from Baudrillard as the dynamics of "the emergence of consummativity" (p. 4). To overcome the recurring crises of overproduction and underconsumption that plagues late capitalism, it seems necessary for business and governments to form partnerships to socialize towards a future where private consumption subsumes public interests, a typical response of neo-liberalist policies.

Adventures of Leadership in Schizo-spaces

The Alberta government's wide-sweeping *Future Ready* pronouncements that side-step many of the systemic challenges schools face is a critical leadership challenge for the coming years of public education that this dissertation raises. As I attempt to mediate these conflicting pedagogical and policy moves, my psychic shift is one of being caught in-between a neurotic impulse of omnicompetence and omniscience to a reflective/reflexive stance of "just figure it all out", which then leads me to a paranoid-hysterical stance: "How can I possibly buffer my teachers and students from this miasma that will unfold?"

Yet, perhaps in these incommensurable spaces, I am nudged by a refleXive cut—a realization that *there is not one future but a multiplicity of compossible futures*, each of which affects the present state of affairs in their actualization. In my tendency to resort to guessing which future I might just *get,* it should be understood in the context that this is unknowable and uncertain. For me, as with my community of colleagues, I must recall that "there is not one public but indeed many publics that emerge and coalesce around any number of concerns" (Sellar, 2015a). How the future is shaped is dependent on what new desires these publics can shape to direct an open change and hence, an open future. I take from Sam Sellar (2015b) the promise in moving past the instrumentalities of rationalistic philosophies and empiricism that suture us into individuated responses driven by an ego response; instead, to mobilize the work of Deleuze and Guattari (1994) by "*working on the social*" (emphasis in original) (p. 46). Such an approach, which I have framed as an "adventure" by recalling events through self-refleXive counter-actualizations, involve moving beyond the strict realism of imposing "performed concepts" (Sellar, 2015b, p. 46) of philosophy and science and their explanatory powers to providing singular explanations as haecceities of social interactions and public policy development. The promise of such an "adventure", at least as I configured it in the AI partnerships, was to bring together lines of thought that need not exclude others: rejecting the view that disciplines of thought need not continue "using the creation of one adventure of thought to undermine the legitimacy, and thus the creative force of another" (Sellar, 2015b, pp. 44–45), in short, recognizing compossible futures. Framing the work of moving through one's shifting subjectivity—as always already subjectivated within policy analysis and educational reform—is an adventure and also a "politics of method."

In such political work, Sellar (2015b) draws from Stengers (2005b, p, 158): “none of these adventures needs to belittle the other ones in order to affirm itself” (p. 45), and to resist “the belief in the power of proofs to disqualify what they have no means to create (Sellar, 2015b, p. 45).

As a subject moving through self-reflexion and refleXion, the adventure is more than a simplistic trope. Sam Sellar worked extensively with the Alberta Teachers’ Association and the AI partnership schools across Alberta in an effort to recast an understanding of how educational change at the school and system levels was realized, and how public policy was developed and mobilized in public spaces. In particular, my collaboration with Sam Sellar afforded me numerous possibilities to question both my school and its system-level “taken-for-granted assumptions” and “intellectual commitments” (Sellar, 2015b, p. 48). It is with this in mind that I took up the invitation to “think rhizomatically”; that is self-refleXively by mobilizing and navigating a Deleuze|Guattari discussion of the government’s curriculum renewal project. My desire was to offer some insight by freeing up desire to show how school leaders might find “(im)plausible” (Honan, 2015) ways to be paradoxically *both* critical *and* complicit in curriculum reform efforts, how thinking with Deleuze and Guattari might suggest new ways to consider teachers’ and school leaders’ work created in the “connections between quite contradictory discourses as well as the path that connect teachers’ talk with curriculum and policy documents” (Honan, 2015, p. 216), so as to offer possibilities for disruption and agency. This agency is developed in a better understanding of “how teachers work, and their relations with texts, and policy texts in particular, [to] flatten out

the hierarchies enveloped with binaries of compliance, subservience, competency and expertness" (Honan, 2015, p. 216).

While one might invest in the possibilities of potential futures as offered by the Alberta curriculum, the capacity of capitalism to reconstitute affect within the circulation of goods and services remained a risk. As I reflected on the pronouncements of *Future Ready* and the hollowed-out spaces for meaningful action catalyzed by the promise of a kinder-gentler capitalism under the New Democratic Party government, I found a questioning possibility in Massumi's (2002a) call to action: " which point [in] a physical system paradoxically embodies multiple and normally exclusive potentials" (p. 226). These points are the metastable fractures that can tip it, phase it into something new.

Honan's (2015) earlier mention of "contradictory discourses," of being both contradictory and complicit, fit well with my own situation. As a school leader in Alberta, I occupied schizo-spaces of in-between: that of being both paranoid and schizophrenic. On the one hand, I considered capturing and enclosing teaching and school leadership within the teacher and school leader standards outlined in Chapters 5 and 6. Yet on the other hand, I also saw the schizo-elements created by the prolepsis as opportunities—the breaks needed—where *events* happened. As with other school leaders, we were all "caught" (subjectivated) within flows that were paranoiac, closing off other "life-lines." The AI partnerships reminded me, time and time again, through my own refleXive ruptures with teachers and students, that we were all working through our own (fore/en)closures that prevented the ideal of "a great school for all" from being realized, or from at least being an actuated possibility.

The key here was affording students and teachers the autonomy to challenge complex, authentic problems about teaching and learning involving multiple "ways" in which these problems could be approached, depending on the context in which the teacher was working and the multiplicity of students they were teaching. This type of engagement away from the enclosures of an overly prescriptive curriculum and assessment regime—where a privileging of one culture over another was not assumed, and attempts were being made to bring the "lived experience" of students and teachers forward to question curriculum reform for the purposes of creating "a great school for all students"—would evoke various deterritorializations in the actual state of affairs. To actualize such new virtual potentials required a fundamental shift in the working lives of teachers.

As a principal who witnessed these conditions for teachers and school leaders in my own school and among our AI partnership schools, I saw, first-hand, the policy prolepsis that characterized the *Future Ready* curriculum reform: given the challenges and opportunities that Alberta teachers faced, the investments to support the Alberta government's promising reforms could be squandered by a lack of long-term commitment to support optimal conditions of practice required for teachers to see them through. I was cognizant of Alberta school leaders, teachers, and students attempting to navigate the incommensurable articulations of a *Future Ready* curriculum of the Alberta government, while advancing large-scale assessments (to be examined in chapter 8) and a broken high-stakes testing regime, thereby invoking the empty horizon of *Future Ready*. As I will outline in the concluding section of this chapter, there was hope when "lines of flight" emerged that reclaimed productive relations as Deleuze might frame them—

disrupting the narrative of pure order of the Control Society where students and teachers remained subjected to flows that were detrimental to their well-being.

Performance Encounters Student Becomings: Interventions and Interruptions

The following offers examples of curriculum as performative encounter, a variant of Jason Wallin's (2010) dissertation to reposition curriculum theory so that "what is required for learning is the fabulation of perplexion that continually requires the recasting of knowledge and action into new forms of organization" (p. 298). Using examples noted from the AI partnership networks of schools, I have reinforced the observation by Charteris (2014a) that the capacity to act upon discourses of the OECD's curriculum reforms can be likened to rhizomatic activity, reinforcing what Deleuze and Guattari (1987) observed as: "a rhizome or multiplicity never allows itself to be over coded, never has an available supplementary dimension over and above its number of lines" (p. 9).

In her analysis of the ways the New Zealand 2006 curriculum reforms were implemented, Charteris (2014b), using cases framed as Deleuzian "plateaus," powerfully illustrated how students exercised considerable agency in the way the competency-focused curriculum reform unfolded. The leadership of disruption and the disruption of leadership was mobilized by student agency where "power shifts as students deterritorialize discourses in the ways that schools are organized" (p. 223). These power shifts, described by Charteris (2014b) as they played out in New Zealand schools, foreground the excursions described that follow for Finnish and Alberta students who re-authorized the authorized curriculum and pedagogies in their schools. As Charteris puts it:

> Rhizomatic agency is where learners navigate discourses to move from one set of culturally and socially structured subjectivities to another. The findings suggest that these moves are identity power plays. Through their lines of flight students and teachers overlap and hybridise discourses. As different subjectivities are taken up, these classroom discourses are acted upon and themselves shift and turn. Rhizomatic moves can be rapid, occurring moment by moment, as students and teachers deterritorialize and reterritorialize their ground. Even subtle shifts in direction can have a profound impact on classroom dynamics. (Charteris, 2014b, p. 195)

Drawing from Deleuze and Guattari (1987) we can see in the following excursions that when student desire is enacted "[t]here 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." (p. 216). With this background in mind, I now take up several such events that capture such deterritorializations.

Students "Re-making" Finnish Teachers

Finland maintains great pride in their ability to develop curriculum that meets the needs of students, both locally and nationally. The national Finnish curriculum documents for Basic and Upper Secondary education (Grades 1–13) are extremely sparse in comparison to their counterparts in other western nations. Additionally, Finnish teachers have a high degree of autonomy to influence decisions about curriculum based on the high degree of public trust in the profession. This is in large part due to

decentralized decision-making and local responsibility for local curricula that has been present in the Finnish educational policy since the 1980s (Mikkola, 2016). Teachers are vetted and prepared to incorporate both "practical wisdom as well as leadership knowledge" when it concerns questions about school life (Mikkola, 2016, p. viii).

Directly following the FINAL AI partnership experiences, funded in part by the Finnish National Board of Education, the decision was made to establish similar school leadership networks throughout the country to promote and "disseminate innovative practices among Finnish schools" (Välijärvi & Sulkunen, 2016, p. 18). The school networks were specifically designed to "create and disseminate pedagogical innovations, to promote learning motivation and school enjoyment, and also to support teachers' professional development", intended to provide structures for collaborative learning and cooperation amongst Finnish school leaders (Välijärvi & Sulkunen, 2016, p. 19).

Of key interest to the Finnish school networks was the development and implementation of newly formatted National Curricula for both Basic (2014) and Upper Secondary (2016) schools in Finland. Finnish teachers and leaders were active participants in the preparation of the national and local school level curricula and had great autonomy to render choices related to the curriculum, as they were expected to participate in general pedagogical decision-making and distribution of resources in schools (Sahlberg, 2007).

Finnish teachers constructed curriculum at the local level based on the framework provided by the National Board's Core Curriculum (Toom & Husu, 2016). The schools determined the curriculum that would guide the practical day-to-day teaching and learning realities of the classroom. Teachers were able to organize for instruction quite

freely and incorporate community resources into their daily lessons quite seamlessly (Toom & Husu, 2016).

