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Animating potential for intensities and becoming in writing: challenging discursively constructed structures and writing conventions in academia through the use of storying and other post qualitative inquiries

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ANIMATING POTENTIAL FOR INTENSITIES AND BECOMING IN WRITING: CHALLENGING DISCURSIVELY CONSTRUCTED STRUCTURES AND WRITING CONVENTIONS IN ACADEMIA THROUGH THE USE OF STORYING AND OTHER POST QUALITATIVE INQUIRIES

by

MARY CATHERINE GARLAND

A thesis submitted to the University of Plymouth
in partial fulfilment for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

PLYMOUTH INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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Animating potential for intensities and becoming in writing: challenging discursively constructed structures and writing conventions in academia through the use of storying and other post qualitative inquiries

by

'Chloe', 'Marys' and Friends

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(Please note that this is the original title page of the thesis submitted on 29th October 2021 for examination. The preceding title page is included here to adhere to the format required by the Doctoral College, which also required the acknowledgements page to be moved to precede the author's declaration.)

Acknowledgements

Whatever I write here will simply not be enough to thank all of my wonderful family and friends beside me as I live my dream of being a PhD student.

Sadly it is not possible to name everyone here, but you have all helped in more ways than you will ever know – thank you, thank you, thank you! x

Author's Declaration

At no time during the registration for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy has the author been registered for any other University award without prior agreement of the Doctoral College Quality Sub-Committee.

Work submitted for this research degree at the University of Plymouth has not formed part of any other degree either at the University of Plymouth or at another establishment.

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Signed *Mary Garland*

Date 31st January 2022

Dear Examiners and Readers,

You may be expecting the abstract here,

but, first, you are asked to read two stories…

'Chloe's'…

and

…'Mad Mary's'

…where the lines for this thesis

first intersect…

Chloe's Story

"Get up *now*, Chloe!"

"Why? What's 'appened?" I ask sleepily. Hannah's a pain – she's my twenty year old sister and thinks she knows everything.

"You've got college. You'll be late!" Oh great, fucking college. I only went for the interview to shut Hannah up. I even swore at that manager woman with the short dark hair – what was her name? Tina, Tracey – that was it. She still said I could start the next day – said I had to behave and I mustn't swear in college, but that I could join. It's my first day today - lucky me! Oh well, there's nothing else to do so I may as well go. I won't learn anything – I never do. I was kicked out of school last year, sent to a pre-sixteen class at another college, but I didn't go; they couldn't make me! The other people were awful; they didn't do any work – I couldn't concentrate even if I had wanted to.

"Chloe, come *on*!" I can't even think without Hannah interrupting!

I get out of bed in the room I share with Hannah and my seven year old sister Danielle, step over the toys and make-up covering the faded pink carpet, sort my hair out and search for some clothes: Hannah has clean jeans and a nice cream jumper in her drawer so I take those. I put my mascara, brown eye shadow and dark red lipstick on as heavily as I dare and then search for some food and money. I can't find either so I slam the door and begin the thirty minute walk to college. It's early and I don't see anyone on my estate – lucky them probably still in bed. On the main

road there are kids in different uniforms – the clever grammar school ones and the stupid ones like me.

Walking down the College drive, I look at the huge building ahead of me. My lessons will be in there: it's new this year, they said. So what? I thought anything would be better than school, but, suddenly I wish I was going there where I know people, where people are scared of me and where I can do what I like. The door opens and I take a deep breath before walking in. A man in a black uniform stops me:

"Can I see your ID please?"

"Who are you?" I ask – I think I do well not to say 'who the fuck are you?', but I'm gonna try not to get kicked out this time.

"College security," he says, "have you got your ID card please?"

"No, it's my first day." I have to give my name and wait while they check that I really am a student. I look around – there's a funny wooden owl on a stand and some boring pictures. Loads of people are hanging around – some must be students, others look old (probably staff); I hurt my neck trying to look up at a weird plane hanging from the ceiling: I hope I won't have to make anything like that! There are another two floors above this one: how will I find my way around?

"I can't see you on the system, Chloe. What course are you starting?" I bite my tongue as I try not to swear – I want to get as far as the classroom; I want to try and fit in:

"Sorry, I dunno, but Tracey's in charge." The man picks up a phone.

It's Hannah's fault I swear so much – she makes me angry - she needs to learn to stop interfering with my life. Since Mum left three years ago, Hannah's become

unbearable – she's always on at me – worse than Mum ever was. That was when my life changed.

"Okay, Chloe, that's fine," says the security guy putting the phone down, "you can go up to room P20."

"Thank you. Could you tell me where it is please?"

"I'll show you." It's actually quite nice when you're polite to someone and they help you. I do feel a bit nervous, if I'm honest. It's much bigger than school and I don't know anyone. At school everyone knew me – I could order the younger kids and my clasmates around… Most of the teachers were scared of me. I did what I wanted and no-one could stop me.

"Thank you very much," I say to the guy as he walks me to my classroom. So many stairs – isn't there a lift?!

I look at the other students waiting outside. Some look scared – just out of school like me, I suppose – others look older, more confident. They don't scare me. I may be small, but I can look after myself. No one messes with Chloe Blackwell.

"Come in, come in," says a woman from the classroom door who I assume is 'Mary'. She's not wearing a suit, but she looks smart. She's younger than that manager woman yesterday – maybe she won't be as fierce. She introduces herself as 'Mad Mary' and I wonder if she is… She wants us to play some stupid game putting an ajecktif or somethink beginning with the first letter of our first name in front of our name. Before that we have to repeat everyone else's ajecktif and name. I'll never remember – I'll look stupid in front of everyone. I don't even know what an ajecktif is – oh, someone else doesn't know either! I'm not the only stupid one here, but, suddenly, I can't help it, I find myself asking, "why the fuck are we doing this?" 'Mad

Mary' hesitates for a moment, but then says something stupid about it helping us to get to know each other. I don't want to get to know her or anyone else here, and I certainly don't want them getting to know me, but part of me does want to fit in so I mutter "okay" and go along with it. When it's my turn, I say I can't think of no ajecktif. Someone else, trying to look clever, suggests 'cheerful' so that's who I become: 'cheerful Chloe'. D'oh! My other classmates include 'tiny Tom' (he is tiny!), 'daring Deryn' (he might be fun!), and 'amazing Anna' (she's posh – what's she doing in a dump like this?). I switch off as Miss explains we're all going to do some crap test on a computer. At least I can work on my own – I hate having to talk to anyone.

Halfway through my stupid computer freezes and I suddenly hear myself saying, "Oh for fuck's sake!" The teacher is beside me in an instant. Fuck, I'm in trouble now: I just didn't want to have the start the fucking test again, but she won't understand that! Unbelievably, she just asks if I'm okay. How stupid: of course I'm not! If I was okay, I wouldn't be saying 'oh, for fuck's sake', would I? Can't she see the fucking computer's frozen and now I'll have to start the whole stupid test again? Without thinking, I'm shouting at the teacher:

"Fuck off!"

Realising what I've said, I run out as fast as I can. Mad Mary's already let me off saying fuck twice, there's no way I'll get away with it a third time! "Chloe?" I hear her call, not angrily, but I keep running – I need to get as far away as I can. Fuck, now what do I do? She'll tell that Tracey woman, and I'll be kicked out. Just when I thought I might give this place a try. Oh well, fuck 'em, it's done now, but, first, they'll have to find me!

I find the perfect hiding place in university grounds opposite the College. I hang around there hidden amongst the trees and some beautiful tiny blue flowers; no-one questions me and I start to relax, I'm invisible! But then students appear and I realise I'll have to face the music sometime. I walk back slowly, find the classroom again and walk in as if I've been there all the time. Amazingly, the teacher doesn't say anything about me swearing at her or walking out – she just helps me log back on. When she says she is going to get something, I believe her, and by the time my name is called sharply from the doorway, I'd almost forgotten what I'd done. How stupid! Of course I wasn't going to get away with telling a teacher to 'fuck off'; I feel sick as I follow Tracey to her office:

"Sit down, Chloe."

I do as I'm told for once, but I stare around the small room filled with boring looking folders trying to look as if I don't care; the only interesting things are a couple of photos on the desk. The children, probably hers, look about my age – I bet they have everything they want. They've got a mum for a start. I'm starving. How long until I can get out of this dump and try and find something to eat? I'll get £30 a week for being here…[1]

"What did I say to you yesterday, Chloe? You seem to have a very short memory from what I've heard from Mary."

I knew it – that teacher's split on me. I deny everything; I say Miss swore at me. But I am told to leave. I protest – I even sound all my letters like Miss:

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[1] This refers to Educational Maintenance Allowance paid to students aged sixteen to eighteen in full-time education at the time.

"Sorry, I really tried, but it just came out. I was angry with the computer. I won't do it again, I promise."

Tracey looks at me and just for a minute I think it'll be alright, but then she says: "Mary gave you at least two chances, Chloe. You were disruptive and rude. You're clearly not ready to be in a classroom. I can't let you stop everyone else from learning and you can't swear at my staff."

"Fuck you", I yell, "I'll do wha' I wan'!"

"Not here, you won't, Chloe. You've had more than enough chances: you are to leave this College right now. Go!"

Just like that. Tracey reckons she gave me a chance, but I've wasted it. She's right. The College ain't a bad place: the other students have no personality, but they might of been okay. Oh well, back home to Hannah until she finds somewhere else for me to go. At least I've hopefully got that teacher into trouble – teachers think they're above everyone - they deserve to be taught a lesson. I hate them all and the nicer they are and the more they let me get away with, the more I hate them.

"Is that you Chloe?" yells Hannah, "wha' you doin' 'ere this early?"

"Fuck off!" I shout as I run to the bedroom. I so wish it was my own room, but I've got it to myself right now. Fuck, Fuck, Fuck. Why do I always mess everything up? I started off so well – I was polite to the security man, I even joined in that fucking stupid game – cheerful Chloe huh! It was the fucking computer's fault and fucking mad Mary's fault. She didn't have to tell on me. If she can't deal with someone saying 'fuck' in her class, she shouldn't be a fucking teacher is what I say.

"Chloe? Wha' 'appened?"

"They kicked me out, whadya think 'appened? Leave me alone!"

"Oh, Chloe. Why can't you just be good for five minutes? Wha' ya gonna do now? You can't 'ang around 'ere all day. I won' 'ave it." As usual, Hannah blames me. Everyone always blames me even when it's not my fault or even when I've tried to be good.

"It wasn't my fault," I say defensively.

"Yea right, whose was it then?"

"Everyone was mean to me, the computer lost all my test, the teacher's crap and that manager's nasty. She kicked me out."

"Come on, Chloe, she wouldn' 'ave kicked ya out for no reason."

"I swore at the computer and that teacher said I swore at 'er."

"Did you?"

"No, course not. She lied"

"Right then, come on."

"What? Where are we goin?"

"Goin to sort this out, aren't I, can't have fucking teachers lying abou' my kid sister."

FUCK. "Just leave it, Hannah, it was my fault as usual, okay, I swore at the teacher…"

Mad Mary's Story

Waking up early, preparing to face the challenge of my first class of sixteen–eighteen year old NEETs.[2] I feel a mixture of excitement and nerves. I recall the final words of my PGCE[3] tutor, 'enjoy it!', as I left the safe confines of the University, my life as a trainee over, theoretically ready to teach solo… And I have been enjoying it, but, until now I have been teaching adults under the Train to Gain scheme:[4] adults working in factories, care homes and hospitals. There have been one or two reluctant students, but, being taught in their workplace, often on their own, offers little scope for 'challenging behaviour'. It is the thought of not being able to control a class that makes me nervous today. I have not taught this age group since I finished my PGCE course nearly eighteen months ago, but I rose to the challenge then and I will do so again today… Surely being an actual lecturer, rather than a trainee, will give me the necessary authority to control teenagers???

Time to get up! I go in search of my boys - Eliot and Joe. Eliot is in his usual place on the sofa. I stroke him; he follows me to the kitchen for food. I can't find Joey, but this is not unusual – he is probably just under the tree. I shower and dress putting on jeans and a top initially as I have got to go down the garden and hopefully get Joe in! Yes, there he is, curled up in a ball – he has not even heard me approach.

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[2] The term 'NEETs', first used in 1996, describes young people not in education, employment, or training (www.oxford.universitypressscholarship.com).
[3] Postgraduate Certificate in Education.
[4] Train to Gain was a Government initiative (discontinued in 2010) enabling employees without Literacy and/or Numeracy qualifications at level 2 (considered equivalent to GCSE grade C or above) to be taught at their workplace.

"Hi Joey," I murmur quietly picking him up. I hold him close and carry him inside. In the kitchen, I feed him, stroke him and then go back to my bedroom to get dressed in the clothes I chose yesterday; clothes I feel make me look like a lecturer and that I feel confident wearing: my smart, formal grey trousers and my long-sleeved black top with white at the top. I clip the sides of my hair back and look in the mirror. Do I look like a lecturer? I think so! I have the right balance between formal and approachable. Stroking each kitty in turn, telling them I will be home later, I leave them more food before calling out "'bye Eli, 'bye Joey" as I leave the house. I get into my small, blue car on the drive and begin the thirty minute journey to work.

I turn into the College's drive – sunrays on my face and arms can only be a positive sign. We are not allowed to park without a permit, but it is so early that there is no-one in the security hut – it is so much quicker to park here than to do 'park and ride', or 'park', wait ages for a bus, 'ride' and then walk...

My heart beats faster as I approach the building. Don't worry, you'll be fine, I tell myself taking some deep breaths as I walk through the doors. The office is empty; I have already prepared my materials so I spend the time printing and photocopying, and running through my planned session in my mind, yet again.

"Hi Mary, how are you? Big day today, you've got Rise Up, haven't you?"

I turn around and greet Phil trying to look more relaxed than I feel: Rise Up is the name given to the course for sixteen-eighteen year old NEETs many of whom have been excluded from schools because of their behaviour. Its very name sends shivers down my spine, but Phil and I were on the same teacher training course and did our first placement together so there is no need to 'act' with him; I am conscious,

however, that he now has an additional year's experience of teaching this age group and I do not want to appear nervous.

"Can I have a quick word, Mary?" The section manager, Tracey, appears at my side. Desperately trying to hide my nervousness, I say quickly, "Yes, of course." Tracey sits down:

"There's a new student starting in Rise Up today – Chloe. She was a bit mouthy in her interview, but she's assured me she wants to learn. Let me know how she gets on this morning." My stomach turns over. I wasn't expecting this. Knowing there is definitely a potentially challenging student in the group is much, much worse than knowing only that there could be one.

"Is that okay?" Realising I have been silent for too long, I say quickly, "yes, of course, it's fine." Who am I kidding?!

With twenty minutes before the start of the class, I gather my resources, take a few deep breaths and prepare to meet Rise Up. Not for the first time I wonder why I am putting myself through this! My plan, once I had completed the PGCE course, was to teach German in Adult Education. I was never going to teach in a FE college: I enrolled in one aged eighteen, but left at lunchtime! What had compelled me to not only apply for this job, but, accept it? There is no backing out now – the students will be here shortly. Please, please, please let it be okay…

Standing in the classroom, I organise my materials and try to look busy. Thoughts are running through my head the whole time: you can do this, you have been fine before and you will be fine now; in two hours this class will be over! I take a deep breath and open the door: the students come in – some looking nervous, some relaxed, one or two actually look quite defiant, but they could be covering up their

nerves (like me!). One of those is probably Chloe… Oh, they are waiting for me to say something! I am the lecturer; I have to start the session… Hopefully sounding less nervous than I feel, I greet the class, introduce myself, and explain the first activity: introduce yourself using an adjective with the same letter as your first name, but, first, repeat all the adjectives and names already given. I had taken this idea from one of the teachers who I had observed teaching a similar cohort in one of my PGCE placement colleges: it had worked well. Knowing this, and that it is an appropriate activity, gives me confidence. One student, not unexpectedly, asks what an adjective is. I am pleased that I remember to invite other students to answer (although I must drop the ends of my words more to sound more approachable) and hope my relief is not obvious when one of the boys explains an adjective is a describing word; I was worried that my question would be ignored. I start the activity by looking at the student nearest me and saying: "I'm mad Mary," (I would later regret this choice of adjective!), "who are you?" when I hear:

"Why the fuck are we doing this?" Uh-oh, what do I say now? My first challenge! I think quickly and, sounding much calmer than I feel, reply:

"So we can all get to know each other; it will help me remember your names." The girl, who has short, blonde hair, must be Chloe – if not, there are two potentially 'challenging' students in the room! I pray that she will accept my answer and join in: hopefully concealing my relief as she mutters "okay", and I repeat my opening sentence.

After the activity, I feel a sense of achievement: everyone participated, and as a group, we managed to go round the table getting everyone's name (and adjective) right, and the girl who I now know is Chloe joined in. But, she did say 'fuck' and I did

not comment. Too late now. Oh well, she was not swearing at anyone and she may not have joined in so easily if I had told her off. Right, move on quickly, get them settled at the computers and then the pressure is hopefully off me. Poor things – I can't believe they have to take the English diagnostic assessment on their first day! Trying to reassure them I present the assessment as 'answering some questions on a computer so we can see what you know and what we need to help you with during the course'. I still do not sound like the students, but I worry they will think I am imitating them as I try not to sound the ends of my words too much. I am suddenly very conscious of my voice and that they might think I sound 'posh'. I do not think I am, but I know my PGCE peers who spoke more like the students had better relationships with them. I am still not familiar with the assessment website, but I have got the temporary login and password and just hope that nothing goes wrong…

One hour after the start of the lesson everyone is quietly working through the assessment and I start to relax: this is okay, I should not have worried so much. However, the silence is suddenly broken:

"Oh for fuck's sake."

Chloe! What do I do? I move over to her and say quietly:

"Are you okay?"

"Fuck off!" I stand there, heart thudding faster and faster, louder and louder, knowing I have to think very quickly and knowing I cannot ignore the language this time as it was directed at me and I cannot have the whole class thinking they can swear at me, and suddenly a line from a PGCE behaviour workshop comes to mind, just when it is needed most:

"I don't swear at you, Chloe, so I don't expect you to swear at me." Will it work in practice? I hope so! My palpitations continue: I am expecting to be told to 'f*** off' again, but, Chloe simply storms out of the room. I am not sure which is worse! The other students look nonplussed and carry on with their work. What should I do now? Where is the real teacher? When will I be rescued from this horrible, horrible situation? Oh, I am the teacher, no-one is going to come and help…

I want to run away, but I cannot leave the room. For the first time, I feel very alone. It is entirely my responsibility to handle this situation correctly, but I do not know what the correct thing to do is. I look at the clock: it is a little early for a break. I take a deep breath and tell myself I cannot do anything until then and then I will go and, and do what? I am going to have to tell Tracey what I have done. What will she say? I am afraid of having done the wrong thing, of having failed the first test by not being able to handle a sixteen year old girl. I am more than twice her age – what is wrong with me? "Okay, everyone, time to have a short break," I say, trying to conceal my relief and my fear for, although I can now go and get some advice, I will also have to admit what has happened. When the last student leaves the room, I lock the door and go in search of Tracey. Fortunately, she is at her desk: I knock, she looks round and asks, "Alright? How's it going?" I am suddenly unable to speak; I stand there desperately trying to hide the fact that I am fighting back tears now that I am out of the classroom, and fervently wishing I had not come straight here. You are a lecturer, I remind my self, you cannot cry in front of your new manager! Tracey looks at me impatiently and demands to know what has happened:

I utter Chloe's name: Chloe has happened…

Looking annoyed, Tracey says, "well, something's obviously happened, but, I can't help, if you don't tell me what it is." I realise I have got to say something – I am making the situation worse by acting like a total idiot – what is wrong with me? There are a thousand words going round my head, but I cannot get any of them to come out. I have to regain my teacher persona very, very quickly. I take a deep breath:

"Sorry … Chloe … Chloe stormed out of the classroom."

"Why?"

It is the obvious response, but so hard to answer. I take another deep breath: "She swore at me and when I told her not to, she left the room." There, I have said it. Now I just have to wait for the axe to fall.

"What did she say?" Oh no, what do I say. Do I use the 'f' word in front of Tracey?

"She told me to 'f off'."

 "Why?"

"Chloe was doing the assessment on the computer and I heard her say 'oh, for f***'s sake' so I asked her if she were okay and she told me to 'f off' and walked out."

Tracey sighs and says, "right, that's it, she can't speak to my staff like that. I'll go and talk to her." I panic: the whole class will think I am stupid now - the manager has to come and deal with a student because I cannot handle her. My first class and I cannot cope. I feel a total failure. I want to say 'no', but I know I have no choice.

We walk to the classroom: all the students are patiently waiting outside, except Chloe. I let the students in. Tracey says quietly: "Come and find me if Chloe comes back," pats me on the arm, and walks away. What does that gesture mean? Does it mean Tracey has noticed how pathetically shaken I am? I feel even worse now. I

take yet another deep breath and face the students again. About half an hour later, just as I am beginning to relax, Chloe returns. I cannot say anything; I help her log on before telling the students I am just going to get something from the office. Tracey is not there: I panic; I go into the staffroom and am relieved to see Phil. Dropping my act, I say:

"I've messed everything up. One of the students swore at me and stormed out."

"Hey, that's not your fault. Have you told Tracey?" I explain that she asked me to come and get her when Chloe came back, but she is not in her room.

"Don't worry, go back to the class and I'll send Tracey along when she comes back."

"Thanks, Phil," I say gratefully.

Will looks over, "you okay to go back?"

"Yes, I'm fine, but thank you," I lie, anxious not to lose face completely.

Walking back to the classroom, I tell my self that I have just got to go back in, and carry on as if nothing has happened. I enter the room – the students are still working on their assessments. My mind wanders as I wonder what made Chloe swear at me, what I could have done differently to avoid the incident, how I could have handled it so that Chloe stayed in the room…

"Chloe! Come here!" I cannot look at Chloe or Tracey (she sounds so authoritative – will I ever be able to be like that?) so I pretend to be busy with another student. Hopefully hiding my relief that Chloe is now out of the room, at least for a while, I finish the class. I feel sorry for the students at having witnessed the incident; they are a nice group. I try to act like nothing has happened as I say goodbye, and see you

on Thursday. I go back to the staffroom and wait, for the second time today, for the axe to fall.

I do not have to wait long. My heart pounds again as Tracey comes in and sits down next to me:

"Lovely girl: she swore at me too."

"Oh," is all I can manage.

"I need you to complete a misconduct form. I've told her I'm withdrawing her place and she must leave the college premises immediately."

My heart sinks. It is worse than I thought – Chloe has lost her place because of my inability to handle the situation. I risk saying: "She'll settle down, it's only her first day," meaning 'I'm sure I'll learn how to handle her better.'

"It's too late for that; I warned her in her interview that I wouldn't tolerate behaviour like that. We gave her a chance, but she's blown it."

I blurt out, "I didn't handle her right."

Tracey looks at me and says: "This isn't your fault, Mary; it's Chloe's fault. There is something I need to ask you though: did you swear at her?"

"No! I asked her if she was okay and, after she swore at me, I just said that I don't swear at her so I don't expect her to swear at me."

"Okay, I didn't think you would have, but Chloe said you did so obviously I have to ask. Are you okay?" I say yes although I am not. Tracey looks at me again and says: 'Sometimes, students just aren't ready to learn. She'll probably come back in a few years when she's grown up a bit and can control her behaviour." As I begin to realise

that Tracey doesn't hold me responsible, she leaves the room and I feel partly reassured, but also slightly sick that I was the first lecturer Chloe met and her college course is now over. I find the misconduct form that Tracey requested. Once I have done that, I will reflect on the incident in my reflective journal: that usually helps me see what I could have done differently.

Sitting alone at my desk, my thoughts are racing: you should not be a lecturer, Chloe took the brave first step of walking through the doors of the College and you ruined it for her; if she had had anyone else first, she would still be on the course… "Hey" comes a friendly voice – Will – as if he can read my mind, "don't worry about it, she just didn't want to be here."

"But she did," I say, "she came to class today and I ruined it for her."

"No, she ruined it for herself," says Will firmly. "You're not so important that you have the power to ruin someone's life." I frown, Will's right, I'm not important, I don't have power over anyone…

"But, because of me, she's having to leave College."

"No, she's leaving because she swore at a lecturer and at the section manager." Will de-personalises the situation and I know he is right. The fact she also swore at Tracey, the manager, takes the responsibility away from me, but, if I had not reported it…

"It wasn't personal, you know, you just happened to be the lecturer in front of her at the time. It could have been me or Phil: it wouldn't have mattered who it was." Will's words reassure me that maybe I haven't done anything too seriously wrong, but doesn't everyone, especially a sixteen year old, deserve a second chance?

Abstract

Written for everyone ever denied the opportunity of fulfilling their academic potential, this is 'Chloe's story'. Using *composite selves*, a phrase chosen to indicate multiplicities and movement, to story both the initial event leading to 'Chloe's' immediate withdrawal from a Further Education college and an imaginary second chance to support her whilst at university, this Deleuzo-Guattarian (2015a) 'assemblage' of post qualitative inquiries offers challenge to discursively constructed structures and writing conventions in academia. Adopting a posthuman approach to theorising to shift attention towards affects and intensities always relationally in action in multiple 'assemblages', these inquiries aim to decentre individual 'lecturer' and 'student' identities. Illuminating movements and moments quivering with potential for change, then, hoping thereby to generate second chances for all, different approaches to writing are exemplified which trouble those academic constraints by fostering inquiry and speculation: moving away from 'what is' towards 'what if'.

With the formatting of this thesis itself also always troubling the rigid Deleuzo-Guattarian (2015a) 'segmentary lines' structuring orthodox academic practice, imbricated in these inquiries are attempts to exemplify Manning's (2015; 2016) 'artfulness' through shifts in thinking within and around an emerging PhD thesis. As writing resists organising, the verb *thesisising* comes into play to describe the processes involved in creating this always-moving thesis. Using 'landing sites' (Arakawa and Gins, 2009) as a landscaping device, freely creating emerging 'lines of flight' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a) so often denied to students forced to adhere to strict academic conventions, this 'movement-moving' (Manning, 2014) opens up opportunities for change as in Manning's (2016) 'research-creation'. Arguing for a moving away from writing-representing towards writing-inquiring, towards a writing 'that *does'* (Wyatt and Gale, 2018: 127), and toward writing as immanent doing, it is hoped to animate potential for intensities and becoming in writing, offering opportunities and glimmerings of the not-yet-known.

Pre-Prelude: A Reader's Guide

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29th October 2021
</div>

Dear examiners and readers,

Thank you for kindly accepting the invitation to read and examine this thesis. Introducing its main characters and themes as well as some of its key concepts and practices, this letter is written to offer you a guiding light. It would have been folded into a paper aeroplane with 'please read me now' written on its side,[5] and placed after 'Chloe' and 'Mad Mary's' stories (which you have hopefully just read) in a hard-bound copy of the thesis, but, with covid-19 still essentially holding us hostage in our homes, it has sadly not been possible to do this…

Sitting here assembling these pages one way, then another, and another, experiencing a sense of 'shaping occur[ring] in the real time of the event' (Manning, 2020: 188), a plan or map of the thesis would be wonderful. Such a map, though, would be inconsistent with the nature of these post qualitative inquiries hoping to glimpse 'the not-yet, at the very edges where thought and practice meet' (Manning, 2013: 35). There is a calling therefore to engage both with the concept of 'research-creation'[6] in Erin Manning's (2016; 2020) work in which 'writing is an act, alive with the rhythms of uncertainty and the openings of a speculative pragmatism that engages with the force of the milieu where transversality is at its most acute' (Manning, 2016: 42),[7] and with 'artfulness' (Manning, 2015, 2016): 'an immanent directionality, felt when a work does its work…This modality is beyond the human' (Manning, 2015: 64). Inspired also by Elizabeth St. Pierre's (2019; 2021) encouragement to experiment freely without having a plan, this seeing what emerges, this process which has come to be thought of as *thesisising* – the verb signifying the movement within this processual activity – is really enjoyable.

You will read about my thesisising in some detail as it has become a significant part of this thesis especially as its writing moves toward immanent doing, often eluding categorisation into the folders once created for it. Refusing to be any one category - writing practices or

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[5] The significance of this will become clear!

[6] This term is understood as being 'the term given, in Canada, to academic work that is evaluated both for a creative, usually artistic contribution , and a written, more theoretical or philosophical one' (Manning, 2016: 11).

[7] Incidentally, for Manning (2013: 34), '[t]echnicity is the associated milieu of technique' 'energized with all the forces of movement-moving' (ibid.); it is here expressivity makes felt and where the not-yet-known might be glimpsed.

methodologies or ethics - insisting on being all three, on being multiple, several files consequently remain outside of those folders, their future within this emerging Deleuzo-Guattarian 'assemblage' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a; Deleuze and Parnet, 2012) uncertain. It is perhaps not surprising, then, that the need for appendices has arisen. In an interview with Donna Haraway (2000), Thyrza Nichols Goodeve says,

> [t]here's this quote I saved from the 1985 'A Manifesto for Cyborgs' where you say, 'Why should our bodies end at the skin or include at best other beings encapsulated by skin.' (pages 86-87)

With Haraway, then, and with bodies never fully formed, this thesis-'assemblage' flows beyond its expected limits,[8] refusing to be contained, insisting on space-making: seeing no bodies, only edgings and contourings, and thus all its writings, especially the ones moved to the edges, the ones in danger of interrupting the flow, but, nonetheless imbricated in this 'assemblage', emerging within and influencing its emergence, there is no doubt this would be a very different thesis-'assemblage' without them. Within these writings, for example, are attempts at creating a 'Body without Organs' (BwO) (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a; 2015b): its workings engaging themselves with the edgings and contourings; incidentally that process has been highly influential in writing within a Deleuzo-Guattarian universe: bringing to life that '[c]oncepts are not waiting for us ready-made' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015c: 5) that '[[p]hilosophers] must no longer accept concepts as a gift, not merely purify and polish them, but first *make* and *create* them, present them and make them convincing' (ibid.). Requiring crafting, it is important to 'awaken a dormant concept and to play it again on a new stage' (ibid.: 83). Despite its significance, perhaps because of its focus on the one concept, written before it was realised that you cannot have one concept without another, this particular text was always on the edge of the continually changing 'assemblage' and has since consequently shifted into the appendices (Appendix Stringendo) where it sits with a couple of other writings which for different reasons[9] also find themselves there on the edges of this collection of post qualitative inquiries. Incidentally, defining Gilles Deleuze and Félix

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[8] A later 'Mary' editing this, aware her appendices are not appendices in the traditional sense, justifies this by adopting Manning's (2016) interest in '[a] speculative pragmatism…[which] is…committed to what escapes the order, and interested in what this excess can do. It implicitly recognises that knowledge is invented in the escape, in the excess' (p. 38). Knowing a speculative approach is adopted in her *thesisising*, this 'Mary' does justice to this by leaving the appendices in place… Incidentally, the footnotes also write against their traditional use: as this footnote exemplifies, footnoting as a process is part of the process of *thesisising*.

[9] *Appendix Accelerando* is primarily in the appendices because the way in which it discusses ethics is contrary to the manner in which ethical conversations usually arise in these inquiries (*A More Serious Intralude* offers more detail around this); *Appendix Allegretto-Largo-Allegro* is in the appendices because of its focus on the pervasiveness of Covid-19 in this always-becoming thesis. Adapted from two conference papers, this appendix did not so much emerge in the writing (as the other texts have), but emerged from interruptions, diversions, and ruptures that the coronavirus triggered - all of which are imbricated in the processual nature of this thesis and so require the piece to be included, albeit on the edges of the thesis-'assemblage'.

Guattari's concept of 'assemblage' fascinated, but, eluded me for years: initially seeming to be something there to be joined and left. More recently, however, they are always there, although, like the bodies and their relational affects and forces within this PhD thesis-'assemblage', always changing:

Sitting at my desk writing to you on my laptop, darkness suddenly beginning to descend, the horses and llamas in the fields are barely visible now, just dark shapes in that half-light making it as difficult to see as this thesis is to 'organise': it's been a dull day and this darkness feels oppressive; this room is well lit though with a glitter lamp just warming up, the glitter, like these words, dancing faster and faster; the cat 'mood' lamp is changing colours beside me, little cat and fox lights illuminate the bookcase, my now-not-so-little black cat Saffie (constant writing partner and companion) is curled up on the bed, and a CD, *The Sound of Silence*, is playing quietly in the background; Baruch Spinoza's 'ontological concept of affect' (Robinson and Kutner, 2018: 111) in which human and nonhuman bodies have capacities to affect and to be affected by each other suffuses this thesis, working as a refrain, positioned as an important force acting on the always ontogenetic emergence of this collection of post qualitative inquiries. Such 'experiential state[s]' (Massumi in Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a: xv) passing between bodies, incapable of being 'documented,' flow through this thesis creating '*a bloc of sensations … a compound of percepts and affects*' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015c: 164) changing with every attempt to put them into words and so always *eluding* capture. There is hope too for a writing which 'twists language, makes it vibrate, seizes hold of it, and rends it in order to wrest the percept from perceptions, the affect from affections, the sensation from opinion' (ibid: 176), but this letter is digressing!

Perhaps the main reason why a letter, this mapping, is necessary, then, is because this thesis has its own ideas:[10] the conventional map of an academic PhD thesis has been discarded. There is still, however, a 'Mary' wanting to follow that map: intent on following all the rules for writing academically and studying books on how to write a PhD, a literature review, a methodology chapter, she has plans to interview lecturers and students about teaching and learning English before diligently writing up the data, carefully adhering to traditional academic formats and styles. After a few years, however, she is swept aside by other 'Marys', 'conceptual personae' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015c: 62) '[brought]…to life' by philosophy which 'gives life to them' (ibid.) composed by the energies and intensities the

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[10] 'Ideas' are not to be confused with 'concept' which is always used in this thesis-'assemblage' in the way Deleuze and Guattari use it as a creative practice to do with making encounter and event. Relative to this, 'idea' is then used much more notionally.

writing creates, flooding the writing with momentum as 'the power of [these] conceptual personae' (ibid.: 73) 'needed to create concepts on the plane, just as the plane itself needs to be laid out' (ibid.: 75-6) develops on the plane of immanence. Suddenly, however, that original 'Mary' escapes, creating havoc by asking *why*, with the submission deadline looming, there is no *actual* thesis, but she is too late… In the meantime, those other 'Marys' have been 'thinking-with' Manning (2013; 2020), entranced by her suggestion '[q]uiet thoughts are forces for the thinking-with, forces that move a body-worlding, that open the more-than to a perception in the making that always exceeds its own framing' (Manning, 2013: 167). They therefore adopt Jonathan Wyatt and Ken Gale's (2018) 'writing to it' as 'a methodogenetic conceptualisation of writing practice that is creative and inquiry based' (Gale, 2018a: 173) in its mobilisation of writing, which they see as a '[t]echnicity: the outdoing of technique that makes the more-than of experience felt' (Manning, 2016: 50). Aspiring to not write a conventional academic text which, as Laurel Richardson (2000) suggests, no-one is interested in, they are aiming, with St. Pierre (2017; 2019), for no methodologies. With Manning (2016; 2020), those other 'Marys' question what knowledge looks like, what academic rigour might be, and become interested in the university and 'the Undercommons' (Moten and Harney, 2013).

You will meet these other 'Marys' as you turn the pages, you will join these multiple selves, 'larval subjects' (Deleuze, 2020a: 103), in their 'Maryings',[11] in their 'intra-actions',[12] which Karen Barad (2007) defines as 'signify[ing] *the mutual constitution of objects and agencies of observation within phenomena* (in contrast to "interaction," which assumes the prior existence of distinct entities). In particular, the different agencies ("distinct entities") remain entangled' (p. 197). You will also join them in their experimentations with different ways of 'writing with' (Wyatt and Gale, 2018: 125), writing in the spaces between in earlier material: these 'intra-actions' with previous writings sometimes distinguished through the use of text boxes, sometimes by changing the text alignment, and/or style of font and/or colour, which is also used to represent different voices: this letter, for example, is written in purple to represent the 'Marys'. Footnoting is also used to indicate developments in thinking exemplifying, like the appendices, that this thesis-'assemblage' is ongoing and will never be

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[11] Jonathan Wyatt refers to the concept of a processual Ken (Ken-ing) in his '(Not a) Foreword' (Gale, 2018a: x).

[12] Engaging with Karen Barad's (2007: 33) 'lively new ontology' as 'the world's radical aliveness comes to light in an entirely nontraditional way that reworks the nature of both relationality and aliveness (vitality, dynamism, agency)', the 'Marys'' *thesisising* exemplifies their 'selfing', their 'intra-actions' with each other, and other 'conceptual personae', and, of course, other human, nonhuman and more-than-human bodies.

complete;[13] it is changing even now with the editing of this letter, and again with your readings of it.

The main reason for the map, then, is the absence of what the original student Mary regards as an *actual* thesis. Whilst this is impossible - '[p]hilosophy is the theory of multiplicities, each of which is composed of actual and virtual elements. Purely actual objects do not exist' (Deleuze and Parnet, 2012: 112) – there is nonetheless still a 'Mary' aiming to create a fully actualised PhD thesis: a 'Mary' failing to appreciate that it is the process, the movement, the liberating from constraints which count, a 'Mary' not realising the nature of actualising enables the thesis to always continue in the present.[14] Her re-emergence leads to questions around the 'quality' of the emerging material, its ability to 'meet' PhD assessment criteria without using academic writing practices and formats traditionally associated with academic theses; you are of course welcome to join in these arguments in the 'playful intraludes',[15] and the 'more serious intralude' between that original Mary and those other 'Marys'. The use of 'intralude' alludes to Barad's (2007) use of 'intra-activity'. Throughout this thesis, where possible, a word ending in 'lude' is carefully selected to enable a sense of the 'ludic', 'spontaneous and playful' (Pearsall (ed.), 1999: 845), to pervade. Through its e*luding* of fixities, then, its defying of writing conventions stemming perhaps from its aim to be written differently, this thesis defies formation preferring to stay 'in-formation' (Simondon in Manning, 2007; 2016) moving freely, creating space, an inquiry 'in the possible, the experimental' (St. Pierre, 2017: 686). In the current circumstances, this what I think of as a 'BwO',[16] the organisation of its contents always shifting, and being shifted by reader and writer, is, of course, now able to *elude* being fixed into a hard-bound book; it will nonetheless still need to be submitted in some form, formation, for you to read, examine …

Writing this, I can suddenly hear my supervisory team exclaiming: this is the fifth page and you still have not told your readers what your research is about! Hopefully, however, you have already gained a sense of this from those opening stories: you may also have sensed that, through the use of writing practices, this Deleuzo-Guattarian 'assemblage' attempts to exemplify shifts in thinking within and around an emerging PhD thesis. With 'movement-moving' (Manning, 2014: 172) opening up opportunities for change, there is a focus on

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[13] Incidentally, it is not always easy to decide where to locate the continually arising future thoughts, 'intra-actions' and intra-jections within this collection of post qualitative inquiries. Generally, however, 'editing Marys' present their comments as footnoting whilst later 'writing Marys' engage more with the content and thus locate their comments in text boxes to be closer to the original text.

[14] This is just one exemplification of the 'Marying', of 'Becoming-Mary', emerging here.

[15] These are called 'intraludes' instead of 'interludes' because of the sense of space-making, of multiple 'Marys' 'intra-acting'.

[16] As indicated earlier, there is an attempt to create a 'BwO' in *Appendix Stringendo* (p.223). See this text for an insight into the way in which this concept is used here, and how this thesis comes to be thought of as a 'BwO'.

writing moving from a conventional representing towards a writing creating and showing, a writing which '*does*' (Wyatt and Gale, 2018: 126). Through storying and other post qualitative inquiries, this collection of conversations and stories shifting between the Further and Higher Education sectors offers challenge to discursively constructed structures and writing conventions in academia. In the middle of this thesis is its protagonist, 'Chloe': her '[s]elves [perhaps] larval subjects' (Deleuze, 2020a: 103) experienced as a multiplicity of affections and perceptions, each self 'a modification' (ibid.); you will also meet older 'Chloe', composed through those affects, percepts and concepts always in play, now in her mid-twenties and calling herself 'Chlo' (signifying shifting selves from teenager using the f-word in every sentence towards ambitious, determined university student). 'Chloe' is, unfortunately, not alone in being failed by mainstream education and subsequently also failed by the very institution which should have offered her a second chance. This thesis is written for all our 'Chloes', for all those who for whatever reason find it difficult, or impossible, to learn within the often rigidly discursively constructed structures controlling educational institutions. 'Chloe's story' underpins many of the following conversations including those with 'Chlo' herself, and with American High School English teacher, Erin Gruwell (2007; The Freedom Writers *with* Erin Gruwell, 2009), whose teaching practices were later inspirational for 'Mad Mary'.

This conversational trope is adopted from Emma Macleod-Johnstone's (2013) 'strangers on a train' (Highsmith, 1999) motif as a tool to bring these tales to life. Taking place mainly between '*composite selves*',[17] 'Marys' and 'Chloe', 'Chlo', and fellow PhD student 'Paula', the conversations in this collection of post qualitative inquiries exemplify writing practices such as 'writing to it' and 'writing in immanence' (Gale, 2020a). With 'Paula', 'Mary' attempts 'writing to' *using* and creating theoretical concepts encountered during their doctoral studies: the process helping both of them in their sense-making of the concepts and practices they encounter. Imagining meeting 'Chloe' ten years after the event at the centre of her and 'Mad Mary's' opening stories, 'Mary' encourages 'Chlo' to engage with 'writing to it'; as an undergraduate, however, she does need to satisfy traditional university assessment practices. Nonetheless, conforming, especially if it entails changing your natural way of working, does not guarantee success:

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[17] This phrase is used to suggest movement away from the construction of characters which infers intention and planning towards movement: toward fluidity and flow, toward selfing and compositional movement, toward Becoming-Mary, Becoming-Chlo.

She studies, starting in the middle. She reads, always from the outside-out. She speaks, stuttering from the edges of language. She fails, her work refusing to order itself to the measure she has been given /…/

She studies, working from the edges. She reinvents, from the middle. The form stumps her. She forgets to cite. She forgets that there was a beginning, a place from which knowledge traced itself. She forgets to impress. She doesn't pass.
(Manning, 2020: 213)

Reading Manning's words, resonating so strongly with the 'Marys'' PhD reading and writing processes, they are inspired to write about these shifting experiences:

she reads, linearly, from beginning to end. She writes what she thinks is the beginning. With Deleuze and Guattari, however, she finds herself no longer alone; she is many, reading non-linearly, choosing which section to read when, revelling in this new-found freedom, happily following those emerging Deleuzian 'lines of flight'[18] from the middle of one 'plateau' to another…

They start writing knowing it will be the middle; they forget they haven't got a beginning, or an end: it no longer matters! Deleuze and Guattari (2015a; Deleuze and Parnet, 2012) stress only the middle, where those multiple 'Marys' emerge from, counts; they let the writing emerge, 'sprouting deviant' (Massumi, 2002: 18)…

They are drawn to writing a thesis which is not a book made of chapters, but, like Deleuze and Guattari's (2015a) *A Thousand Plateaus*, is '[a] rhizome[19]…made of plateaus' (p. 22), with 'lines of articulation or segmentarity,[20] strata and territories; but also lines of flight' (2015a: 2); if these are all '[i]n a book, as in all things' (ibid), then why not in a PhD thesis?

 But can they succeed? They leave you, its examiners and readers, to be the judge of that…

Would it have been easier to resist Deleuze and Guattari's persuasions, Richardson's encouragements, Wyatt and Gale's enthusiasms, Manning's inspirations? Would it have been easier to let the 'Mary' who started this PhD finish it? She is trying to take control again now, admonishing us for not having chapters: not understanding how constraining they are to writing, not understanding the joy of creating cracks in those 'lines of segmentarity' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a; Deleuze and Parnet, 2012) which 'work to striate space and

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[18] To avoid interrupting the flow of the writing here, these Deleuzo-Guattarian lines are discussed in the next paragraph.
[19] For the same reason as above, the concept of the 'rhizome' is discussed later in this letter.
[20] As footnote 18.

fix meanings and practices within established ways of being' (Gale, 2021: 470) controlling, not just writing, but 'things, people…made up of very varied lines…there is a whole geography in people, with rigid lines, supple lines, lines of flight, etc' (Deleuze and Parnet, 2012: 8); rigid 'segmentary lines' stifle writing, especially so-called academic writing: tightly controlling those words and phrases, stopping writing from flowing, but then suddenly, because all bodies are leaky, writing is seeping onto those more supple 'lines of molecularity' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a; Deleuze and Parnet, 2012) into those tiny cracks being created, disabling the rigidity of the 'segmentary lines', and then writing is flowing more freely, '[alert] to the possibilities of the always not yet known' (Gale, 2021: 470): taking off on 'lines of flight' troubling those constraining conventions, digressing in unimaginable ways, animating this *thesisising*. Highlighting moments quivering with potential for change, showing how students' learning might be transformed through engaging with different writing practices, this thesis aims to show a moving away from writing-representing towards writing-inquiring. There is also a writing toward writing as immanent doing, bodies of writing charged, with affects and percepts playing out on a different plane of 'constitutions of immanence or concepts' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015c: 66) offering a glimmer of something not-yet-known.