The FINAL project impacted the Finnish National Board of Education suggesting greater autonomy for schools to collaborate and to engage in initiatives where the final processes and products might be uncertain. As noted by a Finnish FINAL teacher participant: "in general, school world projects are strictly standardized from the top. It is clear what the project goals are and how to achieve them. Sometimes it can even be completed as a final report before the end of the project" (translated from Finnish National Board of Education, 2015, p. 26). The teacher went on to express amazement at a seminar where Finnish FINAL participants congregated to discuss "what is school?" He wrote:

> I was amazed at the spirit of the participants' renewed thinking that included a dose of hope, change—a wake-up from the world where the day-care school system has seemed to haunt us for too long. People did not want to cooperate (just talk), but wanted to change their school activities. I was excited about the opportunity to think about studying, learning and teaching together, not just with Finnish teachers, but with college students, researchers, principals and peoples. In a few projects this is genuinely possible, albeit a necessary condition for a genuine change. (translated from Finnish National Board of Education, p. 26)

In contrast to the enclosures of Alberta's current curriculum reforms, foregrounded by the teacher and school leader practice standards, I was struck by the space opened up for conversations about the question *"what is school?"* all within a relational space where

the curriculum was not a noun but a verb, it is always with an activity of being temporarily located, not mapped—as a series of encounters.

The Philosophy Café: A Curricular Becoming

> Kanadalaiset käänsivät käsitteen englanniksi, possibilization, koska englannin kielessä ei ole vastinetta sanalle mah - dollistaminen.
>
> Translated as: the Canadians were shocked by the word "mah" as there is no English word for "possibilization". (translated from Finnish National Board of Education, 2015, p. 26)

The Philosophy Café project served as a singularity, an interruption in the Finnish curricular world. Where Finnish teachers had autonomy over curricular decisions, it was rare (according to AI participants) that students had ever been included in designing curricular projects. So the Café was a departure from the status quo of Finnish school life. The Philosophy Café served as the event where a Finnish teacher and his students were inspired by what they had experienced and learned from their Albertan partner school that housed a Global Café and moved to take action. The innovative Global Café, which brought on this pre-personal intensity and affect for the Finnish teacher, was his inclusion in the student run space where the ideas and initiatives of students were brought to life with the support of two community builders who connected student projects to community partners. The teacher described being captivated by the activities and "goings on" within the Global Café and spent 2 days watching, questioning, and interacting with the Global Café students to ascertain the "energy of the space" (translated from Finnish National Board of Education, 2015, p. 27). The teacher felt

compelled to experiment with an initiative where Finnish students and community members would discuss philosophy in café settings. According to reflections from the Philosophy Café's originating teacher:

> the Philosophy Café would not have happened, if the partnership project had not been free and respectful—attracting the various starting points, dreams and demands of the participants—both. The question of the project: "What is it, a good school?", received a different answer to the question than was answered at first. At first the answer was a list of fine and even cooler ideals that were worth pursuing. I guess the answer right now is to be—more nimble, more puzzling, more demanding to the querent. I think that good school does not exist it has to be created every day. (translated from Finnish National Board of Education, 2015, p. 27)

Despite the open spaces afforded teachers to design and implement curriculum in Finland according to the assessed needs of their Finnish students, again it was rare that students would take any role in the design or implementation of the curriculum projects. From a Finnish student involved in the FINAL projects: "What I most remember the FINAL project for [is] my trip to Canada. I felt for the first time in my life that we, as students, had some power. We were really able to influence things" (translated from Finnish National Board of Education, 2015, p. 45).

While visiting many schools and classrooms in Finland, it appeared that Finnish classes were quite traditional in their approach to curriculum delivery. Many of the Finnish students in the FINAL project spoke of apathy, boredom, and laziness amongst their Finnish peers. "The exchange helped me to see both good and bad aspects of our

school system. I am in two minds" (Finnish National Board of Education, 2015, p. 45). The student, in her reflection, went on to state that according to her "the biggest problem is the indifference in Finland and laziness for studying. Students are very apathetic, and they are not really interested in learning. I'm sitting in a school like it's a punishment" (translated from Finnish National Board of Education, 2015, p. 45). Time and again Finnish students remarked on the relationships that seemed to exist between Canadian teachers and their students and their hopes that similar relationships might shift life in Finnish schools:

> I also wish that we would go somewhat to Canada in the fact that the teacher's work would include getting acquainted with students. The job of the school educator could be an unnecessary job if the students were able to create friendships for their teacher's relations. The teachers would be more mentors and trusted adults than remote lecturers. (translated from Finnish National Board of Education, 2015, p. 45)

Responding to sentiments expressed by the Finnish students and seeking to include students in curricular becomings, this particular teacher and his students decided to create a Philosophy Café that would include students, faculty members, parents, and community participants who wished to discuss philosophical questions generated by student interest, such as "what is love"? As the teacher reflection suggests, this was a departure from the typical ways of teaching philosophy, spurred on by his encounter with the open spaces afforded by the Alberta partner school's Global Café and the relationships the students had commented on during many reflection activities throughout the FINAL partnership:

> For my part, the partnership project is an inspiration to start the first philosophical cafe in Tysk, where high school students themselves thought about the topics of discussion, they worked - as the chassis to guide the discussion.
>
> The Philosopher Café was born from combining many ideas. Particularly, however, it has been important to have a partnership project spirit, which represents one of the most beautiful but often forgotten goods. Courage leads to the *mah* – action . . . Immanuel Kant's Call for Education: "Dare to think, Sapere Aude!" means above all: "Do act according to your thinking!" The FINAL type partnership project is a story itself, one who begins to live and tell his own story. And bring that story to your hand - include many different encounters, new ways to tell yourself and repeat, tell the world. To myself, that narration includes new ways to experience teaching, learning and leadership. With the word *sa* - the rise of people as a person has gained a new contentment. (translated from Finnish National Board of Education, 2015, p. 28)

Significant for this teacher was the consideration that actions needed to be taken once a "shock to thought" had occurred. The FINAL partnership seemed to break open a space where both teachers and students were feeling frustrated by the "ways things were" and the affective turn was witnessed repeatedly when the closing activity of the summits would have all participants make one commitment to an action they would attempt when they returned to their own country. For the Canadians it seemed less charged than for the Finns who typically maintained quite a reserved demeanour as a culture. Many of the students and teachers were visibly emotional as they made their commitment statements in the circle. Most students pledged to be more outgoing and express their voices

whenever the chance arose, teachers seemed struck by the open relationships that Canadian teachers had with their students, and thus were determined to foster relationships with Finnish students while developing activities where students would have an integral role. As claimed by Massumi, "the skin is faster than the word" (2002a, p. 25) and affect seemed "abundant" in the FINAL partnership excursions.

It was also within this ethos that Alberta principals, teachers, and students were dramatically impacted during their FINAL partnership work and had their own "shocks to thought". Summing up some of his own surprises and insights, Pasi Sahlberg commented in his foreword to the Finnish FINAL concluding report:

> It is therefore no surprise that the partnership initiative between Albertan and Finnish upper secondary schools was an immediate hit in both jurisdictions. Students, teachers and school principals cheered casual collaboration on both sides of the ocean. Light administration in this partnership was a test to the procedures and policies of authorities, who were used to more traditional project approach in their work with schools. Surprise, surprise, everything went smoothly with light organization and administration. Successful partnership requires mutual respect, openness to learn from one another and trust. These were also the key elements of Finland-Alberta Partnership from the beginning. My personal list of valuable lessons from what we have gained from this unique experience is long. On the very top of it is huge additional *value that students who were part of this partnership brought to the lives of us adults*. *It was actually heartening to realize that we have so much to learn from our students when we try*

> *to improve our schools*. This appeared to be true in both countries. (Finnish National Board of Education, 2015, p. 1)

The event of the Finnish teacher discovering new ways forward for teaching and interacting with his students signaled a shift in his teacher subjectivity, and how he might take up new possibilities in school. For the Canadians, talking about their initiatives in the Global Café seemed to crystalize the feeling that change was possible and moving beyond current conceptions of school had made a difference.

Powering Up for One of Many Futures - Disrupting Alberta's Program of Study

An AI partnership teacher, struck by his experiences while visiting Finnish schools, witnessing the Finnish willingness to interact and engage with community members and resources to bring curriculum to life, resulted in an Albertan curricular singularity that emerged in the *intergenerational gardening project*. An Albertan teacher had been impacted, not only by the freedom for Finnish teachers to invite students into the community to learn, not being confined by the walls of the school, but also by the willingness on behalf of the Finnish teachers to deploy community resources to enrich curricular undertakings—thus allowing opportunities for both teachers and students to open spaces for their reflexive encounters.

The teacher in question had embarked on many projects, experimenting with creative ways to teach the mandated Alberta Program of Studies, including: teaching a permaculture course; an indigenous class for building a medicine wheel healing garden; an aquaponics course that combined fish farming, gardening and water purification; and a course called *InSight* that combined the outcomes of Social Studies and Biology, and

additionally had students with a range of learning abilities involved. Having received some recognition in the community with the innovative curricular projects the teacher had initiated, he was approached by a community group, Jasper Place Wellness Center, interested in tackling the issue of food security. The area surrounding the large urban high school where the teacher taught was deemed one of the communities in Edmonton with the highest rate of food insecurity. The teacher met with the community partners of the Jasper Place Wellness Center and the Trinity United Church and a group of 10 interested students. Together the group discussed the issues of food insecurity and who was impacted in the area. Their investigation found that the most vulnerable group were senior citizens living in a three-block radius of the school. The students were empathetic to the plights of the seniors and decided to design a gardening project that would potentially assist the situation. Building on curricular undertakings with the extracurricular clubs of permaculture and horticulture, the students decided they would attempt to plant vegetable and fruit gardens for seniors in the area.

Attention was paid to determining how students might approach the seniors to tackle the question of whether a senior might like a garden planted and subsequently cared for throughout the summer months. The Community Facilitators of the Global Café spent time training the students on how to approach the senior residents and how to foster appropriate relationships. Jasper Place Wellness Center and Trinity United Church community partners were well aware of the seniors that could benefit from assistance, and those who were most in need of improving their food security. They assisted the students in creating a plan to approach the residents in the area and initially students put flyers in the mailboxes of the senior residents with information about the proposed

project. Seniors were interested and responded to the call for gardeners, perhaps prompted in some cases by community partners. Once the students had determined who might be involved, they went in person to the seniors' homes with the offer of planting a garden, tending to it throughout the summer months, and eventually harvesting the gardens.

Throughout breaks in the school day, before and after school and on weekends, the school gardeners planted the backyard plots of seniors' homes. The students seemed motivated by the gardening excursions and commented with pride on the relationships they were fostering with some of the seniors. In some cases the seniors joined the gardening activities alongside the student gardeners. It was a good summer for growing and in early September the gardens were ready for harvest. The students had anticipated just giving the harvested vegetables to the seniors once the summer was over. Having heard about the project and also a FINAL participant, the culinary arts teacher approached the students with an additional idea. Realizing that the seniors would need food throughout the year and that perhaps they could not use the harvested food in a timely way without the food spoiling, the culinary teacher suggested that the students learn how to can and preserve the food. She offered a course in canning and preserving that the gardening students and interested culinary students willingly undertook. The group of students was growing, and the students approached the seniors to determine what they would like to keep as fresh produce and what they would like to have preserved. The canning and preserving of the vegetables and fruits had many willing participants including teachers who decided to get in on the action! Once the activities of the food preservation were completed, it seemed there were still additional vegetables

and fruits that were not needed by the seniors participating in the project. The students and their teachers approached a local community market that operated once a week and the students undertook a pop-up stall to sell the vegetables and fruits. The profits were offered to the summer gardeners as payment for the hours they had worked gardening. In some cases the student gardeners refused the compensation and their profits went back to the not-for-profit organizations to spur on future endeavours to combat local food insecurity.

As a result of the experimentation and subsequent benefits of the intergenerational gardening project at the AI partnership school, a larger community partnership was formed, the West End Food Alliance Hub (WEFAH). The community not-for-profit organization included many partners who had not typically worked together including the Jasper Place Wellness Center, Jasper Place High School, Trinity United Church, and the WeCan Food Basket Society of Alberta. WEFAH would employ many of the principles and actions that the intergenerational gardening project had introduced. A yard share program was established to pair homeowners who had extra yard space, with apartment dwellers wanting to grow their own food to combat food insecurity. Here, students and a group of teachers alongside community partners had adopted a unique approach to tackling complex community issues while addressing curricular outcomes, leading to innovation and risk taking amongst the west Edmonton community members, not-for-profit organizations, and the school community (Edmonton Community Foundation, ND, https://www.ecfoundation.org/blog/increasing-food-security/).

Additionally, the school's teachers and students hosted conference sessions at the *Powering Up for the Future, Food Secure Canada's 7th Annual Assembly* held in

Edmonton, Alberta. The conference presentation was hosted at the school site where students described their intergenerational gardening project inspired by the AI partnership involvement with FINAL. They led participants on a tour of the rooftop greenhouse, the courtyard permaculture garden, and the tilapia/hydroponics operation explaining how the scraps of food feed the fish, and the veggies and fish feed the students through the culinary arts program. The students and teachers also highlighted the First Nations programs at the school that were designed to demonstrate respect for the Earth and the cycles of life. The session was described as giving "participants a glimpse into new ways of thinking and doing that involve kids to build a better future" (Food Secure Canada, 2012).

Curricular Encountering New-newness

These examples of encounters with the AI partnerships afforded me the opportunity to make a psychic break from being overly concerned or invested in a critique of the Alberta government's curriculum reform program propped up as it is by the teacher/school leader standard regime. In the two previous encounters, the AI partnership subject-groups engaged in action research experimentations that had the necessary features of what Deleuze and Guattari (1983) referred to as "minor-ities," creating their own diverging lines of flight and escape, finding their own ways (Sellar, 2015c). At times these subject-groups could be seen as "objecting minorities, minorities producing not as their aim but in the very process of their emergence the power to object and to intervene in matters which they discover concern them" (Sellar, 2015c, p. 160). Sellar (2015c) goes on to claim that the emergence of divergence within these types of

subject-groups, objecting minorities, might have the attributes of empowerment for problem creation and may be the "unknown of our epoch" (p. 160).

In all of the proceeding I saw the schizo-spaces for my multiple desiring subjectivities as a school leader to break from a paranoid/hysteric concern for getting the curriculum *right* (given my own sense of the brittleness towards the *Future Ready* program) or a neurotic impulse to protect my teachers and students from the uncertain future ahead. The work for me, as I moved to a refleXive break, was to think about the questions put to work in the AI partnerships extracted from Deleuze and Guattari's (1983) toolbox, "*the question is not: is it true? But: does it work? What new thoughts does it make it possible to think?"* (p. xv). In the case of the Jasper Place students working through food insecurity I saw Bogue (2004) drawing on Deleuze (2000), explicating that

> genuine learning involves an engagement with such problems, a reorientation of thought following its initial disorientation, such that thought may comprehend something new in its newness, as a structured field of potential metamorphic forces rather than a pre-formed body of knowledge to be mastered. (p. 341)

In some instances, the lines of flight and smooth spaces produced by the AI partnership's subject-groups seemed to lead to shocks to thought on the part of participants about both teacher and leader practice while, according to Deleuze and Guattari (1983), "smooth spaces are not in themselves liberatory . . . a smooth space will [not be] suffice to save us", they do gesture that educators should be "entirely oriented toward an experimentation in contact with the real" (p. 500). The virtual, experienced as shocks to thought, often occurred by involving students in the action research initiatives,

disrupting both the status quo of teachers and the stable ground school principals had been accustomed to standing upon.

Recalling Minister's Eggen's hysteric aspiration cited earlier in this chapter, to "turn some unfortunate past into a positive future for all" (Lamoureux & Trynacity, 2016, para. 15), helps to contextualize the territorialization effects of the desiring machines of practice standards and the ambitious curriculum reform focused on an ambiguous agenda of "indigeneity" that will produce indeterminate but multiple places to lead for students, teachers, and school leaders. The intersection of these two policy reforms stand as a moment in Alberta where a frozen future, one characterized by the Minister's dream of "education reform", was offered as the promise of the present moment. As noted by Sellar (2015b), we might be well advised to heed the advice from Stengers' *Deleuze and Guattari's Last Enigmatic Message* (2005b) in her critique and response to Deleuze and Guattari's (1994) *What is Philosophy?*:

> *But it is confirmation that we live in a dangerous world and that when one takes the easy consensual path of denouncing and deconstructing others' dreams, there is always the danger of discovering that one has strange bedfellows. "There is something more important," "we lack resistance to the present." "We," here, means all of us, whatever our (good)will. Each practice is weakened by its own poisons, is infected by its own lack of resistance*. (p. 155) (emphasis in original)

As I navigated through this chapter and the world-making affordances that curriculum renewal offered schools leaders, I saw the disruptions to *Future Ready* and the intersection of encounters of the AI partnerships offering opportunities for the Alberta schools to rethink encounters with curriculum through moments of singularization. Here,

singularization referred to the condition that frees *difference* from the determinations of habit, memory, routine, and the practices of recognition or identification. This potential release opened up other possibilities in the promise of schizo-spaces yet to unfold. The AI partnerships had produced, for me, a refleXive cut in my subjectivity—that perhaps both the constructs of *school leadership* and *the future* are not *one,* but *many*.

Chapter 8

Assessment Excursion: Encounters within the Statisticon

> "It is not the slumber of reason that engenders monsters, but vigilant and insomniac rationality." (Deleuze & Guattari, 1984, p. 122)

This chapter examines the intersectionality of the empty horizon of the Alberta government's *Future Ready* curriculum reform program and failed efforts to re-form what was a 3 decades old accountability regime known as the Accountability Pillar. Through the schizoanalysis of the experiences of students, teachers, and school leaders involved in the AI partnerships, this chapter offers possibilities for interrupting the assemblage of the current accountability programs and policies in Alberta. Three performance encounters are described in the latter half of the chapter: a global summit of youth reflecting on their experiences related to current accountability regimes, efforts by AI partnership schools to reframe what counts as success in school through a Values Framework pilot project, and an event planned by AI partnership students to speak back to the Statisticon through EDSTAKE.

As indicated in Chapter 7 in the curriculum excursion, the government's effort to reform were unfolding without any serious consideration of its large-scale assessments and its ongoing participation in international bench-marking, such as PISA, which contributed to a policy prolepsis in the field. This resistance to exploring alternatives to the Accountability Pillar may be understood by employing Franco Berardi's (2017) Deleuzian lens. In his analysis we might infer that Alberta Education's data infrastructures are an expression of desire for a "techno-informational automatism that

captures data from the living flow of social activity in order to adapt the articulations of the global machine" (Berardi, 2017, p. 18).

Adapting the term Statisticon (Warren Neidich as cited in Berardi, 2017, p. 18) to frame the processes and architectures of data analytics, Berardi describes the production and circulation of "big flows of data" (p. 19) for the purposes of prediction and pre-emption. His analysis offers important insights in the description that follows of how Alberta's educational accountability apparatus functions as an expression of late capitalism's effort to enhance the productive power of its system of human capital reproduction.

> The statistical pre-emption implies two complementary actions: one is the recording of massive flows of data; the second is the adapting of the machine to the living environment and reciprocal adaption of the living, conscious organism to the machine. (Berardi, p. 19)

Students, teachers, and school leaders in the AI partnerships attempted to define and describe the characteristics of a *great school for all* set against the backdrop of the fluid and shifting mechanisms of accountabilities, burgeoning data infrastructures, and the onset of artificial intelligence systems that were emerging in their schools and jurisdictions. The examples described in this chapter will illustrate how, despite the accountability infrastructures present within the AI partnership school systems acting to striate and define the subjectivities of all those involved in school life, there were disruptions and deterritorializations to the ever-increasing pressures. The examples act as singularities and events stimulated by the AI participants experimenting with new ways of describing success in their schools.

While pushing back against the intensities of these global, yet ultimately locally-enacted policy shifts, I admit to my own (inescapable) complicitness in seeking the ideal school but resistance to being trapped in the forces of the OECD. In this regard I share the caution that ultimately "education is a vehicle for managing the danger of immanence" (Cole, 2012, p. 253) while remaining a site of capital formation. Against a majoritarian language that attempted to locate and fix *a great school for all*, I will illustrate how students, teachers, and school leaders in the partnership schools offered alternative narratives that are best thought of as being beyond coherent critiques of repressive testing regimes or affects driven by resistances to intense surveillance machines (i.e., graduation requirements in STEM, difference defined by honour roll, vocational *vs.* academic streams). Instead, the chapter will be read through a schizoanalysis that considers what the AI partnership participants created in the networks of schools as expressions of "that age-old tension between the addiction to order, or sets of orderings that mobilize and stratify the real in time and space, and the fluid juices of the Chaosmos" (Cole, 2012, p. 253). Ultimately the project in this chapter is to resist framing the partnership work as an excursion in discovering alternatives to current models of accountability that simply recreate new mechanics of human capital production, now currently framed as public assurance.

Disrupting the Statisticon in the Field of Judgement

As described in Chapters 1 and 6, the nature of institutions such as prisons, schools, and military organizations, as described by Foucault's (1977) discipline society, has radically changed and has been replaced by standards, measurement, data flows, and

modulation to enhance educational performance. Indeed data, in all its forms, has become an integral aspect of most socio-economic activity (Wood, 2014). Dominant conceptions of the individual self in Western social sciences have been distinctive in the properties of naturalness and non-reducibility with the citizen described as the entity with selfhood and its attendant inalienable rights (Williams, 2005).

However, in the late capitalist economy the individual is progressively classified according to the costs and benefits of his/her interests, and the formation of the "self" is studied in relation to larger socializing processes, especially when considering the processes of subjectivity (Williams, 2005). Increasingly "[v]alue in post-industrial societies no longer exists within the physical person but instead exists within their associated data flows, leading Deleuze to coin the term 'dividual' " (Wood, 2014, p. 224). The term refers to a physically embodied human subject that is endlessly divisible and reducible to data representations via the modern technologies of control, like computer-based systems (Williams, 2005). "The numerical language of control is made of codes that mark access to information or reject it . . . Individuals have become 'dividuals' and masses, data markets or 'banks' " (Deleuze, 1992a, p. 179).