All this makes that original 'Mary' certain we are going to fail because there is no literature review, no methodology chapter, not even an ethics chapter because, those other 'Marys' say, in the spirit of the 'assemblage', ethical discussions are ongoing and so are presenced throughout the thesis rather than being addressed in one place and then forgotten about… Believing ethos is related to ethics, they think it epitomises the ethos of the collection of post qualitative inquiries to presence ethics in this more atmospheric way… There are, however, reasons for these other 'Marys' taking over, reasons for this collection of post qualitative inquiries emerging as an unconventionally written thesis, and those reasons are not only their total fascination with these other ways of writing and what they might *do*, where they might lead; it is also due to a resonance between the figure of the 'rhizome' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a) connecting the tales, the 'plateaus', in this thesis portraying as they do middles, with no beginning or end, and education in general which does not necessarily confine itself to the length, or linear construction, of a programme. Posing the question of '[h]ow…[to] enter into Kafka's work' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2012: 3), since it is 'a rhizome, a burrow' (ibid.), Deleuze and Guattari (2012) decide to

> *enter, then, by any point whatsoever; none matters more than another, and no entrance is more privileged even if it seems an impasse, a tight passage, a siphon. We will be trying only to discover what other points our entrance connects to, what crossroads and galleries one passes through to link two points, what the map of the rhizome is and how the map is modified if one enters by another point. Only the*

principle of multiple entrances prevents the introduction of the enemy, the Signifier and those attempts to interpret a work that is actually only open to experimentation. (p. 3)

As indicated previously, you will be invited after these introductory materials to choose your own entrances and exits: you have already entered Grasslands College and 'Chloe's' and 'Mad Mary's' homes, and now the room where most of this writing takes place; perhaps you will follow the 'lines of flight' from the College to the pub, joining 'Chloe/Chlo' and 'Mary' for their reunion, or enter the café where they meet to discuss Chlo's essay, or you might decide to join a dream with Deleuze, or re-visit the 'Marys'' writing room to glimpse their *thesisising* at play in this work, which, like Kafka's, is 'open to experimentation'.

Offering, then, modifying experiences and varying adventures within its pages, this thesis-'assemblage' aims to mirror students joining the Post-Compulsory Education (PCE) sector[21] at different stages with their varying qualifications, experiences and different styles of learning. This idea of no beginnings and no endings, but middles, each one connected, each plateau like a 'watchtower' (Deleuze, 1995: 142) watching over the other, creating connecting 'lines of flight' between them, conveys also a more general sense of lifelong learning, always in the middle, always-moving. Assuming, like the writings within this 'assemblage', 'very diverse forms' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a: 5), the 'rhizome' encourages 'plateaus' with affects, percepts and concepts in relational play where anything might happen. Adopting the approach of Barad, Gale, Manning, Massumi, St. Pierre, and Wyatt et al who work to decentre the signifiers 'lecturer' and 'student' through the use of different forms of posthuman theorising, attention is shifted to those forces and intensities always at play in those classroom 'assemblages', thus offering alternative perspectives and perceptions around teaching and learning.

PCE, as demonstrated by the plane motif emerging within this thesis (which was partly inspired by paper planes made by teenagers out of boredom, frustration, and fear), is not always adept at meeting those students' needs who do not move from beginning to end in the anticipated way, who do not achieve the prescribed learning outcomes at the expected time. Incidentally, if a hard-bound copy of this thesis had been possible, there would have been a paper plane inserted between its pages for you to unfold here; now, however, you are asked to click on the plane to the left to read the poem: it is strange now to think this project was partly launched by those paper planes, which caused me, as a new lecturer, considerable anguish. During this PhD process itself, there are landings with theoretical concepts such as Deleuze and Guattari's 'assemblages' from which

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[21] Whilst PCE more usually refers to Further rather than Higher Education, Higher Education students also join from diverse backgrounds and experiences.

'lines of flight' frequently emerge, are created, flown with, sometimes through turbulence; clouds are written into with Wyatt and Gale (2018), sighs of relief breathed as they pass, albeit sometimes only momentarily; in '[a] moment's inattention', there are glimpses too of writing shifting and concepts 'deviat[ing]' (Massumi, 2002: 19) in '[c]reative contagion' (ibid.). With those paper planes driving the inquiry, then, the emerging plane motif is inevitable, and, with the ambition to use Deleuze and Guattari's (2015a) *A Thousand Plateaus* as a model for *thesisising*, it is only natural to try to imbricate their 'planes' (ibid.; Deleuze and Guattari, 2015c) with the paper planes: aeroplanes taking off, flying, landing on a 'plane of immanence' (ibid.).

'Thinking-with' Manning, thoughts quietly sliding towards the idea of 'landing sites' (Gins and Arakawa, 2002; Manning, 2013; 2016; Manning and Massumi, 2014) as events, 'plateaus', 'actual occasions' (Whitehead, 1985), a whole new landscape for *thesisising* is suddenly developing. Is this an example of '[p]racticing the schizz' (Manning, 2020: 188), of 'inventing new operations for modulating the shape of experimentation of an emergent collectivity' (ibid.)? There is more detail regarding the use of 'landing sites' in an email to Erin Manning (why not click on the plane to the right and read it now?), but there is definitely a sensing here of 'landing sites' as creating connecting points for the emerging collectivity of this thesis: places for those paper planes driving this inquiry to land, but also to take off from; with the 'lines' themselves not as important as the points of intersection (Deleuze and Parnet, 2012) offering scope for any number of diversions, 'lines of flight', in between. It is certainly also between these points, where movement occurs, that the troubling of those discursively constructed structures and writing conventions in academia takes place together with the fostering of inquiry and speculation. Incidentally, these 'landing sites' are essential in 'Becoming-Mary', in 'Becoming-Chlo': never one self taking over another, but, similar to the wasp and the orchid[22] (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a: 9): a 'deterritorializing' and a 'reterritorializing' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a; Deleuze, 2017) sometimes 'establish[ing]…surprising connection[s]' (Dosse, 2011: 364). Described earlier as 'conceptual personae', the 'Marys', and also 'Chloe/Chlo' and 'Paula',[23] 'emerge in an originary place, a territory with its logics of deterritorialization and reterritorialization' (ibid.: 458).[24] With these practices mobilising that 'originary place' (ibid.), taking, as Gale posits in a

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[22] See page 148 for more about the wasp and the orchid, and the Deleuzo-Guattarian concept of 'deterritorialization'.

[23] It is perhaps unusual for the conceptual personae to be named, but they nonetheless 'carry out the movements that describe the author's plane of immanence, and they play a part in the very creation of the author's concepts' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015c: 63).

[24] Deleuze and Guattari (2015c) emphasise the importance of seeing 'how everyone, at every age, in the smallest things as in the greatest challenges, seeks a territory, tolerates or carries out deterritorializations, and is reterritorialized on almost anything – memory, fetish, or dream' (pp. 67-8).

recent email conversation about territorialisation, the *firma* out of the *terra*, 'deterritorialising and reterritorialising' are immanently at play within this collection of post qualitative inquiries: animating potential for intensities and becoming in writing, offering opportunities and glimmerings of the not-yet-known.

These 'landing sites' are named after musical instruments: the instrument(s) chosen to convey something about the text: the harp with its ability to create blurring, cascading sounds is consequently the 'landing site' for 'Chloe' and 'Mary's' reunification as their relationship alters, boundaries shift; the cello is the 'landing site' for 'Dreaming Crafting' with its floating, transcendental sounds accompanying those conversations around the introduction to *A Thousand Plateaus* (2015a). The naming of these 'landing sites' after orchestral musical instruments emphasises the role music plays in facilitating a sensing of Deleuzo-Guattarian concepts as being 'exactly like sounds,…intensities which suit you or not' (Deleuze and Parnet, 2012: 3); with the 'Marys'' love of music, the image of the orchestra is also instrumental in, as Buchanan (2006) emphasises, thinking of concepts as a whole universe, a way of thinking, rather than as individual concepts in isolation from each other. Consequently, focusing on playing in orchestras is pivotal in grasping the elusive concept of an always shifting, never staying the same 'assemblage': orchestras, like music, have no peripheries, no centre, but are a collection of sounds, always different (even in repetition). You will have noticed this letter is headed 'pre-prelude', thus acknowledging, again, the importance attributed to music in sensing how Deleuze and Guattari's universe might be perceived.

As well as a 'landing' aeroplane at the top of 'landing sites' inviting you to disembark, you will also see 'taking off' planes both to return you to the contents pages at the end of a 'landing site' and scattered throughout to indicate where 'lines of flight' may be taken to other 'landing sites' where the line you are on continues (like the two you have just seen in this letter). And so, in your wanderings within the 'landing sites', you are asked to be like the autist in Manning's (2013; 2016; 2020; Manning and Massumi, 2014) work: not distracted by the physical, the tangible, but to simply wonder about and with the unseen, the intensities, the forces, the affects, percepts, concepts working together in these 'assemblages'… Manning's emphasis in her work on neurodiversity offering, as it does, different perceptions, including 'field perception' (Manning, 2013; 2016: 115), other ways of looking at things than is generated by neurotypicality, is influential in this thesis attempting to liberate itself as much as possible from discursively constructed structures in academia; 'thinking-with' Manning, then, attention is immediately drawn to the whole 'landing site' on jumping out of the planes, rather than being distracted by individualities.

This letter, then, is written as a pre-prelude, helping you to navigate your way through my *thesisising,* through this thesis's pages, which are not designed to be read conventionally from first to last; you are asked instead to board the planes at 'landing sites', take off with emergent 'lines of flight', landing somewhere new each time, taking your time meandering around, or running, perhaps even dancing with the writing, doing whatever you feel like doing, in the order you feel like doing it in, until taking off again… As this pre-prelude draws to an end, you are asked to please not do as it is suggested some academics do (Probyn in Gregg and Seigworth, 2010) and read only for ideas, overlooking writing style and affect. Influenced by Manning's concept of 'artfulness', '[t]he hope is that this might be seen as a [thesis] of techniques–techniques for composing with creative practice, for composing emergent collectivities, for composing thought in the multiplicitous act' (Manning and Massumi, 2014: ix) and so it is hoped that instead of being judged as a finished product, the creative process of the writing of this thesis, 'the manner of practice' (Manning, 2016: 46), will be recognised as being at the centre because, as Deleuze succinctly says, '[b]etter to be a road-sweeper than a judge' (Deleuze and Parnet, 2012: 7). I invite you therefore, before this thesis changes again, before these 'Marys' are pushed aside by other 'Marys' with other ideas, because this is only one of many versions, to pass with these bodies of writing, this collection of stories and conversations offered here, 'from one experiential state…to another' (Massumi in Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a: xv), making the experience your own. You are encouraged then to freely inhabit the worlds of further and higher education portrayed within in whichever order you choose, whilst asking yourself, as Massumi (in Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a) does in his foreword to *A Thousand Plateaus*, 'not: is it true? But: does it work?' (xiv).

Yours sincerely,

Mary (and Saffie!)
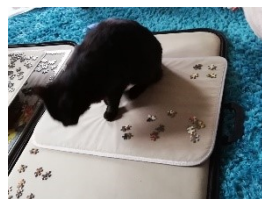
Prelude: *the stories in the mi(d)st of these inquiries*

As 'Chloe' and 'Mad Mary's' opening stories convey, in the middle of this thesis is what might be referred to as a 'critical incident' (Tripp, 1993)[25] at the fictitious Grasslands College of Further Education: unhappy years in schools, struggles to conform to institutional regulations, worries about how to act like a lecturer, a computer crashing during a literacy initial assessment, human and nonhuman bodies all capable of affecting and being affected by what is happening there in that classroom, at that moment of that incident. All those vital intensities of affect and more coming together, mobilising, energising, new student 'Chloe' and new lecturer 'Mad (an adjective rashly chosen as an example for an ice breaker in 'Chloe's' class) Mary' creating their own 'lines of flight' out of the rigidities and fixities of the college's structures. A decade passes before thoughts of the event flood my 'Chloe's' mind once more; those thoughts, whilst not always *as* intensive, *as* pervasive in the 'Marys'' minds, as they were in the days, weeks and months following the incident, nonetheless never actually leave the 'Marys', but 'create impressions…persist[ing] "long after [that] crucial [critical] incident [was] supposedly finished"' (Adams, Holman Jones and Ellis, 2015: 47). Now seeing this 'critical incident' as an 'event', 'an encounter', therefore no longer overlooking the forces of affect, the atmospherics, at work at the time of the 'critical incident', the 'Mary' writing this is alert to 'agencement',[26] to the 'smallest unit', not the individual 'I' of Cartesian thought. This is exemplified here in these versions of the event within this collection of post qualitative inquiries. The posthuman theorisings of this work move away from the human-centrism upon which Tripp's (1993) concept of 'critical incident' is inevitably grounded and there is no doubt that 'Mad Mary' overlooked the forces of affect at work, focusing only on her subjective presencing, on how she appeared to the students. Thinking-with David Tripp (2011), '[i]ncidents happen, but *critical* incidents are produced by the way we look at a situation: a critical incident is an interpretation of the significance of the event' (my emphasis, p. 8). With that event later unexpectedly becoming the catalyst for this PhD inquiry, clearly, much significance was attributed to this event; how learning grows from a focus solely on the incident, an initial 'ask[ing] both what happened and what allowed or caused it to happen' (Tripp, 2011: 9) to the creation of 'Chloe's Story', told here for all those ever denied a second chance; surely, as Gale (2003) posits, this 'owes more to the rhizome

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[25] David Tripp (2011) says what makes an incident critical is our interpretation regarding its significance: '[t]o take something as a critical incident is a value judgement we make, and the basis of the judgement is the significance we attach to the meaning of the incident' (p. 8).

[26] Whilst 'assemblage' is generally used throughout this thesis, 'agencement' appears more relevant here to emphasise the temporary encounter of several disparate elements (Dosse, 2011).

than to the learning ladder or framework of standards' (p.168) with the growth of ideas here, like the Deleuzo-Guattarian 'rhizome', unstructured and unpredictable: 'Mad Mary' never imagined that encounter in a classroom, her subsequent reflective journal entries, would be so significant, neither did she foresee that a new imagined situation, ten years later, would draw her (now a PhD student) and 'Chloe', now an undergraduate student calling herself 'Chlo', together again when 'Chlo' unknowingly contacts 'Mary' for help with essay-writing; with attempts at using, as exemplifying, different writing practices including 'writing to it' (Wyatt and Gale, 2018) becoming imbricated in 'Mary's' PhD writing, she is inevitably interested in what these same writing practices might offer 'Chlo'. Their stories, together with those of others shown here, are about human and nonhuman relationality, about the capaciousness of *all* bodies, including bodies of thought and writing, to affect and to be affected. Affect is not used here in the sense of feeling or emotion, but in Massumi's (in the introduction to Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a) sense of it being 'a prepersonal intensity corresponding to the passage from one experiential state of the body to another and implying an augmentation or diminution in that body's capacity to act' (p. xv). What is being referred to here, then, are those invisible more-than-human relational forces affecting the capacities of bodies to affect and be affected.

Taking the intersection of lines of that first encounter between 'Chloe' and 'Mad Mary', that so-called 'critical incident' occurring in that moment in that classroom on that day, this thesis shifts attention away from the teacher in the classroom, away from the simply human towards nonhuman bodies, such as texts and technologies as well as those invisible intensities of affect continually moving between bodies. By animating those relational intensities of affects at play, at that moment, in the middle of that always shifting classroom 'assemblage', they are brought to life, animating those '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' (Stewart, 2007: 1-2) and so potentially offering new ways of looking at 'critical incidents' within the classroom. Narrated by 'Chloe's' computer, the following version of that original 'critical incident', imbued with a significance lasting over a decade and, even now, leading to a 'challeng[ing] [of 'Mad Mary's'] own thinking and assumptions' (McAteer, et al, 2010:103), aims to show those dynamic, affective relational intensities, frequently overlooked, often repressed in 'academic writing', at play in classroom 'assemblages':

Something feels different this morning – an electricity in the air not usually there perhaps? New students, new lecturer (I certainly haven't seen her before), all those expectations, fears and excitement mingling, 'intra-acting' (Barad, 2007). Oh goody, a 'game', learning everyone's name: 'cheerful' Chloe, 'mad' Mary – she will regret that I'm sure! It can't be easy being new and being the lecturer, is this her very first class? It's really tough – all those demands on you to act 'responsibly' (whatever that means!), keep control of your class (as if any one person can control everything happening in a room, no-one can control me, I know that!), be approachable, friendly (but not a friend I think they say…), it must be so hard not to cross any of those controlling lines… there are so many of them, you know, 'segmentary lines', 'molecular lines', 'lines of flight': the latter are the most exciting ones, they create ruptures and can go anywhere, you don't know what will happen… 'Cheerful' Chloe and 'mad' Mary are also good at disturbances! In a very short time, now not-so-'cheerful' Chloe flies out of the room like a hurricane leaving the rest of us reeling in her wake; 'mad' Mary does not wait long before saying it's 'time to have a short break', and quickly leaving the room. Not long after everyone, even not-so-'cheerful' Chloe (albeit later than everyone else), returns, 'mad' Mary suddenly disappears for a while: she must have reported Chloe to her manager as, shortly after she comes back, the manager storms in saying sharply, "Chloe! Come here!": I do feel a bit bad, but, some people just cannot take a little joke!

Every day, well most days, someone different sits beside me, practically on top of me, touching me, pressing my keys, and if I'm really unlucky, spilling their drink and covering me in crumbs (of course they are not supposed to eat and drink in the room, but they do!), expecting me to obey their every command, but sometimes I just don't want to and so I don't! And the best thing is there is absolutely nothing any of them can do about that, not even the teacher! Today is one of those days so when Chloe clicks 'next' during that same assessment all students seem to do at the beginning of term, I stay on the screen with the commas displayed: it's a stupid question anyway, who cares, who even knows, where the comma should go, even the comma doesn't know - I asked it once! Usually people just 'huff and puff' a bit, press a few more keys and if I still don't move, they move! But not by now very (un)'cheerful' Chloe – she gets in a right state: hitting me, yelling and swearing at me… Why doesn't she just move to another computer that might be more amenable? Instead of that she starts shouting at 'mad' Mary (who must be 'mad' as in angry by now although she doesn't show it), even swearing at her, and thus crossing more of those lines you're not meant to. At that point I decide 'cross' Chloe is a much better name, 'adjective' they called it, for her than 'cheerful' because she then pushes her chair back so violently the poor thing crashes into the desk behind, gives me a final punch, which actually really hurts, and flies out of the room! I've never seen anyone do that before, at least not so dramatically. Other

students have left the room in a bit of a rage, but it is several minutes before the air particles settle down after 'cross' Chloe has shaken them all up like those snow globe things some teachers have beside their computers. I'd love to be one of those computers with just the one main user, they definitely have an easier life. Where was I? Oh yes, the air is all ruffled, the group practically silent apart from murmured requests to 'mad' Mary for help: you can tell her mind is all over the place as she flits from one student to the next. She is trying so hard to appear unflustered and calm, but I see the way she moves back to her desk, staring out of the window for a couple of minutes in 'cross' Chloe's wake… And I feel so sorry for that pen: she is gripping it so hard I am only surprised it survives; she doesn't even need a pen! There is a collective sigh of relief as that class ends: even the walls look shaken and they are usually so immoveable! I wonder what would happen if 'cheerful' Chloe and 'mad' Mary should ever meet again…

There is no doubt that relatively momentary disruption in a classroom has stayed with me and that is probably because it was my first what I would call 'critical incident' as a qualified lecturer. Critical not only as indicated above, but also in the sense of 'mark[ing] an important change or turning point in' (Tripp, 2011: 9) both lecturer's and 'learner's biograph[ies]' (ibid.), there were so many affects in that moment of that incident, so many thoughts flying around; every one of us in that room, the focal point of the encounter, itself capacious in the affectively inscribed relations (human and nonhuman) that were unfolding/taking place at that time and in the future. This 'critical incident' leads to,

[w]hat I want to know today:… how to create conditions for living beyond humanism's fierce belief that we, the privileged, the neurotypicals, the as-yet-unscathed, the able-bodied, hold the key to all perspectives in the theatre of living. The conditions for living I seek are those that facilitate a more-than-human encounter with a life lived in the kind of creative activity that deeply challenges the normative standards that enable (Manning, 2019a: 14-15)

our 'Chloes' to be excluded from education, misunderstood, denied genuine second chances as happened here and as happens everywhere for there is not only one 'Chloe', but 'my' 'Chloes', 'your' 'Chloes' and the 'Chloes' still-to-come.[27] Reliving the incident albeit differently now, with Manning's belief that, '[t]here is a world to be invented, a world always being

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[27] Manning's passage, with its emphasis on challenging the domination of neurotypical views is so powerful that the words demand to be written here in order to emphasise the possibilities of steering perspectives in education which limit the fulfilling of potential for *all* students. With Manning's words above relating to rape, however, there is a deep ethical concern about citing them here, in this context, which is very different to the one from which they originally arose. Whilst the 'critical incident' undeniably caused some degree of hurt to 'Mad Mary' and to 'Chloe', concern remains about detracting from the horror, the unimaginable situation, Manning (2019a) describes in her book, *The Perfect Mango*, and this is certainly not the 'Marys'' intention. They want only to promote creative second chances in education through challenging discursively constructed structures.

invented, and this is the world that keeps me alive today' (ibid.: 15), those terrible anxieties about doing the wrong thing and making the situation worse resurface along with those erratic thoughts, in that moment, shifting from 'I'm the lecturer, what should I do' to 'what if I do this', 'what if I do nothing…' back to 'what *should* I do as lecturer?',[28] and, underpinning them all, was a terrible anxiety about doing the wrong thing and making the situation worse...

Writing this now, over ten years later, this event epitomises what I think of as a Deleuzo-Guattarian 'assemblage' with dynamic relational intensities of affect at play, human and nonhuman bodies, each with capacities to relationally affect and to be affected, potentially creating new 'lines' making cracks in those controlling 'lines of segmentarity' running through the whole always-shifting 'assemblage'; in their different ways, both 'Mad Mary' and 'Chloe' rupturing those lines in that moment, creating 'lines of flight' toward individual 'small plot[s] of new land' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a: 187): 'Mad Mary' rushing for the perceived sanctuary of the staffroom, somewhere away from the fast-moving ruptures rushing through the classroom, the corridors; 'Chloe' also seeking new land at the edge of the College; both, then, 'through a meticulous relation with the strata…succeed[ing] in freeing lines of fight, causing conjugated flows to pass and escape' (ibid.) and thus slowing down the '*mo(ve)ment*' (Davies and Gannon, 2006: x), altering its direction, enabling something other, to emerge.

It was not, however, until many years after that 'critical incident' that I met Deleuze and Guattari and their concepts of 'strata' and 'assemblages'; at the time, this incident[29] was thought to only involve 'Chloe' and me; all those invisible relational intensities at play were exactly that – hidden – and so, oblivious to their affects, I felt only a total sense of failure: believing a student had been forced to leave the college because of me; she'd been brave enough to cross the 'threshold' (Manning, 2020), and I hadn't tried hard enough to exonerate her from blame, to fight for her to remain in College; having embarked on a teaching career to help others, it was devastating to feel, as I did at the time, as though I had destroyed someone's education. Writing about the incident in my reflective journal,[30] I became trapped

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[28] The human-centred nature of these questions surprises the 'Marys' writing this now – why was 'Mad Mary' only focused on her own actions?

[29] A later 'Mary' editing this thinks about how critical incident could be understood also as Deleuzo-Guattarian events or Whiteheadian (1985) 'actual occasions' 'devoid of all indetermination. Potentiality has passed into realization…They are, like all entities, potentials for the process of becoming' (p. 29). As an event, the focus is not on the highly representational facet of simply human subjectivity and rational thought, but recognises finite movement can have an affect, 'affective presencing', of all forces coming together, mobilising…

[30] Whilst there are few similarities between the telling of this incident in the stories told in this collection of post qualitative inquiries and the entries relating to this incident written in 'Mad Mary's' reflective journal, it is nonetheless an ethical consideration that the event itself was a genuine experience and one which a 'Mary' subsequently 'writes to' (see pages 193 and 244).

in that cycle of negativity my PGCE tutors had warned about, but what if I had known about other writing practices? What if I had known then about the relational intensities of affect at play in 'assemblages', and what if I had been able to 'write to' them? What if, in Erin Manning and Brian Massumi's (2014) speculative sense, instead of 'reflective writing', I had attempted 'diffractive writing'? With Karen Barad (2007), 'diffraction' has an emphasis not on replaying what happened but on troubling it, seeing it differently. Is this what is happening here, over ten years too late for 'Mad Mary', but potentially able to help someone else? And what if, with Deleuze and Guattari, Wyatt and Gale, Massumi and Manning, and Kathleen Stewart, we had all been aware of those intensities of affect, percept and concept, those forces invisibly 'intra-acting' in the 'assemblage' created in that classroom on that day? Would we have seen then that it was not caused by any one individual? Would we have appreciated the potential trembling in those 'movement[s]-moving'? (Manning, 2014: 172). Is there, in those spaces, an invisible 'affective presencing' (Gale, 2020; 2021; Gale and Wyatt, 2021)[31] mobilising fear, rupturing conventions and thus creating potential for this, and other, versions of this PhD thesis-'assemblage' to later emerge[32]?

Engaging with different writing practices, writing a PhD aiming to animate potential for intensities and becoming in writing: challenging perceived discursively constructed structures and writing conventions in academia, it is inevitable that the 'Mary' who is reunited with 'Chloe/Chlo' will use this chance reunification to consider how the different writing practices she engages with might transform writing for 'Chlo', and others like her, who, having had negative experiences in education so far, see writing essays as something which has to be done, and writing, consequently, as a barrier to achievement. Aiming then to show 'Chlo' the wonders of writing, its potential to flow, to 'intra-act' (Barad, 2007), to create something even the writer did not know was possible, 'Mary' encourages 'Chlo' to 'write to' those theories and critical events she encounters within her undergraduate counselling course. And so this collection of stories, shifting across the Further and Higher Education sectors, aims to show how writing trying to free itself from those restraining 'academic writing' conventions can be animated, how writing can transform because:

> [t]o write is to trace lines of flight which are not imaginary, and which one is indeed
> forced to follow, because in reality writing involves us there, draws us in there. To
> write is to become, but has nothing to do with becoming a writer.
> (Deleuze and Parnet, 2012: 32)

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[31] See page 169 for more detailed exemplification of this concept.
[32] A later 'Mary' editing this is moved to emphasise that these 'what-ifs' are used here as in-formationally speculative practice.

As examiners and readers, you are now invited to engage in further speculative practice and to take flight, to follow your own 'lines of flight' within, through, across, and outside of these pages using the planes scattered in the 'landing sites', and the 'contents' pages which follow, to choose where to go next; alternatively, you could abandon them completely and randomly choose which page numbers to go to when: the choice is yours! You will notice that, to encourage the concluding writings to be read together, the planes taking-off to the contents pages at the end of each 'landing site' stop when you reach 'Pre-postlude'. Whilst you are not expressly asked to read these materials last, it may make sense to do so...

Note on Referencing: Just before you disappear on your various flights, please note that to facilitate ease of reading and smooth discussion, key terms and concepts are usually referenced **only** in their first usage (**if** that occurs in either *Pre-prelude* or here in *Prelude*), unless its usage differs in source; they are nonetheless placed in inverted commas throughout the work to indicate the word(s) are being used in this way.
If, however, the first usage appears outside of these two texts, it will still be placed in inverted commas, but, not necessarily referenced: there will then be a footnote to an explanation of the term or concept where it will be fully referenced (this is because of the (anticipated) manner of the reading of this collection of post qualitative inquiries making it impossible to know in which order readers may encounter them).

Contents: click on a ✈ to fly! (return to these pages via 'taking off' planes at the end of 'landing sites')

Contents: click on a ✈ to fly! (return to these pages via 'taking off' planes at the end of 'landing sites')

Playful Intralude

Writing is writing what you cannot know before you have written: it is preknowing and not knowing, blindly, with words. It occurs at the point where blindness and light meet

<div align="right">Cixous, 1993: 38</div>

Those introductory texts opening this thesis might have given the impression of 'Marys' knowing what this thesis is about, but the truth is, it is not yet known: those 'Marys' are taking risks with the writing: it is 'sprouting deviant' (Massumi, 2002: 18) and so there is no way of knowing what it will do next! As the 'Mary' who started this inquiry, how the writing moves from 'Chloe', 'Chloe's' computer, and 'Mad Mary' rupturing the lines at Grasslands College to trying to forge post qualitative inquiries, to trying to exemplify different writing practices is troubling. If that gap can't be filled, or at least bridged... why does it need to be? interrupt those other 'Marys', the writing simply flows, we cannot explicitly state how or why it moves from there to there: the writing moves in relation to its sense-making, in 'creative-relationally *more-than* human'[33] ways... If you can't bridge the gap, I continue firmly, then there are multiple theses where only one is permitted and so there is an issue! No there's not! Every 'assemblage', all multiplicities consist of 'singularities'. Why only one thesis anyway, and why so few words? Those other 'Marys' are grousing in the background, getting louder now: that is just so limiting, they lament, why are these 'lines of segmentarity', 'molecularity' and 'flight', previously freely leaking all over the place, creating capillaries, even rupturing, suddenly appearing so incapable of leaking approaching the submission date? Maybe it knows submission is a tightly sealed container with absolutely no spaces for

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[33] See pages 133 and 154 for more explanation of how this practice is used.

seepages or leakages. Ha! They go quiet then, those other 'Marys', hopefully realising, at last, that on a certain day, at a certain time, the time for being 'artful' expires and something resembling an academic thesis conforming to all the word count, font size and line spacing rules has to be submitted for **examination...** Uh-oh, those 'Marys' whisper, not examin***ing*** with its connotations of something active, processual, a chance to still meet the requirements, but examin***ation*** when a judgement will be made regarding the writing submitted on submission day, spoiling our fun! Exactly, and so Manning's 'in-formation', 'not-yetness', Deleuze and Guattari's 'becoming' have no place here, and neither is it possible to fly away on one of those paper planes, or 'to follow the witch's flight' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015c: 41) to other 'landing sites': those planes will be grounded, the witch's broom quarantined... But only until the thesis is opened, those other 'Marys' quickly exclaim, then the aeroplanes will take off again and there will be no stopping them flying from 'landing site' to 'landing site', refuelling while their passenger looks around before taking off again... That's a long way off, I remind them; in the meantime you have to focus on narrowing this giant chasm. What chasm? Writing takes us from there to there to here, thinking and reading and doing and writing take us everywhere... Be serious! We are, the 'Marys' retort: through working with 'Chloe/Chlo' as writing coach ten years after that first incident when the computer had a tantrum and froze, thinking about how best not just to help 'Chlo' write essays, but, how best to interest her in writing, to show her how writing is not just something to pass a module, but how it can complement her studies,[34] all played a role in this thesis's 'movement-moving' (Manning, 2014). However, 'it's not beginnings and ends that count, but middles. Things and thoughts advance or grow out from the middle, and that's where you have to get to work, that's where everything unfolds' (Deleuze, 1995: 161). From a moment in a classroom with

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[34] See pages 153-155 and 182-83.

affects, percepts and concepts 'intra-acting', then, to intensities and 'becoming' abounding in writing… Well, you don't have to represent it quite so dogmatically, I interrupt: let it be, let the writing exemplify the process!! Ha! That shocked them, those 'Marys'! I don't really mind: it's interesting, if I'm honest, seeing what the writing is doing, but sometimes, especially in these later stages, panic sets in that they will destroy my dream; yes, the dream was simply to *be* a doctoral student, but that includes writing a thesis and because I never give up, it includes completing that thesis or, at least, moving that thesis to a point where it could be submitted: when justice has been done to 'Chloe' and all those like her, [35] when these philosophic theorisings are ready to be read by other practitioners seeking liberation from those orthodox academic practices as they *too* try to support our 'Chloes', but these issues can be considered later! You have to focus now on *how* you are going to assemble this into some sort of order to be submitted!

Okay, we admit a conventional link probably *is* needed between those introductory materials and the next 'movement' of the thesis. At last! All the 'Marys' agree! Could that link be that conversation with 'Paula' about St. Pierre's (2017; 2019) work? Thinking with her (St. Pierre, 2019) idea of starting with a concept, seeing how it might open up inquiry suddenly appears appropriate since what follows will further open up this inquiry. The intention, of course, is that the writings in this 'assemblage' will not be read in order, but, if it is to be submitted, something has to follow those introductory texts so maybe it will be that one, or this one, or, if it really can be read in any order, why not one that hasn't emerged yet?…

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[35] Written for everyone, like 'Chloe', ever denied the opportunity of fulfilling their academic potential, this issue of justice for our 'Chloe's' is a recurring consideration.

Landing Site: Viola (introspective, singing)

'Intra-actions' with *Politics of Affect* (Massumi: 2015a)

each force has the power to affect (others) and to be affected (by others again), such that each force implies power relations: and every field of forces distributes forces according to these relations and their variations. Spontaneity and receptivity now take on a new meaning: to affect or to be affected

Deleuze, 2020b: 60

Despite the sun's bright glare, it is freezing coming out of the café; walking towards the library, golden Autumn leaves rustling underfoot, my supervisors' questions continue troubling long after they were first mooted: why is the writing only about my Director of Studies' work? (they weren't the exact words, but that was the essence); why haven't those chapters suggested last time been written? Will this detrimentally affect our supervisory relationship? It certainly looks as though their advice is being ignored, but what if more time had been spent trying to follow it, would the writing still be stuck?[36] These few 'sections' written since then would not exist, there would be feelings of despondency; the inability to write would be detrimentally affecting the relationship with the PhD, and the ability to write at all would be doubted. Alternatively, that event of not being able to write a chapter might have passed and by now a few chapters would have been written, the thesis possibly half-finished instead of unbegun?[37]

The first question is the easiest: my Director of Studies (Gale: 2018a) has recently had a book published which had to be read immediately. It was too beautiful to rush, however: there was a desire to savour it, to not be afraid to pause with any one plateau for days, weeks. Ken's (ibid.) own rupture from the traditional chronological numbering of chapters to be read in order to plateaus which can be read randomly

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[36] As the years pass, there is a pattern to this 'writing-paralysis': whenever deadlines are imposed, whether for a chapter, or a first whole draft, the writing stops. Knowing, with Wyatt (2019), that '[w]riting stalls in the shadow of a [thesis's] deadline' (p. 44), the 'Marys' editing this are anxiously trying to work on this FINAL draft before 'writing-paralysis' can set in. Incidentally, covid-induced writing-paralysis is a theme in *Appendix Allegretto-Largo-Allegro*.

[37] A later 'Mary' sees this as an axiomatic moment in *thesisising*: if the expected chapters had been written, other 'Marys' may never have emerged and the thesis would probably have consisted of chapters instead of 'landing sites'.

encoraged (eventually) a jump to the middle of his book.[38] Pausing first with the plateau *Conceptualising Madness as Affect?* (ibid.) whilst writing so-called 'intra-actions'[39] with its content, then turning to *Writing Minor Literature* (ibid.) which inspired a return to Deleuze and Guattari's (2012) *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*, the reading is suddenly interrupted as, while organising the 'PhD work so far,'[40] Jonathan Wyatt and Ken Gale's (2018) *Writing to it* is encountered: '[they] take the view that within the process of 'writing to it' [they] are transversally engaging and actively producing, through the animation of a philosophy of the event, what Deleuze and Guattari refer to as 'minor literatures' (Deleuze & Guattari, 1986)' (p. 120). Is this an example of 'minor literature'?[41] Are Wyatt and Gale (2018), through dialogue with each other, challenging the traditional academic article format in an academic journal?![42] As one of my Director of Studies' texts somehow leads to another, or, as Deleuze and Guattari (2015a) would say, plugs into another and another and another, it becomes natural to engage with whichever text(s) the current text being read plugs into.[43] Reading[44] *Madness as Methodology* (Gale, 2018a), then, releases something inside the body from the usual style of thinking and of reading: enabling the concept of 'becoming', of being in-between, of being affected and affecting to be felt.[45] And that breakthrough is much needed: with that shock, that cut[46] with conventional ways of reading, of thinking, of writing, it is possible to conceive of writing the thesis sitting on top of [not] my 'body without organs'[47] with its capacity to

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[38] It was an event/ful leap: that simple, but, unusual movement triggering far-reaching change within the becoming thesis.

[39] This is an early encounter with Karen Barad's (2007) 'intra-actions' and this earlier 'Mary' does not attempt to explain how she sees the term; there is nonetheless a sense of it being an entanglement. There is more discussion around this phrase on page 28.

[40] Something this 'Mary' enjoys doing, but never actually achieves!

[41] See pages 162-63 for more detail about how 'minor literatures' are interpreted.

[42] Having previously only primarily read conventionally written academic papers, this idea takes this 'Mary' by surprise! She soon encounters other collaborative papers of theirs though, and realises that this is what Gale and Wyatt do. Later 'Marys', inspired by Wyatt and Gale (2018), aspire to creating a thesis troubling the traditional academic format from within, encouraging it to challenge those discursively constructed institutional structures and writing practices.

[43] Transversal lines can be drawn here to pages 69-70 where Erin Gruwell's students plug in the texts they read (to their own lives as well as to each other's experiences).

[44] Influenced by Manning's 'artfulness', the 'Mary' editing this wants to stress it is the *manner* of reading Gale's book that is particularly important here.

[45] It is only much later in the writing of this thesis that 'Marys' begin to grasp the importance of *the capacities* of bodies to affect and be affected (see, for example, pages 103 and 136) and references to those capacities are therefore continually omitted. There is nonetheless a move, as this 'landing site' progresses, toward a sensing of 'affect' as more than emotion and as being relationally in action.

[46] It is unclear to the 'Mary' reading this now, if this is an early attempt to work with Barad's 'agential cut', or Massumi's (2015a) idea of affect occurring in the 'cut', but the sense perhaps relates more to an 'agential cut'.

[47] This process is described in *Appendix Stringendo* (p.223).

affect and be affected, and being continually arranged into different 'territorialisations' by anyone who reads it.[48] 'Jumping' to a plateau in the middle of a book and then to one a couple of plateaus further on is liberating: there is a feeling of freedom in choosing what to read when, a release from conventions, and rigidities, as 'lines of flight' are created within and outside of the book. Writing in 'plateaus', to be read in any order, there is, inevitably, the worry that the idea for this thesis's framework resembles that of my Director of Studies' (Gale, 2018a) book. This is however fully acknowledged and there is no deliberate intention to imitate it, this similarity has simply occurred in the becoming of this thesis and in 'intra-actions' with the book, and the writer.

Entering the library, thoughts drifting to why the suggested chapters resisted being written, the answer is obvious now: the writing just was not ready: a possible first chapter, starting with a letter to the Examiners, was quickly abandoned as being too scary, and attempts to guide an examiner through a thesis with no idea of what the landscape would look like proved impossible; the scenery (trees, woods,[49] lakes, cafés), and some characters, were there, but there were missing connections.[50] In varying 'intra-actions'[51] with a pile of books, among them Stewart's (2007) *Ordinary Affects* and Massumi's (2015a) *Politics of Affect*, beside the bed, some of those missing connections, and hidden gems of ideas and perspectives, have, however, been found. The more that is discovered, the more the realisation comes that the suggested chapters were not ready to be written: there were too many missing pieces, those theoretical concepts being written about were, and sometimes still are, theoretical concepts in texts as opposed to becoming a way of life, a way of living, a way of being which is hopefully what they will become in this emerging thesis'.[52]

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[48] What the 'Mary' writing this does not realise is that it is not so much that readers rearrange the contents into 'different territorialisations', as that it is the reading and doing which are territorialising.

[49] Alas, the idea of 'woods' from Umberto Eco's (2001) *Six Walks in the Fictional Woods* does not survive.

[50] Later 'Marys' happily accept that this thesis simply will be frayed around the edges because of its processual nature.

[51] Whilst this is an early encounter with Barad's (2007) phrase, there is a sense of 'mutual relationality' (Haynes and Murris, 2016: 974) between the books and 'Mary'.

[52] Whilst the 'Mary' writing this is aware of affect and the nonhuman forces of materiality at play here, she has yet to encounter 'aions' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a; Deleuze, 2017; Dosse, 2011). Anticipating writing her thesis in a more chronological way, whereas '[a]ion is the past-future, which in an infinite subdivision of the abstract moment endlessly decomposes itself in both directions at once and forever sidesteps the present' (Deleuze, 2017: 80), the 'Mary' writing this does not consider time can be 'distributed in a variable fashion' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a: 307) and so simply assumes the chapters will be written one after the other.

Influenced by Wyatt and Gale's (2018) paper, Massumi's (2015a) *Politics of Affect* is selected from the pile: it now seems overdue reading following the 'intra-actions' with Gale's (2018a) plateau, *Conceptualising Madness as Affect?* Starting reading it, writing out the quotations which particularly appeal, making notes about how what is being read might relate to the writing process, to the thesis, to teaching writing, to texts read before,[53] thoughts flow as the pen, like Virginia Woolf's, 'gets on the scent' (Woolf, 2002: 103), freely moving across the page, responding to the text, being affected by and affecting it.[54] Lost in the in-between of jotting the idea down and, as Deleuze and Guattari would say, plugging it in, many words never actually reach the computer monitor. A 'cut'[55] occurs as the computer powers on: Saffie rolls over to be stroked, the clouds also attract attention as do the horses, and the llamas, the thoughts about what to write disappear and so the first page of this document is edited, a section on getting lost in gaps written, and now there's a pause, sitting here hoping to remember those thoughts about Massumi's text.[56] Reaching for the notes, yesterday's idea that surfaced just before leaving for lunch[57] returns; it was centred around Massumi's idea of affect occurring in that 'cut', but what was it? A coffee is made, the dishwasher switched on, a tiny robin appears at the bird feeder, and there is a need to re-focus yet again; as Massumi (2015a) stresses, it is so easy to become distracted, to become 'affected' by what happens in those gaps.

Reading Massumi's (2015a) *Politics of Affect* is like finding a whole box of missing jigsaw pieces. Triggered by events around us, affect, for Massumi (2015a), occurs all the time. These are not necessarily 'big' events like the event leading to 'Chloe's' withdrawal from Grasslands College; the tiniest event – 'a rustle at the periphery of vision' (ibid.: 53), a leaf blowing in the wind, can give rise to affect. It certainly alters Saffie's course: she stops whatever she is doing to run and leap in pursuit of

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[53] During the writing of this thesis, the 'Marys'' ways of 'intra-acting' with texts they read alters, becoming more 'intra-active': see pages 189-90 and 198-99 as examples of this.

[54] As footnote 45.

[55] This reference to 'cut' seems likely to be an attempt to use Massumi's (2015a) 'cut' as it is discussed a few lines further on.

[56] There is a strong sense of this 'Mary' willing those ideas to return to this 'assemblage', but, later 'Marys' know its collectivity, heterogeneity and contingency has already moved on: 'now you see me, now you don't' (Gale, 2021).

[57] Going out for lunch is a distant memory in this Covid-19 world!

anything that moves! Affect as encounters occur, then, in tiny microscopic happenings such as during those conversations which take place in the cafés between 'Chlo' and 'Mary', for example, or when staring out of the window. Conscious now of being affected by these little moments in time, these in-between occurrences, and equally of the capacity of all bodies to affect and be affected,[58] it is worrying the suggestions made to 'Chlo' about her writing may lead to ineffective changes. These conversations between them about writing represent a pause in 'Chlo's' work, in her thinking, as she discusses it with 'Mary', hopefully shifting the writing,[59] those moments, usually in cafés, also affecting future writing as the conversations consider structure, presenting arguments and critical thinking. Similar affective moments occur in PhD supervision sessions, during conversations around a draft text, or ideas for potential texts; *writing-moving*[60] in response to those conversations, new writings emerging; these supervision sessions hugely affective, moments altering the course of these post qualitative inquiries, affecting writing.[61]

Reading further with Massumi (2015a), affect is multiple, its forms are 'manyness' (p. 47): respecting this 'manyness' opens up a 'field of questioning' (ibid.: 48). This 'open field' is exciting: anything could appear within it at any time. With 'an affectation…happening in-between' (ibid.: 48), you start with in-betweenness: writing is usually the in-between – writing after reading about a topic perhaps and so happening in the middle, leading to further thoughts, and experiences. It is quite likely too that others will be affected by that in-between piece of writing, by what they read. A student in 'Chloe's' class, 'Deryn', whose Dad told him he'd never be any good, shyly showed me a story he had written, fearing a similar response; however, I was immediately immersed in Deryn's world of goblins and knights wanting to be a mischievous goblin and at the same time transported back to a story seven-year-old 'Mary' wrote in her tiny handwriting[62] set in a wood where animals could speak.