This shift has dramatically and radically changed the face of the education project over the past decades. The augmentation of governance and surveillance by the number machines of data dashboards and the accountability infrastructures of large international economic machines, such as the OECD and the World Bank, are witnessed and experienced both globally and locally at the school level. Of interest are not what these international large-scale measures mean for schools and school leaders, but more pertinent is how they work and what is produced in their wake. "In the societies of

control one is never finished with anything—the corporation, the education system, the armed services being metastable states coexisting in one and the same modulation, like a universal system of deformation" (Deleuze, 1992a, p. 179). The performative mechanics within the contemporary school have expanded the use of data, which has assumed a central position in all aspects of the education machine (Ball, 2003).

Accountability is the System in Alberta

During the course of my educational career it was apparent that our schools had increasingly attempted to define what was worth knowing and doing in isolated, disconnected learning environments. Stephen J. Ball (2003, p. 216) has argued that what matters most in informing practice and policy is "who controls the field of judgment" in which information is produced and how it is used. Whether it was the continued push by the Alberta government for digital testing platforms or learning management systems, the risk was that educational research and innovation strategies would remain encumbered by business interests and the neo-liberal drives of commercialization and datafication (ATA, 2016). Since May 2015, the Education Minister in Alberta, David Eggen, had promised dramatic change in assessment and accountability measures—yet there was only a growing focus on the development of data infrastructures accompanied by a concern for increasing Alberta's performance in mathematics. When asked about the possibilities for change, his oft-repeated mantra was: "I have to work with the clay I have been given."[32] These sentiments were subsequently echoed in Education Minister Eggen's concern over performance in mathematics when he launched a major government initiative: "We will

[32] This phrase was deployed at the Banff Summer Conference, August, 2015 as well as other public engagements I attended.

work diligently to improve our math scores by reinforcing basic skills and by introducing new programs. Strong math skills are key to success in learning" (Alberta Education, 2016b, para. 3). These new measures included a bursary program for mathematics teachers, alongside changes to the Grade 12 diploma examinations requiring students to show their work (Alberta Education, 2016b). In these policy moves, it was evident that teachers and students were being positioned by the Alberta government as "subject to" the mandated mathematics Program of Study in striated spaces delineated by accountability measures. The minister's anxiety regarding mathematics expressed as improving "our math scores" (Alberta Education, 2016b, para 3) echoes the mechanisms of Berardi's (2017) Statisticon:

> The Statisticon evolves together with the environment (in this case, social life) but the condition for this co-evolution is the pre-inscribed structural homology that makes social interaction possible in the sphere of automated governance. The agent of enunciation must use the language that the machine understands, in order for there to be effective communication. Once the agent of enunciation has accepted the format that makes interaction possible, the interaction can evolve, and the machine can adapt to the living organism insofar as the living organism has also adapted to the machine. (p. 19)

The coupling of the Minister of Education with the machinery of the international and national large scale testing programs produced and powered the Statisticon and further attempted to give life to the imaginary of the *Future Ready* curriculum reforms of the Alberta government.

Students Becoming "More Than Your Evidence"

Throughout the AI partnerships, teachers and school leaders raised issues about the ubiquitous presence of data and its insidious use in their professional and daily lives. It was as a result of these reactions and the ongoing discussions about the limitations that data infrastructures were producing in school leader and student subjectivities that the concept for a summit titled More Than Your Evidence (MTYE) was imagined and eventually executed. Of note were the varying responses from the AI partnership organizations to the merits of bringing alumni students and school leaders together to a summit in Reykjavik, Iceland in October, 2017 (Iceland was selected as a site for the Summit as it is a mid-way point between Canada and our European partners and also to set the stage for a later partnership with schools in that country).

Alumni students from the AI partnerships were invited to the Summit to comment and offer advice to the AI partnership school leaders and the teachers' union federation and government ministry officials about lessons learned throughout their tenure in the partnerships, any potential impacts they had experienced since leaving their secondary schools, and any advice moving forward with international partnerships. For some of the AI partnership organizations, the MTYE summit seemed a natural progression and an exciting research opportunity, while for other teacher organizations it was deemed irresponsible and out of their scope or mandate to support student travel, when the students invited were neither participating members of the union nor current students within the system. Eventually, in many instances, it was the AI school leaders who found the financial means to support the involvement of the alumni students. The disruptive value of student input and voice in school policy discussions had been well established

amongst the AI partnership school leaders, who described student involvement as the necessary leverage for change. This would be the first time that the AI partnerships considered alumni student involvement as a potential catalyst.

The MTYE summit included participants from Alberta, Norway, Finland, and Iceland. In addition, a number of esteemed academics specializing in the areas of educational policy (with research specializations in global measurement infrastructures, evaluation, and how educational data shape policy and practice in schools) attended the MTYE summit to actively participate and contribute to the summit proceedings. The More Than Your Evidence summit was held at the Iceland Teachers' Union summerhouses located in a pastoral countryside location, an hour outside of Reykjavik. Participants shared accommodation and spent 3 days participating in both group and individual activities, culminating in individual presentations to their country cohorts, and ultimately to the group as a whole. All of the presentations were captured on video and participants offered their artefacts to be placed on the AI partnership public access website.

Participants did not necessarily know one another from previous interactions, as the specific country partnership activities did not typically overlap with one another. It was, however, remarkable to witness how easily the participants became acquainted and acclimatised to the project of the Reykjavik summit. Participants spent time describing their personal histories with assessment and evaluation processes in school and how they had been or had not been valorized within their own school systems. All participants described their specific AI partnership projects and recollections/reflections from their time spent in the AI partnership participation. Ultimately all participants were challenged

to prepare presentations containing their understandings and advice for school leaders when considering international partnerships and the possible sites of micro political resistance to the machinery of global data infrastructures. The remainder of this chapter highlights singularities that illustrate nomadic, deterritorialized student and teacher desires about assessment and school.

The first singularity is from an MTYE participant who had her "shock to thought" while participating in the summit proceedings. Her presentation to the MTYE group was about her participation in a student voice initiative of Alberta Education, which was struck to review the Alberta Grade 12 testing regime and her subsequent realizations that she had been "played".

It was following the proclaimed mandates outlined in Alberta Education's *Ministerial Order* #001 (2013), which described the three key qualities that students should develop throughout their schooling (those of an engaged thinker, an ethical citizen, with an entrepreneurial spirit) that Alberta Education struck many student forums and committees where student input into issues was garnered with the claims that student input would assist them in their attainment of 21st century skills.

An AI partnership student from Calgary, Alberta chose to offer her experience as an example of participation in the mandated critical thinking and ethical citizenry outlined by the education ministry. While the student was completing her Grade 12 year in high school, she was chosen to serve on a provincial student advisory committee which had the mandate to review the Alberta provincial diploma exam testing program, the high stakes standardized exit exams for students completing courses in the subject areas of Math, Science, English, and Social Studies. The provincial student committee was

comprised of students from across the province. The AI partnership student described her fellow participants as high achieving students for whom the school system seemed to be working. She claimed that most of these students were highly regarded school citizens who enjoyed school and were interested in their school's culture, were active on school leadership groups, and most, if not all, were on track for post-secondary learning following their high school experiences.

This particular Alberta Education provincial student advisory board was given the task to review the provincial accountability framework and in particular the weighting of the Alberta Diploma examinations. The provincial diploma testing model that had been in place since 1978 was under review, in large part due to the pressure exerted from the Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA, 2012). The Alberta Teachers' Association's (ATA) stance was that the teachers were the professionals best positioned to give accurate assessments of their students' standing in relation to the mandated provincial curriculum (ATA, 2012). Additionally, the ATA claimed that the Diploma Exams, administered in a high stakes environment as a 1-day event worth 50% of a student's grade, produced anxiety for both students and teachers, and did not accurately reflect students' abilities or address many of the objectives outlined in the curriculum. It seemed here that the ATA was making reference to the notion that teacher and student subjectivities, and the manner in which teaching and learning was being approached in the province, was being shaped by the forces of the high stakes exit exams. This notion that teacher subjectivities were being shaped was perhaps due to an increasingly noticeable practice in many Alberta jurisdictions where teachers were being evaluated according to the results their students received on the Diploma Exams, and in many

instances how much the teacher-awarded mark differed for the student's performance on the Diploma Exam.

Of additional concern to the ATA was the use of diploma examinations in the ongoing ranking of schools in the province by such entities as the Fraser Institute (Booi, 1999). Established in 1974, the Fraser Institute is self-described as a "research and educational institution" with offices in British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario, and Quebec. The Fraser Institute's vision statement described "a free and prosperous world where individuals benefit from greater choice, competitive markets, and personal responsibility;" in particular, their mission "is to measure, study, and communicate the impact of competitive markets and government interventions on the welfare of individuals" (Fraser Institute, n.d.). According to ongoing articles and presentations by the ATA, the Fraser Institute's rankings spoke more to the Social Economic Status (SES) (Berliner, 2011; Couture, 2013) of the student population of a school, and were masterfully engineered to reflect political biases of the rankings more than any accurate reflection of a school's success or failure with its student charges (ATA, 2012; Berliner, 2011; Gariepy, Spencer, & Couture, 2009).

In agreement with the ongoing concerns raised by the ATA about the province's accountability framework and in particular the Diploma Exam weightings, in November 2014 the Alberta School Board Association (ASBA) passed a resolution that the Alberta Government should reduce the weightings of the diploma exams from 50% to 30%. The day following the ASBA's resolution, the Minister of Education, Gordon Dirks, announced a full review of the issue that would include all stakeholders, including students (Klingbeil, 2014). It was in this light that the Student Advisory Board was

struck, and one of the AI partnership students became a member, representing Calgary, Alberta and her public school district the Calgary Board of Education.

Through many communications (personal conversations, letters, presentations, and video) at the More Than Your Evidence summit, the AI partnership student referenced her participation on the advisory board as being of great importance for what she thought she had learned at the time, immediately following the advisory board's tenure and subsequently during her discussions at the MTYE summit. The Alberta School Board Association's suggested review of the diploma weightings and the reduction from 50 to 30% was the central organizing question and problem outlined for the students to discuss. The student's initial excitement to the proposed changes was:

> I remember thinking that this change would be revolutionary for our school system; students would be able to focus more on course work as opposed to spending the entirety of their final year of public education focussing on a number. (ATA, 2019, p. 11)

The student described the discussions of the students on the committee as ranging from a fear that student motivation would be negatively impacted and would diminish without the accountability and incentive of the 50% weighting, to the anxiety that students continually expressed about the "one shot" moment of the diploma exam to demonstrate achievement; the ever-present reality that it just might end up being a "bad testing day". Ultimately, after much consideration, the students on the advisory committee did ratify the suggestion that the weightings be reduced to 30%. Subsequently, in March 2015, then Minister of Education, Gordon Dirks, announced that

the Alberta Diploma exam weightings would be reduced from 50 to 30% (Gilligan & Mertz, 2015).

The AI partnership student described feeling elated that her role in the consultation had led to such a fruitful conclusion. While elated by her contribution to the historic change to the diploma testing regime, she described never reconciling, however, that her teachers did not express the same elation and seemed more worried and anxious than before the announced changes to the diploma weightings. She claimed that, following the announcement, many of her teachers announced that all exams would need to reflect the style of diploma assessment so that parents and the public would not have diminished trust in the teacher-awarded mark that was now to be worth 70% (personal communication at the MTYE summit, 2017).

At the More Than Your Evidence summit, in a presentation where this student became visibly emotional (perhaps signalling affect), she described that her reflections of her participation on the student advisory board had led to the previously un-thought-of realization (shock to thought),

> that at the time we were all working incredibly hard to change something that really wasn't a change. It was the illusion of change; we were questioning inside a bubble. We had the illusion that we were breaking barriers, when really we were given a question and provided an answer. The answer was-standardized tests will exist, and it will be quantifiable by a number, and it is that exact number that is in question. (ATA, 2019, p. 11)

She went on to express her disappointment in the systems used to evaluate student achievement, her teachers' reactions to their roles in assessment, the lack of trust felt

about teacher judgement from the public, and the betrayal of the system in "validating" student voice while in reality appropriating their agency and any claim she might have to "citizenship." In her presentation, she emphatically concluded that more trust was needed in the system for professionals closest to the students to make judgements on their achievement and learning. More radically, she suggested that assessment should be redesigned altogether "to eliminate some of the stress associated with school, and the obsession students develop of not only achieving a number, but becoming a number" (ATA, 2019, p. 12). As Deleuze (1994a) notes and the student's reflections reveal:

> It is so difficult to say how someone learns: there is an innate or acquired practical familiarity with signs, which means that there is something amorous—but also something fatal—about all education. We learn nothing from those who say: "Do as I do". Our only teachers 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. (p. 23)

The student's reflection gestures to her learning (as an event) happening years after her participation on the assessment committee. It was only when reflecting on the teachers' lack of positive response to the reduced weightings, and a lengthy discussion about global forces acting to shape both student and teacher subjectivities, that the student claimed she had a breakthrough and her learning began. She questioned both her participation on the committee and subsequently, her realization that she had been duped by the whole process. She felt that student voices had been appropriated to give credence to a decision and discussion that had already taken place.

These students were pre-empted in their efforts to engage the Statisticon of the accountability or public assurance systems, but were playing roles that had been pre-determined and in actuality did not require the "critical" thinking that the ministry was espousing. These students were subject to a neo-liberal human capital version of the ministry's own description of an engaged thinker as someone "who thinks critically and makes discoveries; who uses technology to learn, innovate, communicate, and discover; who works with multiple perspectives and disciplines to identify problems and find the best solutions; who communicates these ideas to others; and who, as a life-long learner, adapts to change with an attitude of optimism and hope for the future" (Alberta Education, 2013, para. 7). These students engaged as puppets for the purposes of ratifying a predetermined outcome.

It appears that this student did have a learning event at the MTYE summit where, as Deleuze (2000) suggested, "to learn is first of all to consider a substance, an object, a being as if is emitted signs to be deciphered, interpreted" (p. 4). This student began to better understand the desires of the Alberta Government and the desires of her teachers following the diploma exam announcement. "The search is presented as the exploration of different worlds of signs that are organized in circles and intersect at certain points, for the signs are specific and constitute the substance of one world or another" (Deleuze, 2000, p. 4). This student was discovering the world of governing bodies through numbers and performative student consultation, as well as the worlds that teachers inhabit where trust and professional judgment are questioned regularly by both the public and the media.

Interruptions/Interventions in an Alberta International Partnership School

The Values Framework Initiative was focused on enhancing the high school experience by defining broader measures of success. Based on the work I began at Jasper Place, this project grew and morphed throughout the AI partnerships. Between 2015 and 2017 two large high schools, one in Alberta and the other in Finland, took up work to develop a multilateral accountability framework. This involved bringing multiple school stakeholders, including community members, together to unpack their experiences in school and identify values that they wanted embedded in the school culture. As outlined in Chapter 1, I initiated this work given my commitments to equity and opening opportunities for the growing complexity and diversity of schools—*a great school for all*.

These two high schools (Albertan and Finnish), while motivated by different forces, delved into projects with students, teachers, community members, and school leaders to develop values frameworks that would better reflect the aspirations of the school communities and perhaps lead to developing new subject groups that might motivate different student, teacher, and school leader subjectivities.

In Alberta, the motivation behind this initiative was to potentially disrupt the forces of the Statisticon embedded in the provincial accountability regime and the OECD architectures of efficiency, progress, and comparison. In Finland the school was motivated to disrupt leadership so that teachers might find ways to engage students in their learning so that they might become less passive, as the teachers were noticing an apathy amongst students and were worried about the role technology was playing in the lives of their students. Engaging students in new ways within the school environment might shift relationships between teachers and students, shifting the hierarchy from

teacher as giver of knowledge and students as passive recipients. This disruption might unsettle the tendency of Finnish teachers to work in isolation and open up spaces where the leader might find processes so that the school could shift as a whole. Finnish principals had been impacted and quite taken by the Albertan school leaders' abilities to work alongside teachers in the school, both individually and as a collective. This was new territory for the Finns because teacher autonomy in Finnish schools had typically thwarted any and all whole-school change initiatives.

The schools began with questions similar to those posed by Gert Biesta (2015) in his influential book, *The Beautiful Risk of Education*. Biesta queries, what are the purposes of education and schools (2015, p. x)? which led the two schools from Alberta and Finland to probe into the questions of: what is school supposed to do? What makes an engaged school? And, ultimately what makes an equitable school? These were the questions the students (current and alumni), teachers, support staff, community partners, and parents of the schools involved in the AI partnerships began to discuss and interrogate while considering their school communities.

The AI partnership schools attempted to open spaces where deterritorialization could occur and lines of flight that might escape the striated domain began shaping the school environments, acting to shape student, teacher, and school leader subjectivities. Initially, in both cases, the schools began their work with focus groups and surveys. Questions were structured with the intention to solicit ideas from focus group participants that might help to identify a list of values that existed within the schools' cultures and might assist with the efforts to identify preferred goals to move the schools beyond the

Statisticon in Alberta and the teacher as autonomous classroom and subject leader in the Finnish experience.

The challenges I described in my school (Alberta) were about the inability of the teachers to see cultural and hidden assumptions (Stiles, 2016a & b) that shaped their pedagogy, and their definitions of learning and success as framed by the Statisticon that had shaped students' ways of knowing, defined how or what they ought to learn, and demonstrated learning that was deemed acceptable. Given that Alberta's testing program—the most comprehensive in Canada—had been in place since 1982, it was difficult for these teachers to see the possibilities for any alternatives to the accountability regime. In many ways the Alberta schools' students and teachers were like "goldfish swimming in water, unaware of the water within which they swam" (Sellar, 2015a).

Just as the student from the MTYE summit described in the previous performance encounter (Students Becoming "More Than Your Evidence), the re-weighting from 50% of a student's mark to 30% brought great consternation and concern on behalf of the Alberta teaching staff (Stiles, 2016b). Staff, teachers in particular, expressed consternation that students might take the exams less seriously and potentially teachers' marks might be challenged by parents, the ministry, or the jurisdiction as discrepant and unreliable that they were worth 70% rather than 50% (Stiles, 2016b). Delving into the unknown by unpacking their assumptions, questioning the values they had about learning and assessment, and experimenting with new ways to disrupt the typical definitions of school success was fraught with anxiety and paranoia.

Once the Values Framework was established in my school, the process called upon the stakeholders to identify a value or goal that resonated with them and, over the

course of their time at the school, find ways to change practice that might enhance the area they had chosen. The goals were not centered on diploma marks or graduation rates, but included sentiments such as "students feel a sense of belonging". Rather than a prescriptive set of annual goals to meet, which was defined by the Albertan government and examined within the jurisdiction, the intent of the Values Framework was to provide a basis from which individuals could take action in the areas of the school community's priorities and become inspired about their own agency within it. It was thought that this might free them from their overriding paranoia produced within the Statisticon.

The action research Values Framework processes and experimentations of the Alberta International partnerships produced conditions where the participants questioned their most fundamental assumptions and prejudices about what was worth knowing and doing in terms of the school curriculum, engaging with questions about the purpose of school, how to redefine success for students, and whether students had been engaged in learning within their school activities. The true learning and disruptions came to light at a FINAL summit when a student innocently posed the question: "Why do I need to begin worrying about the diploma exams when I'm only in Grade 10 and they are 3 years away?". The teacher who heard this student comment reported that his world had shifted as he realized he was complicit in the circulating forces of the Alberta Statisticon. He had felt fairly confident that he "only put the full court press" (personal communication, 2016) on the students in their final year of his classes, but this student comment forced him realize that all of his energies in his classes were motivated to assure students would be successful in the final provincial exit exams.

In addition, the involvement of my school in the AI partnership exchanges amplified "becoming other" in new school environments in Finland, Norway, New Zealand, Ontario, Canada, and other Albertan schools. *Becoming other* helped to unseat assumptions about the ways schools operate in order for students to succeed. While previously the only context available to the Alberta participants had been dictated by the long-standing testing regime in Alberta, students and teachers began to question their practices and the ways their school had been shaped. Questions such as: *How schools can run so smoothly with little or no attention paid to monitoring students every move as in the trusting culture of Finland? How could so little time be spent in Norway and Finland during the school day and school year, yet students would still achieve the same results, or better than those of their Albertan counterparts? How could the school curriculum embrace the activities of reconciliation in New Zealand without losing "precious content" in the mandated curricula? How could curriculum be rethought in Finland and New Zealand to allow for jurisdictions and schools to design curricula that suited their local school community needs?* New ideas and perturbations were felt and brought to the discussions and action research initiatives about school success, engagement, and difference.

All of these questions led to actions that would contest the premise that *more information* generated by *datafication* should further power standardized approaches to teaching and learning and should offer the magic bullets of "best" practices. Offering these professionals the time and ability to host visitors and travel to connect and collaborate with students and teachers from their own schools and those of the AI partnership schools led to more than just learning from one another in comfortable

conversations. Worlds were unearthed as actions followed to experiment in novel ways. Lines of flight were released from the high stakes testing environments, subverting the accountability machines that had become the drivers of the instructional systems in their school. As Sellar (2015a) put it: "accountability has become the system." *Becoming other* through the AI partnerships provided new lenses and impetus for these professionals to question, understand, and unpack myths and assumptions that lay hidden in the culture of their school and the jurisdiction within which it was nested. My school began to experiment with alternative ways of describing and enacting teaching and learning practices including empowering students to engage in learning activities driven by their passions and interests, all of this to support and commit to goals beyond those of producing students as human capital.