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[58] This is the first reference in this 'landing site' to the *capacity* of all bodies to affect and be affected, but it is unclear how the phrase is interpreted.

[59] The 'Mary' writing this now is moved to add that those conversations offer opportunities for change, moving writing towards glimmerings of the not-yet-known.

[60] Later 'Marys' have inserted '*writing-moving*', a phrase which arose during the writing of this thesis, as they see this movement as significant here.

[61] There is just a glimmer here of a 'Mary' sensing the affective capaciousness of writing.

[62] See page 188 for an insight into a slightly older 'Mary's' views on her still minute handwriting.

There were grammar, punctuation and spelling errors, but those can be taught in-between the story in a way that imagination cannot. Through that event, that sharing of his writing, Deryn's confidence increased; his knowledge and understanding of punctuation developed as, discussing the different punctuation marks in the context of his story, in relationality with the meaning, he could see the effects of punctuating writing in action; he passed his level 2 English exam[63] and would almost definitely be surprised to know that this encounter with his writing affects this always becoming-thesis all these years later.

Anne, a mature student (and consequently in another class), had left school twenty years earlier with no qualifications. The story she submits in her second week interests me immediately: her ability to write so openly and engagingly is impressive, but it is so personal that time is needed to decide how to respond. How might her honesty as well as her literary style be acknowledged? Am I expected to comment on the steps she describes to overcome the issues she writes about?[64] Eventually, a response is prepared, but the possibility that her writing had actually been meant for her counsellor had never been considered. It is difficult to say who is more embarrassed when Anne explains she submitted the wrong piece of writing. Should the lecturer have questioned a student writing openly about her personal issues? With hindsight, it was obviously a private piece of work intended for another reader, or was Bill right when he exclaimed, "You don't believe that, do you? She wanted you to read it, but was then embarrassed about it." There is an 'in-betweenness' in that event for both Anne, seeking a strategy in writing to deal with issues faced, and 'Mary', profoundly affected by what she has read, unsure how, as lecturer, she should respond.

The above stories demonstrate Massumi's (2015a) idea of 'the past bumping against the future in the present' (p. 148); past, present and future are 'actively present…in the cut' which is 'an interval smaller than the smallest perceivable, to paraphrase Deleuze. It cannot be consciously perceived' (ibid.: 60). Massumi (2015a) suggests also that conscious memory is capable of 'going from the present to reactivate the past, whereas active memory…com[es] from the past to energize the present' (pp.

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[63] As footnote 4, Level 2 is broadly considered equivalent to Grade 4 GCSE.
[64] See page 66 for further discussion of this student's writing.

61-2).[65] A reflective[66] lecturer, much time was spent consciously remembering past events, consciously trying to recall their affects in the present, trying to look at them through different perspectives, and often then becoming excited about potential changes.[67] Sometimes, however, as with Deryn and Anne's stories, a memory is triggered, emerging unasked into the present: Manning (in Massumi, 2015a) writes about what she calls 'event-time', 'emphasiz[ing] the nonlinearity of the time of the event' and 'time's affective force, in the event' (p. 148). 'This affective force…laden with both pastness and futurity' is described as coming together 'in a way that is singularly active[68] in the now of experience' (ibid.) as happens with those memories of Deryn and Anne surfacing at this moment. It is indeed, therefore, impossible to map any event in advance.[69]

As writing coach, conversations cannot be mapped in advance; everything is done in the moment: reading an assignment, or a dissertation section, identifying issues affecting its affect, and discussing suggested changes with the writer. As lecturer, however, conversations about a student's writing would generally follow lone reading of the text. Students' reactions are, inevitably, impossible to map: each encounter is a changing 'assemblage' offering new possibilities for all bodies involved, especially perhaps for writing. My perspective on the lecturer's role within the classroom changes whilst reading Massumi (2015a): in a classroom 'assemblage', a lecturer is one of a number of bodies, human and nonhuman; the lecturer is not, therefore, the one responsible for everything that happens within the classroom. Humans and nonhumans are continually affecting each other and being affected by each other within the 'assemblages' within a classroom.[70] 'Chloe's' enforced withdrawal was no

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[65] Reading this a few years later, a connection is made with Karen Barad's (2010, cited in Barad, 2014) thinking that '[t]he past is never closed, never finished once and for all, but there is no taking it back, setting time aright, putting the world back on its axis. There is no erasure finally. The trace of all reconfigurings is written into the enfolded materialisations of what was/ is/ to-come.' (p. 183). Perhaps this footnoting epitomises this style of writing?

[66] Later 'Marys' reading this would prefer to be 'diffractive' practitioners, but, at the time, the emphasis was on being 'reflective'.

[67] One of these 'past events' 'reflected' on was 'Chloe's' withdrawal from Grasslands College, potentially the 'beating heart' (Buchanan, 2021: 60) of this 'assemblage' of post qualitative inquiries.

[68] The earlier 'Mary' missed the point here: forces *combine* to create that 'singularly' 'affective force'.

[69] A later 'Mary' reading this considers how different the reunion (in *A Second Chance*) between 'Mary' and her former sixteen-year-old student 'Chloe' in the café in Rainfield could have been with the emergence of different affects.

[70] As mentioned before, earlier 'Mary' has yet to fully grasp not only that 'assemblages' are made up of *all* bodies, but also that it is the *capacities* of those bodies to affect and be affected *relationally* that is so important. Reading this now, the urge to change the sentence to: 'In relationality, humans and nonhumans continually have

longer, as 'Mary' believed for several years, despite both 'Tracey's' and 'Will's' assurances at the time to the contrary, entirely 'Mad Mary's' fault; it was the affect of multiple events which in turn affected multiple other events.[71]

Massumi (2015a) encourages consideration of these 'assemblage' encounters with others and what might happen in that space between thought and writing when coming together to look at a piece of writing. Reflecting on helping students write their assignments, then, Manning's (in Massumi, 2015a) comment comes to mind: 'the biggest mistake we make is to pretend that we can categorize and compartmentalize events according to pre-established criteria' (p. 145). As a lecturer in both FE and HE, learning outcomes had to be written, assessment methods and grading criteria designed, each student's progress from beginning to end measured, and detailed written feedback identifying areas for improvement provided, and explained, to each student. With 'Chlo', however, it is different: as writing coach, 'Mary' is able to 'start with the in-betweenness…start in the middle, as Deleuze always taught, with the dynamic unity of event' (Massumi, 2015a: 48)[72] and discussion takes place around the writing in a probably more effective way than happened previously. Without a mountain of bureaucratic paperwork to deal with, without the need to 'assess', it is possible to focus on the writing, on how it flows, how it is structured, what it means,[73] its affect, rather than trying to identify exactly where progress has been made since the last assignment and which boxes can now be ticked. With the focus purely on the writing, the 'pre-established criteria' is largely ignored and so there is no attempt to 'categorize and compartmentalize' events (ibid.: 145).

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the capacity to affect and be affected' has to be resisted! Please see later, developing, discussions around this, in the introductory materials.

[71] Later 'Marys' realise that whilst this does not exonerate 'Mad Mary', it removes any 'illusions that [her] part [was] any grander than it [was]' as they 'maintain availability and openness to [their] material surroundings' (Rautio, 2013: 402).

[72] The 'Mary' re-reading this now senses an emphasis on 'dynamic unity' (Massumi, 2015a: 48) rather than 'event' which earlier 'Mary' overlooked, thus reinforcing the emergence of intensities during the 'critical incident' all those years ago at Grasslands College.

[73] A later 'Mary' resists the urge to change this to 'what work it does'. She notes also that what was important in a piece of writing has since changed. As this thesis shows, the focus has subsequently shifted to what writing opens up, what writing *does*.

Manning (in Massumi, 2015a) posits, 'art can do the work of keeping experience complex by creating an open field for thought in the making' (p. 145): could that 'open field'[74] be created here, within this becoming thesis in which in each moment, each encounter, each text, each paragraph, each word, change is not just possible, but, likely as this thesis and its human and nonhuman characters[75] are continually 'becoming'. Gale's (2018b) words, 'now you see me, now you don't,'[76] at a recent conference float to mind. Those words were lost then, their sense just out of reach. However, five months later, attending his book launch[77] at the University of Plymouth, a sense is grasped of 'now you see me, now you don't' (ibid.; 2021): just as you think you understand who you are, where you are, you will move, you will change, you will become other, and so, you can never catch me, anyone, or anything![78]

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[74] The 'Mary' rereading this is interested in this earlier 'Mary's' reference here to Manning's work: is this the beginning of attempts to engage with 'artfulness' later to become hugely influential in the crafting of this thesis?

[75] This 'Mary' thinks nonhuman only applies to objects; she has yet to realise it also includes writing, thought, and spaces, for example.

[76] Gale uses this phrase in the title of his 2021 paper.

[77] On 7th November 2018 for *Madness as Methodology* (Gale, 2018a).

[78] The 'Mary' writing this tries so hard to 'understand': believing she is 'getting' it. At this stage, however, she still thinks of identities as individual; she still hasn't grasped the connection here with the always shifting nature of 'assemblages' and it will be years until she does! See pages 77-80 for an example of developing shifts in thinking around this concept.

Paper Planes

Comma Rule 1

Use commas to separate the words in a series of three or more.

Punctuation – not the comma -

my heart sinks;

Where are my books? What does it do?

Separates items in a list;

Oh what fun!

How am I *supposed* to teach that?

Kinaesthetic activities.

Cards to sort?

'They must, *must* be doing something!'

A week spent planning, preparing;

over now!

What made me think I could do this?

Here is that day I've been dreading;

Here's the room

The moment of truth has arrived.

"Make a sentence with these cards please."

"Do what miss?

No way we're not in primary school!"

Paper aeroplanes are flying…

Where's the teacher?
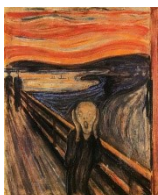
Omg! The teacher is me!

Deleuze in the Classroom

Spontaneity is the thing to inspire students, not slavish adherence to a plan
Ayres, 2012: 53

Walking into a café in London's West End with the most wonderful array of tables and chairs from different historical eras, a shiny dark brown, rectangular table with drawers reminiscent of a writing bureau seen in Charles Dickens' house[79] beckons me. Trying not to spill my latte, I move hastily towards the table before anyone else cruelly snatches the dream of sitting there away; Lacanian *jouissance*[80] floods my body sitting here, on this beautifully polished dark brown chair, probably not from Dickens' era at all, or perhaps he sat on this very chair at this same table to write one of his novels?! His windows did not overlook Carnaby Street, but gazing out at the rain, I imagine him walking along the clifftop in Broadstairs.[81] Staring into space, thinking that this time with this beautiful table should be used for *thesisising*, my attention is suddenly drawn to a tall lady asking to share my table. Dressed smartly, with shoulder-length dark brown hair, she looks like photos I have seen of Erin Gruwell, and she's definitely American, but surely I cannot be sharing a table with the founder of the 'Freedom Writers Foundation', who I am looking forward to hearing at the book festival later? She was possibly the best mentor ever for teaching teenagers in FE colleges although she obviously did not know I existed! I

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[79] I first visited his house in Broadstairs, Kent, aged eleven: I had just started reading his novels and his desk never failed to inspire me to want to write!

[80] A younger 'Mary' is drawn to *jouissance* which she interprets as fleeting happiness; a later 'Mary' (see pages 179-80) sees a connection between this and Deleuzo-Guattarian 'haecceity'; a later, later 'Mary' (four days before submission) wonders about the movements, the presencing of disparate elements creating 'haecceities' which are surely also present in *jouissance?*

[81] Rereading this text, another 'Mary' is reminded of the picture of Deleuze walking the sands of Big Sur, California, on the front cover of *Desert Islands and Other Texts 1953-1974* (Deleuze, 2004).

cannot bear the suspense: I hope you don't mind me asking, I say amazed at my uncharacteristic boldness, are you Erin Gruwell?

She smiles and asks if I am here for this evening's talk.

I nod, still blushing from my effrontery; I am absolutely fascinated by your work with the Freedom Writers, it's been such an inspiration, I say.

Thanks, that's very kind; are you a teacher?

I'm focusing on my PhD now, but I've taught in English Further Education colleges which are similar to American high schools. I was desperate for new strategies to engage my class of disaffected sixteen to eighteen-year-olds one night when I came across the film *Freedom Writers* (Paramount: 2007). Like your students, mine had been described as 'stupid' (Gruwell, 2007: 33), unteachable, by colleagues and some had been expelled from schools when they were younger. One of my worst sessions was when the students started making paper planes out of their worksheets and flying them around the room; I even wrote a poem about it!

Oh, I know how that feels: 'I dodged a paper airplane-made out of my syllabus' (ibid.: 1) in my first class as a student teacher.

I'm not alone then! I was both hoping and dreading the 'real' teacher appearing…

I remember that feeling so well: suddenly realising 'I was the authority figure, armed only with a broken piece of chalk' (ibid.: 2).

You were so good at engaging your students though. Your 'stand on the line' game (The Freedom Writers *with* Erin Gruwell, 2009) when students stepped on the line in response to questions inspired me to try something similar with my students to show them there were commonalities between us; the way you chose texts your students

could relate to instead of the set ones encouraged me to think about literature which might inspire my students and, although I didn't give my students diaries, I encouraged them to write a short book about their lives: there was silence for the first time as each student (voluntarily) read their story aloud.

That's wonderful; I just had to do something when '[s]imply reading or writing for the entire period was a recipe for disaster' (Gruwell, 2007: 31).

I found the same; I was *told* to make sure students always had something to do, encouraged to use cards for group activities, but, well, those paper planes I mentioned earlier are a case in point: the activity leading to the planes was putting word and punctuation cards in order to make a sentence which obviously didn't interest them. It was my first year of teaching that age group and I felt I had to do the same as everyone else. I was amazed at the way you challenged your institution's rules introducing your own activities and texts into the curriculum to benefit your students, and, consequently, altering your students' attitudes towards English. Your initial situation deeply resonated with me: I was struggling to accept, for example, that I had to 'teach to the test', and enforce the College's code of conduct with these young people, despite the fact many had been excluded from schools and were finding it hard to adapt to college life. One student, 'Chloe', just couldn't help using the 'f' word in every sentence. Erin looks sympathetic as I tell her how I decided to use my discretion and not continually reprimand 'Chloe' for something so obviously unintentional, but how things then went very wrong. I still feel guilty, I confide. But going back to the students sharing their own stories, that helped me understand their backgrounds, which were so different to my own, and to understand we were all basically simply struggling to fit in. Before I'd heard of you and the Freedom Writers, I continue consciously trying to speak louder as the sounds of the coffee machines

and the conversations suddenly seem to have increased, I turned to theory for help:[82] by thinking of the institution as the Lacanian 'symbolic order'[83] (Fink, 1995), I could accept that everyone had to master its rules, language and culture if they were to fit in. If they didn't, they would not be accepted by the institution and would therefore remain on its margins until they did. I thought therefore of my students and myself as temporarily standing on the edge of the College, learning what to do, how to be accepted. I liked Judith Butler's (1990) performativity theory[84] which I saw as offering me a potential strategy for changing the situation…

I'm not familiar with her work. How did you use it?

It's interesting she's asking how I *used* it, not how I applied it: well, my understanding is that by repeatedly performing an act it becomes accepted as the status quo; Butler (1990) posits that repetition of an act disrupts the symbolic order from within. My 'act' was to introduce other resources into the curriculum such as topical newspaper articles, music, and excerpts from novels that I thought might interest the students. Butler's theory seemed to give me permission to do this and I believed that, through repetition, my new materials would become accepted by students, possibly even approved by the institution. Watching *Freedom Writers* (Paramount, 2007), however, provided me with new strategies for subverting the status quo and the confidence to experiment in the classroom; you were inspirational…

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[82] See page 107 for further detail about 'Mad Mary's' turn to theory with bell hooks (1994).

[83] See pages 105 and 107 for further discussion on Lacan's symbolic order in relation to 'Mad Mary' and 'Chloe'; see also page 130.

[84] With Manning introducing a later 'Mary' to the fixities of repetition, its 'precision' (2013: 35), she begins to question earlier 'Mary's' beloved performativity theory's ability to lead to change; consequently, a later 'Mary' realises that, repeatedly performing an act, pushing those boundaries through that repetition, is actually quite a rigorous process. It is understood too that simply pushing boundaries is no longer enough, those boundaries need to be crashed through, surpassed: it is not repetition, but, improvisation – experimentation - that is required to glimpse the 'not-yet, at the very edges where thought and practice meet' (ibid.). And yes, a later, later 'Mary' realises that is where this inquiry wants to be…

Thank you! That means a lot; even now, I don't think I'll ever forget '[t]heir disapproving glances' and 'uncomfortable silence' (Gruwell, 2007: 7) from the other teachers in the staffroom; it was 'pretty obvious that they felt I didn't belong' (ibid.).

I felt like that on my first teaching placement, I say (too loudly as the people at the next table glance over), no-one really spoke to me, I didn't have my own desk and so nowhere to work in the staffroom: I eventually just stopped going in there.

It's a horrible feeling, sympathises Erin. The way my students were treated upset me more though: their room was different to all the other classrooms, the walls needed painting, the tables had been ruined by previous classes, they weren't allowed books – not even the set texts – because staff thought they would damage them (Gruwell, 2007). Those students were treated differently from the others, and they knew it…

And then they feel even more isolated, and it just reinforces the belief they are less important than their peers. It certainly seemed like that for my students: many of them had given up because that's what was expected; there was no praise, just criticism…

Yes, what really shocked me though was when they started writing about the violence they had witnessed towards themselves, their family and friends; I was so relieved that the diaries gave them an outlet for their emotions, 'I didn't want them to perpetuate the cycle of violence by reaching for those shiny red boxing gloves or using a .38 Special. I wanted them to reach for a pen and find another way to fight back' (Gruwell, 2007: 106). And they did. They really engaged with the idea of writing in their journals, and I was amazed when they began to share those stories and emotions with each other: one student even wrote, '[w]hen I finished reading the story, I didn't feel so alone. Somebody in my class shares my secret' (The Freedom

Writers *with* Erin Gruwell, 2009: 152). Through reading and writing, we became a family and our room was transformed and became really important to us. One of my students described us as her 'village' (ibid.: 301) which really emphasises the sense of community that developed that year.

It's amazing how that bond was created through writing; writing changed their lives and, with you, they were empowered to believe that anything was possible. Would you like another drink?

Another Earl Grey please; I love English tea!

I hate it, I only drink coffee, I laugh, moving quickly to the counter before the queue mounts up again. Waiting for our drinks, my thoughts return to the potential in writing for 'becoming' and I remember one of Erin's students vividly describing *I know why the caged bird sings* in their diary entry as 'an analogy of my life …but instead of singing, I write…almost every day so I can escape reality, because sometimes it's unbearable' (ibid.: 259). Writing was creating difference in that student's life, and that student was not alone in finding a different space to inhabit through the process of writing. One of my own former students, Anne,[85] comes to mind: as usual, I'd asked the class to write about themselves (only what they felt comfortable sharing) to give me a sense of how they write and help me get to know them; Anne's writing was wonderful describing really quite personal issues lyrically and beautifully, and clearly beginning to find strategies for dealing with them as she wrote. She'd barely said a word in class and yet this was confident writing. Like Erin's student, Anne's writing epitomises Deleuze's concept of writing as a 'line of flight'.

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[85] See page 56 for more of Anne's story.

I take the drinks back to the table I am now in love with, worrying about the tea bag in Erin's drink, relieved when she says she likes it strong. You were saying about your students developing a real sense of community, I say.

Erin nods: instead of being a room separating them out, marginalising them, from the rest of the institution as intended, it became their special room that others were excluded from: one student described it as 'the place where so many of our fondest memories were created' (The Freedom Writers *with* Erin Gruwell, 2009: 296). It was surprising how quickly the students developed new connections.

I wonder if Erin's heard of Deleuze? She shakes her head as I explain how I find it helpful to think of the classroom as a Deleuzo-Guattarian 'assemblage' 'bring[ing] into play within us and outside us populations, multiplicities, territories, becomings, affects, events' (Deleuze and Parnet, 2012: 38). All bodies, not just human, but also 'objects, affects, resources, identities and practices that can be somehow found in space' (Gale, 2014a: 679) 'co-functioning…'sympathy', symbiosis' (Deleuze and Parnet, 2012: 39).[86] Recognising classrooms are not only used for teaching and learning, Ken (Gale, 2014a), he's my PhD Director of Studies, suggests 'the classroom as 'assemblage' is likely to take many forms and may in fact be a space in which many 'assemblages' form and come apart' (p. 679). This reminds me of your celebrations with your students, Erin, and your ceremonial distribution of the journals. 'Assemblages', then, are always-moving and there is a sense of the 'not-yet' (Manning, 2013: 187) about them.

My thesis is a collection of stories and conversations, but, until recently, they were only ever seen as separate texts, as 'singularities'. Encouraging them to come

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[86] This reliance on quotations to explain the concept to Gruwell is indicative both of this 'Mary's' uncertainty around it and also her determination to understand…

together changes the 'assemblage', each one now being asked to do something different, no longer allowed to hide behind another text.[87] Alecia Jackson and Lisa Mazzei (2016) discuss 'posthuman analysis in qualitative research as attending to what happens when things get knotted up with other things in an assemblage, which acts with an agential force' (p. 94); I just wish I'd heard about Deleuze's 'assemblages' when I started teaching as it has really changed perspectives, especially in the classroom. I wasn't aware at the time, but seeing the institution as Jacques Lacan's 'symbolic order' (Fink, 1995) trapped me, confined me, within the institution's boundaries. 'Thinking with' (Jackson and Mazzei, 2012)[88] Deleuze has shown me I can enter a new institution as me and affect others with my presence just as I will be affected by theirs.[89] With Deleuze, I don't feel that I have to conform to the existing rules and to the existing culture. I can maintain my own values and beliefs and so I don't have to become a different person. I can also form connections with some members of the 'assemblage' and not others. [90] These connections may be severed or interrupted at any time just as new connections might form. Also, instead of turning to Butler (1990) to try to disrupt the status quo of the curriculum, there were other things I could have done;[91] perhaps I wouldn't then have felt so combatant, so defiant, in my 'battling' against the institution and curriculum as I

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[87] Reading this years later, it sounds as though a sense of the thesis as a whole is beginning to emerge, but it would still be a few years before there would be any real sense of the whole, and even then it would only ever be tenuous!

[88] This early 'Mary' is drawn to Alecia Jackson and Lisa Mazzei's (2012) phrase 'thinking-with' and uses it to bring her closer to the philosophers whose work she studies. Later 'Marys', however, are drawn to Stephanie Springgay and Sarah Truman's (2018) notion of the phrase as a way of 'set[ting] the event of thinking-making-doing in motion' (p. 208) which, like Manning's (2013; 2020) 'thinking-with' referred to in *Pre-prelude,* feels more active, more agentic.

[89] The 'Mary' writing this, although not oblivious to other, nonhuman forces in action in 'assemblages' is totally focused here on human members, and has yet to grasp, in terms of affect and relationality, that forces are always at play.

[90] This early 'Mary' has had few encounters with Deleuze and Guattari's work, hence the (mis)assumption around 'assemblages' being human-centred, revolving around her…

[91] A much later 'Mary' rereading this wonders how much this 'Mary' actually understands of 'assemblages' being multiple, always changing. She certainly sees herself as controlling them. See pages 77-80 for an example of a later 'Mary's' thinking around this concept.

fought to support and engage my students. I appreciate now that it would not have been me against the management as 'these figures of segmentarity, the binary, circular, and linear, are bound up with one another, even cross[ing] over into each other, changing according to the point of view' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a: 244), but, at the time, I just saw myself on the edge, ostracised.[92]

Thinking about your work with your students, I say, anxious not to waste this precious time with Erin trying to talk about concepts I do not really understand,[93] Deleuze and Guattari (2015a) state a book is 'a little machine' (p. 2) which becomes a different 'assemblage' with each reading as it is plugged in to other machines. This epitomises the plugging in of the books to your students' own lives;[94] it was amazing when they met Anne Frank's cousin and stood in the room where Anne Frank wrote her diary and hid from the soldiers (The Freedom Writers *with* Erin Gruwell).

That's a great interpretation really highlighting the impact of the books for the students, Erin says, interrupting my soliloquy at last!

I nod before saying, I love Deleuze and Guattari's (2015a) theory that 'when one writes, the only question is which other machine the literary machine can be plugged into, must be plugged into in order to work' (p. 3). I've often 'used' literature to help me in life; I didn't know it, but I've been plugging books into different machines

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[92] The differences between Lacanian and Deleuzo-Guattarian thinking frequently cross the 'Marys'' minds, but, it only occurs to this much later editing 'Mary' that whereas Lacan's 'symbolic order' is representational and structured and about taking up positions, Deleuze 'rejects the idea of representation' (Dosse, 2011: 224) and focuses on movements, speeds, the invention of new concepts. Had she seen herself within an 'assemblage', 'Mad Mary' might not only have placed less emphasis on her self having to change, she may have felt in attunement with the non-human forces at work and thus focused on the connections emerging in relational heterogeneity rather than pre-existing, discursively constructed structures and so have felt more able to respond to students' arising needs, and her own beliefs...

[93] This 'Mary' does not even consider that there can be multiple understandings: she simply assumes she is incorrect and everyone else is right!

[94] Transversal lines can be drawn here with other 'Marys' plugging in different texts: see pages 53-4 for an example of this.

forever! At school, for example, I was never 'Mary', but genius pianist Nina, and budding author Joey Bettany, at the Chalet School (Elinor M. Brent-Dyer, 1980a; 1980b); I was book-lover Nicola Marlow, with her beloved hawk, of Antonia Forest's (1981; 1982; 1984a; 1984b) Kingscote School. There is still nothing better than joining different book 'assemblages'![95] It's fascinating how your students become part of a different 'assemblage' with each text they read,[96] reflecting on changing interpretations, ruptures, 'lines of flight' created in the imagination. Of course, even just introducing the texts would have affected the connections between the 'assemblage's' members.

You're making me want to find out more!

Oh, I'm not really understanding it yet! The book 'becoming' something different with each reader and each reader 'becoming' something different with each book / reading of each book[97] just struck me though because of your students: the texts becoming and creating part of the 'assemblage' and their relationship with each student being different, and each student's relationship with the text, the writer, characters and environment portrayed being different every time they read it.

Everyone interprets books differently…

It's more than that though - something new emerges between the reader and the book, the reader and the writer: reader-becoming-book; reader-becoming-writer…[98] I've read somewhere an 'assemblage' is continually shifting, altering, and

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[95] This 'Mary' still sees 'assemblages' as something to be joined, with herself then being at the centre: she does not consider therefore the relationalities within them.

[96] Another example of this 'Mary's' early thoughts around 'assemblages'.

[97] See pages 52-53 where a 'Mary' writes about readers territorialising with their readings.

[98] Later 'Marys' are more familiar with Deleuze and Guattari's concept of 'becoming' (see page 148 for an example of this).

disbanding: 'assemblages' are always moving.[99] It's like in FE: nothing stays the same - there are staff changes, absences of lecturers and students from classes, and the implementation of new rules / regulations all affecting the 'assemblage'. I used to teach what was known as the Adult Literacy core curriculum (www.toolkits.excellencegateway.org.uk) and the assessments were almost all multiple choice involving very little writing. However, with the introduction of new qualifications designed with employers called Functional Skills ten years ago, there is at least an emphasis on writing in Functional Skills English now. That changed the way we taught, and not only because it was no longer possible to 'teach to the test'…

My students certainly felt writing offered them an escape, like reading, from their everyday life.

Yes, Deleuze says '[i]t is possible that writing has an intrinsic relationship with lines of flight'… (Deleuze and Parnet, 2012: 32).

What's a 'line of flight'?

Well, it's more what it does than what it is. To be forced to follow one is to be forced perhaps to try something new;[100] to break away from current constraints. The texts you introduced took your students out of the restraints of their usual curriculum.

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[99] As stated previously, the 'Mary' writing this has not quite grasped the concept of 'assemblages', or that it is what they do that is important. As the emphasis in this early conversation about Deleuze and Guattari's work is on how 'Mary' then saw her teaching experiences differently, her thoughts remain 'uncorrected' here. A later 'Mary' has a more in-depth conversation with Deleuze himself (see pages 77-80) demonstrating her later understanding of his work with Guattari.

[100] The 'Mary' rereading this years later is interested that this earlier 'Mary' feels 'forced' to follow a 'line of flight', 'forced' to try something new: she is unaware 'lines of flight' are something to be created, something adventurous, like 'taking a witch's ride' (Malamud in Deleuze, 1998: 1).

Yes, and it also helped that someone simply believed in them enough to buy them new books.

That message is incredibly powerful in both your memoir (2007) and the diary (The Freedom Writers *with* Erin Gruwell, *2009*), but it's still breaking out of the usual constraints: 'fleeing…to flee is to produce the real, to create life, to find a weapon' (Deleuze and Parnet, 2012: 36).

Haha, my students already had weapons: I took them to visit the Museum of Tolerance once and they ended up hiding their weapons in the bushes outside (Gruwell, 2007); luckily, they told me in time to do something about it!

That must have been an incredible 'assemblage': weapons in bushes right outside the Museum of Tolerance! It would have made a great painting…

Definitely! Do these 'lines of flight' offer strategies for dealing with life, creating something new?

D.H. Lawrence's view is that '[t]he highest aim of literature is…To leave, to leave, to escape…to cross the horizon, enter into another life' (Deleuze and Parnet, 2012: 27).

So a 'line of flight' is about escape?

It's about 'becoming' really.[101] The interesting sections of 'lines of flight' are in the middle, during the journey, the spaces in between the beginning and end (Deleuze and Parnet, 2012). It is important to remember that there is no beginning or end, and there are no straight 'lines of flight', like writing! When I'm writing, I'm unlikely to start

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[101] With Gale (2018a), later 'Marys' see these 'lines of flight' as being more about 'research-creation', troubling constraints, possibly leading to a breakthrough, than about escaping from something.

at the beginning and my ending often leads me somewhere else entirely. It's often what is in between the introduction and conclusion that matters: with the German Bildungsroman, for example, it's the protagonist's education that's important as 'false starts or wrong choices' lead to someone 'develop[ing] into a mature and well-balanced' (Garland and Garland, 1991: 87) person …

Yes, the attention is focused on their moral and psychological development rather than on any action.

Exactly, it's the protagonist's 'becoming', in the middle of the story, that's significant. Similarly, with 'lines of flight', it's at the points of intersection that things happen![102]

Perhaps in the hiding of the weapons in bushes then! Or in my move to university teaching when I paired up my student teachers to mentor my former Wilson High students…

I've taught teacher training programmes too, I even applied for a manager's post, but, their attitudes towards English were so awful I was glad I didn't get the job, but that's another story![103]

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[102] The 'Mary' writing this has little knowledge of the 'rhizome' or she may have added that things happen in-between, through difference and growth. She may have thought also about the 'rhizome' here as a way of providing a cartography of those movements. There is more discussion of this in *Dreaming Crafting*.

[103] This story, a favourite of earlier 'Marys' was, alas, gently removed from the thesis-'assemblage' prior to submission by a later 'Mary' who felt it was no longer so relevant to the emerging thesis, which already far exceeded the word limit! Incidentally, this footnote is felt to offer further exemplification of *thesisising*.

Dreaming Crafting

In dreams and writing our body is alive: we either use the whole of it, or depending on the dream, a part   *Cixous, 1993: 65*

It's another one of those nights when sleep is e*ludic*: despite watching two of my favourite films (Bridget Jones's Diary (2003) and the sequel) to relax, I'm still lying here wide awake. With Tomaso Albinoni's Adagios playing quietly in the background, thoughts drift, as they so often do in the darkness, to *thesisising*. With *thesisising*, crafting this thesis is an exciting process rather than a daunting, if not impossible, challenge, but *how* is it going to be presented? How do Deleuze and Guattari (2015a) construct *A Thousand Plateaus*…

You know *A Thousand Plateaus* wasn't only written by Félix[104] and me, don't you? It was written by 'quite a crowd' of us (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a: 1). We…

Is that Deleuze?! Where did he come from? How does he know I'm reading his book? Oh well, wow, I can't believe I'm talking to the great Gilles Deleuze and at a time when I need his advice the most! Yes, I interrupt, anxious to let him know I know. It's so good to meet you. I just love your work…

Thank you not everyone does…

I don't know why, I say, feeling flustered in Deleuze's presence and worried about looking stupid; I'm fascinated by the idea of being more than one: I'm trying to use it in my PhD thesis, recognising that it is not being written by one lone student, but by multiple 'Marys' and multiple others, outnumbering the number of readers! Later 'Marys' use *footnoting* as a way of showing how their thinking changes within the thesis and a sense of 'Marying' develops there too, 'becoming'-Mary 'researcher', 'becoming'-Mary 'writer'; there are also conversations between the 'Marys' mainly relating to the crafting of the thesis, and imaginary meetings between them and 'Chloe', one of my first students, now calling herself 'Chlo' and an undergraduate at university. Like you and Félix, I encourage readers in a letter, which I wanted to fold as a paper plane…

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[104] Reading Dosse's (2011) biography about Deleuze and Guattari, a later 'Mary' realises it is highly unlikely Deleuze would have used Guattari's christian name as he does here. Wanting to maintain authenticity, however, the decision is taken not to change 'Félix' to 'Guattari': this is how the Deleuze in the dream spoke about Guattari!

A paper plane?

I wrote a poem a few years ago about my first class as a trainee teacher: the students started making planes with their worksheets and flying them around the classroom…

That sounds fun! What was the lesson about?!

The comma, I say rolling my eyes, and it wasn't fun at the time…

I can imagine.

Well, I definitely learned my lesson: that was the first and last time I ever tried to teach students how to use the comma with worksheets! I wish I had known about 'assemblages' then: I just thought of myself as separate from the students, the paper planes; I had no inkling that all the bodies in this 'assemblage', human *and* nonhuman, were in contingent and heterogeneous relationality, all affecting and being affected by each other.

How would it have changed things if you had?

I like to think, I say hesitantly, I would have identified the construction and the flying of the planes as frustration, boredom, fear, anger, not just in relation to the activity they were being asked to do, but at having to 'learn' punctuation, English, at having to be in College; I would have felt connected, able to understand the students' experiences, follow the emerging 'lines of flight', let them rupture the session plan, the scheme of work…

The what?

Scheme of work: lecturers have to write one at the beginning of a course covering all the relevant topics; I think of it now with your 'lines of segmentarity' running through it, governing teachers' teaching and students' learning, something to be ruptured by 'lines of flight', if meaningful teaching and learning is to take place outside of the rigid curricula stipulating what is taught when…

Okay. So, what does this paper plane letter say?

Oh, it implores the examiners not to read the thesis conventionally from beginning to end; of course it cannot be known in what order the multiple 'Marys' might be met...

Does that matter? If you are telling them not to read your thesis linearly, and we certainly hoped *A Thousand Plateaus* would not be read from beginning to end, then you will have to be sure that the 'Marys', as you call them, can be met in any order.

That's a good point, thanks. I do hope you don't mind there are definite echoes of your book in the thesis, but who, after reading even just the introduction to *A Thousand Plateaus*

(2015a) would not be inspired to try to write their book, their thesis, as '[a] rhizome…made of plateaus' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a: 22)?

Quite a lot of people, I imagine, but, I am flattered by your interest in the construction of the book!

Oh, it's not only its construction that fascinates me, although perhaps what is effecting the thesis most is your suggestion of *mapping* with more than one entryway. I try to see writing as processual, and so not 'to do with signifying…[but] with surveying, mapping' (ibid.: 3); I'd like to invite readers to contribute to that process as they find their own ways through the thesis, guided only by a letter explaining how I would like it to be read.

Well, it sounds like you're doing that: inviting readers to enter the thesis at any point, any entryway, and leave at any exit, and obviously they can repeat that process as often as they like.

Hopefully! I'm also interested in Erin Manning's (2013) 'not-yet' (p. 187), I say, suddenly wondering about connections between that and Deleuze and Guattari's (2015a) 'realms that are yet to come' (p. 3). Does 'not-yetness' have more of a sense of movement, movement toward? I don't know if you know her work? Immediately regretting asking that, I tell him how interesting I find his idea of 'the rhizome pertain[ing] to a map that must be produced, constructed' (ibid.: 22). I initially thought that a map pins the 'rhizome' down, fixes it, but…

No, 'a map … is always detachable, connectable, reversible, modifiable, and has multiple entryways and exits and its own lines of flight.' (ibid.)

I hope, I confide, I will be able to create something like that map.

It sounds as though you are, just remember though, 'tracing is…dangerous' (ibid.: 13).

Oh, aren't 'tracings...put on [a] map' (ibid.: 22)?

Félix and I are not suggesting making a map of tracings, but to *start* with a map. Tracings are like 'a photograph or X ray' (ibid.: 13) focusing on one selected image whereas 'the rhizome pertains to a map that must be produced, constructed' (ibid.: 22).

Ah, and because tracings are *tracings*, and tracing an image on to something else is representational, they don't actually suggest anything new, whereas mapping has a sense of discovery, of always being on the move and so new entryways and exits are emergent in the writing?

Yes, so make something new: '[m]ake maps, not photos or drawings. Be the Pink Panther…' (ibid.: 26) because that doesn't imitate anything…

I've got a little black panther[105] here!

He doesn't look like he's going to go round 'paint[ing] the world' black! (ibid.: 10). I don't tell him Saffie's a she! So, Deleuze continues, '[b]e the Pink Panther and your loves will be like the wasp and the orchid, the cat and the baboon' (ibid.: 26).

What does that mean?

It's not what it means, but, what it *does*!

I should know that; I feel my face turning red as Deleuze continues, '[w]e form a rhizome with other animals' (ibid.: 10). We don't become them but there's an '*aparallel evolution*' (ibid.) of us and our animals as we don't reproduce each other, but, like the Pink Panther, paint our colour on them, on the world.

Oh, my supervisors keep telling me to be more rhetorical, perhaps that's what they mean, paint my colour on the world? Could I do that in this thesis?

Why not? '[R]eproduce nothing…[your thesis] is [your] becoming-world, carried out in such a way that it becomes imperceptible itself, asignifying, making its rupture, its own line of flight, follow[ing] its "aparallel evolution" through to the end' (ibid).

If only I could do that! I'm trying to focus on crafting and editing the thesis now (it is twice the stipulated length!); there is still so much more to say though: every time I open *A Thousand Plateaus*, I come across something new, interpret something differently; just rereading the first plateau earlier, images of 'assemblages' as collections of speeds, lines, spaces flew out at me, reminding me they are not only collections of tangible bodies such as animals, plants, furniture, but also, of course, particles, atoms, matter…I made up a word once, *humanijectaces*, to remind me that they are collections of humans, animals, objects and spaces…

That's interesting, but how do they differ from 'assemblages'?

I don't think they do; it just reminds me that nonhuman bodies don't only refer to objects.

But doesn't joining them together like that create a sense of them being one whereas there are singularities within 'assemblages'…

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[105] Perhaps because of their special relationship with little black panther, Saffie, other 'Marys' are also drawn to speculate about the image of the 'Pink Panther' (see page 190) presumably before this conversation with Deleuze; however, the chronological order in which these 'landing sites' appear shifts away from Chronos toward '*Aeon*: the indefinite time of the event, the floating line that knows only speeds and continually divides that which transpires into an already-there that is at the same time not-yet-here' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a: 305) (see also footnote 52 for more on this). It is therefore impossible to be certain what was written when; every temporarily 'completed' version of the emerging thesis involves editing of each 'landing site'…

Yes, I realise that now and so *humanijectaces* is no longer particularly useful. However, it reminds me of your image that 'assemblage', like old man river in the song I've always liked by Jerome Kern and Oscar Hammerstein II, 'just keeps rollin' along' (ibid.: 26): I can see the *humanijectaces* being swept up as they suffuse the strata running through your universe, running through the thesis.

That's a great image, and of course, 'a rhizome [also] has no beginning or end; it is always in the middle, between things, interbeing, *intermezzo'* (ibid.).

So my thesis will always be middling? It will never have a beginning or end, except I've found my self writing introductory materials.[106]

Well, Félix and I (2015a) did the same; we also ask for the conclusion to be read last so it can be understood…

I noticed that. I'd like my thesis to be a book, 'made of variously formed matters, and very different dates and speeds' (ibid: 2), but I'm not sure how to achieve that yet! I'm fascinated that '[t]he writer invent[ing] assemblages…which have invented him,…makes one multiplicity pass into another' (Deleuze and Parnet, 2012: 39) as, if I can call myself a writer, I like to think this thesis is doing exactly that: it's a sort of coming-together of all my experiences passing into each other, as generative forces 'intra-acting', removing the boundaries around being a student, employee, aunt, friend, music listened to, and played, novels read, and so, of course, they are not only about me, or about humans, but about *all* bodies relationally in action…

Yes, and, as author, it is *you*[107] who 'creates a world, but there is no world which awaits us to be created…One must…speak *with*, write *with*. With the world, with a part of the world, with people' (ibid.).

That reminds me of Manning's (2013; 2020) 'thinking-with' which she (2013) describes as 'quiet thoughts' as 'forces for the thinking-with, forces that move a body-worlding' (p. 167); there's potential for creation in that movement. There are also echoes of Wyatt and Gale's (2018) 'writing to it' in 'speak *with*, write *with*' (Deleuze and Parnet, 2012: 39), but, not wanting to waste this time with Deleuze, I ask him simply how to 'write *with'* (ibid.), telling him how Sally Rooney's (2018) Frances added to my understanding of his universe: '[t]hings

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[106] Later 'Marys' have also written conc/luding materials, but have yet to agree about whether these should only be read at the end, or whether it is okay for the reader to read them whenever they want to! (They have since decided to suggest they are read at the end, but leave it to you, the reader, to choose…)

[107] Despite what she writes above, the 'Mary' writing this seems to be thinking of the Cartesian 'I', an individual, whereas later 'Marys' see this use of 'you' as a relational concept, and so to 'write *with*' is affective, which is the point she appears to miss here.

and people moved around me, taking position in obscure hierarchies, participating in systems I didn't know about and never would. A complex network of objects and concepts' (p. 321)……

There's a real sense of 'being in the middle' there, of being part of the world, replies Deleuze, and what I'm talking about 'is assembling, being in the middle, on the line of encounter between an internal world and the external world' (Deleuze and Parnet, 2012: 39).

How would you get on that line?

Don't be so literal! Do you know Henry Miller's work? I shake my head, but Deleuze continues, in *Hamlet* Miller (cited in Deleuze and Parnet, 2012) reflects, '[t]he most important thing…is to make…[himself] perfectly useless, to be absorbed in the common stream, to become a fish again…The only benefit…which the act of writing could offer me was to remove the differences which separated me from my fellow man' (p.39).

I'm confused; does writing de-individualise, then? Is it that if you are in the middle, you blend in, you are one of many, a crowd? Aren't we always in the middle? It reminds me of your *Immanence – a life* (2001); I interpret that as being about removing those identifying characteristics which make us human so that we can be aware of the forces at play, the intensities, and 'becomings'.

It's more '*a life*, no longer dependent on a Being or submitted to an Act – it is an absolute immediate consciousness whose very activity no longer refers to being but is ceaselessly posed in a life' (Deleuze, 2001: 27).

I read something recently which connects that quotation with writing and with '"[a]ffective presencing" (Gale, 2021);…something takes over, immanence, of its self, preced[ing] all else' (Gale and Wyatt, 2021: 3)…

Yes, Deleuze interrupts, and, of course, we don't write as separate bodies inter-acting; we write relationally as bodies 'intra-acting'[108] with the capaciousness to affect and to be affected. The point is '[t]he assemblage is co-functioning, it is 'sympathy', symbiosis' (Deleuze and Parnet, 2012: 39); but more than that, as I said, '[t]he author creates a world, but there is no world which awaits us to be created' (ibid.) and so 'one must…speak *with,* write *with*. With the world, with a part of the world, with people' (ibid.). 'This is sympathy, assembling' (ibid. :40).