These experimentations of teachers and students *becoming other* seemed to open spaces to allow for *difference in itself*. This concept from Deleuze's toolbox (1994a) is foundational to his theories and insists, according to Taylor Webb and Kalervo Gulson (2015b), that "difference-in-itself is an idea that does not presuppose identities" (p. 519). Instead, Deleuze insists that "difference in-itself is an affirmation of the 'singularity' of each moment, thing, state, etc., a 'particularity that is' and an 'indetermination, newness which creates itself'" (as cited in Webb & Gulson, 2015b, p. 519). These actions reinforced that there could be no *one size fits all* instrumental approach to building the capacity, but instead demanded a healthy acknowledgement and space for difference.

Acknowledging difference, rethinking and experimenting with novel ways that students could acknowledge and be acknowledged as successful in school offered promises of moving from an environment of stasis and striated time spaces to encounter

potential futures, employing the program of studies as points of departure, as "witch's flights" (Biesta, 2015). These productions of difference might be viewed as a positive force in this work of navigating spaces in the "cognitive automation" (Berardi, 2017, p. 20) of the Statisticon that characterizes education systems globally.

Finland Revisiting Values

At the MTYE summit where participants were challenged to share their learning from the AI partnership work and suggest next steps, a Finnish school leader chose to highlight his personal leadership journey, a challenge he had undertaken as a result of his involvement with Alberta. He spoke of his personal journey of disrupting his leadership; his school attempted to disrupt their status quo by using similar Values Framework processes as those tried in the Albertan school. His decision to take up such "work" had been spurred on by having been affected; namely, he had been continually amazed at the affect that spilled out of his Finnish students as they shared how the AI partnership visits and activities had shifted their lives. The typically shy and reticent students became visibly emotive and often spoke at the end of the summit's closing activities in broken voices as they recounted how their worlds had shifted by being in schools and classes where students had agency, voice, and the teachers had relationships and connections to the students in familiar, less formal ways than those of the Finnish teachers and students.

The dilemma facing the Finnish leader was how to reproduce the spaces for such affect to happen in his school where teachers were the masters of their own classrooms and had total autonomy over the curriculum and the ways in which it was delivered and where student-teacher relationships were formal. He explained that he had no concerns

about the Finnish teachers' professional abilities, yet he wondered whether they could be more "human" in their interactions with the students (Päkkilä, 2017a). Formal roles of teacher and student were well established and it was not uncommon for students to go through an entire school course by only interacting with the teacher about the lessons they were to learn. This was quite different to the familiarity expressed in the teacher-student relationships in Alberta. At the MTYE summit, this school leader became interested in the Alberta school's Values Framework initiatives while visiting an Albertan school on an AI partnership exchange. He shared with me how he marveled at the power resulting from including students in focus groups with teachers where the hierarchical roles were minimized (personal communication, 2017).

The Finnish leader also described the Values Framework as appealing for his school's context, not because of a Statisticon that was circulating within the Finnish school system, but because there was a sense of urgency to engage students in new ways in school. Ironically, the final report and presentations from the participants in the Finland-Alberta (FINAL) partnership had been instrumental in reshaping the Finnish National Curriculum (personal conversation with director of Finnish National Board of Education, Jorma Kauppinen, 2016). This leader realized there would need to be new ways to engage students in his school. More importantly, the Finnish principal shared that if the school culture did not dramatically shift, where teachers began to feel that student engagement was important, then nothing would change. As further described by the Finnish school leader, there was a deep "dissatisfaction with the school's self-assessment practices, because they didn't seem to lead us". This was, in itself, an interesting acknowledgement on behalf of the Finnish leader, as he seemed to accept that

"leadership" that he wished for was more than being a manager. For the Finns, "leading" as described by their Alberta counterparts, was not in their purview, and this nascent interest in leadership by the Finnish leader made me think that perhaps a minor leadership of disruption was in motion.

In contrast to the Alberta context where school jurisdiction performance is centrally surveyed through the Accountability Pillar, in Finland the National Board of Education has made the municipalities themselves responsible for creating a framework for school self-assessment. The National Board of Education Framework states that "[t]he municipality has the task of creating the framework for this evaluative work" (National Board of Education, 1994, p. 26). Consequently, for Finnish principals, school self-assessment had become one of the key areas emphasised by local authorities and schools to ensure that self-assessment took place.

It is in these contexts where the Finnish AI partnership school community found the Values Framework activity to be highly interesting. The framework seemed to provide an "opportunity to involve people in developing and leading a culture of change in [the] school" that would also be "concurrent with the change of national and school curriculum which calls for improved student engagement in schools" (Päkkilä, 2017b). The Finnish school leader described that the participation of students in the AI partnership work had been instrumental in reshaping his motivation to prepare his school community to welcome new approaches for reflection on the school, and the "work" of the school (Päkkilä, 2017b). This leader was motivated to lead from the *middle* and move beyond his accustomed role of leader as manager.

This commitment was evident in Päkkilä's presentations at the MTYE summit (2017a) and the uLEAD (2017b) conference where he remarked on two events that suggested the Values Framework processes had led to change within the school, and that his leadership work had morphed. The first was Päkkilä's (2017b) accounting of one of his teachers who typically had been quite strict about assignments and due dates. The value that seemed most unlikely in the Finnish context was that the school would experiment to find ways to build a *school culture of involvement and encouragement.* Päkkilä (2017a) commented that after engaging in the Values Framework discussions it was this same teacher who was emphatic that new processes would need to be implemented so that students would not be penalized if they missed tests or assignment deadlines because they were participating in learning activities that were not in the school. The Finnish school leader felt this was evidence that something had shifted for this particular teacher (Päkkilä, 2017a). He concluded "there is so much invested in the implicit goals that they evoke **emotional** responses and lead people to measure themselves" (Päkkilä, 2017a).

The second event for the Finnish leader was a quote he shared at the Alberta Teachers' Association's uLEAD conference in Banff, Alberta, from a student that claimed he was profoundly changed by his interactions in the FINAL partnership: "The projects have taught me enormously about myself, my values and the way I perceive the world and about what it is to be a Finn" (Päkkilä, 2017b). Päkkilä (2017b) himself became visibly emotional as he shared this student reflection at his uLEAD presentation. He said that nothing more could be said about whether the AI partnerships had made

changes, and he emphatically claimed that none of it might have happened if the students hadn't been involved.

It seems for both the Finnish school leader and myself, the AI partnerships opened processes and experimentations that led to micro-changes and metastabilities within the two distinct ecologies of the schools. In Alberta, focusing on values in school beyond those of efficiency and progress, was an attempt to disrupt the *Statisticon*, freeing teachers and students from their striated subjectivities of human capital. In Finland, the Values Framework served to activate the school self-assessment mandate in ways that might engage students more effectively in school while unsettling the Finnish teachers' professional subjectivities. These processes were not intended to be easy checklists to follow, but rather to engage multiple voices and invite experimentation with new ways of practice which might shift schools, albeit only in small, perhaps undetectable ways. I offer one last performance encounter, where the students from the AI partnerships collectively decided to speak back to the enclosures of the school environments in which they live.

Students at Stake in the *Statisticon*

> In the dynamics of the Statisticon the mirror acts as a generator that leads the machine to anticipate and prepackage social behavior. (Berardi, 2017, p. 19)

As a school leader in a large, urban high school, I had a healthy respect/fear when the media arrived at the school doors. It was typical that reporters from the media, in fact any visitor to the school, report to the office upon arrival to obtain permission for their visitation. It was with some alarm that I was informed that many media personnel with

cameras, including a CBC reporter, had entered the school and were wandering the halls. When questioned they seemed uninterested in me, the school's administration. To my surprise they were, in fact, looking for the two students who had arranged media interviews in the Global Café.

Without the knowledge of school administration, the (Finnish-Alberta) FINAL students had organized locally, provincially, and globally to host an event that would serve as both a protest and a declaration of their rights as students. The students used social media to organize and claim the name "EdStake" to announce their commitment to having a stake in their education. Perhaps Guattari would have been pleased, as these AI partnership subject groups (students) had formed and determined clear goals to share their commitment in demanding a say in their education. In Alberta, the government of the day was announcing further cuts to education. Dennis Shirley described this in his monograph on student voice as the catalyst to change:

> In 2013, Alberta's high school students learned that their Legislative Assembly was preparing to cut educational funding. Activist students decided to respond by organizing a demonstration to protest the cuts. The students used social media to lead demonstrations, and they also used the media to place pressure on their elected officials to retain the funding. The first Twitter account, #EdStake, was created by students running a campaign for greater student voice in regard to the cutbacks. The second Twitter account, #TBOE (for "taking back our education"), was used to mobilize student activists for the demonstration. Throughout this time frame, the students collaborated with the Alberta Federation of Labor to

> provide buses to take them from their schools to the rally in June 2013 in front of the state capital. (Shirley, 2016b)

It was not necessary for students to travel to Finland to learn to protest budget cuts at home, and the overwhelming majority of students who attended the demonstration in Edmonton, Alberta's capital city, had played no part in FINAL. Still, the students who had participated in the FINAL partnership had learned to question the organization and cultures of schooling, and it was those students from the AI partnership schools in Alberta who had taken the lead in this initiative. Of note, this was the first student protest to the provincial government on record that was not led by post-secondary students. Their experiences with student dialogue in the Global Café and in the FINAL partnership had encouraged them to express voice in civil society.

The often-compromised leadership roles that students are placed when thinking "student voice" initiatives were clearly disrupted by the EdStake student movement to question education budget cuts. Students acted on their desires and disregarded the obvious consequences of missing school or questioning authority, both within their schools and of the Progressive Conservative government of the day. While their protests did not lead to any different outcome, the student reflec-x-Xtions after EdStake indicated new *becomings*, affective intensities, and new subjectivities. This is not to claim they adopted new identities, but something happened for the students involved in the organization and subsequent execution of the EdStake movement. Of personal note here was the reaction of a high school leader colleague who demanded that I expel the students who organized EdStake for their "disruption to the orderly conduct of the school" (personal communication, 2013). To be clear, this avenue was not pursued;

rather the students held a certain respect from their peers and many AI partnership school leaders, including myself.

For me, EdStake was an amazing moment where I witnessed the students of the AI partnerships becoming activists, instigated by the example by their counterparts where students collectivism (Finnish and Norwegian) pushed back against the political machinery that was trying to make them compliant with a neoliberal future defined by scarcity and precarity, in this case *Future Ready*. As a school leader EdStake represented an effort by the students in the context of their heterogeneity to speak back to the homology that was being inscribed within the education architectures demanding progress and efficiency. These systems were the capitalist machines shutting down difference to prescribe a "future ready" narrative for students. These students moved beyond determinism described by Berardi (2017) as "a political strategy that aims to introduce causal chains in the world and particularly in the social" (p. 12). Well inscribed by the determinism of the Statisticon, but moved by the rights of the Finnish and Norwegian students to organize and have political power in their education (both countries have active national student political bodies, both at the secondary and post-secondary levels of education), the Albertan students organized to protest their right to be heard and recognized by government. Becoming other on the AI partnership sojourns had led to "chaotic vibrations" (Berardi, 2017, p. 14) and moved the Alberta students to stare in the mirror of the Statisticon and disrupt the machine predetermining their behavior as "good", "compliant" students. As Berardi (2017) described, "the ways to react politically and react back to their impotency of subjectivity would be the emotional reactivation of the hidden potencies of the social organism, the Occupy movement of

2011" (p. 23) for instance. This excursion is perhaps an offering where the student subjectivities within the AI partnerships were disrupted.