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[108] This seems to be a pertinent example of the 'Marys'' relationships with concepts always moving, the same ones sometimes grasped, sometimes not… The 'Mary' writing this dream shows she knows writing is relational, but this momentarily appears to drift out of reach here...

Oh, we seem to be back where we started! How would that work in the thesis I'm assembling, in this world I'm creating, if that doesn't sound too preposterous? I hope I am writing '*with* a part of the world, with people' (ibid.: 39): I like to think I am writing with you and Guattari, with Manning, and with all the other wonderful people influencing my PhD journeying; but it is not just the act of writing itself that is important, but, what is emergent in that process, and that will be different for everyone, and, of course, readers can also assemble it however they wish; I am therefore drawn to Manning's (2016) approach with the 'manner' (p. 46) of writing at the centre: I consequently invite the examiners and readers to explore the creative processes of writing rather than judging the text as a completed thesis…

Deleuze seems to be listening attentively, but I worry my interpretations are not what he intended, and why did I mention Manning (again!): talking with Deleuze just keeps reminding me of her writing! Knowing this could be my only opportunity to have a conversation with him, I change the subject and describe instead how his image of seeds spread by rain water and everything between the original and the farthest plant being, becoming, its territory (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a) has really helped me think of 'assemblages' as always altering…

Well, of course, he says, the concept of 'assemblage' will be understood differently by everyone. Félix and I actually used the French word 'agencement'…

Oh, Ken Gale and Jonathan Wyatt (2009) refer to that in their work. With its sense of 'agentic,' 'agencement' has really helped me to think of 'assemblage' as the encounter of numerous disparate elements simply happening like the 'strata', not created by humans, but simply being there; Jane Bennett (2010) writes about 'agentic assemblages' stressing the vibrancy of matter, its immediacy…

And how, interrupts Deleuze, are you using 'assemblage' in your work?

My heart misses a beat as a loud Saffie-like squeal pierces my dream; I am instantly awake, rushing downstairs, opening the door, calling her, relieved she runs straight in: her tail four times its usual size!

The following night isn't much better: hoping to settle down earlier, I only watch one film, Bridget Jones's Baby (2017), but, sleep e*ludes* me again. I try to recall what Deleuze was asking me when Saffie squealed. Reaching for *A Thousand Plateaus* (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a), I feel pleased I did at least understand a book as an 'assemblage' from my early encounters with Deleuze and Guattari (2015a; Deleuze and Parnet, 2012), even if the concept of 'assemblage' as something happening now, in relationality, 'something which

happens…between agents, elements' (Deleuze and Parnet, 2012: 38) e*luded* me. A book is an 'assemblage' changing with every reading, every reader; it 'is not an image of the world. It forms a rhizome with the world' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a: 10) and so is always connected and in heterogeneity…

Is your thesis 'form[ing] a rhizome with the world' (ibid.) then?

Deleuze! I didn't think I'd ever see him again!
It will be great if it does! I'm hoping it will make its own connections, 'connect[ing] any point to any other point' (ibid.: 21)…

Remember '[i]t has neither beginning nor end, but always a middle (*milieu*) from which it grows and which it overspills…' (ibid.: 22), continues Deleuze. Don't forget it is always the middle, the journey, that is important: '[w]e call a "plateau" any multiplicity connected to other multiplicities by superficial underground stems in such a way as to form or extend a rhizome. We are writing this book as a rhizome. It is composed of plateaus' (ibid.: 23).

I'm not sure what Deleuze is saying, but, that's how I want to write my thesis and so connections between 'plateaus' are vital. Isn't it through these connections that these 'plateaus', as 'multiplicities', just keep on growing, extending, forming a 'rhizome' with the emerging thesis?

Yes, but '[t]o attain the multiple, one must have a method that effectively constructs it' (ibid.).

Constructing is my main difficulty at the moment. What did you and Félix do?

'We just used words that…function for us as plateaus…These words are concepts, but concepts are lines…attached to a particular dimension of the multiplicities' (ibid.) and so, in our 'hallucinatory experiences, we watched lines leave one plateau and proceed to another like columns of tiny ants. We made circles of convergence. Each plateau can be read starting anywhere and can be related to any other plateau' (ibid.). That was our method.

That makes sense: a method that is a non/method and yet it works!

Of course it does; there aren't any methodologies that *can* work – they simply impose order where none can be imposed!

Ah, that's my problem! I'm trying to impose order and yet I'm writing with affective relationality, 'movement-moving' (Manning). Nothing is fixed and heterogeneous connections are always being made and then dissolved. My Director of Studies (Gale, 2021) has a very apt phrase: 'now you see me, now you don't'! I might have a nightcap and see what happens to the words in my thesis: I have tried to avoid any imposing lines and so perhaps its lines will also turn into ants, and solve all my 'construction' problems! I can see them now, ants creating capillary lines… I also love the thought of a 'plateau' being an '*intermezzo*' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a: 26), 'coming and going rather than starting and finishing' (ibid.: 27); is that what you mean by a 'plateau' never-ending?

Just think of 'a stream,' Deleuze suggests, 'without beginning or end that undermines its banks and picks up speed in the middle' (ibid). There is always movement; there are whirlpools, eddies, currents and of course different depths, all moving in multiple ways. A stream is never still!

Like the thesis I'm trying to write then! It would be so great if the thesis could be that stream, and those discursively constructed structures it challenges the banks it 'undermines'.[109] I'd really like it to be read randomly, as I said before, although that will need careful crafting; this is where the 'rhizome' could be useful, especially if 'rhizomes' come from 'plateaus'…

How are you intending to use the figure of the 'rhizome'?

Well, with this 'assemblage' of always-moving writings, aiming to 'reorient thought' (St. Pierre, 2019: 9) using concepts such as the 'rhizome', which 'assumes very diverse forms' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a: 5) and has 'no points or positions … only lines' (ibid.: 7), seems active in enabling this style of inquiry with multiple entryways and exits, and its non-arborescent writings. The 'rhizome' encourages perhaps the 'smoothing and striating spaces' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a) of this thesis's 'landing sites'[110] which are not contained within chapters, but which are plateaus of intensities, affects, percepts and concepts always intra-acting, where writing is rhizomatic, an immanent doing with texts 'always connected, caught up in one another' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a.: 9) like the 'becoming-wasp of the orchid and a becoming-orchid of the wasp' (ibid.). It is not only in structuring this thesis that the 'rhizome' is useful, I continue, it enhances Erin Gruwell's (2007) pedagogic approach, which has been influential in my teaching

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[109] Later 'Marys' grasp they are actually agentic in the becoming of this thesis, in trying to make it work. The practice of *thesisising* comes into play in relation to the processes involved in creating this always-moving thesis.

[110] This 'Mary' could explain 'landing sites' to Deleuze here, but to do so would interrupt the flow of her thoughts and, since he does not ask for clarification, she continues.

practices: Erin refuses to blindly follow the prescribed curriculum, thus bringing life into the classroom through writing and the creation of a '*lived-curriculum*' (Wallin, 2013: 200).[111]

Well, '[a] rhizome ceaselessly establishes connections between semiotic chains [and] organizations of power' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a: 6).

Is that through its 'unpredictable and organic growth…with no clear or definable structure?' (Gale, 2003: 168).Thinking-with' Alfred North Whitehead (1985), I want to avoid trying to explain the 'rhizome': there have been too many occasions when something has been so nearly grasped and then an explanation has been attempted and comprehension lost.[112] The focus is not on what a 'rhizome' is, but on what it might *do* for this inquiry: connecting all those 'landing sites' and plateaus since 'any point of a rhizome can be connected to anything other, and must be' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a: 5).

Of course, 'connection and heterogeneity' are the first two of the six 'approximate characteristics of the rhizome' (ibid.)…

And they are both to do with 'assemblage' aren't they? With the capacity of all bodies to affect and be affected?[113]

Yes, assemblages are rhizomatic! What's the third characteristic? My mind goes blank, but Deleuze reminds me it is multiplicity, '[m]ultiplicities are rhizomatic' (ibid.: 7) and 'defined by the outside: by the abstract line, the line of flight or deterritorialization according to which they change in nature and connect with other multiplicities' (ibid.: 8).

That's a great example of always being relationally in action, affecting and being affected by each other. I'm fascinated by 'lines of flight', I say before being interrupted by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov's *Flight of the Bumble Bee*, a clarinet flying… 'Music has always sent out lines of flight' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a: 11)…

'[T]hat is why musical form…is comparable to a weed, a rhizome' (ibid.). Oh, can Deleuze hear the music too? It's one of my favourite pieces although it's impossible to play! My heart starts beating faster as I realise the 'rhizome's' relationship with music is another reason why

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[111] A later 'Mary' connects this with Gale's (2003) suggestion that '[c]reative pedagogies of resistance, in recognising that language is never closed upon itself, must involve the use of reflexive and deconstructive strategies as a means of opening up new possibilities' (p. 169).

[112] See page 199: another 'Mary' also avoids explaining the 'plane of immanence' for the same reasons.

[113] See pages 103 and 136 for discussions showing changes in the 'Marys'' thinking around this.

this thesis cannot ignore it: I think of my thesis as musical movements of symphonies, of concertos.[114] I'm naming the 'landing sites' after musical instruments, I tell Deleuze excitedly, because music helps me understand your work. I only offer the reader brief clues towards the connections between the instrument and its 'landing site' though because music is relational and I don't want to influence them unduly with what the instrument does for me. 'Thinking-with' music makes felt the 'rhizome's' multiplicities, its movement, its variations, its life…

And of course, interrupts Deleuze, '[a] rhizome may be broken, shattered at a given spot, but it will start up again on one of its old lines, or on new lines' (ibid.: 8).

Like music! I always think of the musical stave on which the notes are written as being like the 'lines of segmentarity' holding them in place, and I can never decide which notes have the most flexibility – the ones on the lines or the ones in the spaces, or the ones written above and below? They are certainly the most difficult for the clarinet to play in tune, and so variations creep in, the lines possibly becoming more supple, 'molecular', and thus giving a little, bending a tiny bit as, for example, when bringing a book into the classroom that isn't on the curriculum as Erin Gruwell did with the *Freedom Writers* and as I subsequently did with my Rise Up students…

It can be more than that, the '[p]rinciple of asignifying rupture' (ibid.: 8)…

Oh yes! I interrupt enthusiastically, the 'rhizome' can crop up anywhere and I really like what you said just now about the 'rhizome' being indestructible. Writing can be like that, I say: a piece of writing can be discarded, but then continue growing, on old or new lines, years later…

'[A]nts…form an animal rhizome' (ibid.) and so 'can rebound time and again' thus, however few are left, it will always remain in some form or other even if it alters its course.

Like a cadenza! '[W]henever segmentary lines explode into a line of flight,...the line of flight is part of the rhizome. These lines always tie back to one another' (ibid.: 9) as a cadenza ties back to the music from which it arises, and, of course, it arises in immanence and so is already multiple...

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[114] This was an earlier 'Mary's' dream which, sadly, failed to come to fruition before this thesis's submission date.

You said you've read *Immanence: a life*? (Deleuze, 2001). [115]

Yes, but I can only grasp a sense of it all being about collective, multiple lives, always emerging, always relationally in play: it's not something I can put into words! Going back to writing, I say, desperate to mention everything before Deleuze disappears, I always used to think that following a 'line of flight' detrimentally affects it, changes the subject, but now digression, distraction, is part of the writing:[116] the lines will retie, reconnect; in my *thesisising*, for example, there are interruptions, 'lines of flight' outside the writings, but, always reconnections. The footnoting helps to connect the different transversal lines, but I worry that won't be enough…

Well, the 'line of flight' will not always succeed: 'there is still a danger that you will reencounter organizations that restratify everything' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a: 9).

So could the institutional regulations 'restratify' the thesis? I can see how the examiners might do that in their readings of it and, if I am thinking of it as a 'BwO',[117] then, as Gale (2021) senses, this collection of post qualitative inquiries '[is] about movement and sense, and as such, [it] always precede[s] organization and the fixities of discursive construction' (p. 466) as indeed they did! I like this way of 'making sense of bodies as processual rather than substantive' (ibid.): it brings them to life between the 'lines' running through them; I think of the thesis as bodies made up of 'lines of articulation or segmentarity, strata and territories' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a: 2)…

There are

> also lines of flight, movements of deterritorialization and destratification...All this, lines and measurable speeds, constitutes an *assemblage*. A book is an assemblage of this kind, and as such is unattributable. It is a multiplicity (ibid.)

I'm working to demonstrate that: I've named each appendix a musical tempo, a different speed, for example; not much, however, has been written about this thesis's 'territories'. It is easy to think of them as being the cafés, Grasslands College, the places where it is written,

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[115] See page 192 for discussion with 'Chlo' about this text.
[116] Later 'Marys', with Massumi (2002: 18), 'take joy in [their] digressions. Because that is where the unexpected arises…the experimental aspect. If you know where you will end up when you begin, nothing has happened in the meantime'.
[117] See Appendix *Stringendo* for more detail around this.

the fixed curricula, the conventions running through 'academic writing', but it is more than that: '[t]he territory makes the assemblage' (ibid.: 586). It isn't just a place that is already there, but a space being made, a space being created, coming into existence; it is agentic, always shifting. I'm hoping the conversations in the thesis will disrupt the discursively constructed practices seen in so many educational institutions. And if the 'lines of flight' rupture the 'segmentary lines' within those 'assemblages', enabling escape, creating change, do 'movements of deterritorialization' (ibid.) alter those 'territories', 'cut[ting] across' them, 'carry[ing] [them] away' (ibid.: 587), enabling something other to occur? The computer crashing during 'Chloe's' assessment is an obvious rupture from which a 'line of flight' emerges: the whole event rupturing the relationship between 'Chloe' and 'Mad Mary' (that's what I came to be called): it is at that point that 'Mad Mary' feels she has to involve her manager and 'Chloe' flees not just the classroom, but the College. Another example is in the conversations, particularly the ones with fellow PhD student 'Paula' about books and papers: we rupture them in our discussions especially as we try to understand different concepts, try to *use* them, to exemplify them, as Massumi (2002) does, thus 'avoiding application' (p. 17):

The important thing…is that these found concepts not simply be applied. This can be done by extracting them from their usual connections to other concepts in their home system and confronting them with the example or a detail from it. The activity of the example will transmit to the concept, more or less violently. The concept will start to deviate under the force. Let it…See what happens… (ibid.: 18-19).

Just thinking about the coronavirus as a powerful, affective force currently imprisoning so many of us at home, and the way that 'Chlo' and I are no longer able to meet in cafés to discuss her writing, but have to meet online in our homes, makes me realise just how dynamic a force is: there's no doubt also that the coronavirus has taken over the writing:[118] it is always there, always relationally in action, a force making its presence felt as affect does to all bodies.

Making new spaces would 'increase…the dimensions of a multiplicity that necessarily changes in nature as it expands its connections' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a: 7).

I hadn't thought of that, I say. I wonder if, in those new spaces, we are creating 'lines of flight' or 'lines of molecularity'…

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[118] This is shown particularly in *Appendix Allegretto-Largo-Allegro* and *Intralude - Wanderings with 'Chlo' dreaming with Manning'* but see also *Writing Post Qualitative Inquiry?* for further discussion about living with Covid-19

Why not 'lines of flight' *and* 'lines of molecularity'?

Maybe, but, you don't seem to mention 'lines of molecularity' when you talk about the lines constituting 'assemblages'; they are not included later either when discussing the 'rhizome', 'made only of lines: lines of segmentarity and stratification as its dimensions, and the line of flight or deterritorialization as the maximum dimension…' (ibid.: 22). I think of the 'molecular lines' as the middle ones, capable of some movement, unlike the 'segmentary lines', but not as far-reaching as 'lines of flight'. I see them as initially creating only minor disturbances, a crack, whereas more disruption would presumably be needed before 'segmentary lines explode into a line of flight' (ibid.: 8-9), possibly rupturing the 'rhizome'? Although 'the line of flight is part of the 'rhizome'[,] [t]hese lines always tie back to one another' (ibid.: 9) and so no damage is done; they can however '[turn] into a line of death' (ibid.: 589), perhaps that is what happened as 'Chloe' ran from the computer, from the assessment…

Maybe. What do you think about the fifth and sixth principles then, asks Deleuze sounding scarily interested even though it feels as though I'm just repeating what little I know...

Are they to do with 'mapping'? I ask tentatively, not liking this close questioning!

Yes, he replies, as we said before: the rhizome is 'a *map and not a tracing*…The orchid does not reproduce the tracing of the wasp; it forms a map with the wasp, in a rhizome' (ibid.: 12). Decalcomania is not possible here since 'a rhizome is not amenable to any structural or generative model' (ibid.: 11). Linked to this challenge is also the principle of asignifying rupture in which the rhizome makes its rupture where a part of the rhizome moves away and makes something new…

And so, I continue, creating something new, not a tracing, not replicating what was there before as tracings do, but offering 'multiple entryways' (ibid.: 23).

Yes, and, of course, '[t]he rhizome operates by variation, expansion, conquest, capture, offshoots' (ibid.: 22)…

That's how I'd like the thesis to operate, I say, thinking excitedly about the way it expands, grows offshoots without me; I've avoided the 'rhizome' for so long and yet it is almost the epitome of the thesis's writing with structuring as immanent doing: I don't always feel in control of the changes, I don't always make them; the whole thesis has immanence in its emergence and in its structuring; even, or especially in the 'writing up'

period, there is simply more and more writing occurring, too much writing! Could I call it 'mapping' 'open and connectable in all of its dimensions' (ibid.: 12)? I'm really interested in what you say about the author, book and the world:

> There is no longer a tripartite division between a field of reality (the world) and a field of representation (the book) and a field of subjectivity (the author). Rather, an assemblage establishes connections between certain multiplicities drawn from each of these orders, so that a book has no sequel nor the world as its object nor one or several authors as its subject (ibid.: 24)

So, they are no longer separate strands, but an 'assemblage', multiplicities coming together?

Yes, I hope you're writing '[a] rhizome-book, not a dichotomous, pivotal, or fascicular book'! (ibid.) exclaims Deleuze. You should '[n]ever send down roots, or plant them, however difficult it may be to avoid reverting to the old procedures' (ibid.).

I'm trying not to, but, with the submission deadline looming, it is difficult to resist tradition.

'Make rhizomes, not roots, never plant! Don't sow, grow offshoots! Don't be one or multiple, be multiplicities! Run lines, never plot a point!' (ibid.: 26).

That's exactly what I want for my thesis, I enthuse, you make it sound so easy! And, suddenly, I understand how a 'rhizome' might open up this inquiry as:

> the rhizome is made only of lines; lines of segmentarity and stratification as its dimensions, and the line of flight or deterritorialization as the maximum dimension after which the multiplicity undergoes metamorphosis, changes in nature (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a: 22).

And so it's 'the multiplicity undergo[ing] metamorphosis' (ibid.) in the lines making up the 'rhizome' which open up inquiry, isn't it? Gilles?...Gilles?

The only reply is the soothing sound of Saffie's purring as she kneads her blanket, waiting for me to stroke her before turning round three times and curling into a ball to sleep.

The emphasis is definitely on connections, and connections[119] are really important in this inquiry: the 'landing sites' are dependent on creating and drawing connections and that is something the 'rhizome' definitely offers; suddenly, I am seeing a whole map (possibly of my thesis?) with its 'multiple entryways', and I'm 'getting' for the first time(!) that: 'what we call a "map" … is a set of various interacting lines' and it might help my thesis if I can just create these lines so:

> [s]ome lines represent something, others are abstract … Some weave through a space, others go in a certain direction. Some lines, no matter whether or not they're abstract, trace an outline, others don't. The most beautiful ones do.
> (Deleuze, 1995: 33)

It's the Deleuzo-Guattarian lines then which will make this thesis whole and I will be asking the examiners to please 'take the work as a whole, to try and follow rather than judge it, see how it branches out in different directions, where it gets bogged down, moves forward, makes a breakthrough' (ibid.: 85), but what if the examiners will not 'accept it, welcome it, as a whole' (ibid.)?

Well, interjects Deleuze suddenly reappearing, then the examiners 'just won't understand it at all' (ibid.) and you'll fail!

I open my eyes, heart racing, it's minutes before I realise it was not just a dream: *thesisising* is actually at work, working, and there is still time to make this thesis work…[120]

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[119] A later 'Mary' sees these connections as 'lines of flight', like the aeroplane hyperlinks on these pages, connecting these post qualitative inquiries, the storyings, the 'Maryings'.

[120] Later 'Marys' realise that, in their *thesisising*, this thesis is working *all* the time and that differentiations are always occurring for this thesis is never fixed, but always becoming; with becomings in 'agencement' being multiple and relating to humans and nonhumans, this is about the 'Marys' making the thesis work relationally with all bodies in action, continually affecting and being affected; it is about 'Marying', 'Becoming-Mary'…

Landing Site: Harp (blurring, cascading)

A Second Chance: 'Chloe' and 'Mad Mary' reunite

The way the past carries over into the new event, which tendencies are reactivated, in what mix and with what formative interactions…is completely singular to the situation, so the theory of affect has to be custom tailored to every field of event-formation and even to every event. It has to be continuously reinvented

Massumi, 2015a: 151

Last week I advertised as a writing coach offering to help with essay and assignment writing (are they different?!); I am meeting my first coachee later this morning: a university student called Chlo. With a stomach already full of butterflies, I wish I had chosen the venue as that would have avoided the additional stress of finding somewhere new, but...

"Miaow!"

"Ah, Saffie, are you hungry?"

I feed her before straightening my hair. Staring at my reflection in the mirror, wondering what a 'writing coach' looks like, my mind wanders to Erin Gruwell asking herself if she looks like a teacher before leaving to meet her students (Erin Gruwell *with* The Freedom Writers, 2009). Even now, I can't believe I had the opportunity to meet her when she came to England, and how easily we chatted about teaching students no-one else wants to teach; there were so many similarities in our experiences considering we were English teachers in different countries. I still find it embarrassing that I told Erin she was inspirational in encouraging me to actively create change in the curriculum, in the classroom, but she seemed quite flattered! I just wish that poor girl who got so upset on her first day, Chloe, had joined my class a year later when I had learned to push some of those institutional boundaries and she would hopefully have had a very different experience. I put the rest of Saffie's tuna in her bowl before I leave; she is curled up on my bed asleep, but, she might want it later. Realising I have forgotten the map, I rush back inside, tell Saffie I won't be long and rush back to the car and set the satnav for the café in Rainfield; I can never totally trust the satnav but it does always get me wherever I am going eventually and I remain indebted to it for guiding me back to Paignlake one night when the main road back from Ocean Metropolitan University was blocked by fallen power cables, and I had somehow turned off before the diversion signs…

"Are you going to uni today, Chlo?"

"Yes, but I'm meeting that writing coach you told me about first."

"Oh that's great darling, is she going to help you with that essay you've been struggling with all weekend?"

"I hope so although I don't really know what she does: I'll just be grateful for any suggestions!" I don't want to tell mum how difficult I'm finding it: it's not the hours spent making notes with books that is hard, but the doing something with those notes, showing I've understood what I've read. It's a big jump from college and I'm just not getting what, or how, they want me to write, and I am desperate not to fail again. I got chucked out of a college when I was younger although it wasn't my work that was the problem: I never did any to find out if it was any good! I'm partly seeing this writing coach to please mum; I don't want to let her down again, especially not after she offered me this new start with her and Rob. "Oh no!"

"What's wrong?" mum calls out from the hall.

Going to the top of the stairs I say, "I forgot to draw the money out to pay the coach – you haven't got twenty pounds, have you? I'll pay you back."

"Sure, oh, I've only got ten."

Rob comes out of his bedroom and hands me fifteen pounds.

"Thanks, I'll pay you back."

"No need my lovely. I've got to go. See you both later."

I look away as they kiss; I am really pleased mum has found someone who loves her so much, but I wish they were not quite so demonstrative in front of me! "I'd better go too; I don't want to be late."

"Good luck darling, see you later!"

I'm about to enter the café in Rainfield where we've arranged to meet when a vaguely familiar-looking girl with long blond-hair clutching a laptop approaches me, "hi, are you Chlo?" I ask. She nods; "I'm Mary, would you like a drink?" I'm not sure of the etiquette of a writing coach buying a 'coachee' a drink, but, I need a latte after the journey and I can't not offer her one! She asks for a hot chocolate and, although it is not busy, I suggest she finds a table while I get the drinks hoping she will choose somewhere she feels comfortable to talk about her writing. As I approach the table in the corner by the window, I wish I had prepared how to

begin my first conversation as a writing coach. "That's a lovely picture", I say, sitting down beside Chlo; she agrees; we both stare at it for a minute or so, at the six sheep clustering under trees in the snow. The aeroplane above them looks out of context, but, it looks beautiful glinting in the sun with the snow below. Thoughts drift to a family walk on Dartmoor, there were no planes, but there were sheep and ponies, and feelings of peace and happiness abounded. On edge now though, still unsure how to start, I break the silence, asking Chlo simply if she has brought some writing with her.

"Yea, it's on here, is that okay?"

"Sure. Is there any particular aspect you'd like to focus on?"

"Everything – I'm hopeless at writing! I can't do punctuation, grammar and spelling - however hard I try I always get it wrong." Her voice is also strangely familiar, but it is unlikely we have met before as I have not lived here long…

"Well, that doesn't mean you're 'hopeless at writing'! A lot of people aren't very confident with punctuation, grammar and spelling, but can still write well." That might not be totally true, but I want to encourage this student as, like many others, she seems to think of writing as only being about those three things, and she has therefore decided she cannot write!

"Really?"

"Yes, the structure, how you create an argument, and how you communicate, are equally important." While she finds the right file, I ask how she has got on with her other assignments: her answers will help me decide what to focus on.

"It's here." She pushes her laptop towards me. Not wanting to be tempted to make changes to the writing on the screen, but, hoping to actively involve Chlo in the process, I limit my use of the laptop to scrolling up and down the page. I notice a couple of common 'issues' almost immediately: no introduction, one citation following another with no explanation, and no apparent links between one paragraph and the next. While I consider how to approach these issues – Chlo is clearly not a confident writer so I certainly do not want to destroy any confidence she does have – she pushes her hair behind her ear and says, "It's rubbish, isn't it? I said I couldn't write!"

"It's not rubbish: you've got a good vocabulary and you've clearly done a lot of research."

She looks taken aback at this possibly unexpected praise, "Oh, I have done a lot of reading actually."

"I can see that," I say surreptitiously lowering the laptop's lid so it is no longer a barrier between us. "Can you tell me what you were asked to do for this essay?"

As she's speaking, I notice that, like many other students, she can confidently tell me what her assignment is about, but she has not expressed it clearly in her writing. "It sounds like you're confident with the topic," I say, hoping to increase her confidence, "I'd suggest you write what you've just said at the beginning of your assignment. It would be a great introduction."

"Really?"

"Definitely." She is sitting poised to start typing, as if she thinks I will tell her word for word what to type, but, realising I am not going to, she suddenly pushes her hair behind her ear and starts writing; gazing at the sheep above, thoughts flood my mind about how those academic essay-writing guidelines are followed like sheep, followed as if lives depend on them, and perhaps they do! Writing an experimental PhD inquiry, challenging orthodox academic practices through the format of the thesis itself, it's been a while since my writing considered those expected conventions, a while since, inspired by Massumi's practice of 'exemplification',[121] any attempt was made to impose order on my writing, to control it rather than let it run riot...

"Is this okay?"

"Great!" Should I say any more about the lack of an introduction? "When's it due?"

"Tomorrow." My heart sinks: if she had told me that in her text message, I would have suggested meeting earlier! "Okay, there are a few things you can do which won't take too long and which will make a big difference. If you want to meet again, before your next essay's due, we can chat about integrating your evidence, your references, a bit more. For example, after you make a point, you could explain it in more detail than you've done here and analyse it, then include your reference and finally discuss its significance. That way you can start to create your argument: you'll find that's expected more as you progress on your course." Despite my misgivings about this 'formula' for writing, students do seem to find it helpful; I hate suggesting it now though: it is such a rigid way of writing after the writing practices I have been trying to engage with recently, but I do not think they would help Chlo improve her essay in time to meet the deadline… Why not? ask the sheep above; I cannot answer them. Is it just the limited time stopping Chlo from doing anything except following those traditional rules for

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[121] Massumi's (2002) practice of 'exemplification' is used within this thesis with its emphasis on showing rather than telling. See page 153 for further discussion of this practice.

writing academic essays? Why can't her writing board that plane glinting in the sun, or 'follow the witch's flight' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015c: 41)? What would happen en route?

"Er, you said there are a few things I could do to make it better?" Chlo interrupts my thoughts.

What should I focus on? Chlo simply will not have enough time to present her evidence differently overnight, but she can consider the point of each paragraph and link them to demonstrate an attempt to create an effective argument so this is what we focus on under the gaze of those attentive sheep in the snow, with the background noise of the occasional coffee being made. I am impressed at how receptive Chlo is to my comments, needing little prompting to identify the main point of each paragraph and its connection to the next one and then adding a sentence or two to make that link explicit.

Nonetheless, I avoid Chlo's question as, tucking her hair behind her ear, she asks if it is okay now: how would I know? Everyone interprets the assessment criteria differently, the student's writing is likely to be assessed differently by everyone who reads it...

My thoughts drift to those vague functional skills standards about whether appropriate sentence structures and tones were used in students' writing (https://www.thinkonlinetraining.com) and the hours we would spend as a team of 'functional skills specialists' trying to word advice around this to help lecturers marking the assessments.[122] Was that really all that was important in determining whether students had achieved the necessary level of English to be awarded the qualification? 'Thinking-with' Moten and Harney's (2013) suggestion that by 'refus[ing] to call [a class] to order, we are allowing study to continue' (p. 9), would they suggest that by not restricting writing to those criteria, and consequently not constraining students' writing, we are enabling students freedom to be creative? Obviously 'Chlo's' assessment criteria are very different, and, fortunately more specific, but nonetheless still restrictive…

It's time to intervene: why is the writing suddenly being aligned to the right, not the left, and is the 'Mary' writing this 'thinking-with' Deleuze and Guattari's 'lines of segmentarity': the curriculum traversed by these 'lines', which must be adhered to rigidly and which thus define the course / programme of study? Is she thinking some of those lines running through the curriculum are more supple, that those 'lines of molecularity' work to elude rigidity, allowing

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[122] This 'Mary' has yet to encounter Moten and Harney's (2013) work in which they challenge such practices in HE.

seepages, leakages, thus disabling the rigidity of the 'segmentary lines', making interpretation of assessment criteria possible…

I'll have to be honest with this other 'Mary': I did not consciously shift the writing to the right of the page - perhaps it just happened because of the interruption to the conversation with 'Chlo'? As indicated earlier, I am not controlling this writing; I am happy for it to choose where to align itself on the page![123] *As for whether I was thinking-with Deleuze and Guattari's 'lines' or not, I'll be honest and admit I wasn't….*

"But, there is a sense of movement in those fixed lines…"

"Yes, but it's not how I thought of them. I just worried terribly about misinterpreting the assessment criteria, because I hadn't written them, and so I didn't feel able to confidently tell 'Chlo' her essay would pass."

"Oh, well, I was enjoying watching you two chatting incidentally; you showed little sign of those fears from a decade ago of repercussions over what you say and do."

"Thanks. There's still apprehension around interpretations of assessment criteria though!"

" Well, 'Chlo' and her essay are still very much bound by the 'segmentary lines' running through the University and so, as writing coach, there are still some constraints in the advice that can be given…"

"Definitely. I hated that question about whether her essay was okay or not! I just said simply,

"You've definitely got a clearer argument now and, if you want to let me know when the next assignment is set, we can have another chat focusing on presenting evidence in more depth."

"Great, thanks." As she closes her laptop, she offers me the money for our session. I had completely forgotten! Writing her receipt, I say: "sorry, Chlo, remind me of your surname?"

"Blackwell," she says. As I write her name at the top, there is a loud bang of thunder and, simultaneously, my heart inexplicably begins to pound.[124] Chlo…Chloe…Chloe Blackwell…Grasslands College…I thought I knew her from somewhere! But can it really be her? It's her voice, her blue eyes – I'm sure it is – even the cream jumper looks familiar, but, didn't she have short hair?… What would she be doing in Rainfield – two hundred and sixty

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[123] It is interesting the writing again chooses to align itself right when, later in this same 'landing site', the original 'Mary' interrupts the conversation between this 'Mary' and 'Chlo'.

[124] See pages 56-7 for discussion around memory moving between past and present: 'active memory…coming from the past to energize the present' (Massumi, 2015a: 61-2) seems particularly pertinent here as does the idea of past and present energising the future as these movements occur in 'the cut' which is 'an interval smaller than the smallest perceivable, to paraphrase Deleuze. It cannot be consciously perceived' (ibid.: 60)

miles from where I last saw her? She does not seem to recognise me; shall I say something? If it really is her, she has obviously done brilliantly since then to now be a first year counselling student at Ocean Metropolitan University (OMU)…

I have to know: "You didn't go to Grasslands College, did you, about ten years ago?"

She looks down at her laptop suspiciously as if it has somehow given away her secret and pushes her hair behind her ear before saying, "why do you think that?"

"I, I, I used to work there…years ago…I think you were in my class? The first class I ever t-t-taught actually." Why am I stuttering? It was a long time ago now: this is a different Chloe; I'm a different Mary!

Chloe/Chlo stares at me open-mouthed before exclaiming as lightning flashes across the sky illuminating our table: "Mad Mary! What are you doing here? My mum said you were a PhD student!"

Oh no, she remembers me as 'Mad Mary!' "I am," I say, more casually than I feel, "I'm at the same university as you actually."

"Oh! You were the English teacher though, weren't you? You tried to help me."

Is that what she thinks? I thought she would hate me; I thought she would blame me for being expelled.

She grins suddenly and says, "I didn't get on at Grasslands…"

As my stomach turns over (as it did all those years ago when Tracey warned me there was a potentially 'challenging' student called 'Chloe' starting that day), Chlo continues: "they didn't like my language! It was bad, but I was just so angry at everything and everyone after my mum left. It's great living with her again. I wasted a few years doing nothing, then my mum contacted me out of the blue to ask if I'd like to move here with her and her new bloke, Rob. It was Rob who suggested I went back to college; he even went with me to an open day. It was great – I did a couple of short courses, then an Access course last year, and I started at OMU in September."

"Wow, you've done so well! It must have been hard moving away though; I've only lived here for nine months so…"

"No, it's been good; it's worked out well and mum's a lot happier here; she's stopped going on at me and there's always food in the house. I miss my sisters though: Hannah stayed in Kent with Alex, her son, and Danielle didn't want to leave her school so she moved in with them." Chlo looks at her watch: "I'd better go."

"Yes, of course. Chloe…"

"Chlo, please, no-one calls me Chloe now."

"Sorry! You made quite an impression on me at Grasslands and, well, recently, for my PhD research, I wrote two stories – my story and yours…"

"Mine?"

"Yes, I hope you don't mind. I was wondering if you might read them sometime? It would be interesting to know what you think."

She tucks her hair behind her ear before saying, "Yeah, if you want…"

"Great. If you give me your email address, I'll send them. There's no rush," I say as she writes it down, "but perhaps we could have a chat about them sometime?"

"Sure."

"Great, thank you. Good luck finishing your assignment!"

"Thanks." I watch as Chloe – Chlo - rushes away before I return to the counter for another coffee wanting to gather my thoughts before driving back to Paignlake: waiting in the queue I ask my self why I mentioned the stories and why I asked her to read them:[125] 'Mad Mary' is obviously a good name for me! I barely know Chlo – I've had two encounters with her in the last decade and they could not have been more different; I am asking her to read a story I have written supposedly from her point of view, but how can I possibly know what was going through her mind? I am going to have to check I have not written anything detrimental… What if reading about the past upsets her? Her life has obviously changed completely since then. The last thing I want to do is bring back bad memories that are not even true… I will stress the stories were written from memory and have been fictionalised,[126] and obviously I will make it clear I will not mind at all if she decides not to risk being reminded of the past, not to read my stupid stories…

"Can I help?"

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[125] A later 'Mary' editing this now is drawn to this question: why did she ask Chlo to read the stories?! She wonders about the environment, its 'affective presencing' (more about this concept can be read on page 169): so different from where the two first met, more relaxed, the café noises, the drinks, and those sheep watching over them, surely they would not let anything untoward happen…?

[126] The 'Mary' writing this now no longer separates fiction from fact in the way earlier 'Marys' did, but 'Chlo' still thinks in these binaries and so this reference to them remains.

"Oh, hi, a medium cappuccino please." I usually drink lattes, but feel in need of extra

caffeine. I walk back to the table we recently vacated, relieved it is still free, and sit down. Staring at the picture again, I am reminded of the paper planes that once flew in class,[127] not in Chloe's class, but, in the same College, and I think how different this environment is from the one where Chloe and I first met: those uniform tables and chairs facing the front prohibiting conversation replaced here by tables of different shapes and sizes encouraging conversations, relaxation;[128] those signs banning food and drink replaced by pictures fostering the imagination rather than stifling it and instead of the relative silence, the noise of coffee machines and conversations. What if Chloe and I had met here instead of there all those years ago? Sipping my cappuccino, I realise how lucky I am to have this second chance to help Chloe:[129] I just hope I have not ruined it already by asking her to read those stupid stories...

Seeing 'Mad Mary' again was weird; I felt so embarrassed thinking about how I behaved in her class and although I'm scared to read her stories, I want to help - I owe her that at least after swearing at her (she should have thrown me out herself, not waited for that manager!) I'm actually really worried about what she might have written about me and *as* me! It can't be good! She must hate me and yet she gave me extra time; it was really helpful going through my essay paragraph by paragraph, identifying the main point, well points sometimes, and then connecting the end of the paragraph to the following one. I even enjoyed doing it and that same method should work with other essays – it's logical really, find the connections and your essay has structure! 'Mad Mary' suggested doing a plan before I start writing so I can see the topics I'm writing about, and the possible connections, but I've never been good at plans: the college tutors were always going on about them… I feel really excited about writing the next assignment and 'Mad Mary' said she'll help which is great.

I don't get home until late even though Rob gave me a lift. We chatted about writing essays and I didn't even look at my phone once. When I do, 'Mad Mary' (I must stop calling her that!) has already sent me the stories and my heart actually starts to pound! She's included a

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[127] See page 117 for more thoughts around the making and flying of these planes.

[128] A later 'Mary', encountering Manning's (2020) concept of 'practicing the schizz', gives this issue further consideration on pages 169-70.

[129] A later 'Mary' realises that whilst this 'reunion' may seem unexpected, a series of 'potentials' (Massumi, 2019: 534) brought them together: '[t]here is a "tenuous thread" – an infinitely complex zigzag abstract line – connecting every occasion's actual world to the open whole of the universe' (Bergson, 2012, cited in Massumi, 2019: 536)…

really nice message asking me to please not feel I have to read them, but, I will - it will be interesting actually, I've never been in a story before and it can only be fictional anyway: 'Mad Mary' cannot possibly know what I was thinking… I take a can of coke out of the fridge, go up to my room – it's still a novelty to have a room to myself, but, this time, instead of thinking how beautiful the fairy lights are above my bed, how they somehow shine through me, making me feel so at ease with my self, I simply start reading; I begin with my story and, it's amazing, she understands me better than I do! She's got one thing wrong though, I didn't hate her, or resent her asking me if I was okay; no one ever asked me if I was okay before – it was such an alien question, I had no idea how to react except angrily. I'm embarrassed about that now and about having got her into trouble with her manager. I'll apologise when I see her, buy her a drink…

I wait nervously outside the pub in the wind and rain; is that Chloe…Chlo… crossing the road? She looks very wet! I should have been braver and offered to pick her up.

"Thanks so much for reading those stories and coming out in this awful rain; I really appreciate it. Would you like a drink?"

We sit down at an empty table by the window with Chlo's Doombar and my Thatcher's Gold. Chlo is very quiet and I worry the stories upset her, but after a minute or so, she pushes her hair behind her ear and looks down mumbling, "I just wanted to say, I've always felt bad about telling that manager woman you swore at me. I'm sorry for getting you into trouble." She looks up at me briefly.

"Oh Chlo," I say, my heart breaking at the thought of her thinking she'd got *me* into trouble all these years, "I didn't get into trouble. I should have done – it was all my fault. I should be apologising to you – being my first student you suffered because of my inexperience." As I'm speaking, the coincidence that she is also my first writing coachee strikes me; I must not let her down again… "Since then," I continue, "I've learned a lot about myself, about sixteen year olds, but I still worry about *how* best to support them and that's partly what's inspired my PhD: to try to identify teaching strategies that students forced to study English might find interesting, that would be enjoyable and so foster a lifelong love of learning."[130] Have I said too much? I don't want to scare Chlo away with my dreams of engaging and motivating troubled teenagers!

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[130] Whilst the focus of these inquiries have since shifted away from 'teaching strategies' per se, this original aim is nonetheless axiomatic in the development of this thesis and my *thesisising*: the 'Mary' editing this realises that it is the moving away from a focus on 'teaching strategies' to writing for everyone ever denied the opportunity of fulfilling their academic potential that drives the experimentation, the engagement with always

I'm relieved when she smiles: "I don't think that would ever be possible! At sixteen I just didn't want to be there: I didn't see any point: I'd already failed at school; I knew I was no good at anything; I didn't have any qualifications; I was a total failure. My mum had left me, my sister was always going on at me, I was always hungry, there was never any money; I was miserable, hated everything and everyone – there was no way I could concentrate on learning like I can now…"

"It's understandable you couldn't focus then! It's so great you're at uni now." Chlo sounds so dejected I change the subject to the present, although, by asking her here, I am hoping to talk at least a bit about Grasslands College.[131] "You're studying counselling now, aren't you? I worried that thanks to me you would never return to education."

"Yea I got that impression reading your stories! When that computer jammed I was worried you'd make me restart the stupid test, and then you tried to be nice to me, asking if I was okay, and I just couldn't handle that! No-one was ever nice to me!"

"I'm sorry, I totally misunderstood you."

"It wasn't your fault – I was weird! When that computer crashed, and once I'd escaped from the room, I was actually relieved it had happened. If I'm honest, I used the computer freezing as an excuse to run – to avoid anyone seeing how rubbish at English I was."

"Oh, then I completely misinterpreted your feelings – I just assumed…"

"That I was f****d off with the computer?"

"Yes, and that you then realised you had crossed too many lines by swearing at me." Oh, why did I remind her about that?

"That was too subtle a difference for me then, Mary!" She smiles and I breathe a quiet sigh of relief as she continues: "I thought of myself as a failure and I didn't want everyone to know!"

"But it wasn't that kind of test, Chlo", I say automatically, "it would have shown what you were confident with and what areas we needed to work on."

"That's what you said then as well," I cannot help smiling, but, luckily, she does not seem to notice and continues, "but being asked to do a test like that on my first day when I was already nervous about being in college and the thought of being identified as a failure yet again was awful. So the computer failing saved me from failing!"

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moving affective forces in processual 'assemblages', and the subsequent aim to animate potential for intensities and becoming in writing, offering opportunities and glimmerings of the not-yet-known.

[131] This 'Mary' binarises past and present although other, later 'Marys' show they realise they are not polarised.

"Before I started the specialist diploma in teaching maths, I had to do an assessment. I only had a GCSE grade C in Maths, from twenty years ago, although I had been working hard to develop my own maths skills in order to teach it. Anyway, I found the test difficult, there were some questions I could not even attempt, and I was convinced I had failed! I had similar feelings as you, and I was twenty years older: that test would show how little I knew! I wish you'd spoken to me, but I can understand why you didn't…"

"Yea, well, you were the teacher and I hated anyone in authority then. It's different now..."

Interesting that she refers to me as 'the teacher', that discursively constructed reality, no longer a real person…

"My lecturers are great," Chlo continues, "but, one of the reasons why I chose counselling was because I realise I wasn't alone in feeling like I did as a kid. I really want to help teenagers like I was; I've realised from doing this course that I could have benefitted so much from counselling, but, even if I'd been offered it, I doubt if I would have gone! Obviously the course I'm doing now is not a counselling course for me, but we do have to consider our experiences and draw on those, especially in our reflective essays, and that's made me determined to help others struggling in schools."

"I'm so pleased, Chlo! I'm sure you'll be a great counsellor. One of the reasons I went into teaching was because I once needed a second chance myself when I failed my A-levels. My school and a careers advisor, who didn't even know me, tried to persuade me to do a typing course instead of retaking my A-levels and reapplying for university the following year, but I was determined to retake: I'm so pleased I did as I then passed them all and was able to start at the university of my choice. That initial failure made me determined to help others to fulfil their potential. Proving the school wrong, achieving an 'A' after being told my grades were unlikely to improve, was such a wonderful feeling and one I still recall now when doubts about my ability seep in: the tears still flow as they did when I opened both of those envelopes a year apart, but so do the shivers of excitement and achievement… Sorry, I'm getting distracted! How did you get on with that assignment you showed me?"

Chlo smiles and says: "not too bad: I passed – thanks to you!" I am relieved for I had not felt certain it would pass and had dreaded failing her a second time… Until our meeting in the café I had only ever given feedback on assignments I had written the assessment criteria for, and been responsible for teaching students the required material; interpreting someone else's assessment criteria, for a subject I knew little about, was therefore a new experience.

"You did all the work, not me! Did you get any feedback?" I ask hesitantly, worried Chlo will blame me for her assignment not being perfect.

"Yeah, I was going to ask if we could meet again actually. My lecturer said I need to integrate my quotations more. Is that what you meant when you said about explaining my points more before I reference them?"

I nod: "I'd be happy to help." I am impressed Chlo remembers our conversation. Oh, her glass is empty: "Same again?"

"Thanks, if you're sure?"

"Yes, of course, the least I can do is buy the drinks!" I don't tell Chlo, but I hate trying to get served in pubs: I am always last. Looking back on our first meeting as writing coach and coachee, I find it amusing that I worried about whether I could buy her a drink or not, but, of course we are also fellow university students. Our relationships have certainly shifted since being lecturer and student all those years ago, and we are meeting in quite different territories[132] now too. Whilst it occurs to me that those institutional 'lines of segmentarity' running through us at Grasslands College are still binding us here, and in the café where we met last time with Chlo's essay, I realise I do not feel as trapped by their rigidity as I used to. I am aware, instead, of more supple 'molecular lines' alongside them enabling flexibility and movement.

"Cheers," says Chlo, pushing her hair behind her ear as I put the drinks down. "Um, can I just ask why you wrote these stories?"

"Sorry, I should have said! The stories have more than one purpose. At the moment I'm planning to preface my thesis with them as a way of setting the scene: illustrating the context of a typical English class taking place in a FE college. I'm hoping our stories illustrate the tensions faced by new teachers anxious to support students, but, aware also of institutions' expectations, as well as conveying students' feelings of nervousness and anxiety combined with the affects of pressures outside of their studies."

Reading this a couple of years later, future 'Marys' like how 'Chloe's' and 'Mad Mary's' stories remain close to the heart of this thesis, to all the 'Marys'' hearts:

"Well, of course, they started the inquiry; they had a clear purpose," that earlier Mary, the 'model' PhD student, reminds them, "they were designed to introduce the context of FE..."

"Well, yes, they were, but…"

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[132] See pages 85-6 for more about territories.

"They are also the only stories inviting the reader into a class to share the experience of teaching and learning in a FE context", continues that Mary.

"Maybe, but they also marked a turning point in the thesis's development, in our development: these stories, unknowingly at the time, exemplify the classroom becoming a relational space with forces and intensities at play within the emerging 'assemblage', thus continually being constructed differently; with affect existent on this plane, the power of the capacities of all bodies, human and nonhuman, to affect and be affected, dominate..."

"I'm not sure about that…"

"Why not? The classroom is definitely a relational space with all bodies, human and nonhuman, in contingent and heterogenous relationality, having the capacity to affect and to be affected by each other. Blaming themselves for what happened, 'Mad Mary' and 'Chloe' were totally oblivious to the forces and intensities at play around them."

"But how can you say nonhuman bodies, forces and intensities affected the students in the class? You can't just say all bodies have capacities to affect! What evidence have you got for your data chapter? Oh, don't tell me, you haven't got a data chapter and you haven't got any data?"

"I have! The data is in the stories…"

"Really?! I suppose you would say those stories explore how bodies affect other bodies in the classroom?"

"Well, that's not really what they do – affect is more than simply human and it is always relational: it is everywhere, an invisible force 'com[ing] into view as habit or shock, resonance or impact. Something throws itself together in a moment as an event and a sensation; a something both animated and inhabitable' (Stewart, 2007: 1)."

"That's stupid! Why don't you gaze through different theoretical lenses, as planned, thus showing different perspectives and suggesting alternative strategies for teaching English? At least something concrete will then emerge from this thesis, which may help other lecturers. You shouldn't have changed it…"

"I haven't: this thesis could still help others; it suggests different ways of looking at situations, offering tools for mobilising concepts. Gazing through different theoretical lenses seems so passive now. There is a recent shift in this thesis towards a more active using of theoretical concepts, towards a Deleuzian 'plugging in' of them to suggest different ways of thinking about FE culture. The use of concepts as providing 'power to move beyond what we know and experience to think how experience might be extended' (Colebrook, 2008: 17) brings

those classroom experiences to life, recognising the distribution of agency across human and nonhuman actors. Furthermore, the writing practices exemplified within the different texts in the thesis suggest ways of writing 'academic writing' differently."

"That's interesting," says the original author, "but certainly those initial gazings through lenses, those initial applications of theory to my teaching practice, to my experiences, were central in the relationship between 'Chloe' and 'Mad Mary'."

"Yes, and none of that has been deleted; it's really important that,

through a Lacanian lens, for example, the college becomes a place with its own culture, rules and language that all newcomers – you and me – students and lecturers - must quickly learn and comply with to be accepted by the institution.[133] Consequently, I saw both of us as newcomers positioned on the edge of the College needing to learn its jargon and conform to its regulations and ethos in order to be accepted. I was so intent on mastering these aspects that I overlooked your needs."

"No, you didn't! My problem was that, at the time, every other word, as you noticed, began with 'f'!" We both laugh and I'm surprised at the ease between us, and our drinks(!). "I realise now, especially since reading your story, that you risked your job for me…"

"No, I should have, but I didn't. I was too scared of making a bad impression; I'd risk it now…"

"Well, you definitely tried to help me and I did know that, even then: I was just too stupid to let you." I am shocked by Chlo's maturity, but I shouldn't be: she must be in her mid-twenties now! I realise what a rare opportunity this is, meeting a student a decade later, a student deemed 'not ready to learn' by a college whose role should have been to offer second chances. Would it have been possible to support her at the time? What if I had known about 'assemblages', about the capacities of all bodies, not just human, to affect and to be affected?[134] What if Chloe had known? Whilst Chloe and I were not the only ones involved, could we both have reacted differently to whatever surged through the classroom at that moment? Could it have been as if it hadn't happened? But affect is invisible, provoked in the

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[133] A later 'Mary', reading Deleuze's (2020b) *Foucault* is drawn to the definition of 'Panopticism' '*to impose a particular conduct on a particular human multiplicity.* We need only insist that the multiplicity is reduced and confined to a tight space and that the imposition of a form of conduct is done by distributing in space, laying out and serializing in time, composing in space-time, and so on' (p. 29). She is struck by the lack of resistance, since, as a new lecturer, it did not take her long to begin to try to push the boundaries of the 'symbolic order' in which she saw herself.

[134] A later 'Mary' (on page 107) intra-jecting with this earlier one, asks a similar question, but, being more aware of 'relational forces, is able to see there was scope for change in that initial 'critical incident'. A later 'Mary', 'thinking-with' Manning (2020), grasps that, with 'practicing the schizz' taking place in the setting up of thresholds, for example in the setting up of a classroom, and in the terms of the encounters that they are contingent with, there are multiple ways in which human and nonhuman forces can engage with them (as footnote 128, see pages 169-170).

moment, not something which can be controlled so perhaps the best outcome would have been that we both recognised what was occurring as being out of our control and waited for it to pass, resisted its surge, or could we have redirected its surge… 'Thinking-with' Spinoza, however, it is possible 'to change, will, or manipulate external circumstances so that affects between their body and external modes are agreeable (that is, they are not destructive or paralytic)' (Young with Genosko and Watson, 2013: 294); this suggests those relational forces could have been worked with to produce a different outcome.

"I just couldn't distinguish between swearing, and swearing *at* someone", Chlo explains; "I appreciate now that whilst you were prepared to overlook me swearing in class, there was no way you could ignore me swearing at you…"

"The trouble was I then worried I shouldn't have made that distinction. I did it in the belief that you simply did, as you just said, use the 'f' word when you spoke and that you would not be able to change that immediately. However, I couldn't risk the other students seeing me let you swear at me, or risk them telling my manager or colleagues that I let you swear in class. Also, I was conscious that, as a lecturer, I had to enforce the College's Code of Conduct: I was so worried at not being seen to do this that I handled the situation with you badly, but, I thought I was a 'player' in this Lacanian symbolic order and, to be accepted (or to keep my job!), I had to enforce its rules, culture and language…"[135]

"I do feel bad for putting you in that position."

"Please don't, Chlo. You didn't do anything wrong!"

"Well, I am sorry. I just felt so isolated and, it wasn't that I didn't know I had to behave in a certain way, it was just that I simply couldn't do it. What you just said about conforming is interesting and certainly the more I tried to stop using the 'f' word, the worse it got. I guess your theory fits – I couldn't comply so I was kicked out!"

"It's really interesting to hear your thoughts about that time. What we were talking about earlier is how individuals fit into society from a Lacanian perspective," her eyes glaze over, but I continue, "more recently however I've started gazing through a Deleuzian lens." How can I explain this in a way Chlo might understand? "Deleuze, very basically, as I don't really understand him yet, sees society as being made up of 'assemblages'; I'm therefore thinking

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[135] There is some similarity here with the conversation with Erin Gruwell in *Deleuze in the Classroom* as another 'Mary' explains how Lacan's 'symbolic order' was applied to try to fit into a new institution, a new career, but, it nonetheless feels important for 'Chlo' to also be told this (to understand why 'Mad Mary' acted as she did).

of the College as an 'assemblage' which newcomers – you and me – join thus becoming part of an existing 'assemblage'.[136]

'Assemblages' affect, and are affected by existing members, human and nonhuman; this is one aspect I find fascinating because with Deleuze, nonhuman bodies as well as human bodies have capacities to affect and to be affected by each other in relationality; so, for example, the computer you used for your assessment becomes a part of this 'assemblage'. That's why I came to see the computer as being at least partly to blame for your departure from the room. Does that make sense?"

"But that computer saved me from the humiliation of everyone finding out how stupid I was."

I am so relieved Chloe simply accepts the computer could have had the power to influence events that day! "However you look at it, that computer was powerful and triggered what Deleuze would call your 'line of flight' from the classroom and subsequently from the institution. But, indirectly, that led to you joining another college in a different part of the country and subsequently to becoming a university student; you simply took an alternative route and, I imagine, gained invaluable experience along the way that you wouldn't have had at Grasslands..."

"Whatever! You're losing me now!" Oh, I knew I would end up saying too much! "I didn't realise my story was so significant," continues Chlo, "I've hardly ever thought about Grasslands since I left."

"That's a relief! I suppose it affected me so much because, as I probably said, you were one of the first sixteen to eighteen year old students I taught and it was only after you'd left, and as my teaching experience increased, that I realised you were not alone and that actually there were numerous reasons why you and students like you couldn't simply sit in a class and 'learn' as institutions seem to just expect."

"Well, as I said before, nothing and nobody could have helped me then…"

"But you were only sixteen and support should have been there. I'm hoping that by telling your story, my story, and others' stories, by consequently questioning also what 'work' looking through the selected theoretical lenses at those experiences might do, I will be able to inquire

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[136] This naïve way of thinking of an 'assemblage' troubles later 'Marys' since it is always shifting, always changing, and is not therefore something that can be joined 'as it is'; consequently, 'Chloe' and 'Mad Mary' joining Grasslands College automatically alter the 'assemblage', they are pivotal in its 'becoming' something other. 'Mad Mary' is, however, unaware of this, believing only she must change her behaviour, and 'Chloe's', to fit in with the institution. Since to change her view as stated here would be unauthentic to the original 'Mary' writing this, the text remains unchanged. There are further discussions around 'assemblages' on pages 77-80 showing how the 'Marys'' thinking shifts.

into how theorising those FE worlds alters my perspectives, and how these theoretical lenses might consequently enable the teaching of English in FE to be written differently and thus offer students different experiences."[137]

I like how the writing shifts here, exemplifying how Marys' thinking has shifted since writing these thoughts and of course there have been further shifts in the meantime; starting at Grasslands College would have immediately begun to create change, but 'Mad Mary' thought she had only two choices as she joined her fixed Lacanian 'symbolic order': conforming to its rules, culture, and language, or remaining on the outside.

With 'assemblages' always shifting, however, we were not so bound as she thought we were by the college's rules and regulations, by the curriculum, and by the short length of the course dictating immediate assessment of students with no time allowed for their nerves to settle, and to become familiar with their new environment. In addition, 'Mad Mary' was just too worried about doing the 'right' thing, whatever that was! Somehow she needed to both abide by and enforce the College's rules, even though they were not necessarily helping her to help students. Surely that was her priority though, even if she were, by doing that, taking advantage of those 'molecular lines' inviting change to offer a new, vulnerable, student a chance to settle in?[138] Writing about the 'critical incident' in her reflective journal afterwards, 'Mad Mary', like bell hooks, turns 'to theory because [she is] hurting…[She] came to theory desperate, wanting to comprehend-to grasp what [had] happen[ed] around and within [her]' (1994: 59). The theory she turns to, however, is Lacan's psychoanalytic theory with its male-dominated 'symbolic order' which, if she cannot master its language, culture and rules, she will never fully be able to join. What if, instead of seeing her self as having to conform within this community of human bodies, 'Mad Mary' encounters Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy and is therefore aware of the capaciousness of not only her body, but all bodies to affect and be affected? What if she thus believes multiple relations with human and nonhuman bodies are possible, and that depending on those relationships, 'their power of acting increases, or…diminishes' (Lorraine, 2011: page 116 of 171, 61%)? What if, 'Mad Mary', unable to take up a position as full member of the Lacanian Symbolic thus sees herself in the institution as 'deterritorialising' and 'reterritorialising' as 'becoming-lecturer', able to harness Gale's (2021) affective capillary leakages to create 'lines of flight toward new

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[137] Re-reading this later, it seems very human-centred, but it seems important to leave in those original thoughts around what this inquiry might have been as they direct these conversations between 'Chlo' and 'Mary'.

[138] It occurs to a later 'Mary' editing this that 'Mad Mary's' 'position, at that moment,…is [to]…become an instrument of governance' (Moten and Harney, 2013: 126), but, she is unsure *how* to govern and feels that to do so would be counter to helping 'Chloe', although the institution would presumably disagree and believe 'Chloe' would be more effectively helped by 'Mad Mary' enforcing the rules.

ways of life' (Lorraine, 2011: page 138 of 171, 72%), new curricula, new structures and practices? Interestingly, a much greater sense of these 'lines' and continually shifting 'assemblages' was experienced only by a later 'Mary' stepping outside, wandering with nature, with a beautiful, big mouse away from her usual habitat and so venturing onto those leaky 'lines of molecularity'; with covid-19[139] entering Paignlake, making it a UK hotspot, altering the controlling 'segmentary lines', educational institutions are forced to desert their physical spaces and adapt curricula, thus creating new, more flexible 'lines' .

"Oh, I didn't realise how late it had got - I'd better go, but I'll be in touch when I get my next assignment, if that's okay?"

"Of course! Thanks so much for coming; I really appreciate it."

"I enjoyed it – I loved reading your stories too, they were really interesting!"

"Thanks, Chlo. Would you like a lift?"

We leave the pub in torrential rain; I drop Chlo off and, almost immediately, start questioning whether I really want to spend my days helping students produce essays in the conventional way,[140] or whether there is scope in the role of writing coach to encourage more creative practices like 'writing to it'? Could Chlo still meet the assessment criteria if she adopts 'writing as inquiry'? This thought occupies me for the next thirty minutes until I turn off the A38 when I have to focus on my driving: these narrow roads are tricky, especially in the dark and wet; by the time I leave the main road however, the idea of a writing project is born…

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[139] See also Appendix Allegretto-Largo-Allegro (p. 246).

[140] This 'Mary' does not know it, but this feeling, this questioning, is axiomatic in terms of the turn of *thesisising*.

Landing Site: Wind Quintet (ensemble, varied tones, versatile)

Pre-pre-prelude and post-post-postlude: 'speculative pragmatism'

These are the easy parts: spreading out the 'writings' from the black cat 'inquiry' box,[141] each one hitherto thought to have potential for this thesis; sitting to one side, not in the middle, not wanting to be the French horn, its albeit beautiful, expressive, tone in danger of overpowering the wind quintet, a human sitting at the centre of this thesis, taking control, purporting to be the most important body in this 'assemblage'; wanting instead perhaps to be ahuman, or possibly *a* human, maybe *a* writing: one of this thesis's papers, wanting to see what they might do since '[t]his is art: the intuitive potential to activate the future, to make the middling of experience felt where futurity and presentness coincide' (Manning, 2015: 46). This not wanting to dominate the writings must be why these paragraphs, although conveying a 'Mary's' thoughts are not in the usual purple font for 'Marys' voices.

The terms '*a* human' and '*a* writing' emerging here reminiscent of Deleuze's (2001) 'Immanence - *a* life'[142] hoping thereby to convey even a tiny sense of freedom from defining human characteristics,[143] constraining binaries, creating space for something other, for multiplicities, to emerge. But multiplicities are creating this thesis, not only has it multiple writings, but, multiplicities at work within each writing, multiple selves… Seeing each potential 'paper' again, touching each one in turn, in the random order once suggested by flying paper planes,[144] and reading them one by one, hearing those multiple 'Mary' voices, hoping to sense what's happening (if, as Gale (2018a) writes, '[s]ense is palpability in touch, taste, smell, hearing, seeing and…and it is how [he] make[s] sense of the world' (p.1), will sense now be made of this emerging thesis?), what each paper is doing, whilst knowing, even if this were

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[141] A later 'Mary' reading 'The Undercommons' (Moten and Harney, 2013) is drawn to 'the 'undercommons' [being] a box, and if you open it you can enter into [their] world' (p. 110). Is opening the black cat box referred to here like opening the 'undercommons': a gateway 'into [the] world' (ibid.) of the emerging thesis?

[142] With its emphasis on life, not on the particularities of an individual's life, a 'Mary' wonders about '*a* writing' not as a particular text or style, but as 'writing itself.'

[143] This earlier 'Mary' writing this has yet to grasp the sense of 'immanence' as without consciousness, as of itself. See *Writing Immanently* for a later 'Mary's' thinking around this.

[144] That was fun: Saffie running after the flying paper planes (in the garden), each one with a 'title' on, then noting them down from farthest to nearest; was there anything wrong with that order?

possible, any sense-making could only ever be fleeting like Lacanian *jouissance* (Lacan, 2017; Braunstein, 2003); sensing only ever momentary because changes occur simultaneously with that sensing: the intensities, and forces of affect, percept and concept at play within and between this 'becoming' thesis's papers always shifting; the contents so far, these so-called 'plateaus' without beginnings and endings, are continually moving...

One of the papers now hovering on the edge of this thesis-'assemblage' is an attempt at creating a Deleuzo-Guattarian (2015a) 'BwO':[145] does this text sense its uncertain and edgy place within these bodies of writing? In the writing emerges the idea of the thesis as 'BwO' with these 'singularities' shifting, capable of reorganisation by reader, by writer, creating alternative versions with different 'lines of flight' emerging every time. Whilst the attempt to create a 'BwO' is not in itself particularly significant, the process is vital in making sense of Deleuzo-Guattarian concepts; this is therefore too important a piece to omit, although it is perhaps only connected by those leaking 'molecular lines'. The thesis's hardbound cover[146] the 'stratum' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a: 187), the 'ledge' for standing on to create a 'BwO', but always with 'a small plot of new land at all times' (ibid.) where 'the BwO reveals itself for what it is: connection of desires, conjunction of flows, continuum of intensities' (ibid.), suggests this thesis might be, then, a 'little machine, ready when needed to be plugged into other collective machines' (ibid.). Whilst other machines are definitely 'plugged into' this thesis, it has not yet been 'plugged into' other machines – perhaps that should change?[147] Nonetheless, hopefully, its 'plateaus' will be capable of being rearranged like the organs in the 'BwO'.

Little Saffie - has she altered the font alignment, justifying it to mark her entrance, her contribution to trying to 'organise' the writing? - coming into the room where the papers are lying, stepping on almost every one of them (twice!), is more interested in investigating the newly created space between bedside table, with photographs of the brothers she never met, and bookcase where novels and poetry sit beside cat

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[145] See Appendix *Stringendo* (p. 223).
[146] Written before covid-19, the possibility of **not** submitting a hardbound copy had not been considered.
[147] Whilst this idea of 'plugging in' the *thesis* to other texts has never been a conscious process, it is one which nonetheless feels as though it has been taking place …

ornaments and fox lights; not finding anything interesting, she moves to the other space, between bed and bedside table (created, like the one the other side, to rescue a daddy-long-legs trapped in a spider's web outside the window), before jumping on to the window sill. These emerging spaces seeming significant now in the search for what is driving this thesis because change happens in particular in 'smooth space' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a: 563), in those spaces Saffie is now 'striat[ing]' (ibid.). Is this writing emerging here on this screen smoothing this thesis? It is definitely disturbing its writings, this process of gathering them together, removing them from box and folder to the carpet, the desk, any clear, or not clear, surface, being affected and affecting.[148] Saffie and I are watching the horses now: one of the cow-like ones is rolling over in the sun, hooves in the air; its 'twin' trots over and rolls over too, but the other one moves away, not wanting to 'intra-act' in the same way.[149] Karen Barad's 'intra-action' is used here in an attempt to exemplify connections emerging in the writing between surroundings and the papers spread around the room, papers it is hoped are already 'intra-acting', entangling, 'becoming' something other, something different together such as this thesis!

Will the surrounding papers 'intra-act' like the horse rolling over, or will they move away, creating distance? And what about the other papers, the papers not in the box, the ones in the blue folder, the same shade as the car bought ready to start full-time teaching as Train to Gain[150] lecturer, now bringing those memories into play: teaching 'adult literacy' often in a tiny space with one or two students, varying levels of motivation, and only a laptop and paper, no texts in sight with those ten week courses offering no space for deviations from the rigid curriculum;[151] those other papers are interrupting this process now, diverting attention away from the materials on the floor, demanding to come out of the folder; it is lucky they persist as the almost forgotten

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[148] As stated before, it is later 'Marys' who begin to grasp the significance of 'the *capacities* of bodies to affect and be affected' which, between the texts being considered here, is immensely important. There is however a sense of this 'Mary' doing this here as this 'landing site' develops.

[149] Later 'Marys', with their shifting interpretations of 'assemblage' and of the capacities of all bodies to affect and be affected, think how the two horses affect and are affected by each other: one rolling over; one distancing himself, and the 'Mary' writing this, the 'Mary' reading this, the unseen bodies in their midst, nonetheless also with the capaciousness to affect and be affected. A later 'Mary' again, reading about 'Little Hans' sees how 'different connections, different relations of movement and rest, enters different assemblages' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a: 298) and so there are differences in the ways the horses act. This 'Mary' finds herself thinking also about how the writings around her might consequently relationally affect each other and so come to create a 'whole' thesis...

[150] A Government initiative (see footnote 4).

[151] This 'Mary' has yet to encounter Erin Gruwell's teaching practices (discussed in *Deleuze in the Classroom)*.

draft plateau about ethics,[152] and an early draft of a letter to the examiners seem quite pivotal pieces in this thesis's becoming… How easy it is to sit with it so far, rediscovering all its potential 'organs' unfolding and folding in this room, and then to start writing potentially another paper instead of attending to the intended activity, event!

There is nonetheless a sense of movement (even the writing is moving: reverting now Saffie has lost interest to its more usual left alignment), crafting, happening here between these texts lying next to each other in this 'relational field' (Manning, 2012) with 'its capacity to immediate in ways that bring to expression new forms and forces of existence' (Manning, 2019b: 113). Could these unfolding texts be Madeline Gins and Arakawa's 'landing sites' (Manning and Massumi, 2014), somewhere to land, look around, pause, wonder and somewhere to take off on new 'lines of flight', rupturing other texts?[153]

'Speculative pragmatism' Manning (2016) suggests 'is about balancing several books, or several passages, or several ideas, or several textures, at the edge of the desk, on the floor of the studio, and wondering how else they might come together, and what else, together, they might do' (p. 39);[154] if only that coming together and that doing was more explicit instead of 'open to the more-than' (ibid.: 33)! 'Plugging in' Manning's (2016) 'artfulness' 'defined…as the in-act of the more-than where the force of form remains emergent' (p. 13) allows for capaciousness to come alive, thus recognising writing as a body with capacities to affect and be affected by other human and nonhuman bodies; this exemplifies it is 'the manner of practice and not the end-result' (2016: 46) which matters. With

artfulness…lived-as a field of flows, of differential speeds and slownesses, in discomfort and awe, distraction and attention…something to move through, to dance with on the edges of perception where to feel, to see, and to be are indistinguishable (Manning, 2015: 65),

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[152] This would subsequently be rewritten and dispersed throughout this collection of post qualitative inquiries.
[153] This is an axiomatic moment as the idea of using 'landing sites' as a way of crafting this thesis emerges from being surrounded by those papers, by, potentially, a thesis-'assemblage' of post qualitative inquiries.
[154] A later 'Mary' thinks there is a sense in which this, in part, suggests a 'practicing [of] the schizz' (Manning, 2020) working in, between and with thresholds.

the pressure eases as the emphasis shifts to *how* the passages, the writings so far, connect with each other collaboratively, which 'more than all else…depends on the human getting out of the way' (Manning, 2016: 63) and that is what I am trying to do by sitting to the side, by wondering, not prescribing, but sensing, with Moten and Harney (2013) that this is 'a collection of things which resonate with each other rather than having to develop sequentially' (p. 119)... Whilst this appears to be helping the 'manner' of becoming, however, what about the structuring, the arranging? This thesis does seem to be 'becoming' in its writing, writing immanent in its emergence, processual rather than substantive: this thesis's 'beating heart' (Buchanan, 2021: 60) can almost be heard like 'Mary's' racing heart receiving the text that she is at high risk of severe illness[155], and 'Mad Mary's' thudding heart as 'Chloe' yells "f*** off"…

Adopting Ian Buchanan's (2021) suggestion to 'approach all material…as a sign or collection of signs that an assemblage may be in operation, and as a question mark as to the nature of the assemblage that might give it unity' (p. 73); there is a sense of unity (Massumi's (2015a: 48) 'dynamic unity' perhaps?) with and between these materials, of unity being created, suggesting an 'assemblage' is operating. Is this thesis creating an 'assemblage'? Is an 'assemblage' creating this thesis? It is so easy to think 'assemblages' are created, but they are not, 'assemblages' simply happen![156] Is this thesis 'the engine that drives [the 'Marys''] entire critical project' (Buchanan, 2021: 12)? What are these inquiries about? Their *composite selves*, as well as inferring movement, which is also central, offer unity as do the multiple 'Marys'; 'Mary's' diffractive selves: the term 'diffractive' used to imply different forces coming together (Mazzei, 2013), 'becoming' something other, no two 'Marys' the same. Furthermore, the attempts at active practices of doings in the writing such as theorising and fictionalising, and 'exemplification'[157] provide unity; there are also the writing practices this thesis tries to demonstrate: 'writing as a method of inquiry'[158] 'writing to it', and writing immanently hoping to thus enable the unexpected to occur,

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[155] See pages 248-49.

[156] This 'Mary', then, unlike earlier ones, realises that the Deleuzo-Guattarian concept of 'assemblage' as always emerging, always shifting.

[157] Massumi's (2002) practice of 'exemplification' is used within this thesis with its emphasis on showing rather than telling. See page 153 for further discussion of this practice.

[158] See page 154: it is not long before 'method' proves problematic and there is a move towards 'writing as inquiry' as exemplified by Gale (2018a) and Wyatt (2019).

new discoveries, the following of and the creation of 'lines of flight' to wherever they lead, as well as the attempted use of other Deleuzo-Guattarian concepts including 'assemblage', 'plane of immanence'. There is the use also of conversations as a trope (Macleod-Johnstone, 2013) to bring these tales to life, and attempts at writing these conversations immanently as they are inevitably written, not spoken. Structuring therefore emerges in the writing, disturbing the Deleuzo-Guattarian 'strata' running through the thesis, encouraging the creation of other, more flexible lines deviating from those defining, regulating 'lines of segmentarity' enabling different ways of analysing the experiences they share to emerge…

What **work** might these conversations do? What questions are they asking? Might they, with Moten and Harney (2013), be encouraging new ways of thinking about educational structures such as curriculum and pedagogy? They are certainly challenging academic writing traditions, as well as the conventional format of the academic thesis (problematised by Manning and St. Pierre) that the earlier material expected to create. Deleuzo-Guattarian 'becoming', however, is processual, and so at some stage the material perhaps gains the confidence to attempt disruption of the traditional academic thesis format, to attempt to epitomise something other?[159]

This event, this sitting here surrounded by this thesis's 'becomings' so far, is simultaneously exciting and worrying. The reading of the writing flowing, uninterrupted, all however many words, those in the 'assemblage' and those not, for there is a realisation now that not all of the material selected will have a place in the 'assemblage' that is becoming, in this always shifting thesis; moving through Grasslands College, experienced differently now: that sense of absence in 'Chloe's' and 'Mad Mary's' opening stories seeming stronger; rereading their stories, the absences in their lives are particularly noticeable, and not just physical absences, but, what was not said at the time, particularly between 'Chloe' and 'Mad Mary' now seemingly having a significant presence; there is a notable absence of decorated walls and texts for Erin Gruwell's students resulting in Gruwell (2007) supplying them with texts and journals unexpectedly leading to the forging of the *Freedom Writers*;

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[159] Re-reading this two days after the title and abstract have been 'set in stone', nine months since this text began to emerge, it's interesting that, even at that relatively late stage in thesis-writing, it was not definite that the format of the traditional PhD thesis would be challenged.

and what about this thesis's attempts to create 'methodology-free' (St. Pierre, 2019: 3) post qualitative inquiries?

Despite having spent over two weeks with almost everything ever written potentially for this thesis, intensely focusing on its material so far, there is still doubt around what is underpinning this research inquiry.[160] Whilst not every one of these 'papers' forms part of the 'assemblage' operating here, they were written with a view to becoming part of it; as the 'assemblage' changes, however, it is inevitable its contents will change too, 'assemblages' are processual. It has taken months, years, but, there is sensing now of this thesis as being an 'agentic assemblage' (Bennett, 2010), always shifting, 'now you see me, now you don't' (Gale 2018b; 2021). Slowly and significantly, during these days with this thesis tangibly taking over the room where most of the reading and writing takes place, new 'lines of flight' emerge including yet more draft abstracts and potential titles. Moreover though is a sense of 'becoming', a sense of this thesis creating its writers,[161] but, there is also frustration and annoyance at coming across advice given a year ago to start thinking about 'organising' the thesis, and realising this still has not happened; perhaps side-tracked by this thesis's determination to grow and grow, but more likely prevented by anxiety; a fear, even then, of not being able to craft it: but, how can a BwO, something always shifting, something always 'in-formation',[162] ever begin to form something that could potentially be offered to a reader, an examiner? It would have been easier to have begun the organising earlier before this thesis became longer, and more uncontrollable. This thesis has certainly been writing a lot; as 'smoothing' takes place so too does 'striating' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a: 563): as the writing conventions it challenges are smoothed out, something new emerges such as 'writing to' concepts instead of applying them. This is how, for example, the idea of 'assemblage' as structuring, structuring in immanence occurs – perhaps that is occurring now, in the writing of this?

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[160] There is a shift here towards a later 'Mary' wanting to trouble the expectations of a conventional academic thesis, and earlier 'Mary' wanting only to question how English is taught in FE colleges, wanting to encourage the Functional Skills English curriculum to be written differently.

[161] Later 'Marys' notice echoes here of Deleuze's thinking (Deleuze and Parnet, 2012) around authors creating worlds (see pages 78-9).

[162] Manning's (2007) use and practice of Gilbert Simondon's 'in-formation' is used here to emphasise the thesis's movements, including creating space within the conventional academic thesis format for something other to emerge, and the sense too of this thesis being processual, always concerned with not-yetness just as this thesis is always 'not-yet'.

Walking[163] with the thesis, up the hill to the bench overlooking the sea (and the horses), the most worrying aspects of the thesis surface, but it is okay: it is '"In-formation"…compositional and processual' (Gale, 2021: 469), happily operating as an 'assemblage' with its shifting 'plateaus', its papers, even beginning to write immanently as, 'thinking-with' (Jackson and Mazzei, 2012; Springgay and Truman, 2018) Wyatt and Gale's 'writing to it' (2018: 121), '[a]n immanent imperative', permission is given to escape convention, to go with the writing wherever it goes, not worrying about getting lost, more confused, knowing it will be okay. And that is happening here: there is an emergence from being lost in the thesis's trees, from being lost in the folding and unfolding folds on the thesis's 'plane of immanence'; Wyatt and Gale (2018) talk about 'writing to it' as a relational mapping, 'cognitively attuned and sensitively oriented to worlds in the making, to active processes of world making' (p. 127) and that seems to be occurring now in this thesis during this walk. This is somewhere I often come; some would say there is nothing here: a crossroads with a bench facing the sea (in the distance), with the Dartmoor hills behind, but, 'in nonhuman ways it *does*' (Gale and Wyatt, 2018b: 198).

Staring at the sea, there's a sense this thesis really is 'becoming' now: the clouds (Wyatt and Gale, 2018) literally beginning to drift away, everything seeming 'in-formation', and I realise '[t]his is where [the] writing [is leading]. Here, to this walk' (Gale and Wyatt, 2018b: 198). As these words appear so does the realisation that this is a 'line of flight' and, therefore, it 'is hugely processual, it is active…: it does' (ibid.). This is not the first 'line of flight' during the PhD process, but this is the one which stands out, demands to be noticed, this 'line of flight', this one, occurring now, is absolutely pivotal in this *thesisising*. It is unclear why and too much questioning, too much trying to sense-make, always appears to destroy the *mo(ve)ment* (Davies and Gannon, 2006: x) and so, with Gale and Wyatt (2018b) I will 'respect' the 'uncertainty' (p. 198).

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[163] This 'Mary' has yet to encounter John Lundy's (2014) comparison of 'an ethical life' to 'a stroll through life. It is about affirming becoming, multiplicity, and chance. It is about expanding horizons, through new possibilities and new connections' (Lundy, 2014: n.p.) which is what, to a certain extent, is being sought here with regards to this 'Mary's emerging thesis. Lundy emphasises also the need for 'ruptur[ing] the mold in order to find the truly good life that lies beyond it' (ibid.) and that, too, is an aim here: to rupture discursively constructed structures to find effective ways of supporting those needing second chances: it is only ethical to enable our 'Chloes' to have these opportunities.

Searching for my house amongst all the tiny boxes below, the question arises of what work those *composite selves* are *doing*? Are they bringing the context of the inquiry to life for the readers, enabling them to experience challenges imposed by the rigid curricula and the fixed institutional rules and regulations, exemplifying their destruction of 'second chances' for those already failed by mainstream education? What is the relevance of 'Chloe' fleeing an assessment when the computer crashes to writing as *doing*, as a collaborative act, to thinking academic writing differently?[164] What about the connections between writing practices and education?[165]

Seeing the classroom as a Deleuzo-Guattarian 'assemblage' completely changes everything: it is no longer only about 'Chloe', 'Mad Mary', and the other humans in the room; 'thinking-with' concepts, percepts and affects (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015c), sensing their affective forces and energies, charged in relationality, their movements quivering with potential for generating second chances for our 'Chloes' as opportunities and glimmerings of the not-yet-known are almost visible on the horizon as the use of concepts such as 'assemblage', and other writing practices, which the *composite selves* engage in, encourage other ways of thinking about teaching and learning.

Why would, for example, a sixteen year old who wants to learn brick-laying or beauty

therapy be interested in how to use the comma? It is not surprising that attention turned to making and flying paper planes: signifying almost everything wrong with education as students are forced to learn in restrictive, constraining ways. The level of motivation, concentration and creativity displayed whilst making and flying those planes was admirable;[166] furthermore, the 'lines of flight' they created, literally and metaphorically, are fascinating.

Some of them even landed in the building site below where some of those students aspired to work; what if we had been on those planes? What would it have been like to fly outside of the constraints of the curriculum, the institution?

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[164] In many ways, it isn't until the final, final draft of the abstract that these strands come together!

[165] See pages 25 and 64 (footnote 84), about 'the very edges where thought and practice meet' (Manning, 2013: 35)

[166] A later 'Mary' wonders if this is an example of how, as Manning (2013) posits, 'a collaborative event [can be] orchestrated' (p. 35) with the classroom 'assemblage' 'operat[ing] at the level of collective invention in the tense of the not-yet?' (ibid.).

That change in perception of the classroom is so important; seeing it, for example, as an 'assemblage' that is happening now, exploring those forces at play, this thesis challenges the curriculum and 'academic writing' conventions: the whole academic PhD thesis both in its format and in its language. But, *how* does creating concepts, and engaging with other writing practices, demonstrate other ways of thinking about education?

The challenging of curriculum and conventional academic writing is 'exemplified' primarily in discussions between 'Mary' and 'Chlo', and 'Mary' and Erin Gruwell[167]; fellow PhD student 'Paula' also plays a role here in exemplifying challenges to orthodox academic practices and the effect of this challenge for students; with a shared interest in posthumanism, the two also attempt fairly in-depth discussions around potential uses and creations of concepts; as indicated earlier, the multiple 'Marys' role is diffractive: like 'Paula', they question the writing, the different 'Marys'' thinking, the structuring and format of the thesis. All of these discussions, although spoken, are written, and so exemplify different writing practices aiming to encourage creativity, generating new ways of thinking. Another important aspect is the challenge to the fixities and rigidities witnessed in educational institutions and again the *composite selves* are responsible for highlighting these: they are evident in 'Chloe's story' and 'Mad Mary's story', and in conversation with American High School English teacher Erin Gruwell. These conversations, again emerging in writing, demonstrate the Deleuzo-Guattarian 'strata', the rules and regulations running through the educational institutions the characters experience, as well as the creation of spaces within them, spaces for introducing other texts, more likely to engage students, and ways of writing differently, troubling those fixed 'lines of segmentarity', creating 'lines of molecularity',[168] with these changes as well as, inevitably, 'lines of flight' emerging with their rupturing.

Attempting to move away from binaries of, for example, human and nonhuman, this thesis demonstrates writing as 'agentic assemblage' (Bennett, 2010), drawing on the

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[167] Whilst Gruwell's American students follow a different curriculum, there are nonetheless similarities (see *Deleuze in the Classroom*).

[168] This earlier 'Mary' has yet to understand all lines are always present. See pages 121-23 for a later 'Mary's' thinking around this.

'affective presencing'[169] of surroundings, of the whole 'assemblage', in the writing process. With her (2010: 23) 'animal-vegetable-mineral-sonority', Bennett epitomises all the forces at play in writing processes, and the capacities of all bodies, human and nonhuman, to affect and be affected; in the context of this inquiry, then, as Deleuze and Guattari (2015a; Deleuze and Parnet, 2012) advise, writing is no longer a solitary act, but an 'assemblage'. This entangling of human and nonhuman materialities enables animation of the potential for intensities and becoming in academic writing, which is, then, no longer about the lone student writing essays or the lone academic writing books, but about all the forces in these emerging writing 'assemblages', which are inevitably always changing, thus altering the 'assemblage', affecting the immanently emerging writing…

Walking (downhill now!), nearing the end of the walk, we ask about the role of the *composite selves*: their usage enabling readers to relate to these characters, share their experiences, understand their frustrations at being seemingly contained within these defining and constraining conventions and rules demanding essays to be written in a certain way... And of course whatever is written in this thesis will not change the fact that academic institutions expect 'Chloes/Chlos', 'Paulas' and 'Marys' to write essays and academic theses which conform to certain conventions… Notwithstanding this, this collection of post qualitative inquiries shows ways for thinking academic culture and writing differently, thus becoming more accessible for more people including those in the Further Education and Skills sector which remains neglected and under-researched (Daley, Orr and Petrie, 2015; Wallace, 2015). The *composite selves* are driving this thesis, moving it away from being a fixed product towards being processual with a new emphasis on inquiring into Manning's (2013) 'not-yet'. However, with the deadline for submitting this thesis continually moving closer, and these writings continuing to resist any form of organisation, it is time to see what Deleuze and Guattari (2015a) say about structuring *A Thousand Plateaus,* how Ken's (Gale, 2018a) *Madness as Methodology* is arranged, and what Manning does to organise her books…[170]

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[169] See page 169 for more detailed exemplification of this concept.
[170] A later 'Mary' excitedly discovers 'processual engagement' (Gale and Wyatt, 2018b: 194) described by Gale and Wyatt as the 'searching for how the texts spoke to one another; to, through, past, with, between and beyond each other, seeking connections, dissonances, echoes and refrains' (ibid.), which resonates with the 'Marys''

processes, although they were incapable of describing it as such; does this 'landing site' exemplify that: the 'creative collaborative series of turning and returning to the texts, suggesting lines of flight, taking detours, always moving the writing in different directions'? (ibid.)

Because the regime won't leave you alone, do you intend to conspire with it and give it complete control over your life?

Nafisi, 2008: 280

Walking downhill to a shop I usually drive to (because the sun is shining and it is not raining, and I am conscious of getting very little exercise), thoughts are circling around like the seagulls above as I am walking along, with, beside, in those 'segmentary lines' recently encountered with Deleuze and Guattari (2015a), with my supervisory team. Those lines are all around; stepping into the road where usually only vehicles go, crossing to the other side, I am aware now of creating new, emergent lines in flowing, intersecting, 'molecular lines'. Of course I'm not the only human or animal to walk in this road, usually used only by vehicles and objects blowing in the wind, to have momentarily stepped off, out of, these rigid, controlling 'lines of segmentarity' to cross to the other side, but how many are aware of space-making, as they cross to the other side? Almost running now (the hill is steeper), I am suddenly stopped by a big, beautiful field mouse running out from the field to join me. Space smoothing and striating[171] with our movement, the mouse within 'molecular lines' (away from its usual habitat; how many mice, brought home by Eliot and Joey, have I released in similar fields?), and me back where I should be within the 'segmentary' ones on the pavement, it occurs to me that all these 'lines' are here all the time, we are just not necessarily on all, or any, of them all the time (Deleuze and Parnet, 2012). We stay together, the mouse and I, until a car drives too fast up the hill sending the mouse scurrying for its more familiar, much safer 'segmentary lines' in its field.

Reading this now, a few months later, this writing shifting to the centre
indicating a change in thinking, the lines cannot be as separate as being

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[171] This is an earlier 'Mary's' usage of 'smoothing and striating', something this later 'Mary' editing this is still trying to make sense of!

described here; it is not that there are no 'segmentary lines' here and only 'lines of molecularity' there: all 'lines' are always moving, folding, fluctuating, always in flux. 'Lines of molecularity' are like tributaries leading off 'lines of segmentarity', breaking away; they can be created and ruptured by 'lines of flight' and so they seem to be the most exciting ones with no knowing where they might lead, what might emerge… This coronavirus is pushing most of us off the 'segmentary lines', altering life as we know it with its fixed structures and regimes, but in other ways it is creating more of them (queues outside shops, one way systems inside) and so it seems those 'lines' are indeed always moving. Not that I've been out, this is just what I've heard from the media, from my brother selflessly still risking his life to bring us milk, bread, fruit until we are able to get supermarket deliveries to our doors... With the University finishing for the Summer, it feels as though the 'segmentary lines' associated with it have shifted and life is being lived on those tributary 'molecular lines', with the potential to create 'lines of flight': the thought of living within them indefinitely is nonetheless concerning, but, of course, these 'assemblages' are agentic, the lines created and always becoming, in 'creative-relationally more-than human' ways.[172] For now though, it is those 'forces of encounter' (Gregg and Seigworth, 2010: 2), in Gale's (2018a) 'interplaying forces of concept, affect and percept' (p.39) which interest me: freely emerging between the lines,

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[172] See pages 133 and 154 for more detailed uses of this practice.

'without the structure that has dominated only a few hours a week but has nonetheless restricted my creativity…

And we are still connected, the mouse and I, still together in this 'assemblage' even though it is not visibly present. The connections with branches, grass, litter are all fleeting: movement 'smoothing and striating' spaces, movement through 'segmentary lines', occasionally shifting to 'molecular' ones (crossing roads, the shop's car park). Of course, I'll walk back through different 'assemblages'. Perhaps I will walk on the other side of the road but even if I walk on the same side I will be going uphill, not down, different cars will be racing along, different people, different birds and different lines encountered crossing the road in different places; even if I see the mouse again, it will not be exactly the same as it was, it will not be the same 'Mary' walking back…

Only of course I won't be walking back through 'different assemblages': 'different assemblages' are not *there* waiting, they are always emergently presencing, always affectively contingent and on the move.