Conclusion

As I looked back through the assessment excursions from the participants at the More Than Your Evidence summit, to the work on the Values Frameworks, and finally the student protests of EdStake, I realized the multiple ways my leadership had been disrupted. As with previous excursions describing my shifting subjectivities as school leader, I resisted being positioned as someone who was seeking the ideal school within the apparatuses of the Statisticon that continued to be driven by the OECD. For example, I wondered if the Iceland youth summit and the call for students to claim a schizo-space that allowed them to be "more than your evidence" was little more than an episodic murmur within a saturated ecology of the global education reform movement. So too, I was anxious about the viability of the Values Framework research initiative, and the degree to which it simply allowed schools to adapt to an inevitability of the growing Statisticon. Yet, I shared the Deleuzian sensibility drawn from Berardi (2017) that both the *present* of the cognitive capitalism we inhabit and the *future* are a heterogeneity—they are not the *one*; they are the *many*.

Against my desire as a "disrupted leader and a leader of disruption", I share the caution that ultimately "education is a vehicle for managing the danger of immanence" (Cole, 2012, p. 253), while remaining a site of capital formation. Against a majoritarian language that attempted to locate and fix *a great school for all*, I have illustrated how students, teachers, and school leaders in the partnership schools offered alternative

narratives that are best thought of as being beyond coherent critiques of repressive testing regimes or affects driven by resistances to intense surveillance machines (i.e., graduation requirements in STEM, difference defined by honour roll, vocational *vs.* academic streams). Instead, the schizoanalysis considered what the partner participants created in the networks of schools as expressions of "that age-old tension between the addiction to order, or sets of orderings that mobilize and stratify the real in time and space, and the fluid juices of the Chaosmos" (Cole, 2012, p. 253). This assessment excursion offered opportunities and experimentations for alternatives to current mechanisms of human capital formation now widely accepted as accountability.

Chapter 9

A Hope for Liveable Worlds

> The society that is liquid in theory continues to be lumpy in practice. (Fourcade, 2016, p. 188)

In this final chapter I refocus on my dissertation problematic and revisit the adventures of thought this work has suggested for reimagining disruptive school leadership within the constellation of the performative instrumentalities that shape the landscape of Alberta schools. What began with the intention of evaluating the successes and failures of the Alberta International partnerships has morphed into a reimagining and re-enactment of the contemporary education project, particularly as it applies to the role of school leadership.

More than any one filament that offers possibility and hope for the seemingly intractable challenges that herald the creation of "a great school for all," I offer the promise demonstrated by students working through the spaces they shared with their teachers and school leaders at the juncture of intersection of global neo-liberal education reforms. While I acknowledge that this intersection in Alberta's contemporary promises and predicaments calls for critical approaches that open new spaces for contestation about educational research (Reyes, Charteris, Nye, & Mavropoulou, 2018), I remain committed to navigating the culture of trepidation, fear, and silence that permeates the halls and offices of school leaders. I continue with a sense of hope as we work through the "wicked problems" (Reyes et al., 2018; p. 286) of traversing the frozen future offered by the contemporary neoliberal education reform agenda.

As a triadic subject working through the many unassimilable encounters that are

now narrative traces from the previous chapters, I chose the marker of "disruptive leadership" as I worked through the quiet desperation that characterizes too much of our current school leadership practice and policy. I am not naïve to believe that suggesting a disruption of leadership and to experiment with a leadership of disruption will not be met with dismay, suspicion, and perhaps even not-so-veiled punitive consequences. However, I am more convinced than ever that neither impotence nor omnipotence is the way forward. Moving beyond moral callings that gesture the possibility of transcendence rounded in the immanence of liberation, I hope this study offers a brittle promise of world making that momentarily locates and mobilizes the courage to engage in dangerous thought and action—a gift offered by students within the AI partnership excursions. The remnants that follow as a "conclusion" are not to inscribe me as a scholar of schizoanalysis or as an iconic representation of a disruptive leader. Instead I have found a promise in this work, a sentiment I borrow from a friend and scholar Dennis Shirley who worked alongside the AI partnerships as an external evaluator, someone who continued to implore educators to seek ways to counter the OECD agenda by striving to advance educational development with integrity (Shirley, 2017). In this respect, I offer disruptive leadership in the spirit shared by Donna Haraway as the moral imperative of critical thought, "not for the easy frisson of transgression, but for the hope of 'livable worlds' " (Haraway, 1994 p. 60).

Sharing the Offerings/Sufferings of Disruption

Disrupting leadership in this era of Guattari's (2000) Integrated World Capitalism (IWC) requires transversal manoeuvres (such as the AI partnership work of including

students in school leadership activities), to refute students, teachers, and leaders as fixed coherent subjects who would unseat embedded relations of power thereby achieving a form of transformation. Following Guattari (2008), "it's never a question of proposing an alternative model. But on the contrary, of trying to articulate alternative processes when they exist" (p. 132). The partnerships were merely an invitation to *act* and *improvise* (Wallin, 2013) by employing transversal excursions. These transversal excursions operated as tools "used to open hitherto closed logics and hierarchies" (Genosko, 2002, p. 78). Thus

> transversality became a tool for liberating the expressive potentials of institutional life. More specifically, as with the experimentations of Guattari at la Borde, the AI partnerships operationalized transversality towards a desedimentation of subject roles, and the universalization of institutional semiotics informing institutional subjectivizing processes. (Wallin, 2013, p. 40)

From Guattari (1995b), I posit that by allowing students, teachers, and school leaders to confront new materials of expression, they additionally experienced new complexes of subjectivation. New incorporeal universes of reference were opened up, allowing for processes of resingularization, a reordering of the self and the relation to the world (Guattari, 1995b). Through such a pragmatic and aesthetic reconfiguration one creates new modalities of subjectivity in the same way an artist creates new forms from a palette (Guattari, 1995b, p. 7). Just as La Borde clinic was a site of resingularization (O'Sullivan, 2001), so did (in certain instances) the learning experiments and performance encounters taken up within the AI partnership act as comparable sites of experimentation.

This speaks to the continual challenge faced within schools and society, namely we actually desire our own oppression. It is critical to examine how desire circulates in school assemblages so that we might face the problematic that most teachers and school leaders are more than content to remain within a state of status quo that requires little or no thinking, just compliance. This, however, is not indicative of the teachers and school leaders that entered the AI partnerships. Carefully chosen by their teacher associations, school jurisdictions, and school leaders, AI teachers and school leaders were committed to questioning their practices and their habitual responses within the education systems. However, this in no way ensured that the partnerships and the participants included chose to experiment or engage in the dangerous thinking necessary to escape the disciplinary impacts of surveillance and control, nor elude the modulating forces of *designer capitalism* (jagodzinski, 2010).

Inherent in this analysis is the admission that for many educators there exists either a lack of responsibility or freedom to engage with students in meaningful ways. The opportunity of moving past this is by reconnecting teacher and school leader desire to encounter students as possibilities for hope and hope for possibilities. School leaders and teachers often declared that there is no space for school leader or teacher as *becoming* in the current milieu of the Statisticon where accountability and outcomes-based performance measures were placed on them, dictating how they interacted with students in their classrooms and schools. Teachers spoke of the joy they had in working with students during extracurricular activities, when they were free to enjoy the relationships unharnessed from their roles as organized performers. Ironically, it was with the Finnish partners that this became the most apparent, as they do not engage with students through

extra-curricular means. They lamented their reality and expressed their envy that their Canadian counterparts had unique relationships with students that seemed to manifest during extracurricular activities, where teachers and students shared common interests and passions. In fact, many Finnish schools adopted and implemented school-wide activities that attempted to build upon the emotional potentialities afforded by extracurricular initiatives to establish space for affect in their schools. It was agreed upon by many of the AI partner teacher and school leader participants that feeling free to embrace "teacher as becoming" often occurred outside of the traditional classroom walls during times beyond normalized instructional routines.

Taking *a Futures Becoming* as Far as it Can Go

> Only in the trial and error of conduct may a body discover the encounters, affects and relations that most reliably enhance its health in experience. (Duff, 2014, p. 188)

Throughout this dissertation I took up the challenges and tools offered by Deleuze and Guattari's schizoanalysis to map the terrain of education, in particular the contemporary landscape of school leadership. Bracketed as I was as a triadic subject, mobilizing schizoanalysis as a tool for mapping desire-production, I attempted to ascertain the various blockages and flows, or lines of flight, available within complex, inconsistent, and contradictory systems in the education milieu I inhabited. My efforts to help schools "be better" by allowing spaces for metastabilities (Simondon, 1994) in the context of education can be characterized in a similar manner to Cameron Duff's engagement with Deleuze's tools in the health care sector. Duff (2014) made an

important contribution in drawing on a Deleuzian "transcendental empiricism" that problematizes the construction of a body being "healthy" by illustrating how:

> subjectivity and embodiment ought to be regarded as assemblages of the inside and the outside, of forces and processes distributed in multiple, dynamic and recursive relations. Nature and culture, body and world, inside and outside can no longer be regarded as ontologically distinct and separable entities. (Duff, 2014, p. xii)

Duff (2014) suggests that in a "Deleuzian perspective, health may be characterised as a discontinuous process of affective and relational becoming in which the quality of life is advanced in the provision of new affective sensitivities and new relational capacities" (p. xiii). Extrapolating from the sentiment of a continuous *relational becoming* in the trajectories of affects and relations, the project of helping schools become "better" (as defined by the naïve aspirations of a great school for all) helped to stabilize and destabilize the fixed framing of my subjectivity and role into the unfolding of this dissertation. In this respect this dissertation and the project of "disrupting leadership—a leadership of disruption" echoes an ethics and methodology to school improvement that I shared with Duff's (2014) efforts. Applying his Deleuzian approach to health care, Duff (2014) suggests:

> However, my purpose is less concerned with getting Deleuze "right" than with the dedicated and pragmatic application of his concepts. The goal is to extract particular "tendencies" present in Deleuze's concepts, and then put them to work in the analysis of select health problems, to "take them as far as they can go." (Massumi as cited in Duff, 2014, p. 11)

Duff's reference to Massumi's invocation taking it as far as it can go was compelling to me in my ethics of disruptive leadership. In my work, the schizoanalysis was fundamentally diagrammatic through the recounting of the excursions through leadership, curriculum, and assessment, resisting any attempt to provide a "formula" or "model" for school leadership (Buchanan, 2014). As these excursions, as adventures, have illustrated, it remained imperative to accept that, according to Deleuze and Guattari (1983), connections occur in multiple ways, beyond local and global machines and their forces at work. As I thought of my shifting subjectivities, I remained drawn to the sentiment that "schizoanalysis is about resisting those normalizations that reterritorialize theory, or if you will, [it] is about keeping theoretical understandings of the terrain of education open, immanent and outlandish" (Thompson, 2013, para. 1).