Who is this 'Mary' *in a shop* worrying only that this older couple might take the items she wants to buy, seemingly oblivious to the possibility of them passing the virus on to her and subsequently to her parents, her brother…? Just being in a shop is unimaginable now in this changed Covid-led, Covid-controlled world…

In the shop, there are brief encounters with others – the elderly couple by the soap, again by the toothpaste, we seem to be looking for the same items! What if they take them all? There are empty shelves everywhere and no hand sanitiser…

And now a pupil at a local school and his or her mother have been confirmed as having the virus, it seems more real. Fortunately it is not either of the schools my niece and nephew attend but it could be next time… Consequently, us humans are out buying whatever we can in the shops, stockpiling, in case it is us who have to self-isolate next time…

It is interesting that, at the time of writing, there are no thoughts of a lockdown, or 'shielding', staying in for at least three months which turn into eighteen months, and more… There is concern, however, around what might happen to Saffie if all her family contracts the virus and, what if everyone has to go to hospital leaving her alone? The virus' affects are not fully known: even if we do not come into direct contact with it, steps are needed to minimise the likelihood of doing so, thus we are initially separated from family and friends, stopped from shopping, only allowed out once a day to exercise. There was actually no need to worry about stockpiling items: online supermarket delivery slots eventually became available and hand sanitiser came back into stock… News that my favourite zoo by the sea in Paignlake will not be reopening when covid-restrictions are eased interrupts this writing; it is devastating to think of no longer sitting by the seals sunbathing on the rocks, relaxing with the otters rolling in the water, the penguins strutting on their beach, the puffins teetering on the edge of the water; the virus has killed my favourite place, destroyed my dream of returning there first, as soon as I feel safe to go outside again…

Wandering uphill with my soap, toothpaste, and paracetamol, considering the lack of litter on this side of the road, its different feel, houses rather than fields, I realise I have company: 'Chlo' is rapidly catching me up, her movements smoothing the spaces I have just that moment striated. I wonder out loud about the processually always on the move 'assemblage' emerging here, sensing, perhaps for the first time, what a small part of it 'Chlo' and I are. Standing still, staring up at a tree towering above us, there is a sense now of being tiny in the presence of this magnificent being spreading its branches to the sky, two squirrels chasing each other upwards, spiralling around its trunk in and out of sight, seeing us, then scrambling along its branches. With '[e]very territory, every habitat, join[ing] up not only its spatiotemporal but its qualitative planes or sections: a posture and a song for example, a song and a color, percepts and affects' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015c: 185), there is suddenly a sense of percepts, affects and concepts intra-acting, working together with 'Chlo' and I,

Thinking about affect differently now, how if we stop, pause while wandering up the hill, we are in no hurry having cancelled my one commitment of the day, there is time to be affected and affect: normally so focused on rushing so as not to be late, there is no time to consider surroundings, but today there is… Usually, 'Chlo' could be running behind me and I probably would not even notice. It is strange she has suddenly appeared today, when there is time to stop and stare…

alongside us, in our 'becomings'. What if we simply sit down under this tree at the edge of this road drinking coffees, eating snacks (taking our litter away with us of course!)? Would we create more 'lines' to intersect with concept-making? I'm already sensing a line of breakthrough emerging, being created, and suddenly affects and percepts and concepts are seen as multiplicities, as qualities working together in affective, perceptual and conceptual ways and so sitting here within moving, leaking 'lines', space

deterritorialising' into a picnic area, simultaneously 'reterritorialising', cars continuing their journeys, and mice hiding under the long grass, percepts, affects and concepts are so obviously always at play together like the squirrels and the tree and 'Chlo' and I…[173]

But we do not stop, we keep moving and I confess I was supposed to be supporting another student with essay-writing today, but, knowing he had just come back from Italy (although not from a named, affected area), I postponed the meeting saying I was unwell… Knowing there are at least two cases locally changes the situation and so I stepped out of those 'segmentary' lines and did not go to work today because this virus appears stronger than all other *humanijectaces*,[174] this virus kills, a killer is in our midst…

Moving uphill more slowly now between Stillward and Brookward Lanes, I am pleased Chlo is out here with me, getting a sense of 'assemblages' in the making: the two of us moving, striating and smoothing the spaces around us with our different speeds, crossing between 'segmentary' and 'molecular lines' in our wanderings…

Is this valid research? That question again! Is this really 'PhD level' – 'Chlo' and I out for a wander? It is a 'researcher's' experiences, a way of 'plugging in' 'assemblages', like a research inquiry, always changing, being made and re-made, and 'plugging in' those lines I have been reading and writing about recently as we make connections, disconnections, interruptions, diversions; in our wanderings, it finally makes sense that there is not one 'assemblage' here that I join and leave and another one there and another one over there: there is only one 'assemblage' in this universe, which my presence, moving around the 'assemblage' with other *humanijectaces*, affects, just as I am affected by those *humanijectaces*; I sense too, during my wanderings,

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[173] This is an axiomatic moment in a 'Mary's' 'thinking-with' affects, percepts and concepts as she sees them here working together: nature relationally affecting her as she affects it, disturbing the squirrels' habitat, for example, sensing perceptibility in this non-human landscape where concepts are forming with the affects and percepts in play.
[174] As indicated on pages 77-78 and 178, for example, the use of this word has since been discontinued; it is still used here however as it is relevant to the development of 'Mary's' thinking that she is now able to see an invisible virus as a body in an emergent 'assemblage'.

that all these lines are always there, everywhere encompassing us *humanijectaces* as we move within them, between them, creating them, rupturing them.

Could those thoughts be examples of underlying 'forces of encounter' (Gregg and Seigworth, 2010: 2)? Are they making themselves felt now, coming into play? Reminding me, interrupting my focus on Deleuzian 'lines', that there is a PhD thesis to be written, encouraging me to think of the capacities of these human and nonhuman bodies to affect and be affected in these encounters, to consider how and why this might happen… That's certainly an incredibly long sentence, it feels out of my control, driven by others…

When 'Chloe' and I were in the computer room, then, we had not left our families behind; Eliot and Joey were still there but in another part of the 'assemblage'; 'Chloe's sisters, Hannah and Danielle, were around; 'Chloe's failed attempts to conform in schools did not just disappear, but were still there in other parts of the 'assemblage', past entangling present entangling future[175]…

And as I sit here now, feeling I should be there in a café with my writing coachee, there is a real sense of us being in the same 'assemblage' although I have no idea where he is; I suspect he still went to the café, but I feel safer here, writing up my latest thoughts around Deleuzian 'assemblages' and lines, 'strata', which probably would not have occurred to me inside the café. Suddenly it has been a long, event/ful day and

the words

start to shift on the page

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[175] See page 53 (footnote 52) for discussion around Deleuze and Guattari's use of aion that runs counter to the conventionalities and orthodoxies of chronos.

and the urge to lie down next to Saffie

and close my eyes, just for five minutes,

is   too   strong   to   resist…

"Is that an example of your 'writing-creation' you mentioned in your email?[176] Are you exemplifying it here?"

Professor Manning?! Wow, I must be dreaming! *"Um, no, at least not deliberately, this was written a long time before I thought about 'writing-creation,' possibly even before I'd heard of 'research-creation' and how '[c]ombined with study…the emphasis moves toward the exploration of how modes of making and thinking become consolidated in emergent, collective forms of practice that are artful' (Manning, 2016: 13). The concept's not fully formed, but it seems to relate to 'research-creation' in that there is a sense in which their singularities remain, but, sorry, it's just a half-formed idea that sadly falls outside the scope of my PhD thesis…*

"When is anything ever fully formed?"

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[176] See pages 175-6.

"Oh, well, nothing ever is, but I should have more of a sense of how it might work! I think of 'writing-creation' as relating to the practice of writing as immanence, emerging in the writing, words leading to other words (Manning and Massumi: 2014): do you think the writing emerging from these wanderings might exemplify 'writing-creation' then?"

"Definitely! It's obviously writing as immanent in and of itself; it's also creative and imaginative, with academic undertones, references, and concepts."

"Thank you, I hadn't thought about it in that way", I say, "I was beginning to relate 'writing-creation' to Deleuze's (1995) délirer 'going off the rails' (Gale, 2018a: 1-2), as in my thesisising, *there is an emphasis on troubling academic constraints to open up inquiries. With Simondon's (in Manning, 2007) 'in-formation', which you introduced me to, some flexibility is created, there is more fluidity as the academic thesis is no longer fixed in conventional format, but is in-formation, becoming. I have recently been feeling as though the writing in this thesis needs to do something else: with délirer 'it's coming to life' (Gale, 2018a: 2), rupturing with tradition."*

"Tell me more!"

My heart is racing: Erin Manning is actually interested in this, the latest idea to emerge within the writing! Will I be able to do it justice?[177] *"Well, 'thinking-with' délirer as necessitating shifting toward speculative becoming enables a moving away from writing-representing towards writing-inquiring, toward writing as immanent doing, thus animating potential for intensities and becoming in writing, offering opportunities and glimmerings of the not-yet-known."*

"Yes, délirer is immanent doing; Do you know Deleuze's (2017) 'Logic of Sense'?"

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[177] A later 'Mary' editing this with only six days until submission(!) wonders also if there is justice for Erin Manning in this dream…

"Oh, I've just started reading that! I can see it ties in with your writing about neurodiversity, suggesting different ways of seeing the world… When I think about the Lacanian 'symbolic order', which considerably influenced my early teaching experiences,[178] délirer poses a real challenge to it. It didn't occur to me that there were other ways of thinking about institutions, and that instead of a focus on production in fixed ways, there were all these other processes of being, of becoming. I mentioned 'Chloe' in my email: Deleuze (1998) writes about literature being delirium involving stirrings in this 'oppressed bastard race' (p. 4) and about 'writ[ing] for this people who are missing' (ibid.) and that just seems to me to be our 'Chloes', to be all those denied that second chance in education, cast aside by an inflexible system unable to meet students' needs even though meeting all students' needs is at the heart of education, but I'm nervous about working 'minor literatures'…"[179]

"Have you read Moten and Harney (2013)? Although your 'Chloe' wasn't at university, educational institutions are all fairly similar…"

"In my imaginary second chance to support her, she does actually attend a so-called 'widening participation' university; like the FE colleges, these had, at least initially, an emphasis on offering second chances to non-traditional students."

"Not Oxbridge then?"

"No, these ones traditionally offer more vocational courses and used to be known as polytechnics or colleges of higher education; since 1992, many of those institutions have become 'new' universities. Of course, a division remains between them and the 'Russell Group' universities (despite the students, in my experience, often benefitting from more support in post-1992 institutions).

Chlo is a mature student when she starts her counselling degree and so a 'widening participation' university seemed more appropriate; however, I primarily wanted her second chance to be at the university where 'Mary' is studying for her

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[178] As footnote 83, see pages 105 and 107 for more detail around this.
[179] See pages 162-63 for more detail around 'minor literatures'.

PhD as this dissolves their previous hierarchical lecturer and student relationship; therefore, when Chloe and Mary are reunited, they are both students at the same university."

"The hierarchies are interesting. I'm just thinking about Moten and Harney's (2013) critique of the university as being 'fucked up' (p. 117) and their determination to 'think about it in a way to help us organize ourselves to make it better' (ibid.)…"

"Yes, their emphasis is on coming 'together and think[ing] together in a way that feels good, the way it should feel good' (ibid.); sadly, what happened with 'Chloe' did not feel good…"

"True, but, look at how that event has inspired you to experiment with different ways of thinking, moving across space and time, engaging in speculative practices in your PhD inquiries. Fortunately there will always be new students, like you, willing to experiment with different practices, neurodiverse ways of seeing the world, making a difference…"

"Oh, I don't think I'll be making a difference; I'm actually really worried about the future: the issue remains, as you highlight, that '[i]nnate knowledge – intuition, speculation – is frowned upon within methodological approaches' (Manning, 2016: 42) and so far…

Ouch! *What's that? An injection in my ankle? Am I in hospital with Covid?* ***Ow!*** *Oh Saffie, it's you!*

A More Serious Intralude

I suppose you're happy now; you think you've not only got your introductory texts, but also the next 'movement'… that's right! We were in deep despair over the 'first full draft', the 'movement[s]-moving' (Manning, 2014) from one to the next seeming too contrived, like the beautiful, carefully constructed conventional academic thesis we're aiming to avoid, but, as we were feeding Saffie, at 4 o'clock, we suddenly realised we just needed to 'cut [it] apart' (Barad, 2007: 381) that full draft, and… But, you still need connections between those 'singularities' (Deleuze: 1995)! You've been reading Deleuze! There are connections, but that is the problem: each text fits everywhere and nowhere…isn't that a song?...and so the connections are multiple, like the thesis's entryways. You hope! You'll have to 'cut it together' (ibid.) very soon to submit it on time you know… Ha! They go quiet then those other 'Marys'; it's due in two months, I remind them, and you still don't even seem to know which order the texts will be presented in! That doesn't matter: we don't want it to be read linearly! Furthermore, the collection of post qualitative inquiries will always be 'in-formation', 'becoming'… That's impossible! Your 'assemblage' has to 'become': it has to be submitted on a certain date, at a certain time… Ssssh! We'll fly away on our planes, 'follow[ing] the witch's flight' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015c: 41). That's right, do what you always do when the deadline approaches and all you've produced is a load of disconnected texts about whatever interests you at the time: don't bother trying to connect anything, just write an unconnected thesis and say it's written in 'plateaus' with rhizomatic, not arborescent, writings… You just don't understand! We're doing this inquiry the Deleuzo-Guattarian way, but you still want conventional contained chapters; that's not going to happen – it's too limiting; we're making this work; these plateaus will fit together 'like watchtowers surveying or scanning their own particular areas, and signaling to each other' (Deleuze, 1995: 142) whilst having their own entryways; writing in this way doesn't mean 'unconnected': our 'landing sites' connect, Deleuzo-Guattarian 'lines' are running through them all, obviously, and… don't tell me, leaking into other more supple lines before creating 'lines of flight' somewhere else… Those 'lines of flight' occur from ruptures: they might occur anywhere and lead anywhere, changing thinking and writing processes… Well, how convenient: *thesisising* gets a bit tricky so a 'line of flight' appears and changes the subject! That's what happened with ethics, isn't it? You presented a paper on how to get around ethics regulations in educational institutions or something like that, and then you forgot all about ethics… That's not true! An ethics plateau appeared

in the first draft, but, it was felt to be inconsistent with the style of the thesis and to contradict the whole ethos - the whole atmospherics - of a Deleuzo-Guattarian universe with its sense of a whole, its connections, its relational movement between *all* bodies (human, non-human, more-than-human) as they:

… bump and collide

Divide and meet... (Short, Turner and Grant, 2013: 213)

Ethics is not a separate issue, neither is it a 'geometrical calculation' (Barad, 2007: 179) and so it did not make any sense to try to write about ethics separately when it is so imbricated in our *thesisising*, in knowing and being and writing; Barad (2007) has this fantastic word 'ethico-onto-epistem-ology - an appreciation of the intertwining of ethics, knowing and being' (p. 185); by attempting to engage in 'experimentation and creativity' (Gale and Wyatt, 2018b: 203), to not want it to 'wither and die' (ibid.), we are 'engaging in affective forms of inquiry that animate doing-bodies in ethical, political and always experimentally infused ways' (ibid.) and so ethical considerations are imbricated in our writing and cannot be separated out for discussion in one particular place. Written a couple of years ago now, however, the conference paper that you just mentioned is very focused on the creation of space within the formal requirements of institutional ethical procedures. The issues are still relevant to this thesis with its *composite selves*, which was the focus of the space-making, and it is therefore seen as an integral part of this collection of post qualitative inquiries now situated in the appendices (Appendix Accelerando). With ethical issues continually arising in our *thesisising* and in 'intra-actions' with other bodies, we use Massumi's (2015b) practice of 'creative-relationally *more-than* human' to think beyond expected ethical considerations: to be alert to 'modification rising from within an activity's stirring, bringing a qualitative difference to its manner of unfolding' (Massumi, 2015b: 7) and so we are attune to new ethical issues arising… Are you though? Do you even think about the ethical issues surrounding your imaginary conversations… Of course, we do! If you read *Deleuze in the Classroom*, for example, you will see ethics at play in creative-relational-space-making ways in the conversation with Gruwell: it's epitomised, for example, in the incident when Gruwell realises her students have weapons with them and, about to enter the Museum of Tolerance, she is suddenly faced with an unexpected ethical decision! She laughs about it during our conversation, but you can imagine the difficulty she was in, the ethical dilemmas she faced: what if those weapons had been discovered whilst they were all in the Museum, what if they were taken, what if someone was subsequently killed… Well, what about your email to Erin Manning then… What?! Writing an email to someone is not an ethical issue: it might be *if* Manning replied and we included her response,

but we wrote it for us, we're not sending… That's not the point! Of course it is an ethical issue; I suppose you don't think there are any ethical considerations in your dreams with Deleuze either? He died twenty-five years ago! The Deleuze of our dreams mainly only says lines from his books, indicated with quotation marks, so there's nothing unethical there; we do the same in our other imagined conversations, including with Gruwell: of course, we know not everyone will agree with our interpretations and it is not always possible to know 'what kind of potential they tap into and express' (Massumi, 2015a: 11), but no-one and no-thing could be harmed by the content of those conversations: we're as sure as we can be that what we're doing will not detrimentally affect anyone's work. That's good, but, you've never actually met these people! You've created them to be how you want them to be… Yes, that's true, but even if we had met them, it would still be our versions of them that we write to, that are portrayed in that email and during that imagined conversation. Is it unethical to purport to tell others' tales even if it is made clear that the tales are not told as they would tell them but only as they have been perceived? In that ethics plateau there was actually an additional imaginary conversation with Gruwell asking her permission to include our imaginary conversation, but, surely you can see the ludicrousness of that! We don't say anything we would be worried about Gruwell or Manning reading: we only really directly quote from their books and papers. In conversation with Gruwell, most of her 'lines' are quoted from her memoir (Gruwell, 2007) or from the Diary (2009), for example, and so we are not falsifying facts… Okay, but it's impossible to know how they might react to what is written here. We know that! It's also impossible to know how examiners might react to the nightmare of the PhD viva we created and so we changed it: the appointed examiners are absent to avoid causing any offence… Ah, that's really interesting: so you thought they'd be offended by your portrayals of them and yet you're happy to portray Gruwell, Manning, your former colleagues and students… It's not the same! Isn't it? No! We accept former colleagues and students might possibly wonder if they had any role to play in events at Grasslands College, or if fellow PhD students might wonder if they have contributed to the construction of composite self 'Paula' – this is discussed in *Introducing Other Writing Practices* which also considers the ethics of writing about 'Chloe/Chlo',[180] but all we can really do is 'put it out there and you can make of it what you will' (Turner, cited in Ferdinand, 2018: 153): readers '"are responsible for their construction, not us"' (ibid.). What were we saying? Oh, yes, it was felt that to portray examiners as so scary and disinterested in the thesis, even though it was stressed that they were not the *appointed* examiners, was unethical and did not do justice to examiners of PhD theses; the imaginary viva has therefore been rewritten with fantasy elements and so there is no way it could be taken to be

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[180] See pages 164 and 193-94.

portraying PhD examiners…You've got an answer for everything! It's not only Erin Gruwell in that conversation with her though: surely you need permission to recreate those stories written by her high school students in their *school* journals? Those stories have already been published; anyone can read them! We've been very careful to cite from those journal entries and to make it clear that's what we're doing. In that conversation, you will see we preface quotations with, 'one student wrote', we do not specify any of the questions in the 'stand on the line' game, or, how many students stepped forward in relation to which question, and we never identify the student (we do not even use their numbers included in the diary)… If someone has read the Diary, they would recognise the stories… They would already know the stories then – we're not saying anything new; obviously we are writing our interpretations, but we use their words to describe their feelings, the events so we are not changing those, we are not pretending something happened differently or someone said something they didn't…

We've been reading loads about ethics by the way; we love the idea of '[e]thics…[as] a typology of immanent modes of existence' (Deleuze, 1988: 23) because of the image of ethics as being part of the event, a body with the capaciousness like all other bodies to affect and be affected. Positing 'affective loading' (Massumi, 2015a: 11) as 'an ethical act', Massumi (ibid.) emphasises the uncertainty around how a body might react in situations so, when the computer froze, for example, would 'Chloe' calmly move to another computer, or would she get angry? That 'uncertainty produces an affective change in the situation…[it] is an ethical act…[i]t has consequences' (ibid.) which are of interest in this collection of post qualitative inquiries with its engagement with Spinoza's question of what a body can *do*, and with the capacities of *all* bodies to affect and be affected… That line again! …and *all* are of this event... Okay, so lots of 'bodies' are involved in an event, that's nothing new! But, Tamsin Lorraine's (2011) emphasis on 'Deleuze's notion of being "*worthy* of the event" involves attuning ourselves to the multiple durations of our lives in ways that allow us to skillfully unfold the creative possibilities of the multiple assemblages of which we form a part rather than fixate on our representations of life' (my emphasis, page 5 of 171, 5%), thus shifting attention away from representing towards the not-yet-known, but also introducing an element of *worthiness*: suggesting we are not automatically entitled to be part of the event, but perhaps need to *prove* our capaciousness to relationally connect and be connected with, to 'intra-act' with other, non-human, more-than-human bodies, and to be responsive to, part of, the 'affective presencing'[181] in the event. More repetition! That's all you do!… It's not! We use phrases in different

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[181] See page 169 for more detailed exemplification of this concept.

ways: we're plugging them in, seeing what they do! We've just encountered what Lorraine (2011) calls Deleuze and Guattari's 'immanent ethics' seeming to show 'what is [whilst] unfolding what could become invit[ing] creative resolution[s] of the obstacles that prevent us from our individual and collective thriving' (Lorraine, 2011: page 2 of 171, 3%). We're plugging it in here in relation to our *thesisising*, which we are living and enjoying (it is our dream!), so this 'unfolding' from 'what is' to creatively address barriers in 'Chloe's' way is fantastic: we are starting to sense it now, and, with Lorraine encouraging us to 'attempt to be as skillful as we can be in working with the forces moving through and beyond us in ways that move us or increase our joyful power' (Lorraine, 2011: page 165 of 171, 86%), we can focus on attempting only to do our best, we don't have to be perfect as, ethically, what is important is that we have tried as hard as we can to do justice to the concepts we are encountering: Elspeth Probyn (in Gregg and Seigworth, 2010), for example, writes about writer's shame in relation to a duty of care to do justice to the content/subject of the writing; 'affective presencing' requires an 'immanent ethics' (Lorraine, 2011) as there is no means of knowing what will arise in immanence: it is not just humans involved in space-making. With relationalities at play, those forces of affects, percepts and concepts with capacities to affect *all* bodies, including nonhuman and more-than-human, and to be affected, it is impossible not to go 'trespassing into otherness' (Kunzru et al: 2016). The tales told in this thesis can only ever be in relation to others: no body exists in isolation and so no body is 'becoming' in 'relation-less worlds' (Turner, 2013: 216).

The more we understand the relational capacities of *all* bodies to affect and be affected, the more attune we are to those emerging intensities and their affects which are vital to the emergence of this collection of post qualitative inquiries and its troubling of academic orthodox practices…The processes of understanding these alternative ways of thinking cannot therefore be rushed and there is considerably much more to ethics than whether something is just, unjust, good and bad, ethically right or not: ethics is in the event, it is in the forces and intensities at work, in 'affective presencing': what occurs in the event is an ethical act, as Barad (2007) writes, 'each intra-action matters…because the becoming of the world is a deeply ethical matter' (p.185); our *thesisising* is an ethical act… But what about the ethics of writing about us 'Marys'? I know you mock me – that 'Mary' who started this PhD, the one who wants to write it properly haha – but I'm becoming you… oh no, you're not, you can never become anyone else because that person is also always changing (Deleuze and Parnet: 2012)… Well, you write about us and I'm a 'Mary' too; you can't just ignore the ethical issues of writing about us even though Delamont (2009) posits that autoethnography will always be read as being true and is therefore 'almost impossible to write…ethically' (p. 59). I agree with her: I was totally shocked when my supervisors told

me that not everything they wrote was true… Well, that's another ethical issue: knowing what you've written will be read as true, as having happened, having been thought or said whilst knowing that you've made it up…

Well, what's being created here, with autoethnographies meeting posthumanist ways of writing hopefully resists categorisation as 'autoethnography' or 'posthumanism'; having so many of us 'Marys' disperses the notion of self, selfing: with no one 'Mary', there is no 'I', which helps to achieve an ethical relativism. But, yes, we agree there is an ethics of care to writers and the writer's family and friends, and anyone the writer has ever known... Ah, at last, all the 'Marys' agree! We have therefore been careful about what we write: thinking about how, for example, Saffie might feel about what is written about her, checking it is not harmful to her or her family. Perhaps a 'test' might be whether they would be happy with someone who knew them reading everything that is written about them, and thinking that it is 'true' even though it is impossible to divide what is written here into true and untrue…

Texts and Technologies

On this first day of the official lockdown[182] my brother and nephew arrive bringing essentials from the local shop. We have been meeting like this for the last few days, not waiting for the Government to take action, but wanting to keep safe and so they come into the back garden via the side gate, we stay inside with the patio doors open keeping a distance of at least three metres, Saffie, regardless, running between all of us, but not being stroked... Waiting to wave as they walk home up the footpath, I'm thinking about our changing relationalities, these invisible boundaries invoked by this new 'social distancing' ever present as we come together in these spaces with the patio door boundary between outside and inside temporarily opened, blowing kisses and waving as they depart, no longer able to hug, and so gesturing a hug inevitably including all other humanijectaces[183] *in that virtual hug and blowing kisses, again including all* humanijectaces. *And so this exemplifies how this new virus is affecting us, this small family unit, this writing, and how we are hopefully affecting COVID-19 as we try to wash it off our hands, not touching our faces so it cannot enter our bodies, trying to kill it before it kills us…[184]*

Covid-19 soon stops Chlo and I meeting in cafés: we decide to meet online instead, and, noting my reluctance, I remind myself we are fortunate to have an alternative way of meeting – would this have been feasible ten years ago? It will be interesting to see how this affects us, how this new space our computers will create for us will work; it will inevitably force a different way of working with technology providing the means to continue our work: my laptop will become the space for discussing writing, will it assist or become a barrier…

And actually, once I have bought a microphone, talking on-line with writing is not so bad... As Chlo and I adjust to this new way of writing we find ourselves easily chatting to each other as if we are in the same room, despite us both still showing in our individual spaces on the

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[182] Due to the coronavirus the UK's government has imposed severe restrictions on the UK population including only going out once a day for exercise and infrequent shopping for essential items. The announcement was made at 8.30p.m. last night (23rd March 2020).

[183] Early 'Marys' use this word to remind them 'assemblages' include **hum**ans, **ani**mals, ob**ject**s and sp**aces**. After a dream conversation in *Dreaming Crafting* with Deleuze, however, the use is discontinued (see pages 76-7).

[184] You may notice structuring on this page is slightly different: text boxes are used, not for 'intra-jections' by later 'Marys', but for insights into events affecting the writing of this thesis. On page 144 the use of text boxes reverts to being used for 'intra-jections'.

screen and she is thrilled to see my little cat, who she has heard so much about, walking across me, burrowing into my arm; poor Saffie is totally unsettled by the laptop speaking. She usually loves the laptop, the movement of the mouse(!), the letters running across the screen, disappearing and appearing again, but, a speaking laptop?! As Chlo and I chat without the usual background café noise, without the usual collaboration of other *humanijectaces* around, I am aware of space smoothing and striating in our silences and our speaking: I can almost see new lines emerging and diverging. We chat about Chlo's essay and I am more aware than usual of the text being disrupted as Chlo adds notes from our conversations, a body of writing relationally being affected and affecting other bodies around it… The text is totally central in this 'assemblage', its discourse shaping our discourses, there is no knowing where these conversations are going, there is only knowing that there is movement: writing-moving… And it is movement that is so important here, movement of *humanijectaces* so often overlooked: in movement, change occurs, 'worldings' (Manning, 2013) are created… Ah, ironically, my screen has frozen and Chlo obviously cannot hear me…

The computer monitor brings Chlo and I together again from across the county for our next writing meeting. We appear on the screen in our boxes separated by thin horizontal and vertical lines, lighting up yellow and green as we speak - talking to each other almost as if we were in the same room:

"Hi Chlo, how are you?" I ask as she appears on the screen in what is presumably her bedroom as a dressing gown is hanging on the back of the door.

"Hi Mary, can you hear me?"

"Perfectly, did you have any trouble getting in?" Oh, that sounds as though she has travelled here, but she will know what I mean.

"No, not really, the computer's just a bit slow."

"So's mine; I think everyone is using the internet in the lockdown!"

"Yeah, my mum and Rob are both working from home so they are on it all the time! I've written loads, but I can't show you, can I?"

"You can," I say, "there should be a green button at the bottom of your screen which says 'share screen'?"

"Okay".

As I wait, fingers crossed, hoping the technology will work, feeling my dependence on it – no longer 'mutual[ly]-intradependen[t]' (Gale and Wyatt, 2018a: 567), I see there is also an option of clicking 'mute' (to talk to our cats perhaps!), or turning the video off (to feed them) becoming a blank rectangle with our name across it – there but not there! But obviously I do not feel I can activate either of these: I cannot just disappear - I am still tied by human conventions even in this new technological world in which a human is still needed to 'host' the meeting and today it is me; presumably in online classrooms across the country it is the lecturer rather than the student who is allocated 'control'. There is, nonetheless, little any human can do if the computer crashes (I am reminded here of the first time I met 'Chloe') [185] and/or the wifi connection fails: a reminder of all bodies having the capaciousness to affect and be affected, of forces at work, of 'movement-moving' (Manning), potentially disrupting, potentially facilitating… This, or email, is our only means of Chlo sharing her hard work and, remembering that past 'critical incident', I worry she will give up if the technology goes wrong… I am so relieved when the essay appears on my screen… Technology is amazing and has now become central in this becoming posthuman world with COVID-19 pushing the humans out, banishing them to their own homes, leaving the outside for nature, enabling *'anijectaces to* rule the world: even the (UK) prime minster is now self-isolating after testing positive…

"Can you see it now?"

"Perfectly, can you remind me what you've been working on?"

Chlo outlines what the essay is about, and then I ask her how she found the process of writing it:

"Okay, I enjoyed it! You said to just write freely, to let my ideas emerge so that's what I did. I did go back a couple of times to restructure it…"

"That's fine, it's not that you can't edit, it's just that you want your thoughts to be flowing before you do so you can follow those emerging thoughts and not just discard them because they are not in your plan! It's also important to write freely without being inhibited by the inherent need for structure, finding the right word…"

"That's what I tried to do."

"Great, I'll have a read…"

It's so easy to talk about what we've done, what we've tried to do, but so hard to actually '*do'*, which is exactly the problem I am experiencing now with my PhD writing… I find it

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frustrating not to be able to read Chlo's essay independently: I cannot move her essay on my screen so have to ask her 'to scroll down' and 'to scroll up just a bit' so I can check for structuring… Is this exemplifying 'mutual-intradependence' (Gale and Wyatt, 2018a: 567)? It's fascinating seeing the piece of writing being affected and thus affecting the discussions Chlo and I are having as the text changes in front of us. And it's not just me and Chlo and this computer, it's the coffee, the coke, fingers connecting with keys, *writing-moving*, Saffie shifting sleepily, the air moving, 'movement-moving' (Manning); as Jane Bennett (2010) says of her book:

> The sentences…emerg[ing] from the confederate agency of many striving macro- and microactants: from "my" memories, intentions, contentions, intestinal bacteria, eyeglasses, and blood sugar, as well as from the plastic computer keyboard, the bird song from the open window, or the air or particulates in the room, to name only a few of the participants. What is at work here on the page is an animal-vegetable-mineral-sonority cluster with a particular degree and duration of power. What is at work here is what Deleuze and Guattari call an assemblage (p. 23)

I show this passage to Chlo, sharing my screen with her: "so it's not just me sitting alone at my computer writing then?"

"Definitely not! You, we, are a part of an 'animal-vegetable-mineral-sonority cluster' (ibid.) with its own agency, capable of influencing what emerges on our screens… We think we humans are in sole control but we're not. We're never alone, never not affected by those animals, objects and the spaces around us just as we affect them, their presence and ours always with the potential to relationally affect our writing…"

"Only if we let it…"

"No, all the time," I say, "think about it, a keyboard is never totally clean so we're always typing with bacteria, touching the keys, becoming one with those keys, our bodies not necessarily ending with our skin (Haraway, 2000); that alters my perception: me, this pen and this paper 'intra-acting' within this 'assemblage', breathing in and expelling air from our bodies, our thoughts always moving, drifting to apparently unrelated material; it's simply not possible to focus all the time, memories are never not present, but are always being triggered by something and, of course, they are not fixed, but are always relationally changing; the spaces in which and with which we write are never still, never silent: if it's not birdsong affecting us as in Bennett's (2010) example, it will be the hum of a freezer, the sound of our own breathing, Saffie's gentle snoring, the worry of her swollen paw, and of course our intentions as we write are ever-present, invading our work. You've heard me mention Deleuze?" I continue as Chlo nods, "well, '[t]he minimum real unit is not the word, the idea, the concept or the signifier, but the *assemblage'* (Deleuze and Parnet, 2012: 38)"

"But there are lots of members in an 'assemblage', aren't there? That's what we were talking about on that walk when you said if we sat down and had a picnic we would be striating the space or something"?

"Yes, that's right," I say, pleased Chlo remembers, "space is always smoothing and striating, and so just by being in your room typing, forces are in action in the spaces around you, potentially affecting and being affected by each other, and in the movement, change occurs, and so the concept of 'assemblages' helps us write by making us more aware of our surroundings, no longer taking them for granted, but being alert to their affect because all bodies, not just human, have the potential to affect and be affected. And that being affected and affecting is, as Massumi (2015a) says, 'the cutting edge of change'" (p. ix).

"So," starts Chlo slowly, "writing really is powerful…"

"Yes," I jump in too quickly in my enthusiasm, "writing *does*," (Gale and Wyatt, 2009; Gale et al., 2012). Writing is a body and so when Spinoza (Deleuze, 1992) says, *'[w]e do not even know of what a body is capable*' (p. 226), that includes writing; when we are writing, as Bennett (2010) asserts, we are neither alone, nor all-powerful."

"That makes my writing seem more far-reaching somehow… In fact, I'd probably change the way I've written this now."

"Great, although what you've written here is good. I can see your ideas flowing freely and confidently."

"Thanks, I found not checking spelling or worrying too much about structure helped me get started: I often sit in front of a blank screen for hours!"

"Me too! Do you want to text me in a week or so to let me know how you're getting on?"

"Sure. Thanks, Mary, 'bye."

Waiting for Chlo to join me for another 'virtual' meeting, I realise I am unusually half an hour early and so I start searching among my many papers for the new title I thought of for this thesis a while ago: I can see the piece of paper with a blank chart at the top which I wrote a couple of ideas in, but where is it now? It has been on my mind for several weeks that my original title is not suitable, but what if it is too late to change? Ah, here it is, but the titles are awful:

'Creating space for change through challenging convention in Post-compulsory Education[186] and academic writing: shifting attention away from the simply human';

'Creating space for change in Post-compulsory Education and academic writing: shifting attention away from the simply human'.

I will have to start again; I want a title which portrays a reason for using Deleuzian concepts, a title conveying, as Spinoza would say, the capaciousness of texts, of writing, to affect and be affected, and, obviously a title conveying what the whole thing is about, whatever that is…

Hi Mary!

Hi Chlo, I was just thinking about the title for my PhD, but I don't like either of these!

I think they sound okay, Chlo says when I have shared my screen. What's your PhD actually about? It is not the first time I have been asked, but it is the first time Chlo has asked:

Well, our stories (sixteen year old 'Chloe's story' and new lecturer 'Mad Mary's' story) open the inquiry as they are about our English class, the computer crashing and both of us fleeing, but, these stories were written a few years ago now, and suddenly seem to be triggering a need for change…

That's a powerful metaphor, interrupts Chlo.

Yes, there are definitely some underlying Deleuzian energies and forces there! I came to think of the movement of the computer freezing as rupturing those Deleuzian 'lines of segmentarity'; those institutional forces, controlling behaviour, denying you a second chance…

Could you control them, now you're aware of them?

I've thought a lot about that, Chlo. I know I keep mentioning Deleuze, but, 'Deleuzian immanence indicates a conceptual space in which one seeks to dissolve all binaries, and the categorizations that divide one from another' (Wyatt et al, 2011: 2) so, student and lecturer;[187] 'mind and body, interior and exterior, self and other, theory and practice, man and animal, organic and inorganic…are all part of the same Being, *and at the same time*…are multiple and emergent' (ibid.).

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[186] As per footnote 21, it is acknowledged that the phrase Post-compulsory Education more usually refers to FE, however it is used in these suggested titles to refer to both FE and HE: what is most important here is 'Chloe's' move from FE to HE and so a phrase loosely capable of encompassing both is used.

[187] It is intended to decentre individual 'lecturer' and 'student' identities by shifting attention towards affects and intensities always in action in those multiple 'assemblages'.

So, we're all the same then?[188]

What's interesting is the divergence (Wyatt et al, 2011).

What about it?

Why did I start this conversation?! Divergence, I tell Chlo, is exciting: it's when other things can emerge and so from us being 'multiple and emergent' (ibid.: 2), we… I pause, unsure of what to say next. Okay, I continue, let's think about education: we

> find our own way of engaging in thought, and our own way of engaging in being, that opens up the not-yet-known within itself. We must work with experience, multiplying it, while also drawing on, or more correctly, playing with Deleuze's multiplicity of concepts (ibid.: 3)…

So what?

Aargh, that is such an infuriating question! Now I know how students must feel when I ask them that! Well, Deleuze and Guattari (2015a) write about a 'plane of consistency' or 'composition' which is necessarily a 'plane of immanence' (p. 331)[189] with 'strata' suffused by 'assemblages' of human and nonhuman bodies (*humanijectaces)*. These 'assemblages' are always moving, people becoming trapped between the strata's 'segmentary lines',[190] but slippage to 'molecular lines' is possible and, indeed, what happens; if there is a big enough cut, a rupture to what society considers normal occurs with 'lines of flight' emerging, creating change more far-reaching than pushing boundaries with Butler (1990): 'lines of flight', which human and nonhuman bodies can create, then take them outside of the strata, somewhere other where anything is capable of becoming… But I shouldn't be saying this, it's too representational…

These are interesting interpretations of 'strata' suffusing 'assemblages' and of 'lines of segmentarity, molecularity and flight', showing a naïve 'Mary's' thinking around how Deleuzian 'lines' might have been used in the classroom (although this is not clearly stated). Rereading this, it all feels very deliberate, very human-centric, but, perhaps there is a sense

I don't know about that, but, it's helping me understand what you're talking about…

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[188] There are echoes here of another conversation between 'Chlo' and 'Mary' (on page 192), but, the focus there is *A* Life (Deleuze, 2001).

[189] This is an early encounter with 'plane of immanence'; this 'Mary' does not appear to have quite understood the relationship between the two planes, that they are both the same and yet, in another sense, complementary. There are further discussions between later 'Marys' and 'Chlo', and 'Paula', in *Writing Post Qualitative Inquiry?* and *Writing Immanently*.

[190] See pages 121-23 for an example of a later 'Mary's' thinking around Deleuzo-Guattarian 'lines'.

of 'segmentary lines' as being institutional forces, their rules and regulations 'trapping' staff and students into compliance; the movement of slight non-compliances creating some leeway, some slippage to 'molecular lines', and some sort of rupture to rules and regulations, enabling escape on a 'line of flight'.

Thanks, it's helping me to work it out in my own mind too…

Great. So what happens next, when we've all created our 'line of flight' to a better world?

That's an interesting idea of 'Chlo's', and, reading 'Mary's' explanation, you can see why she thinks that … This 'Mary' has not yet grasped 'that things, people, are made up of…lines' (Deleuze and Parnet, 2012: 8), that lines run through the Deleuzo-Guattarian universe and are there to be troubled as this thesis aims to trouble academic orthodox practices…

Well, it's not quite like that: sorry, I haven't explained it well! There are people who happily live their lives within and on the lines. It's also possible, I say enthusiastically, to live on different lines, to be on different lines at different times, in fact that's what Deleuze and Guattari (2015a) say about their writing together, that they were always apart, at different speeds in different places (Deleuze and Parnet, 2012). But a 'line of flight' takes you to a space outside the strata where difference can emerge because, if you think about it, we live our daily lives in the same places doing the same things and so the same things always happen. By getting out, getting away, change can occur, but Deleuze (Deleuze and Parnet, 2012) is definite that a 'line of flight' is more a rupture than an escape,…'[t]o leave, to escape, is to trace a line…The line of flight is a deterritorialization' (p. 27): it is 'active' and 'the opposite of the imaginary' (ibid.)…

It can't be *active*, and it's not real so obviously it is imaginary! What else could it be?

No, it is active: if you think about the wording Deleuze uses, '[t]o leave, to escape, is to trace a line' (ibid) then that leaving of the strata, via a rupture, is the creating of a 'line of flight' which you then follow so, you see, it's a very active process: through 'territorialisation', something new or different is folded in, differentiating what preceded it and, thereby, facilitating 'becoming'. So, for example, it is not where the 'line of flight' starts from or where it ends that matters, but what happens in the middle. Deleuze talks about a 'bottleneck' (ibid.: 29) in the middle: perhaps the experience of coming through the bottleneck, of becoming by getting through obstacles[191]…

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[191] This image reminds a later 'Mary' of the formal transfer process from MPhil to PhD at OMU, which was described as being a bottleneck to get through: something that had to be complied with in order to fly freely

Why is the middle so important?

Still feeling on unfamiliar ground, I admit I'm unsure, but say I think it's partly because we never know when something starts or when something ends.

But, we do know, protests Chlo, I know exactly when my uni course starts and ends…

Do you? When does the process actually start? When we initially think about applying, or is it when we enrol, or when we have our first session? We assume our course will run as planned as from beginning to end, and, yes, these programmes have 'lines of segmentarity' running through, but they can be disrupted by 'lines of molecularity' – think about the lockdown, the introduction of 'home learning', the abandonment of GCSE and A-Level examinations, the changes made to undergraduate examinations. And does it all really finish on the stated end date? When is that: when we submit our dissertation, or, in my case, on the day of the viva, or on the day I resubmit having made corrections, if I'm lucky enough to be given a second chance that is!? Obviously it would end when we're told we've failed! But what if we try again? I'd finished my A-levels, but three months later, I was studying them again… Perhaps it doesn't end until we stop thinking about it? I can't imagine that time! I still think about my MA and that was several years ago! So, it's not the start or end that's important, but the process, what happens in between; I couldn't tell you the exact official start and finish dates for my MA but I could describe the processes I engaged in. My MA was a 'line of flight' I created out of a city firm of solicitors where I negotiated overseas insurance claims and from there I created other 'lines of flight' to other places, often more than one at a time… Each novel I read is a 'line of flight' somewhere away from this lockdown, away from the daily text messages from the coronavirus service telling me what I can and can't do:[192] the mobile now something I'm scared to look at instead of a means of keeping in touch with family and friends. If I've managed to forget for a moment, every text message arriving on my phone, flooding my body, skin no barrier, instantly reminds me I am confined to the house, the garden, not even supposed to play with Saffie in her alley behind the garden. Going back to the novel, the 'Bildungsroman' is a genre focusing on the psychological and moral development of the protagonist: on the middle of his or her 'journey' regardless of where s/he starts or finishes…

But, interrupts Chlo, what does thinking with Deleuze actually *do*?

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again. Is that similar to the submission of this thesis? Has it got to be forced to an end, even though it feels still very much in the middle, in order to potentially take off again later?

[192] See Appendix Allegretto-Largo-Allegro (p. 246) which, incidentally, is situated at the edges of this collection as this theme is considered to be outside of the thesis-'assemblage', and so arising in transcendence rather than immanence, which is what concerns this body of writing.

Well, with Deleuze we experience differently: books are not just representing life, but affecting us, being affected by us; texts imagine different worlds, portray experiences differently, conveying power to become, the possibility for something other… Ah, there it is - the missing connection between our stories and our writing: the writing I'm doing with you, encouraging writing academically differently through alternative approaches: 'writing to it' (Wyatt and Gale: 2018) and 'writing as inquiry' (Gale, 2018a; Wyatt, 2019)…

Reading this now, it appears to be an ideal opportunity to explain to Chlo that all bodies (including of writing) in this universe have capaciousness to affect and be affected by each other, that these affects are relational, and that in those movements are moments trembling with potential for change. When we read, I would tell her, we are part of what we are reading, when we write, we are part of that writing, we are

It's another few months before writing as an immanent practice is encountered, but there are echoes of it here in the desire to want to create difference, 'intra-actively,' in writing.

relationally involved and so potentially affecting and being affected by the bodies and movements around us. What we learn from those processes, from entering fields beyond our usual experiences, is exciting: every book, every essay is an adventure, animating potential for becoming!

Have you thought any more about the title then?

Well, I'd like it to convey that sense of difference, that sense of affect, rather than stressing tales of fight and flight.[193] Although there are tales within the thesis, there is a shift towards *thesisising* – the processual nature of writing a thesis, responding to emerging affects and percepts; they are always in play in the capaciousness of the concepts: affecting and being affected by them. I've definitely got an emphasis on the affective powers of texts now…

What do Deleuze and Guattari actually say about texts?

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[193] The working title centred on 'tales of fight and flight', reflecting both 'Chloe's' and 'Mad Mary's' reactions during the initial 'critical incident' as well as 'Mary's' feelings during the flying of the paper planes (see page 60). However, 'fight and flight' are not polarised, but on a pendulum. Incidentally, ethical considerations arise here with 'Mad Mary' wanting to flee the classroom, but, having a responsibility towards the vulnerable students. Furthermore, being told to 'teach to the test' conflicts with her belief in fostering a love of lifelong learning in her students making her feel combative towards the institution, the curriculum.

They say loads: one question they pose that I really like is, '[w]hat if one became animal or plant *through* literature, which certainly does not mean literally? Is it not first through the voice that one becomes animal?' (2015a: 3); I think that really demonstrates the affective powers of literature because, outside of literature, in 'becoming' nothing ever becomes…

I don't understand the question! What do you mean 'if one became animal or plant' (ibid.)?

Well, Deleuze and Guattari talk about the concept of 'becoming' which Deleuze describes as 'an encounter between two reigns, a short circuit, the picking-up of a code where each is deterritorialized' (Deleuze and Parnet, 2012: 33). Seeing Chlo looking nonplussed, I try to explain the wasp and orchid example Deleuze and Guattari (2015a: 9) use: when the wasp lands on the orchid, it is becoming orchid, the orchid is becoming wasp as the two touch, as the wasp takes the orchid's nectar, they become one but retain their differences… Sorry, I'm not making much sense! Have you read Kafka's *Metamorphosis*? I studied it years ago (in German, which didn't help!), but it's taken on a whole new meaning since encountering Deleuze! Gregor, I thought, somehow turns into a beetle, but he doesn't, he is becoming-beetle, becoming-man. 'Becoming is a verb with a consistency all its own' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a: 279) and you never become, it's not possible, you are always becoming…

Liking animals and literature, it is great to find them entangled in A Thousand Plateaus (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a): '[a] becoming-animal always involves…in short, a multiplicity' (ibid.: 279) such as literature, which they say 'is an assemblage' (ibid.: 3). Another reminder of the need to perceive the Deleuzo-Guattarian universe as a whole!

Why?

I think because you're always moving and so you're never still: you can never become, you're always becoming. But when Gregor and the beetle combine,

neither...resembles the other, neither…imitates the other, each deterritorializing the other, pushing the line further. A system of relay and mutations through the middle. The line of flight is creative of these becomings. Lines of flight have no territory. Writing carries out the conjunction, the transmutation of fluxes, through which life escapes from the resentment of persons, societies and reigns   (Deleuze and Parnet, 2012: 37-38)

So, I continue, this is what is happening when change is occurring, when difference is emerging. It's not that one becomes other, but, that 'they are in alliance, they are involved' (Gale, 2021: 469). It's about the processes of 'becoming', the 'system of relay and mutations

through the middle' (Deleuze and Parnet, 2012: 38). Deleuze (1995) describes reading as 'a series of experiments for each reader in the midst of events that have nothing to do with books…getting it to interact with other things, absolutely anything' (p. 9) and so it's important to ask not 'what a work of literature *means*…[but] *what can it do*?' (Baugh, 2000: 35) which will be different for every reader, and every read*ing* because the 'manner of their encounter' (ibid.: 52) is also important! If you think about writing, it 'always combines with something else, which is its own becoming' (Deleuze and Parnet, 2012: 33) and so writing is never a solitary act, and neither is reading. Deleuze and Guattari really bring literature and writing alive, showing us other worlds, showing the transformative abilities of literature and writing:

> To write is to trace lines of flight which are not imaginary, and which one is indeed forced to follow, because in reality writing involves us there, draws us in there. To write is to become, but has nothing to do with becoming a writer
>
> (Deleuze and Parnet, 2012: 32)

Well, that really does put writing in a new light, doesn't it? It makes it more than transformative, says Chlo, and I know you want to transform thinking around academic writing so yes I can see why you want a title which reflects '[m]ovement, [i]ntensity, and [p]otential' (Gale and Wyatt: 2018a: title) of texts in shifting attention away from the simply human…

Thanks, Chlo, that's really helpful,[194] maybe something like:

Exploring the potential for intensities and becoming in writing: experiencing writing differently in post-compulsory education?

Maybe, says Chlo doubtfully, why don't you ask your supervisory team what they think?!

We write to be in the reverb of word and world
Berlant and Stewart, 2019: 131

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[194] A 'Mary' editing this is struck by 'Chlo's' insightfulness in this conversation and the way in which she helps this other 'Mary' develop her ideas for the title. It is great to see how 'Chlo' is changing, thus offering exemplification of the enormous benefits of embracing the different writing practices she is introduced to as she demonstrates opening up inquiry.

Paper Planes Flying Again!
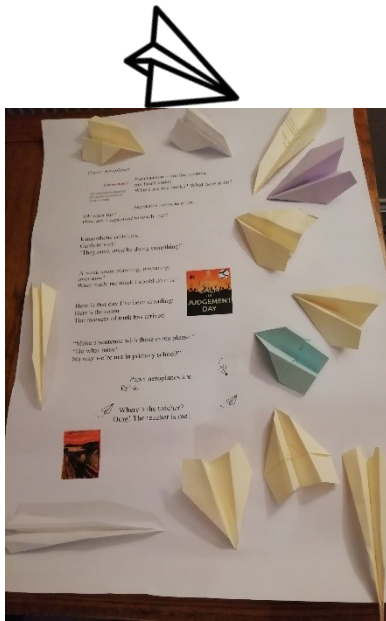
More work than last time,
the students were much faster!
Hopefully these planes

will fly! Everyone
waiting…, looking…, expecting…,
Help! What should I do?

I'll have to say some-
thing to start the planes flying!
Why? Can't the poem,

planes, speak for themselves?
Why are humans still needed?
Breathe… Say anything…

Conversations start,
Cats – the name sticker, green scarf, -
starting to relax now,

let the paper planes
work! Will they be affective?
What work will they do?

The planes are flying!
Memories of what will come
flooding the space…

writings are flying
see them go - out there in space –
landing over there…

being unfolded…
Oh, reading the poem a-
loud feels very strange,

but everywhere are
people talking and writing
with the paper planes! 😊

A Different Playful Intralude

You're still doing it! What? What almost every other PhD student in the world is doing when submission is imminent: carefully checking for connections between paragraphs and chapters, making them explicit: rewriting the first few lines, ssssh! yes, I *know* you are not writing in chapters, and the last few, then grouping texts together: look at those last few texts all with immanence as a common theme... So? It's not the only time 'immanence' is mentioned: there's already been... Listen to yourselves: 'there's already been'! You can't deny you're structuring this thesis chronologically. We're not! I wish you'd just let me write my planned thesis without any of these stupid nightmares, dreams, 'playful' and 'serious' 'intraludes', conversations, *composite subjectivities... Selves, not subjectivities; subjectivities have more of a sense of being fixed, conforming to expectations somehow whereas selves, selving, are free*! Whatever! This is supposed to be an academic thesis, not a collection of fairy tales; you're writing what 'chick lit' is to the novel! Where's the academic rigour, the argument and discussion, the analysis, the evidence? It's all there! Where? I could have written the thesis by now and it would have... Oh, here we go again! I've seen what you're creating: all those years wasted... They haven't been wasted! *Thesisising* has changed our way of thinking forever: we have very different perspectives on supporting students now we're attuned to other forces, to the capacities of all bodies to affect and to be affected... How will that change anything? We'd introduce the idea of other writing practices like 'Mary' does with 'Chlo', writing for learning, writing that *does*, not writing for representation, writing only for assessment, but, writing for mobilising inquiry, writing for movement, writing creating 'lines of flight', and our classroom would consequently be a different place... Ha! With paper planes flying around! Why not? You saw the

concentration, the motivation behind the making of those planes, and why shouldn't students experience *writing-moving*?! They could 'write to' the writing folded in the planes, add to the fold: they'd soon be 'writing with' (Wyatt and Gale, 2018) the not-yet-known... That would be a great way to introduce 'artfulness': show them 'that the "I" is not where life begins, and the "you" is not what makes it art' (Manning, 2015: 75); we'd tell them about Massumi's (2015b) 'supernormal animal' too: how it is capable of 'surpass[ing] what had been assumed to be its natural target' (ibid.: 4). Just think what that could mean for our 'Chloes'...

Okay, okay, you're right, that original 'Mary' murmurs, maybe that would inspire students: different ways of learning, not knowing what they might learn, writing to discover, exceeding expectations... At last! All the 'Marys' agree! It was one of the worst moments as a lecturer when those planes first flew, but, look what came out of it and perhaps there's more to come with *writing-moving*, it's not yet known how this *thesisising* will end, *if* it ever ends! Look at what's happening so far: writing 'sprouting deviant' (Massumi, 2002: 18) in this Deleuzo-Guattarian universe of movement on and with and in-between always shifting strata with *all* bodies having capacities to relationally affect and be affected, and with those relationalities always-moving, anything might happen...

[T]here is no "conclusion" to be found in writing...

Cixous, 1993: 156

Landing Site: Strings (conversational, 'intra-acting')

Introducing other writing practices

Learning is a fragile enterprise that can too easily be sidetracked by the encroachment of what is set up, in advance, as relevant or irrelevant... The mode of critique that operates as an academic trope stifles the very opening through which fragile new modes of existence can come to expression   *Manning, 2016: 9*

Whilst watching Saffie staring at a couple of little birds at the bird feeder hanging in the tree, doubts concerning suggesting other writing practices to Chlo surface. Driving home in torrential rain after meeting in the pub that evening, it had seemed such a good idea to introduce the writing practices I have been engaging with recently; Chlo is studying counselling and so, surely, an attunement[195] to other forces is vital, but, as Paula reminds me, Chlo is not doing a PhD.[196] After just one session with Chlo, however, it is a struggle to continue teaching in conventional ways: recommending careful planning before writing 'logically' structured paragraphs with an emphasis on representing, rather than the exemplifying (Massumi, 2002) which structur*ing*, naturally occurring in the writing, enables. Massumi's (2002) suggestion that,

[a]s a writing practice, exemplification activates detail. The success of the example hinges on the details. Every little one matters. At each new detail, the example runs the risk of falling apart, of its unity of self-relation becoming a jumble. Every detail is essential to the case. This means that the details making up the example partake of its singularity. Each detail is like another example embedded in it. A microexample. An incipient example. A moment's inattention and that germ of a one-for-all and all-in-itself might start to grow. It might take over. It might shift the course of the writing. Every example harbors terrible powers of deviation and digression (p. 18)

is just too exciting not to experiment with: encouraging *writing-moving*, breaking free from the controlling writer, the conventional academic writing conventions, thus enabling a writing 'sprouting deviant' (ibid.) with a writer willing to take risks, to let the writing write; writing falling through, falling off[197] the 'lines of segmentarity' usually running through it, seeping into 'molecular lines' rupturing them, creating 'lines of flight' to unexpected places… Perhaps that would be a step too far for Chlo, however. What about Richardson and St. Pierre's 'writing as a method of inquiry' (2000; 2005; 2018)? It is clearly written for qualitative researchers,

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[195] See page 158 for a less naïve 'Mary's' use of this word which, here, conveys a sense of simply being in tune with other bodies rather than of the dancing with them later 'Marys' come to enjoy. See also footnote 220.
[196] See page 182.
[197] Later 'Marys' think about 'délirer', a going off the rails, breaking with tradition, creating chaos by troubling those orthodox academic writing traditions, seeing what else emerges…(See pages 129-130).

but they (2005) suggest 'writing *is* thinking, writing *is* analysis, writing *is* indeed a seductive and tangled *method* of discovery' (p. 967): could that encourage Chlo to develop her ideas within her writing? It may of course depend on the nature of the assignment as to whether it will be appropriate for Chlo to experiment with this practice, and with 'writing as inquiry' which both Ken Gale (2018a) and Jonathan Wyatt (2019) move toward… Wyatt and Gale (2018) say the practice of 'writing to it' was inspired by Richardson and St Pierre's 'writing as a method of inquiry', but *method* is troubling:[198] it suggests a controlled practice, an inflexible doing, but, just because I, inspired by St. Pierre's (2017; 2019) more recent work, am writing a thesis defying methodologies and methods, it does not mean these writing practices have a place at undergraduate levels. Engaging with Massumi's (2015b) 'creative-relationally *more-than* human' (p.14) practice, Gale (2018a) and Wyatt (2019) suggest the use of 'writing as inquiry' as opening up those possibilities arising within 'creative-relational inquiry'.[199] Wyatt (2019) 'propose[s] that creative-relational inquiry calls, not for 'writing as a method of inquiry', but 'writing-as-inquiry'…[he] argue[s] for the place of the personal in such creative-relational inquiry' (p. 41). 'Creative-relational inquiry is concept, not methodology. It's inquiry that seeks not to "capture" and hold still, but to find a way, through desire, to do justice to the fluidity of process' (De Andrade, Stenhouse, and Wyatt, 2020: 6).[200] And that is what I want for my PhD too as well as I, the researcher, you, the examiner, the reader, all of us in this always-becoming 'assemblage', 'never able to be distant and separate, [but] always caught up, caught up in the flow' (ibid.: 8) of this collection of post qualitative inquiries: the

creative-relational casts relating-to others, to ourselves, to the material world-as generative process, as doing, as dynamic. The creative-relational acknowledges how relata-we, me, you, this – are produced through the relational (ibid, 9)

Wyatt (2019) writes about 'writing-as-inquiry' in relation to therapy, is that the same as the counselling that Chlo is studying? It is certainly closer to it than my PhD in Education. Conscious of having already failed Chlo once, and knowing those discursively constructed structures demanding conventional academic approaches and methods by examiners require attention, care will definitely be needed. Is it possible to balance these tensions around 'standard' approaches' and creative writing processes, and engage in non-traditional structuring? With what emerges in the writing capable of mobilising thinking, mobilising inquiry, Chlo could really make a difference to her clients: she could find new ways of

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[198] It would not be until eight days before submission that this editing (panicking!) 'Mary' realises why 'method' is troubling: how can you impose order on always-becoming, always-moving writing?

[199] A concept invented by Jonathan Wyatt.

[200] In the *Pre-prelude*, emphasis is placed on judging the manner of the writing, on acknowledging the unfinished nature of this work; perhaps it is not too late to ask that the 'fluidity of process' (as referenced above) also be taken into account?

supporting them effectively as she better understands their needs, but how might these tensions be balanced within academia?

Unsurprisingly, sleep is initially *eludic*: with all these concepts and ideas[201] flowing rapidly through the mind, movement seems incredibly apt since, 'creative-relational inquiry is about movement, about process. Creating as process, relating as process' (De Andrade, Stenhouse, and Wyatt., 2020: 7). Yesterday's 'writing to it' raised questions for consideration including whether it is possible to teach movement away from representation, movement towards writing as immanent doing. With immanence occurring in and of itself, surely it would just be lost in attempted explanations and instructions? How…

Sitting in the car later, waiting for the windscreen to clear, the picture of the sheep and the plane above them in 'our' café comes to mind recalling the plane (made by students) hanging from the ceiling by Reception at Grasslands College I used to walk underneath every day, as well as images of the paper planes flying around room P20 and out to the building site below: the builders looking up in wonder and amusement, the lecturer looking away in horror and shame… Cloud covering the sky, creating interesting patterns moving across the sky, a pinkish-cat-becoming-polar-bear distracts me briefly before attracting thoughts of Wyatt and Gale's (2018) 'writing to it', the agency of the weather, 'clouding'… How can Chlo not be excited by that? By the idea of

writing as *clouding*, as a process of gathering and moving and dispersing and travelling, and doing so in response to and 'intra-acting' with the winds, currents and forces with/in/into which clouds are embrangled (Wyatt and Gale, 2018: 124).

Those verbs creating such a strong sense of movement and becoming opening up possibilities of writing as being so much more than something for assessment purposes, taking writing to a different level with nature, imbricating clouds and writing, both so atmospheric, as: 'creative engagements with writing practice in and with the not yet known in today's academy' (Wyatt and Gale, 2018: 119). Like Manning's (2007) use of Simondon's concept 'in-formation',[202] combined with improvisation, writing is always on the move,

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[201] The use of 'idea' or 'concept' troubles later 'Marys': 'concept' seems something much more philosophical than 'idea'. As per footnote 10 (page 27), however, 'idea' is always used notionally, but 'concept' is only ever used in a strictly Deleuzian sense as a creative practice to do with making encounter and event.
[202] See pages 129 and 186 for more detailed explanations of 'in-formation'.

processual, moving-toward not-yetness... With '[c]louding as writing tak[ing] us into what we don't know' (Wyatt and Gale, 2018: 127), an active process is suggested, resonating with this PhD inquiry experimenting with writing to inquire, 'intra-acting' with the literal and metaphorical 'winds, currents and forces' (ibid.: 124) 'embrangl[ing]' (ibid.) the clouds, the whole, moving 'assemblage'. 'Embrangled' (ibid.) is such a beautiful word with its sense of togetherness, sense of being imbricated in 'creative-relational' ways… Oh, that was the car park!

Five minutes later the door to the café in Rainfield slides open; there is a welcoming warmth as it closes, and an aroma of fresh coffee as well as the noise of the machines and people chatting: I try to like these sounds, to think, like Wyatt, 'these features are perhaps echoes of my internal writing world' (Gale and Wyatt, 2008: 376) as it is inevitable within this type of environment, and is still preferable to the more formal, often constrained feel of educational institutions worked in in the past, but I still find them distracting, still prefer silence, or my own choice of music playing in the background… Looking around for Chlo, the odd mixture of round and square tables, all different kinds of wood, demand attention, as do the equally odd assortment of chairs – some coloured wood, some dark and light brown: these are the ones I am drawn to as suddenly it is a Monday evening in the nearby church, orchestra members chatting, catching-up after a week apart, tuning our instruments ready for rehearsal, how I miss my orchestra…
Hi! Sorry I'm late…

Hi Chlo, Happy New Year! I love your coat and that shade of green really suits you.

Chlo smiles. Thanks, Mum gave it to me for Christmas. It's really warm. Do you mind if I get a drink? Would you like one?

I'd love a latte please.

Briefly watching the passers-by hurrying to the next shop perhaps, or to work, looking up at the Dartmoor sheep (they could of course be anywhere!), realising I have sat at the same table as last time, it feels important to keep any references to 'writing as inquiry' and 'writing to it' short and simple…

Thanks Chlo, lattes always taste better in a glass!

After taking the round, flowery tray back, Chlo takes her essay brief out of her purple rucksack asking, what do you think? Will it be suitable for that different way of writing you were talking about? Silently skimming the page, noting qualitative aspects such as the effect of someone's attitude regarding the counselling process, and the role of the client and, in some cases, the client's family...

There's this as well, Chlo says placing another sheet of paper on the table. It's a reflective essay demanding the ability to see situations from other people's perspectives such as fellow student counsellors and counsellors. There must be appropriate literature for counselling encouraging creative developmental techniques, encouraging students to find out what is not-yet-known, but, sitting side by side with Chlo, the confidence felt whilst driving here dissipates; the tensions between the way most university lecturers expect an essay to be written and these more creative writing practices with the potential to create more innovative thoughts, resurface. Nonetheless, my instincts are that Chlo, and others like her, would benefit from more flexibility in writing essays, from allowing writing 'sprouting deviant' (Massumi, 2002: 18), thereby seeing what emerges in the writing. These different ways of writing are very much experimental, I tell her: the plan would be to see what might happen if you move away from those traditional academic conventions often so stifling, thought-destroying, if you simply write…

Without worrying about analysis, spelling, punctuation…

Well, critical analysis will still need to be demonstrated, and any spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors would still be expected to not detract from meaning, and essays would still have to be structured appropriately with arguments coherently developed…

So what's different then?

The difference is in the approach; instead of academic writing being something to be feared, something purely for assessment purposes, it is regarded as collaborative, something developing innovative ideas that you're not expecting when you start writing, something flexible to be enjoyed, something creative, something relevant to your development as a counsellor… Manning (2016) stresses it is the *art*, the process, of painting which is important; I relate this to the *manner* of writing as therefore being significant so think of writing as a means of communication, conversations, with lecturers and others, a means of developing understanding through the process of writing, and so writing to discover, with the emphasis on, as Manning (ibid.) suggests, the *process* rather than the finished product. Her

writing (2013; 2016; 2020) has a focus on the 'neurodiverse': how they see the world and how what they see, the 'neurotypical' might miss.[203] Manning's (2013) work is brilliant: she recognises the autist's ability to experience '[i]ntensive relationality' (p. 8) resulting in the 'capacity to feel the force of preacceleration, to hear and engage with the betweenness of prearticulation, with the more-than of experience in the making' (ibid.); furthermore, as Gale (2021) posits,

> [i]t is not good enough to live with these materialities in the crass partiality of the simply human. Movement and moment are always vibrant, ever changing, in their continuing pulsating happening. Attunement, becoming attuned with this is to be agentic in giving new life (p. 468)

It is so important to be attuned to those affective forces when animating potential for intensities and becoming in writing: thus offering opportunities and glimmerings of the not-yet-known as my thesis aims to do. Manning's writing on 'artfulness' is brilliant too; I could talk about it all day, I say, but know the temptation to tell Chlo too much must be resisted: it is important to focus on what she needs to know and so Wyatt and Gale's (2018) idea of 'writing to it' becomes the focal point, stressing they discuss writing as an active process: 'a creative act' (Wyatt and Gale, 2018: 126).

Well, of course, writing is active, it's something we do isn't it?

It is, yes, but, Wyatt and Gale (2018) suggest that the actual process of writing 'bring[s] concepts to life' (p. 122) for each reader differently, and so it is a totally active process with reader and writer affected by and affecting the writing. This is really important, especially in reflective writing, when you are writing to understand, writing to analyse, writing to develop your skills as a counsellor. I think you'd enjoy it, Chlo. I tell her about 'writing as a method of inquiry' (Richardson and St. Pierre, 2005) and that St. Pierre (ibid.) says that, as a result of using 'writing as method of inquiry', she has 'thoughts' she wouldn't have had otherwise and that by 'us[ing] writing as a method of data collection' she encountered alternative 'sorts of data' (p. 970). My Director of Studies (Gale, 2018a) writes 'the madness of the method of inquiry…[is] *délirer*, it's going off the rails, it's coming to life' (pp. 1-2); speaking with you now, I realise this is what my PhD inquiries need too![204] So, this could work well for you, Chlo: it could really enhance your work with your clients because, for example, you could

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[203] See pages 35 and 40 for further accounting for and of this.
[204] Anxious not to bombard Chlo with information, 'Mary' does not follow this 'line of flight' in conversation with Chlo, but it is nonetheless something she follows later.

think of them as your data and by writing about them, you would then begin analysing their feelings, their needs, really thinking about what your 'data' is telling you…

So, the clients would be my data?

Yes, well, your writing about them, with them and to them…

I'm just so worried that my essays will go back to being unstructured …

No-one is saying you cannot plan and organise meticulously: you wouldn't forget your first language by learning a second! (Richardson, 2000) - this could take your writing to another level; you'd enjoy it too because you are so enthusiastic about your experiences and writing in this way – as a method of inquiry – would encourage you to 'discover new aspects of [y]our topic and [y]our relationship to it' (ibid.: 923). You would be troubling conventional ways of writing from within: your data would initially be the same, but 'writing to it' would enable you to mobilise your inquiry, to find out so much more.

Well, I have been getting a bit bored recently so a new challenge might be good.

That's precisely what inspired Richardson's (Richardson and St. Pierre, 2005) practice: she was feeling 'constrained and bored' (p. 960) by the way she'd been taught to write. Taking a more creative approach could help to 'evoke the emotion of felt experience and portray the values, pathos,…and spirituality of the human condition'[205] (Banks and Banks, 1998: 17) which is so important in counselling. Richardson sought also to change qualitative research from 'foolish at best, and narcissistic and wholly self-absorbed at worst' (Richardson and St. Pierre, 2005: 960) to being creative, to being about the world and to recognise the perseverance of writers and researchers to find the words, expressions, to construct the worlds as they experience them.

Oh, I often spend ages trying to think of the right word to express something without ever finding it!

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[205] 'Human condition' troubles later 'Marys', but, as this is in relation to Chlo and her studies, it is left unchanged.

We all do and sometimes there just isn't one; Deleuze (Deleuze and Parnet, 2012) says '[y]ou can always replace one word with another' (p. 3), but it doesn't always seem possible, not with moving writing…

Haha! What about the other writing style you mentioned? Is that the same?

No, but I think you'd enjoy experimenting with both practices. You might like to read the papers; it's really interesting how Wyatt and Gale (2018) actually demonstrate 'writing to it' in their writing.

That would be beyond me…

It wouldn't! You'll have to be aware though that 'when the writing/clouding takes [you] over, the ride can be bumpy' (Wyatt and Gale, 2018: 124).

Clouding?

Yes, clouding, things won't always be clear immediately, and, for a time, while you're searching for that clarity, it will get worse!, hence the possibility of the writing being 'bumpy' as you 'ride' (ibid.) with and to and through the emerging possibilities. Seeing the confusion on Chlo's face, I suggest focusing on how she might use these practices to continue developing her 'academic' writing, and, through writing, her subject knowledge. Richardson's (2000; Richardson and St. Pierre, 2005; 2018) 'writing as a method of inquiry' arose from a desire to make qualitative research less dull, less self-indulgent, more interesting, more creative, for both writer and reader. Wanting to break away from the traditional views of writing being 'organized and outlined' (Richardson, 2000: 924), she hoped to encourage writing that would discover, represent the striving for words, the rewriting of paragraphs to construct images we see.[206]

With 'writing as a method of inquiry', then, writing becomes more than a means of 'writing up' data after conducting research, writing becomes 'a dynamic, creative process' (ibid.) and writers no longer have to 'silence their own voices and…view themselves as contaminants' (ibid.: 925).

Why 'contaminants'?

Well, traditionally, in a Positivistic sense, research should be objective and so the researcher should not say what s/he thinks. That's considered to be contaminating the evidence.

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[206] Later 'Marys' appreciate there is nonetheless still a sense, in Richardson and St. Pierre's early work especially, of this approach largely being human-centred and so potentially problematic in the wanting of a writing which is always creative, always-moving…

Like bias?

Yes, in a way. So, instead of 'shutting down the creativity and sensibilities of the individual writer / researcher' (Richardson, 2000: 925), Richardson's practice enables writers to write to discover; they are free to write what they actually observed and heard, free to construct themselves, their worlds as they participate within them because of course a researcher cannot be truly objective because they are situated within the worlds of their research... I am totally imbricated in mine, for example, but not, I hope, as a 'fixed, centred, bounded, unitary, denominative subject' (Wyatt, 2019: 129-130), but as multiple 'Marys', multiple writers, tellers of stories, engaging in selfing; this 'Mary' is already changing, she is never still, but that other 'Mary', the one starting the PhD process is also here, clinging on to her notion of a 'perfect' PhD thesis following all the rules and traditions despite these other ones not wanting that, wanting to write because 'it is becoming, becoming something other than a writer, since what one is becoming at the same time becomes something other than writing' (Deleuze and Parnet, 2012: 55).

It sounds exciting, but…

I know it feels strange at first, Chlo, and I appreciate it goes against what we've both been taught. It's impossible to explain how it works, but, as you write, if you're prepared to digress, to follow the emerging ideas in the writing, I promise you'll be amazed at what appears on the page! It's a fantastic feeling, thoughts emerging in the writing that, as St. Pierre (Richardson and St. Pierre, 2005; 2018) suggests, wouldn't emerge otherwise…

But you were so adamant that I should always plan first, using that phrasebank (www.phrasebank) to help find academic phrases…

Yes, and there is nothing wrong with doing that – you might still find it helpful; it's just there are other possibilities and writing can be, and do, so much more. Writing *does* (Wyatt and Gale, 2018: 126). 'Writing to it' is Wyatt and Gale's creation and yet they have many conversations about what it actually *is* and, not surprisingly, it is not any one thing: multiplicities are involved. For example, Ken (ibid.: 125)

> *understand[s] 'writing to it' as involving a writing to, a writing with, a writing to inquire into what might be troubling, what might be emerging in conversation, bringing about laughter, generating pain: 'writing to it' is affective and it is creative in engaging with the constant processual entanglings of materiality and discourse that are involved in bringing concepts to life*

So, it is complete absorption in writing, an immanent practice, writing emerging within writing, something my thesis experiments with actually. Wyatt and Gale (2018) adopt a

'dialogic play script form' (p. 120) which animates their writing brilliantly, literally bringing those concepts to life within their conversations, 'lead[ing] to new experimentations' (ibid: 119).The conversations in this thesis also aim to do this in their use of Massumi's (2002) practice of exemplification[207] as 'Mary', usually with 'Paula', discusses how concepts might be used in her PhD inquiries to show how those concepts can trouble academic conventions, creating flexibility within them. These conversations…

You can't have conversations in a PhD! Rob, my Mum's partner, finished his recently and I couldn't get past the first few pages, but there definitely weren't any conversations in it!

Well, my Director of Studies wrote a collaborative thesis with Jonathan Wyatt which has since been published and their book (Gale and Wyatt, 2009) certainly includes conversations; my supervisor, Emma's (Macleod-Johnstone, 2013) PhD thesis includes conversations with a stranger on a train! But let's focus on what will most help you…

What's the difference between 'writing as a method of inquiry' and 'writing to it'?

Well, with Deleuze and Guattari, who, as you know, are hugely influential in my research, it doesn't have to be one thing or another; 'writing as inquiry' and 'writing to it' complement each other to a certain extent in that both are writing to inquire; Wyatt and Gale (2018) stress they 'write to' the issues, queries and questions arising in their lives and in their writing: '[w]hen *we* use the phrase 'write to it' we mean exploratory, inquiring, open, hesitant, writing. Writing as flow' (p. 120), but perhaps there is more a sense of disturbance with 'writing to it' than 'writing as inquiry'? They certainly compare what they do to Deleuze and Guattari's (2012; Deleuze and Parnet, 2012) 'minor literatures'.

What are they?

'Minor literatures' are written within major literatures but they create new languages to trouble the major and so disturb the conventional, the traditional way of doing things: I like to think the writing about Further Education in this thesis could be seen as 'minor literature' because it's written within the major, and aims to disturb convention.[208] What is also interesting about 'minor literature' is their 'first characteristic[209]…[as] in it language is affected

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[207] Massumi's (2002) practice of 'exemplification' is used within this thesis with its emphasis on showing rather than telling.

[208] The 'Mary' editing this sees the 'Marys'' whole PhD thesis as minor literatures troubling the traditional academic thesis written in the major…

[209] The other two characteristics are not mentioned here, but are nonetheless relevant to this thesis and *thesisising* in that 'everything in them is political' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2012: 17) and 'takes on a collective value' (ibid.) rather than only being of concern to individuals. This inquiry, for example, is written for everyone ever denied the opportunity of fulfilling their academic potential; furthermore, in relation to that 'collective value', Deleuze and Guattari (2012) enthuse 'literature finds itself positively charged with the role and function of collective, and even revolutionary, enunciation' (p. 17).

with a high coefficient of deterritorialization' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2012: 16): these informal conversations in such a formal setting (a PhD thesis) thus 'deterritorialise' academic convention, and that's what you would be doing if you adopt this practice of 'writing to it'. Incidentally, I'm not offering the thesis as a new model for academic theses; I'm hoping 'to create a becoming-minor' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2012: 27), to create '[a]n escape for language, for music, for writing' (ibid.: 26). Through writing in plateaus[210] rather than chapters, for example, the writing feels free, unconstrained, fluid and flowing. I'm creating a non-linear thesis which can potentially be read in any order the reader chooses with each plateau, and each section of each plateau, connecting to all others. A lot of the writing is as conversations and so the language is often conversational rather than 'academic' and the content is designed to challenge the conventional way academic writing is taught and presented in Further and Higher Education. If you are okay with it, it would be interesting to write about you engaging with these different ways of writing, 'writing to it', 'writing as (a method of) inquiry', rather than conventional ways of planning and organising essays such as were inflicted on you earlier requiring you to know exactly what you are going to say before you start writing.

Have you got any other participants? I don't know much about PhDs, but they're research, aren't they? So you need a lot of evidence? One person isn't enough…

Well, it depends on the context. One person's experiences are just as valid as any number of other people's… There are other *composite selves*, such as my fellow PhD student Paula, but you are the thesis's star, its protagonist; my own experiences are included in the research as well and of course, in addition, writing is explored through the work of The Freedom Writers *with* Erin Gruwell (2009).

What's a *composite self?* Is it *real*? Is Paula the same as me?

That's a difficult question, I think to my self; the Freedom Writers and Erin Gruwell are 'real' in that they existed, but, is Paula the *same* as Chlo: a *composite self* inspired by someone I once briefly encountered? She's not quite the same in that there is no one person, no one incident, from which she emerges… Well, I say eventually, as with you, Chlo, there are of course ethical considerations[211] around the use of a *composite self*, and, I am aware some may assume Paula is a peer. There is however no way of 'proving' that Paula does not 'exist', that she is not consciously anyone I know…

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[210] The idea of 'landing sites' has yet to emerge.
[211] See pages 193-94 and 213.

You could just be saying that – she could actually be your best friend and you've just changed her name!

If she were, I'd have to ask permission as she would be recognisable, identifiable. If you ever read the thesis, you will see that all the conversations between Paula and I are very focused on my PhD, not hers; one reason for that is the word count, but it is also because she is a *composite self* and so she is not a fixed, stable, self, but, fluid, always changing, selfing; she flows along with all the 'Marys'' thoughts, attune to the forces around them, living in between, through the Deleuzo-Guattarian 'lines'. Most of their conversations exemplify the different writing practices they encounter and so, different types of data emerging through 'writing as inquiry', and 'writing to it', are used within the thesis, including composite data, creative data, data emerging from conversations, and emotional data. Affect plays a considerable role too: considering the capacities of writing to relationally affect and be affected is really important and so thinking of Wyatt and Gale's (2018) ''[w]riting to it' as event/ful, affect/ful, power/ful' (p. 127) makes writing active, '[a] way of becoming with writing' (ibid.). Using these two practices enables the creation of very different inquiries and this may help you in counselling, offering you the opportunity to use your data in different ways as I mentioned earlier…

Had you heard of these other writing practices when you started?

Not until about half-way through, but, as Manning (2016) posits,

[t]here's something about writing [a thesis] that is out of time. As though the writing only really knows what it's after once it has begun to make its way into the world. For me, thinking too has always had this quality: thinking thickens in its encounter with the futurity that orients it…thinking is always out of sync with itself' (p. ix).

I wasn't actually ever intending to write about writing, the writing chose to do that in its 'sprouting deviant' (Massumi, 2002: 18). It's only really through writing that issues arise, that thinking develops, that ideas occur and that you can actually inquire into those emerging queries and questions and, of course, as you do that, more are emerging in the writing. 'Writing to it' enables a troubling, a disturbing of those things blindly accepted such as conventional ways of academic writing with writing representing rather than *doing*, traditional formats for PhD theses, for example, standard English curricula, but also ways of working with clients, helping people to be able to deal with trauma, for example. These other writing practices enable a challenging of conventions: instead of interviewing students and lecturers for research, for example, collecting 'data' from interviews with them to analyse and interpret

and 'write up', the *composite selves* are data,[212] although I did not initially see them that way; there is also data emerging from literature, a film (*Freedom Writers*, 2007*)*, as well as from personal experiences of teaching in Post-compulsory Education; all kinds of data are also emerging in the writing which would have remained silent if I hadn't experimented with 'writing as inquiry', and with 'writing to it'.

I like the sound of ideas emerging in the writing, says Chlo thoughtfully. Oh, is that the time? I've got a lecture at 1: I'm afraid I'm going to have to go.

That's okay, just get in touch when you're ready and, in the meantime, why not take an event, perhaps a meeting with a client, and 'write to it' from their perspective and from yours.

I'm only observing at the moment.

Well, that's okay, you could 'write to it' from your perspective as observer, and the perspective of the counsellor you're observing? That looks relevant to your next assignment and will also help you to start engaging with 'writing to it'. Just start writing and see what emerges through the different dialogues, see what you discover whilst writing (Richardson and St. Pierre, 2005). See you soon!

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212 See Appendix Accelerando (p. 240-41) which describes how, in order to meet institutional ethical procedures, it was necessary to 'divide' the hitherto merged data into categories.

Intra-lude – 'Thinking-with' Erin Manning

To	erin.manning@concordia.ca
Cc	
Your Inspirational Work	

Dear Professor Manning,

I am a PhD student at Ocean Metropolitan University and I am really looking forward to your seminar here next week. Your work is inspirational: without your (Manning, 2016: 14) 'artful', I would still be sitting here, head in hands, thinking I have no dissertation (or two!), wondering how to start organising all the writing so far into some thing resembling a doctoral 'thesis'! Experimenting with 'speculative pragmatism' (Manning, 2016), balancing all the texts everywhere (desk, table, laptop) and all over the floor, it is unbelievable how their relational forces show 'what else, together, they might do' (ibid.: 39): I am particularly fascinated by the transversal 'lines' emerging between the initial encounter with student 'Chloe' inspiring these PhD inquiries and the reunification of 'Chloe' and English lecturer 'Mary' ten years later. With a later 'Mary' now aware forces of affect were at work in that encounter, and the subsequent writings, it becomes obvious that the thesis is written for all those 'Chloes' denied the opportunity of

fulfilling their academic potential, demanding second chances for them all whilst simultaneously posing its own challenge to discursively constructed academic structures and writing conventions. With the thesis remaining 'in-formation'[213] (Simondon, in Manning, 2007), the relational intensities of the writings are connecting in multiple ways: the thesis consequently always 'moving-with' (Manning, 2020: 159) writers and readers creating worlds within. It is incredibly difficult to organise for presentation to examiners: it is impossible to know which text should follow which, or what conclusions, if any, might be drawn, but, hopefully, 'the manner of [the writing] and not the end-result' (Manning, 2016: 46) will be examined!

In my *thesisising*, which is both a practice and a concept, a 'thought in the act' (Manning and Massumi, 2014),

> *writing developed through the activity of thinking-with that movements of thought propel. As with prehensions that invent the subject of perception through their activity of pulling forth, writing wrote me into the process of inventing-with relationscapes (Manning, 2012: 11)*

Of course, writing the thesis did not start in that way: there was a (now strange) assumption that, as writer, I controlled what was written. Since meeting Massumi (2002), however, I have fallen in love with allowing my writing to be 'sprouting deviant' (p.18): it is amazing what writing can do once allowed to deviate from the lines on the page, to follow those Deleuzo-Guattarian 'lines of flight', rupturing carefully laid plans for structuring arguments; writing practices including 'writing-as-inquiry' (Gale, 2018a; Wyatt, 2019) and writing as immanent doing are now hi-jacking this collection of post qualitative inquiries! The direction the thesis has taken still feels strange: it is no longer a traditional thesis with strict methodologies. Of course, doubts creep in at times, but, with the support

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[213] See page 115 (particularly footnote 162) for more detail on this use of Simondon's process of 'in-formation'.

of my supervisory team, and with you, Massumi, Deleuze and Guattari, and others, I no longer feel I am writing this alone: there is a receptiveness also to forces and intensities 'emerg[ing] through the process of writing' (Manning, 2012: 11).

I have always wanted to be a PhD student: it has been my dream since I was an undergraduate, but, it would be almost twenty years before I would realise that dream and then, unexpectedly, it would be in Education, not German. The catalyst for my PhD was that 'critical incident' (Tripp, 1993) in my first year of teaching sixteen to eighteen-year-olds in a FE college. I initially believed this incident involved only me and new student 'Chloe'. Over the next few years, I had the privilege of teaching numerous other 'Chloes', but the original 'Chloe' continued to trouble me. As a new PhD student, I wrote both my version of that incident, and 'Chloe's' imagined version: these stories are still positioned at the beginning of the thesis, preceding the abstract. As I became more familiar with posthumanist theorisings, it was soon obvious that the incident was not only about lecturer and student:[214] so many other forces were relationally in action as the computer sixteen-year-old 'Chloe' was using froze in the middle of her literacy assessment; writing recently about that event from the point of view of the computer,[215] acknowledging those affects within the 'assemblage' passing through us all, influencing our actions, all coming together in that moment, creating that memorable, affective incident at the centre of this inquiry, encouraged me to attempt to landscape the thesis as Deleuze and Guattari's 'plane of immanence,'[216] with 'no structure…only relations of movement and rest, speed and slowness between unformed elements…only haecceities, affects, subjectless individuations that constitute collective assemblages' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a: 310).

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[214] Thinking of educational institutions and staff as being policy driven as well as discursively constructed, it is hoped to decentre individual 'lecturer' and 'student' identities by shifting attention towards affects and intensities always in action in those multiple 'assemblages'.
[215] See pages 39-40.
[216] See particularly *Writing Post Qualitative Inquiry?* and *Writing Immanently* for discussion of this concept.

My Director of Studies, Ken Gale, is developing a new concept, 'affective presencing' (2020; 2021; Gale and Wyatt, 2021):[217] perhaps you have heard about it? I am still trying to make sense of it, but it really accentuates movement is relational, always shifting, and so 'affective presencing', which relates to *all* bodies including the more-than-simply-human, is at play in that moment of that incident in the classroom 'as something takes over, immanence, of its self, precedes all else' (Gale and Wyatt: 2021, 3). 'Thinking-with' your 'movement-moving', *all* those bodies, including trembling walls and quivering air particles, are moving in relation to each other, affecting and being affected by invisible affects passing through each other; fear, then, not as I initially believed, an emotion restricted to 'Chloe' and I, but a relational affect pervading the room: relationally in action. This realisation suggests all this potential could have been mobilised differently, leading to a speculative approach to the inquiry being adopted: the 'Mary' (there are multiple 'Marys' in this thesis!) at the time blamed herself for years, if only she had not asked 'Chloe' if she were okay at exactly that moment; the 'Marys' writing this now, however, engaging with your work, are asking not, as they remember doing at the time, 'what *if*', but, 'what *else*'? 'What else' might have happened if the technology had not failed, if 'Chloe' had stayed in the room, if, they had been attune to institutional forces, to other transversalities in action, if they had known about 'practicing the schizz' (Manning, 2020) and that it 'involves attuning to transversalities that include institutional forces' (Manning, 2020: 149). Your suggestion that, 'if tuned carefully', there is potential for 'institution thresholds [to] facilitate the creation of operative techniques…[capable of] grow[ing] and proliferat[ing] through and beyond the institution' (ibid.: 151), creates openings for changes to those fixed structures facing 'Mary' and 'Chloe'. With '[p]racticing the schizz involv[ing] asking how else we might contribute to creating thresholds that perform otherwise possibility, that touch experience differentially' (ibid.: 191), there is a sense of solidarity, collectivity, felt in Moten and Harney's (2013) 'Undercommons' which went unnoticed by 'Mary' for, whilst empathising with the difficulties 'Chloe' faced walking into the College that morning,[218] 'Mary' did not know that 'a practic[ing] of the schizz begins…at the

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[217] To be authentic, the unusual decision is taken to fully reference this concept again here: this is written as a formal email to Erin Manning and it therefore seems appropriate to do so. The same applies to other key concepts referred to here.
[218] As indicated in 'Mary's story' (p.23).

threshold' (Manning, 2020: 147) and did not therefore consider them as powerful sites of movement, open to animation and creativity. She was unaware of the possibilities of 'detour[ing]' (ibid.), of altering conditions to enable alternative ways of operating, to be more approachable to 'Chloes'. Like all lecturers, she understood the importance of positioning tables and chairs with some layouts encouraging small group work, others whole group discussion,[219] but, did she think how they might look from the 'threshold'? Did she know that in the 'smoothing' and 'striating' in the moving of furniture, new classroom 'assemblages' are created… It was nonetheless impossible to change the furniture in the computer room that morning and, with even the computer getting fed up and going on strike, there was not much feeling of 'attunement'[220] between bodies that morning! 'Thinking-with' you now in that 'space of encounter' (Manning, 2020: 181), there were no hiding places, no flattening of hierarchies, it was a typical college computer room: lecturer's desk at the front, students' desks in rows, students all facing the front. 'Mary' did not even want these vulnerable students to have to do an assessment, but, she did not think there was a choice. As a new teacher, like many of her students, she felt nervous, unsure how to act; this room, with its examination layout, firmly discouraged communication; its blank walls (apart from austere instructions about how to log on, and notices forbidding food and drink) accentuating those feelings of trepidation; the whole room was intimidating, making her heart beat faster, forcing her into acting like the teachers in the school stories younger 'Mary' loved so much: always pretending to be one of her favourite characters at school.[221] Feeling herself adopting a less friendly approach, reinforcing those barriers already in place within the room between her and her students, especially after the 'incident' with 'Chloe', 'Mary' was unaware that what she thought of as her volitional 'movement was [actually] immanently directed and shaped' by the event (Manning, 2016: 21). As you (2020) say, some buildings just are out of bounds for some people,

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[219] An earlier 'Mary' refers to the different layouts of tables and chairs in the classroom where she and 'Chloe' meet, and in the café in Rainfield where their reunification takes place (pages 98).