A key feature, while perhaps naively included in the design of the AI partnerships, was the uptake of the concept or practices of transversality which, for Guattari (2011) inherently produced chaosmosis[33] which is "linked to [the] risk of plugging outside of sense, outside of constituted structures" (p. 27). This was seen throughout the partnerships with the attempts to reduce hierarchical structures of leadership by including students in school decisions, having AI participants take up Wallin's (2011) challenge and "twisting [of] Spinoza, that we do not yet know how a life might go" (Wallin, 2011, p. 297). As Guattari (2011) shrewdly discerned, the subjectivities of the AI partnership participants, students, teachers, school leaders, and

[33] According to Guattari (2011) "chaosmosis: always implies that a process of singularization may arise; it may approach the issue from new angles, and may create fluctuations that produce a different kind of equilibrium, a different kind of order. It's what Ilya Prigogine and Isabelle Stengers call 'fluctuations far from equilibrium'. In other words, the 'formations of the unconscious' appear here as something that may possibly be produced, found, articulated, and assembled, and not something to be sought, rediscovered, or recomposed on the basis of universes of subjectivity (p. 382).

teacher union officials were deeply implicated within the mechanisms of both Foucault's (1972) disciplined institutions and Deleuze's (1990) control society as "components of subjectification that coexist with one another" (p. 27). This echoes the initial observations in Chapter 1 that school leaders had assumed subjectivities that were simultaneously impotent and omnipotent, leading to a conclusion that perhaps the concept of "leadership" was moribund. The continuously modulating forces of late capitalism at play throughout the partnership work suggested that participant leader, teacher, and student assemblages were often created through policy prolepsis, not necessarily policies implemented and actualized in the school sites.

In many ways, this past decade "while characterized as one of both reform and openness (of schools, markets, etc.) [has been] in reality one of stifling repression" (Reynolds & Webber, 2016, p. 3). Long-time advocate of school reform and research to assist teachers and principals with the professionalization of their practice, Richard Elmore (2012) has acknowledged that he does "not believe in the institutional structure of public schooling anymore" (para. 3), noting that his long-standing work has become "palliative care for a dying institution" (para. 3). Elmore (2012) went on to predict "a progressive dissociation between learning and schooling" (para. 3). This, from an academic whose life work and symbolic capital as an education reformer has been devoted to professionalizing teaching and leadership with a focus on the scalability of "best" practices. In this revelation Elmore (2012) stated that his enduring fidelity to scalability was misplaced and incorrect. In fact, it is processes of local, discrete manoeuvres that could have impact at the edges of a globally functioning educational system.

There was a certain naivety in the belief that by creating partnerships internationally, educational leadership would automatically be improved and we would see schools getting better. However "better" remains a problematic within the enclosures of the OECD and neoliberal reform agendas of school improvement efforts. It seems clear now that in the early stages of the partnership "getting better" was not going to disrupt the status quo or assure a better understanding of the underlying forces at work in educational development such as the policy prolepsis of practice standards, ambiguously defined curriculum reform, and the apparatus of the Statisticon. Also, it must be reinforced in an irony lost only to a few, that the original partner countries were those that had fared well on ISLAs, particularly PISA. Was there a sense of urgency to change leadership in schools where, quite frankly, things were already "very good" as measured by OECD standards? Until the students entered the scene, I would suggest nothing new was going to come about other than congenial visits or minor structural changes to bell and supervision schedules—"all changes to make schools a better version of yesterday" as one of our critical friends observed.

In fact, it is now quite apparent that much of the partnership work ultimately supported efforts of edu-preneurs that became entangled with the workings of the OECD by assisting with such projects as country evaluations of school leadership. In turn, these actions promoted the edu-preneurs' worldwide presence as experts in the school leadership domain. While these experts affirmed their commitments to idealistic goals of equity and espoused social justice, it seemed they had become part and parcel of the OECD machinic desires. So by way of logics, the AI partnership work was captured within the OECD machinery as a by-product. This is evidenced in much of the rhetoric

that seemed appropriated directly from the partnerships such as “a great school for all”, “equity through excellence”, and “students at the center of change”. Thus, the partnership work intent on reforming schools through local innovations and internationalism had, in fact, played into the reproduction of the politics of standardization and capitalist subjectivities such as those of the OECD, and in turn promoted a certain leadership subjectivity. However, it did seem that the school leaders had a heighted awareness of the global forces at play, and overall developed some skepticism about the edu-preneurs and their augmented connections to OECD. These sentiments were heard in the “backrooms” of the partnership and were never revealed truly in the public domain. Guattari (2011) gestures to the probability of this type of “capture” as he states:

> Let’s suppose that . . . the leader of this group struggling for a just cause . . . and at the same time there’s no device for any attempt to analyze what other types of investment are necessarily at work in the situation on the molecular level. In this case, what will inevitably happen is that, sooner or later, the best intentions, the most favorable power relations, will have an appointment with an experience of bureaucratization, an experience of power. Inversely, if the processes of molecular revolution are not taken up on the level of the real power relations (social, economic, and material power relations), they may begin to revolve around themselves as imploding processes of subjectivation, bringing about a despair. (p. 186)

In many instances, the awareness of the forces of internationalism bolstered the school leaders’ reserve and confidence to continue working at the school level where they

were connected, felt they might have impact, and were invested in molecular problematics. Again, this is not to suggest that merely focusing on the local necessarily led to lines of flight, deterritorialization or smooth spaces, as "molecular problematics are totally connected—both at the level of their repressive modulization and at the level of their liberating potentials— to the new kind of international market that has been established" (Guattari, 2011, p. 175). There were signals of both repression and capture into the grand leadership narrative, but there were also singularities of liberation from the normalized leadership subjectivities, a break from how school is imagined.

Throughout the AI partnership work there were numerous encounters that afforded school leaders a step beyond what I have characterized, inspired by Berlant (2011) as the current impasse of life, caught between institutions of enclosure and institutions modulating continuously through the post-Fordist, neo-liberal capitalist forces of societies of control. AI partnership participants established devices of molecular singularization and subject-group dynamism, which led to new collective forms of desire and mutating school leader, teacher, and student subjectivities. These disruptions or perturbations within the individual and group desire of the AI partnership participants signaled the Deleuze|Guattari concept of (re)singularization in motion. As discussed by Guattari in *Chaosmosis* (1995b):

> Nowadays we can consider that the way out of an impasse, whatever it may be, always implies that a process of singularization may arise, may approach the issue from new angles, and may create fluctuations that produce a different kind of equilibrium, a different kind of order. It's what Ilya Prigogine and Isabelle Stengers call "fluctuations far from equilibrium," "structures far from

> equilibrium." In other words, the "formations of the unconscious" appear here as something that may possibly be produced, found, articulated, and assembled, and not something to be sought, rediscovered, or recomposed on the basis of universes of subjectivity. (p. 382)

The AI school leaders and participants radically experimented forward through three excursions in leadership, curriculum, and assessment in the current global education milieu, to trouble current understandings of school life. However, it must be emphatically acknowledged that this did not suggest easily reproducible solutions, or that this might well have happened without the construct of the AI partnerships, but certainly aspects of the partnership work disrupted the subjectivities of the school leaders in both interesting events and non-events. It was rarely the "rich dialogue" of the partnership work that led to ruptures, but rather the actioning/experimenting/doing that led to fruitful insights and micro changes.

The AI partnership work brought perturbations to the traditional spaces of schooling that had often appeared rigid and hierarchical. The AI partnership work offered, especially with the students' involvement, new ways and styles of thinking that are best characterized as "semblances" (Massumi, 2011), rather than a recipe of change strategies. Reading back through the three excursions in leadership, curriculum, and assessment, the students played a critical role destabilizing and renewing possibilities for disrupting and reimagining leadership and life in schools. Taking up Massumi's (2011) sense of "style" as a bridge to mobilizing change, these were interruptions and interventions that should not be framed or privileged as creative innovations that will readily leverage scalable changes in schools, or that can be simplistically imported from

one to school to another. Rather, as an emerging group of systems designers informed by Deleuzian thought are suggesting, we ought to think of:

> creativity [a]s an act of deterritorialisation and this unpicking of the forces and flows that constitute a space, a territory, can go in different ways: it can disrupt and energise, it can "domesticate" or (to refer to another of Deleuze and Guattari's concepts) "reterritorialize." (Brasset & O'Reily, 2015, p. 31)

The acts of transversal boundary crossing outlined in this dissertation that displaced taken-for-granted assumptions and sometimes served to "undomesticate" our schools have supported the disruption of leadership in constructive ways. To reiterate, there was disruption in the AI partnerships when the participants and facilitators embraced experimentation and released themselves from fixed ideas of specific pathways, expectations, or outcomes. Many of the AI initiatives agitated and unsettled previous understandings of school leadership and life in schools, and shook the system temporarily to open spaces for *thinking* which, in turn, produced, often small, but new promises and possibilities. Given the completion of this dissertation and as I anticipated my future work as a school leader, I did not worry about the scale or intensity of the "disruption"—instead I took up the invitation of Massumi's aesthetic of a future *becoming* present, as a "thing felt" that:

> is fringed by an expanding thought-pool of potential that shades off in all directions. It's like a drop in the pool of life making ripples that expand infinitely around. William James spoke in those terms. He said experience comes in "drops." (Massumi, 2011, p. 51)

Moving beyond the 7 years of my involvement with the AI partnerships that mobilized my desires and psychic investments in school X, I remained subject to and subject of the molar and molecular forces that attempted to inscribe the role and the work of school leader. However, I was more convinced than ever that disrupting leadership through the invitation of multiple voices and possibilities articulated by each students and teachers every day was the radical trajectory forward. This is an invitation offered by an Alberta student at a public forum in Banff, Alberta at an AI partnership summit following a week with a contingent of Finnish students, teachers, and school leaders.

> I know at times we can be difficult or it might seem our problems are so many, but please just don't give up on us. (AI Partnership Student Public Forum, Banff Centre, 2015)

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Appendix A

Ethics Approval

3/20/2019

https://remo.ualberta.ca/REMO/sd/Doc/0/2994O8VH6A5KH45HDD68GBVK4B/fromString.html

Date: Study ID: Principal Investigator: Study Title: Study Supervisor

Notification: Outside of REB Mandate

March 11, 2019 Pro00089163 Penelope Stiles Disrupting Leadership: A Leadership of Disruption Jan Jagodzinski

Thank you for submitting this application for review. The project as described in this application has been reviewed and it has been determined that this project relies exclusively on publicly available information. Therefore it is outside of the mandate of the Research Ethics Board and does not require or qualify for human ethics review.

Sincerely,

Ubaka Ogbogu, LLB, BL, LLM, SJD Research Ethics Board 2

Note: This correspondence includes an electronic signature (validation and approval via an online system).