[220] A later 'Mary' reading this senses 'attunement' is used here more in a sense of (not) being in tune with each other; later 'Marys' engage with it, as 'affective attunement' (page 174) which 'for Stern…is key to interpersonal becoming' (Manning, 2013: 7) (see also page 157). In the version of the computer's story referred to here, 'attunement is capacious, it has potential, it does…It stirs human emotion.' (Gale, 2021: 468).

[221] See page 70 for more detail around 'Mary's' love of reading school stories, and how being in those 'assemblages' makes her school days more enjoyable.

some 'thresholds' just not intended to be crossed by everyone, but, an English FE college, traditionally promising learning for all, should not be one of them. In the thesis, a coincidental, imagined, second chance to support 'Chloe', now calling herself 'Chlo', who has since returned to education, is therefore created. Realising 'Chlo', the university student seeking help with essay-writing, is 'Chloe', 'Mary' determines, this time, 'to facilitate conditions that transversalize collectivity' (Manning, 2020: 193). Consequently, 'Chlo' is introduced to different writing practices, encouraged not to be trapped in the constraints of conventional academic writing with its focus on representing, but to mobilise writing, to see what emerges... In a moving away from physical institutional 'thresholds', meetings between 'Chlo' and 'Mary' take place in cafés and, more recently, because of Covid-19, in virtual spaces, in their own houses, thus crossing only virtual thresholds; this has created a completely different studying atmosphere for 'Chlo'…

That initial encounter with 'Chloe', then, has been hugely influential in triggering this inquiry. I feel the writing shifting now to another influential event: the day a class of teenagers made paper planes[222] out of carefully designed comma worksheets, and flew them around the room, some even flying out the windows to the building site below! I wrote a poem about that class and I once used the idea for a workshop: inviting participants to fly paper planes with extracts from the middle of texts written during my doctoral studies so far printed inside them, then unfolding them and 'intra-acting' (Barad: 2007) with the text and each other: those relational intensities passing through us, shifting the bodies in the room, creating so much more than anticipated: a sense of haecceity, of '[t]his is this' (Gale, 2018a: 25), a moment of 'beautiful temporary knowing' (ibid.) of where this thesis is going,[223] 'the tendencies of pastness contribut[ing] to how the current event unfolds' (Manning, 2016: 133). With the paper plane motif, encountering architectural 'landing sites' (Arakawa and Madeline Gins, 2002) with you and Massumi (2014) offered a solution

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[222] See pages 62-63, 75 and 117
[223] Alas, it was very temporary!

to my crafting problems, especially when combined with 'artfulness': 'the way the art of time makes itself felt, how it lands, and how it always exceeds its landing' (Manning, 2015: 76)! There is no doubt the idea has 'taken off', like the paper planes; the only slight problem is that they are all about 'landing' whereas the thesis is equally about 'taking off'. Consequently, there are connecting flights ('taking off' aeroplanes at the end of each 'landing site' (to fly readers to the contents page to choose somewhere else to look around) as well as in the middle of 'landing sites' (with hyperlinks to be clicked on like the ones on the previous page)); not to be confused with 'lines of flight', these middling aeroplanes encourage readers to escape to another 'landing site' where the line continues. There are also 'landing aeroplanes' at the top of each 'landing site'. It is great how '[l]anding sites abound within landing sites…[t]he corner of a desk can be taken as a full-fledged landing site, even while subsisting as part of the landing site holding and portraying the desk as a whole' (Arakawa and Madeline Gins, 2002: 9); it reminds me of those texts balanced everywhere, able to 'abut, or overlap, or nest within one another' (ibid.: 8), opening up so many possibilities for them to be whatever works best for the work you want them to do… In my thesis, I think of them as middles, 'asthetic impressions…sensible qualities, odors, lights, sounds, contacts, or free figures of the imagination, elements from a dream or a nightmare' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2012: 69), coming to life at the intersection of lines running through the 'assemblage'; I want those sites to be 'smooth spaces' in-between where change is occurring, leaking from 'segmentary lines' into 'molecular lines', before rupturing them, creating 'lines of flight'. Adopting Deleuze and Guattari's (2015a) idea of writing in plateaus instead of chapters, each 'landing site' named after whichever musical instrument(s) seems to best epitomise the tone and content of the plateau; I've chosen musical instruments because music really helps me with sense-making of Deleuzo-Guattarian concepts and practices,[224] and those 'landing sites' perhaps now becoming movements in music, creating symphonies, concertos.[225] I am hoping these 'landing sites' will be seen as sites of

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[224] See pages 35 and 83-84 for more detail around processes of this sense-making with music and Deleuze.
[225] It will be interesting to see whether this happens or not!

movement, quivering with potential for change, 'work[ing] in the mode of speculative pragmatism' (Manning, 2016: 2) which 'invents, doing its work at the limit where *what if*? becomes *what else*?' (ibid.: 202).

I am completely immersed, imbricated, in this PhD process, dreaming about 'open[ing] the field of experience to the more-than of objects or subjects preformed…delight[ing] in the activation of the as-yet-unthought' (ibid.: 12). This is an extraordinary thought-changing experience: objects will never simply be objects again, and forces and energies will always be passing through all bodies, 'affective presencing' happening in the moment within and around. It is impossible to describe what is occurring, sitting in the sun with books, pen and paper, engaging in this 'activity of *immanent* critique…an act that only knows the conditions of its existence from within its own process, an act that refuses to judge from without' (Manning, 2016: 12). Those processes of reading and writing so imbricated in what is developing in this inquiry, emerging immanently, as the '['Marys'] learn for learning's sake…tak[ing] the risk of knowing differently…' (ibid.: 214), that the thought of not submitting a thesis, and so keeping this process alive, crosses my mind: it has always been the process that draws me towards doctoral studies - the urge to learn, to read, to think differently, to write, to create never diminishing; despite being expected to submit within two weeks, those feelings are as strong as ever! Feeling as though I have not read as widely as other doctoral students, I like your (https://www.youtube.com) suggestion not to question what I have not read, but to focus on why and how I have read what I have; my reading will continue forever, every text always leading to another, to others.[226] Since encountering *A Thousand Plateaus* (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a) and *Madness as Methodology* (Gale: 2018a), I rarely read a book from beginning to end: instead, anxious to extend my knowledge and understanding, curiosity is followed. It would not even matter, therefore, if '[these Marys] never graduate. They just ain't ready' (Manning, 2016: 215): the 'thinking-doing' would be 'a value in itself' (ibid.: 200).

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[226] See pages 53-54 for an exemplification of this reading process.

Moving from being a PhD student expected, and expecting, to write in established ways, to becoming a PhD student engaging with your 'research-creation', with '[s]tudy…that delights in the activation of the as-yet-unthought' (Manning, 2016: 12), there is a wanting '[t]o compose with the minor gesture' (ibid.: 7), an asking 'how a practice is capable of opening up the field such that minor gestures can emerge' (ibid.: 66) as the formatting of the thesis itself troubles those rigid Deleuzo-Guattarian 'segmentary lines' structuring orthodox academic practice. There is a determination also - the 'minor' 'mak[ing] its gesture felt' (ibid.: 65) perhaps - to evade 'method…captur[ing] the minor gesture…captur[ing] study, and silenc[ing] it' (ibid.: 12). 'Thinking-with' 'minor gestures' at those 'interstices of the as-yet' (ibid.: 23), were they gathering in the computer room with 'Mary' and 'Chloe' with the incident itself 'as-yet-unseen … as-yet-unthought … as-yet-unfelt'? (ibid.). Is the 'minor gesture' at work in that classroom incident 'open[ing] experience to its potential variation' (ibid.: 1)? Although there is a sense, once the manager is involved, of the incident, of 'Chloe', being 'cast aside…in the interplay of major chords' (ibid.), these post qualitative inquiries exemplify that it is never forgotten. The question remains, nonetheless, as to how best to support our 'Chloes': could being aware of any perceptible 'shift in tone, a difference in quality' (ibid.) in that moment as decisions were made 'on the edges of imperceptibility' (ibid.: 221) have altered the situation, making it a positive one for 'Chloe'? Something definitely encouraged 'Chloe' and me to go off on our different tangents as the Deleuzo-Guattarian 'segmentary lines' in the assessment room began to crack with the computer crashing: were forces of encounter taking over, rupturing the usual rules and regulations, creating emerging 'lines of flight' leading first 'Chloe', and later 'Mary', out of the room? Could it have been those 'wander lines' (Manning, 2020: 159), '[t]hick with the vibrations of the everyday' (ibid.)? What could be more everyday in the English FE sector than a stressed student swearing and a lecturer uncertain how best to act? Those 'wander lines' encourage Daniel Stern's (1985) 'affective attunement' (Manning, 2013: 7) to things in relation to each other: could 'the wander lines['s] bring[ing] to expression…how else the mapping of subjectivity can occur' (Manning, 2020: 161) have helped 'Chloe' and 'Mary' that morning? What else might have occurred with the 'merging-with of vitality affects across experiences toward emergent events. Not a feeling-of,' you emphasise, 'but a feeling-with' (Manning, 2013: 7-8)?

What else could these 'wander lines' do in this inquiry? Incidentally, as the thesis emerges, there is increasing awareness of the Deleuzo-Guattarian 'lines' running through it, emerging in the always 'striating and smoothing' spaces writing creates, accompanied by hope that they are not divisive, trying to trouble any that are. Whilst earlier 'Marys' are now suggesting comparing 'wander lines' to those 'lines of segmentarity, molecularity and flight', resistance is 'mak[ing]-felt' as later 'Marys' now feel uncomfortable about comparing always-moving concepts? With the 'returns' and the 'circlings-back and circlings-around' (Manning, 2020: 161) of 'wander lines' epitomising my PhD journeying, these lines illuminate the manner of thinking and writing: changing with every circling in this always-moving thesis. The circlings making 'moving-again…possible' (ibid.) in this 'world that demands our attention' (Stengers, 2014: 107), releasing writer from feelings of paralysis in the process occurring particularly in the midst of so many new ways of thinking about and 'thinking-with'. With '[w]ander lines celebrat[ing] deviation, detour. Bodies are made in the detouring, moving with the affordances of all that is felt…moving-with worlds in the making' (Manning, 2020: 159-61), it seems okay not to know in which direction to turn...

Your idea of 'research–creation' (Manning and Massumi: 2014) inspires me to think about 'writing-creation' as perhaps bringing so-called conventional academic writing closer to creative writing, the fictional (or not!) writing of novels, the imaginative writing of poetry, a writing animating potential for intensities and becoming. I see 'writing-creation' as a Deleuzo-Guattarian combined 'deterritorialization' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a: 591): the movements between writer and writing, reader and writing, readers and writers, creating new 'lines of flight' and so, combined with departures from the text, perhaps new manners of writing will flourish? There is hope also of enabling the 'tap[ping] [of] cosmic forces' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a: 592) in 'absolute deterritorialization': 'connect[ing] lines of flight, rais[ing] them to the power of an abstract vital line, or draw[ing] a plane of consistency' (ibid.)… In its 'smoothings' and 'striatings', 'reterritorializings' and 'deterritorializings', there is a sense of the 'minor gesture' 'tun[ing] the [thesis] to its processual force' (Manning, 2016: 65). I am entranced by 'immanent' critique as 'engag[ing] with new processes more than new products…seek[ing] to energize new modes of activity, already in germ, that seem to offer a potential to escape or overspill ready-

made channelings into the dominant value system' (Manning and Massumi, 2014: 87). Could 'immanent' writing therefore escape rigid academic rules encouraging exploration of not-yet-ness? 'Thinking-with' writing emerging in the writing, then, words leading to other words, writing 'sprouting deviant' (Massumi, 2002: 18), there is perhaps potential for 'writing-creation' in this inquiry as creative writing, using concepts, animating potential for intensities and becoming? A way of bridging the gap between creative and academic writing with 'writing-creation' becoming immanent writing, writing as immanent doing, leading to change, to new ways of thinking and of writing…

Many thanks for reading this – as you have seen, your work has truly inspired my PhD studies!

With many thanks and best wishes,

Mary and little cat Saffie (we loved seeing your beautiful cat during your talk:
[Post Philosophies and the Doing of Inquiry Session 6 Erin Manning - YouTube](#))

It is only by recognizing the bonds of complicity and the limitations that come with situation that you can succeed in modulating those constraints at the constitutive level, where they re-emerge and seriate. This is 'immanent critique'…it engages becoming rather than judging what is

Massumi, 2015a: 71

Landing Site: Grand piano (Blend of harmonics, bright)

Writing Post Qualitative Inquiry? 'Intra-actions' with Elizabeth St. Pierre and others

Writing *does*. It changes how things are, how I see the world…I fear writing as tearing a line through stability   *Wyatt and Gale, 2013: 305*

Having just discovered Elizabeth St. Pierre's work (2017; 2019), I cannot wait for my supervision session! She writes so openly about her doctoral student experiences and her supervisory practices that I am almost expecting her to be there. Arriving too early, I enter the library café; Paula is sitting alone by the window hard at work, but, she is typing less frantically when I have got my latte so I ask her how she is getting on:

Not too bad thanks. I'm just thinking about haecceities…

Have you read St. Pierre's (2017) article? I can't remember the full title; I'll send it to you. It's really helped me: I was completely stuck with my project and was doubting everything I was doing, and my ability to use Deleuze and Guattari's concepts, but this article and another one St. Pierre (2019) published last year about post qualitative inquiry, have made a huge difference to my thinking and conceptualising…

I check later and its full title is: 'Haecceity: Laying Out a Plane for Post Qualitative Inquiry'; it is that 'laying out' that is missing from my work, that preparing the landscape, that structuring, that layering of the text;[227] perhaps I can address this here, inspired by this article…

That's what I need! Have you got time for a chat?

I've got my supervision in twenty minutes, I say, sitting opposite her beside a large spider plant reminding me of my one, which sadly didn't survive the move to Paignlake. In *Haecceity,* I tell Paula, St. Pierre (2017) writes about her own doctorate and how she felt she encountered 'haecceity' too late to respond. That made me realise how lucky I am as I met Deleuze and Guattari within a few months, but I've taken a piecemeal approach and explored each concept individually[228] rather than, as Ian Buchanan (2006) says, thinking of their work as a way of thinking the universe. With Buchanan (ibid.: 2) 'grasp[ing] the whole first, all at once, and us[ing] that to understand the concepts' suddenly becomes possible: I can see our environment as whole: those 'assemblages' within the lines within the strata, a continual striating and smoothing (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a) of those spaces, creations of new lines emerging from cracks, cuts,

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[227] Manning (2012) writes about '[c]ulling the bookness from the book' (p. 219) which leads a later 'Mary' to think about 'culling the [thesisness] from the' thesis so that it is 'a relation to be lived' (ibid.), not just something to be read, thus bringing the concept of 'thesis' to life, making it relational.

[228] The later 'Mary' rereading this now realises the impossibility of having one concept without another as they all intra-link, but, unaware of that, earlier 'Marys' thought they could take one concept at a time in order to understand them.

ruptures enabling us to escape the conventions of academic writing and academic thesis formats so that, within the synonymous smoothing and striating spaces (ibid.; Deleuze and Parnet, 2012) within the thesis, a different format emerges, creating new lines toward what St. Pierre (2017; 2019; 2021) calls post qualitative inquiry.

I'm trying 'laying out' a 'plane of immanence' now because I like the idea of it being 'destratified, decoded, absolutely deterritorialized matter' (Bogue, 1996: 132), 'a flattened plane' (St. Pierre, 2017: 692); I think that will provide the perfect landscaping device levelling out hierarchies of human and nonhuman bodies, matter, enabling 'disparate things and signs mov[ing] at infinite virtual speeds and slowness' (ibid.); it offers somewhere for Deleuzo-Guattarian concepts such as 'assemblages', which I now understand as always 'becoming' and so as processual doings always acting in relationality, to *be* because you cannot, as I have been doing, expect them to work anywhere!

I wonder if haecceities are created within 'assemblages'?

They certainly have a sense of Ken's (Gale, 2018b; 2021) 'now you see me, now you don't' about them, but I'm not sure; 'haecceity' 'helped [St. Pierre]…think *post qualitative inquiry*' (Taguchi and St. Pierre, 2017: 646) though so we need to work on it! Ken (Gale) and Jonathan Wyatt (2013) provide a good example, '[t]he haecceity of touch, sound, taste, sight and smell that becomes, say, my love of swimming and surfing in the sea is that *momentary* coming together in which time and space fuse' (p. 306).

*'Humanijectaces' (**hum**ans, **ani**mals, ob**ject**s, sp**aces**) is a word created by an early 'Mary who kept forgetting 'assemblages' included all bodies. There has been considerable disagreement, but, in discussion with Deleuze (in Dreaming Crafting), a consensus emerges that the word does not offer anything 'assemblages' does not and its use is therefore discontinued. It remains in this 'landing site', however, as this 'Mary' still relies on it!*

A moment when senses combine fusing time and space… says Paula thoughtfully.

Yes, so a coming together – fleetingly – of *humanijectaces* creates haecceities…

Rereading this, a later 'Mary' appreciates concepts such as haecceities are, as Deleuze and Guattari say, 'fuzzy and vague' (2015c: 143).

Maybe, but that example focuses on the five senses, and so perhaps it's more the affects of *humanijectaces* coming together, their atmospherics, like in dance?

Yes, that make sense, St. Pierre (2017) describes haecceities as 'creative forces' (p. 694): capable of creating movement; I haven't got any dance in my inquiry though!

Why not think of your own example then?

In the silence which follows, my thoughts slowly begin to flow: the important aspect seems to be that 'coming together in which time and space fuse' (Gale and Wyatt, 2013: 306) like when playing the clarinet, immersing myself in its woody scent, its sound, its feel; my clarinet and I, multiple bodies moving, becoming one, one voice: lips creating a seal with the mouthpiece, tongue moving on and off the reed affecting the length of notes as air from the surrounding spaces move through the bodies sending music into space, fingers moving on the keys, sometimes slow, sometimes flying, sometimes in-between, but always aware of the keys, the spaces in between, affecting the variety of sounds being made. Surely playing together is a haecceity – we are one, our bodies knowing each other so well having been 'intra-acting' for thirty years: sharing countless nervous moments before examinations and concerts - and we are multiple, absorbed in the moment, the movements, fusing space and time, I am the clarinet, the clarinet is me...

That's beautiful, Mary! You're making me want to play the clarinet!

Haha, I'll teach you, if you like! Thinking about writing, I continue, the feelings of achievement after struggling with a sentence, a paragraph, a text potentially for my thesis, the multiplicities in the writing finally conveying what's been e*ludic* for so long suddenly there within the page to be seen, felt, heard, smelt and touched is such an indescribable, fleeting pleasure, *jouissance* (Lacan, 2017; Braunstein, 2003*)*; feeling your writing has capacity to affect and be affected relationally by other words, readers, writers, is…

I know what you mean: there's real 'creative force' in that '*mo(ve)ment*' (Davies and Gannon, 2006: x) when writing and sensing come together. There's a sense of 'thisness', without humans and objects: could that be haecceity? It's certainly a '*momentary* coming together' (Gale and Wyatt, op. cit.).

Definitely! I'm going to have to go I'm afraid, but, let's talk about this again soon!'

Back home, I read ardently: Ronald Bogue (1996), Ken Gale (2018a; 2015), Gale and Wyatt (2009); I sense that although haecceity is singular it is not one thing, but multiplicities of intensities, speeds, flows, senses connecting momentarily – that is where the singular comes in, in the 'momentary coming together' (Gale and Wyatt, 2013: 306) of the multiplicities, in that fleeting moment of 'knowing', in that moment when intensities and speeds combine in Gregor's becoming-beetle moment (Kafka: 2011) in Die Verwandlung (The Metamorphosis), in that moment when 'Chloe' races out of the room, disconnecting from all humanijectaces around her, hurtling past other humanijectaces *in her rush to leave Grasslands behind, the accumulating intensities, is that*

Of course, it is not actually 'Chloe' who is important here, but those energies and forces being created, the whole 'assemblage'.

'haecceity'?, rupturing those connections made by 'Chloe', driving her along on that 'plane of immanence' of the not-yet… But what do haecceities do? What might they do for my inquiry? Asking these questions, I am thinking of haecceity as an epiphany, a moment of enlightenment, a moment of calm after the rush of intensities, speeds, senses, flows, a moment perhaps like moments following the feeling of finally understanding something you are reading, finally making sense of something previously beyond understanding, when the notes you are practising suddenly come together and those musical phrases sound like the ones you imagine; thinking of jouissance, fleeting happiness, understanding fading as fast as it occurs, moving on to practising the next phrase, sense-making with the next concept, being plunged back into the not-yet-known as quickly as something becomes known, a sense of 'now you see me, now you don't' (Gale, 2018b; 2021)… But, it was not such a positive experience for 'Chloe',[229] although it was still a significant turning point. And so maybe that is what work haecceity does, offers a moment of 'knowing', a moment of jouissance (sometimes, but not always), before being thrown back into the not-yet, enabling a 'coming together' (Gale and Wyatt, 2013: 306) before a rupture, always smoothing and striating, striating and smoothing, the movement creating 'lines of segmentarity', 'lines of molecularity', rupturing strata, 'lines of flight' emerging to the not-yet-known… And it is only really in the not-yet, on that 'plane of immanence' defined by a life,

pure immanence…is A LIFE, and nothing else… A Life is the immanence of immanence, absolute immanence: it is complete power, complete bliss *(Deleuze, 2001: 27),*

that these post qualitative inquiries can take place, that new ways of writing PhD theses, can be experimented with, as space for change, for the potential for animating intensities and becoming in writing, eventually perhaps emerges…

Turning to 'immanence', sensing it as 'the not-yet-known', the 'not-yet', the still-to-come, continuing my simply reading approach, there's a lot more material than at first thought; opening 'Deleuze and Collaborative Writing: An Immanent Plane of Composition' (Wyatt et al., 2011), looking for references to the 'not-yet', how was it overlooked that they are writing on 'an immanent plane', stressing they 'must find [their] own way of engaging in thought, and…in being, that opens up the

> *Re-reading this, I am drawn to St. Pierre's (1995) idea that '[t]his story never begins but has always been, and [they] slip into it over and over again in different places, and it is as if [they] too have always been there' (p. 5 cited in St. Pierre, 2017: 690).*

not-yet-known within itself' (ibid.: 3)? It is reassuring to find others already here: there is a sense of coming-together, albeit at different times and speeds as Deleuze (Deleuze and Parnet, 2012) might say, making the 'plane of immanence', an inspiring place to be writing, a creative place to, as Wyatt et al. (2011) suggest, 'work with experience, multiplying it, while also…playing with Deleuze's multiplicity of concepts' (p. 3). They even respond to the query, raised by St. Pierre's (2017) article, about Deleuze and the individual and experience, which initially made me unsure about writing autoethnographically,

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[229] A later 'Mary' editing this thinks here of Moten and Harney's (2013) words that education should not be a negative experience (see also page 131).

suggesting that it is not that Deleuze 'den[ies] the existence of individuals and their experience'
(Wyatt et al., 2011: p.3) but that instead of exploring identity, 'Deleuze asks…how is that possible?...
How might I comprehend Being in new ways through listening to you inside the fold of your
experience?' (ibid.: 3-4), and so experience is relational, not individual, on this plane of the 'not yet';
'we are all part of the same Being' (ibid.: 2), where speed and slowness distinguishes things (Deleuze
and Guattari: 2015a), and all us humanijectaces are brought together in this folding and are coming
together differently in new foldings and unfoldings… Thoughts drift to those paper aeroplanes in a
workshop[230] last year: every one of them was folded into one of four designs for others to unfold to
engage with the writing within to be affected and to affect.[231] It was clear from that workshop that
my experiences within my fold were not mine alone, the discussions those planes generated
suggested a shared fold, a coming together of folds, and perhaps all our folds spread out after that
workshop, intra-acting with each other in their unfoldings and foldings, spreading into other
educational institutions, encouraging second chances for all our 'Chloes', encouraging writing
differently…

I am continually distracted by this always not-yet-known Covid-19 virus. My anxiety high, incapable
of being calmed even by playing Brahms clarinet sonatas with their deep emotions usually totally
immersing me in the music. The anxieties flooding through me are affecting my breathing: I try the
slower, simpler, just as beautiful *David on the White Rock* (Traditional Welsh Folksong in Harris and
Johnson, 2003: 2) and that begins to calm me, but that place of total absorption in the music
continues to be e*lud*ic; I am writing this the day after the over-seventies and those with underlying
health conditions were advised to stay in for up to twelve weeks (with no inkling that advice would
remain in place for a year…). It is hard to write with your thudding heart continually reminding you
that your family and friends are always at risk, with anxieties surfacing and resurfacing, the pen is

 barely moving now… And my hammering heart reminds me of that day when the paper
aeroplanes flew inside Grasslands College crossing classroom boundaries, reaching
thresholds,[232] insisting that change occurs, that we *humanijectaces* are in this together, affecting and
being affected by each other: these planes have stories to tell, demanding second chances; it is
strange to think that, as a lecturer in my first year of teaching, stuck in my Lacanian 'symbolic
order',[233] I thought this undoing of the classroom 'rules' that had somehow taken place around me,

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[230] See also page 171 for other references to the flying of these planes at the workshop.
[231] As seen in other texts, this 'Mary' does not yet 'get' the emphasis on relationality in these 'intra-actions'.
[232] Later 'Marys' will 'think-with' Manning and so will see these 'thresholds' as being crossed, as sites for change.
[233] See page 105, 107 and 130 for discussions of how the Symbolic is interpreted.

was all my doing, nothing to do with any other human and nonhuman bodies in the room, in past classrooms…[234]

Hi Mary, how was your supervision last week?

Really inspiring thanks, Paula! We talked about engaging in post qualitative inquiry; St. Pierre (2019) really seems to understand students: she highlights the difficulties of encountering post qualitative inquiry with a strong methodological background and the ease with which students without that background engage with it: simply accepting there are no methodologies, it's experimental, and so you need to be prepared to work with the not-yet-known which she says 'glimmers seductively and then escapes in fits and starts' (p. 3)…

Oh, what a beautiful metaphor, and so it is never known….

Yes, it's always changing, e*ludic*: 'now you see me, now you don't'! (Gale, 2018b; 2021)

It sounds as though post qualitative inquiry totally opposes the conventional PhD with its emphasis on methodology, its planned interviews with participants, its experiments, its interpretations of data, and, of course, it's expected outcome or findings…

Yes, and it contradicts also the conventional ways students are taught to write essays: plan first, do not start writing until you know what you are going to say, do not digress; I've been struggling with these practices[235] recently whilst helping Chlo with essay writing: it occurred to me after our first session that I didn't necessarily want to continue teaching writing in the traditional way, and that's because I'm so excited by 'the not yet, the yet to come – the immanent' (St. Pierre, 2019: 4). I'm so anxious to create a genuine second chance for 'Chlo' and this strikes me as a way of doing it: Chlo isn't imbricated in those academic constraints controlling ways of thinking and writing; she's capable of moving away from 'what is' toward a more speculative approach, seeing what emerges in the writing…

Don't forget Chlo isn't doing a PhD! There are barriers in the way of what you're suggesting here: you probably need to think about the ethics of drawing Chlo into these writing practices!

You're right! I thought I was acting in Chlo's best interests, but just because I'm into innovative writing practices and wouldn't dream of writing any other way now, it doesn't

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[234] See, particularly, *A Second Chance* and the email to Erin Manning for discussion around the 'Marys'' changing perspectives of this.

[235] A later 'Mary' realises these practices are redolent of and constitute the neurotypical HE institution Moten and Harney (2013) write about (the 'Mary' writing this has not yet encountered their work).

mean it's right for her. As a first year undergraduate, there is less scope for, as I think Massumi (2015a) said 'playing with constraints'…

Yes, assessment criteria would need altering to be less specific and, in my experience, many undergraduates would struggle to think and write in the ways you are proposing. We both do!

I know, but, it's the enthusiasm generated by removing academic constraints that I want Chlo to experience as well as opening up opportunities for glimmerings of the not-yet-known! I still regret continually suggesting to students they plan their essays, their introductions and conclusions before they start writing! Laurel Richardson and St. Pierre (2005; 2018) introduced me to 'writing as a method of inquiry',[236] but, with Ken (Gale, 2018a) and Wyatt (2019) the writing moves away from being 'method' toward 'inquiry'. In St. Pierre's (2021) later work, she argues for a 'refusal of method', and for the 'invent[ion] [of] new forms of inquiry that might create a new world and a people yet to come' (p.7). But I just can't believe I've been so stupid and not identified with post qualitative inquiry earlier; this seems to be where my PhD 'fits' and so, if situated within a 'plane of immanence', with 'strata' capable of cracking, creating diversions, rupturing and thus creating emerging 'lines of flight'; with 'assemblages' suffusing the lines, could those rigid 'segmentary lines controlling academic writing be troubled? Could these concepts I'm using (creating?) come into play here, animating potential for intensities and becoming, glimpsing the 'not-yet'?

You're really seeing it as a whole now…

Yes, and it seems to work really well with the emergence of my *thesisising*, but I am worried it's happening too late.

I don't see why: doesn't it just alter the surrounding context slightly?

Paula's question worries me: gazing around the café, out of the window at students and staff outside, not knowing this could be the last time we see each other (Covid-19 would shortly close the university campus), I'm unsure whether my sense-making of those concepts I'm

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[236] A later 'Mary' problematises 'method': see page 154.

using has fundamentally changed or not. I am suddenly very aware of the movements of people around us, conversations hanging in the air, unanswered questions floating, the aroma of coffee, and while I am thinking, time and space feel fused reminding me of haecceity… And I realise Paula is right: I am seeing all the concepts as emergent in co-compositionality now, and so as new 'becomings', new thinking, on the plane of 'virtuals', 'possibles' and 'potentials' (St. Pierre, 2019) creating opportunities for change, difference, in the always 'striating and smoothing spaces'; always changing 'assemblages' of *humanijectaces* no-one and no-thing more important than any other and all with the potential to affect and be affected by all other human and nonhuman bodies...

Did we understand that the 'plane of immanence' is 'unthought in every plane' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015c: 59) and that a Deleuzo-Guattarian concept is 'an act of thought' and so 'exists in a different *order* than concepts in education and the social sciences?' (Taguchi and St. Pierre, 2017: 643). Did we grasp that, in this order, philosophy is not mere 'contemplation, reflection, or communication' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015c: 6), and existing concepts are therefore unable to be thought, and new concepts are possible? This is such an exciting time to be doing a PhD with Taguchi and St. Pierre (2017) suggesting 'concepts – acts of thought – are practices that reorient thinking, undo the theory/practice binary, and open up inquiry to new possibilities' (p. 643).

My thoughts shift to what work this new way of thinking might be doing for the emerging thesis. From my recent reading, I am confident a breakthrough is occurring: there is a new contextualising of the Deleuzo-Guattarian concepts being used within a universe and a sudden understanding that, 'if post qualitative inquiry doesn't exist but is immanent, *there is nothing "to apply"'* (St. Pierre, 2019: 11). This is not easy for someone obsessed with applying theories,[237] but, with St. Pierre beside me, I feel confident I can change!

Just as I feel my inquiries are coming together, I realise I am still troubled by whether I am writing an autoethnographical inquiry or not. When I mention this to Paula, she reminds me not to be so binary! She is right, but, then it occurs to me that it is not only the ethics around showing Chlo these different writing practices that I need to consider: moving toward post qualitative inquiry involves challenging autoethnographies, but autoethnography comes under qualitative research. It's not the purpose of this thesis to discuss those issues, but autoethnographies meeting posthumanist ways of thinking and writing will make ethics less

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[237] This obsession originated from encounters with psychoanalytical and performativity theories during my MA programme: my favourite assignment title quickly became 'test the applicability of x theory to y'! As soon as I started teaching, I applied first Lacanian psychoanalytical and subsequently Butler's performativity theories to situations I experienced; with hindsight, there was perhaps a sense of 'mastery and control' (Massumi, 2002: 17) as I believed that applying Lacanian theory helped me to fit in, and applying performativity theory enabled me to disrupt standard curricula (see page 64 for more detail about this). *What this earlier 'Mary' does not initially realise, however, is that this application is only really likely to lead to '"more of the same"' (ibid.) rather than significant change.*

than straightforward: there is the need, for example, to think not only about human bodies, but, about 'all bodies, human and nonhuman in relationality. It is not enough to talk only and in isolation about human bodies' (Gale and Wyatt, 2018a: 567). With the emphasis on all bodies, it is inevitable that new situations will arise in 'which we no longer know how to react, in spaces which we no longer know how to describe' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015c:). New approaches towards ethics are therefore needed such as Barad's (2007) 'ethico-onto-epistem-ology' (p. 185), a reacting to ethics in the moment for, with '[b]odies in motion liv[ing] in momentary worldings of "now you see me, now you don't"; they are ghostly, sylph-like, briefly apparent, caught in a glimpse and then lost in the wink of an eye' (Gale, 2020b: 307).

When I next see Paula, she tells me about a paper in which Ken and Jonathan (Gale and Wyatt, 2018a) suggest autoethnographies are 'a nod to what lies beyond, to what is possible' (p. 567). She says, they suggest asking:

> is what I am doing worthwhile as a form of inquiry or am I simply indulging in the
> production of accounts that nurture forms of subjectification that serve to sustain
> researcher identities and practice representations that are fragile, unsustainable and
> possibly even dishonest? (ibid.: 566)

They are discussing posthumanism here, 'a bringing of the multiple (human, non-human, more-than-human) bodies together onto a stage, into engagement' (ibid.: 567) and then they talk about 'becom[ing] alert to our 'mutual intra-dependence' (ibid.)' emphasising the issue of relational ethics: no-one, no body, exists in isolation, none of us are becoming in 'relation-less worlds' (Turner, 2013: 216).

'Mutual intra-dependence' (Gale and Wyatt, 2018a: 5) really seems to exemplify relationality: all *humanijectaces*, for example, in relation to each other, entangling, 'intra-acting'. In the assessment room with 'Chloe', for example, we were all 'mutual[ly] intra-dependent': 'Chloe', 'Mad Mary', the computer, the assessment, the electricity, the other students, every one and every thing being, *all* bodies, affected by all our actions, our 'intra-actions'. Thinking of the supervisory team as '[t]he [s]upervisory [a]ssemblage' (Done, 2011), thoughts around how this Mary-Emma-Ken-Doctoral College-cats-and-and-and 'assemblage' is always becoming, how it works in different ways, how there are five days before submission, but this *thesisising* is refusing to stop... Going back to 'mutual intra-dependence' (Gale and Wyatt, 2018a: 5), there's the coming together with 'Chlo' (as writing coach and coachee): the too loud, too quiet, too dark, too bright, too tense environment always shifting, especially with the past emerging as it does! I didn't get it before, but, of course these multiple 'assemblages' are

always on the move, 'in-formation';[238] furthermore, with affect relationally being distributed through all bodies, in these movements, are moments quivering with potential for change, and so there's always a writing into the not-yet-known, each movement leading to another and another, a venturing further into the 'not-yet'…

All of these connections, I continue, creating these 'assemblages' are relevant to this becoming PhD, to it becoming an autoethnographic inquiry because auto is not only self as in the human body, the individual, me, alone, it includes the surroundings: I am so conscious that skin is not a barrier between our body and the things we touch, the things around us. I especially love Bennett's (2010) 'agentic assemblages': in my letter (P*re-prelude*) to the examiners and readers, I try to exemplify her (2010: 23) 'animal-mineral-vegetable-sonority'[239] writing 'assemblage' to offer an insight into a moment in *thesisising*.

I write a lot about my surroundings too, and about my self. It concerns me that because 'writing is never neutral or innocent' (Sikes, 2009: 1), but, has the power to hurt and betray, particularly when about 'lives', ethical considerations are continually at play within this inquiry.

I worry about that too: care for the self, care for all the 'Marys' since 'personal and professional risks and vulnerabilities' (Adams, Holman Jones, and Ellis, 2015: 63) can be created in writing about self, and care for the 'Chloes'/'Chlo' too. What is told here is 'my construction of events. Within a constructed ontology,[240] there ceases to be 'factual' accounts which can be identified as the 'true' version of events, there are just different constructions of an event, or moment in history' (Turner, 2013: 220). It worries me: it could be dismissed as self-indulgent,[241] only of use to us writing it, but something unfolding could be of use to others: 'writing about the self always involves writing about others' (Adams, Holman Jones, and Ellis, 2015: 56).[242]

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[238] Simondon's 'in-formation' (as encountered with Manning, 2007) is used here to convey the fluidity, processual nature of 'assemblages'.

[239] See page 141 for the full quotation and further discussion around the work it does.

[240] The 'Mary' writing this, despite her engagement with posthumanism, has not quite grasped Simondon's 'ontogenesis'; she does not therefore contest the idea of 'a constructed ontology', of a fabrication of a person as they want to be seen. It only occurs to a later 'Mary' editing this that this human-centric notion is generally contested elsewhere in these post qualitative inquiries as bodies are seen as 'always in genesis, in a state of potential becoming' (Manning, 2007: xxi) and it is understood that '[o]ntogenesis is a slippery category: it is that which is not yet' (ibid.). Later 'Marys' also recognise that '[a] philosophy of the event is ontogenetic: *it moves* before *it is* (Manning, 2016: 207).

[241] The concept of 'self-indulgence' seems unavoidable in relation to writing autoethnographies; for example, Andrew Sparkes (2002: 212) 'quite literally [arms] [him]self' with two of his own papers for the external examination board, indicating the contentious nature of autoethnographies in academia.

[242] It is only later Marys who realise autoethnographies usually write only about human 'others' and that this is what Adams, Holman Jones, and Ellis are discussing here.

Autoethnographies feel like something to be created, like a concept. It's the flexibility of autoethnographies that attracts me: their encompassing of creative writing, poetry, emotion and affect which enables tales to be told in a way which invites readers to share those worlds. Deleuze and Guattari (2015c) write about literature and concepts both being created, and Gale and Wyatt (2018a) argue 'autoethnography is both a concept and a practice' (p. 7), and so why shouldn't this PhD be an autoethnographic inquiry *and* use Deleuzian concepts…?

Why not indeed!

There are also, of course, frictions in writing autoethnographically and in posthuman ways that I will need to 'write to'. I am feeling a bit stuck though: I feel as if I belong in St. Pierre's (2019) category of indoctrinated students with a methodological background, and yet I had several years between my MA and my doctoral studies so I should be okay! I wonder if St. Pierre has any advice!

Checking later, St. Pierre (2019) suggests reading and, 'if the text seems too hard to read, read harder and learn to be comfortable in the discomfort of not knowing' (p. 13): that is not always easy! There is no doubt though that 'reading can reorient thought and help one experiment with how the forces of the virtual that have not yet been actualized might come together to create something new' (ibid.):[243] there is a lot of that here in this thesis!

Rereading this, I am conscious of wanting to focus on 'the creation of the *not yet* instead of the repetition of what *is*' (2019: 3) because the desire to write English differently continues to inspire this inquiry. To do that 'methodology-free' (ibid.) within post qualitative inquiry with its encouragement of 'us[ing] [concepts] to reorient thought' (2019: 14) within the 'not yet, the yet to come – the immanent' (ibid.: 4) is daunting, but, however hard it is, there is a desire to want to be with 'a people yet to come for whom methodology is unintelligible' (ibid.: 14). "Trust',[244] St. Pierre (ibid.) writes, 'is affirmative and active, helps keep anxiety at bay, and encourages experimentation with the continuous variation of living'. Buoyed by this and by her recognition that a PhD student's graduation 'deadline forces focus', I'm 'thinking-with' St. Pierre, 'trust[ing] [my] belief in the world, … engender[ing] new space-times, however small their surface and volume' (ibid.).

And so, despite the coronavirus continually seeping into my mind, taking over my thoughts, at least one text a day from 'the coronavirus service' appearing on my mobile, reminding me to stay in, to do things I enjoy (my PhD!), to stay away from others – I sit here, encouraged by St. Pierre, 'laying out…a…*common plane of immanence* on which all bodies, all minds,

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[243] Reading underpins this collection of post qualitative inquiries: all the 'Marys' are continually reading, and rereading, and so their thinking is always being reoriented (even now as they edit this text!).

[244] A later 'Mary' begins to 'trust [her] reading…trust the concepts [she's] studied…and trust experimentation and creativity' (St. Pierre, 2019: 14) as she uses them in her writing, seeing her selves as writing with not only St. Pierre, but, Manning, Massumi, Gale and Wyatt, feeling 'trust' working in affect, in more-than human ways.

and all individuals are situated' (Deleuze, 1988: 122): thinking, reading, doing, writing; the *thesisising* and the writing, like 'the plane of immanence…always variable…constantly being altered, composed and recomposed, by individuals and collectivities' (ibid.: 128) on this 'plane' of speculative inquiry, of not-yet-ness, which could be anywhere, which 'is everywhere' (St. Pierre, 2019: 10), where anything could happen, especially 'in pursuit of…, a witch's wind' (Deleuze and Parnet, 2012: 56) 'escap[ing] the dominant system' (Deleuze, 1998: 5), and dominant practices; the emerging thesis working as an 'assemblage', always on the move, a body of writing, thinking, reading, doing, a collection of post qualitative inquiries with the capaciousness to affect and be affected by other bodies: readers, the machines they will plug it into, writer (thoughts flowing, connecting with other writings as this text does); with its non (methodological) approach, this thesis uses and creates concepts as well as exemplifying alternative ways of writing an 'academic' thesis, challenging conventional formats and styles, and so, with St Pierre's (2019) '*refrain',* this thesis perhaps 'begins to mark a territory for thinking in thought and the not yet we might create' (p. 14).

I make stories. I twist up toys out of anything…But which is the true story? That I do not know   *Woolf, 1992: 167*

To write or not to write is such a difficult question: there is a not wanting to spoil that beautiful page of uniform typewritten words…but, also, a not wanting to lose that wonderful sentence, that evocative passage… and so perhaps a little pencil line or two would not hurt…but, what if, on some of those pages, those ordered lines of words on those beautifully white pages are disrupted, what if a stain appears… a coffee stain in Deleuze's (1995) *Negotiations*, a muddy red pawprint stain in *Relationscapes* (Manning, 2012)… there's a driveway two hundred miles away with pawprints in a patch of concrete: pawprints made by 'gentle giant' Eliot, a reminder of a truly special friend 'intra-acting' with, 'striating', concrete for others to wonder about; concrete that, if left smooth and unmarked, like the pages of new books, would have appeared unremarkable… and so what, then, if handwriting appears on a book's pages: will the reader's 'intra-actions' ruin them forever? The entanglement of pawprints and concrete was certainly not disastrous… Would new, handwritten, words between the lines, around the lines, similarly bring new life to the page, creating new 'lines of flight', enabling new forms to emerge? Always encouraged to be careful with books, not bending their spines or tearing their pages, only a few very early childhood books have scribbles in; every gap on every page of all A-level English literature texts taken into the examination room, however, are filled with handwriting once declared 'almost invisible' by a junior school teacher: proof of nine-year-old 'Mary' simply ignoring her teacher's comment. Does her one word retort, 'raspberry's' [sic] to said comment, suggest a love of her handwriting, a need to defend it against criticism? With no recollection of writing this, the next few minutes after finding the exercise book all these years later are spent laughing whilst trying to reconnect with that 'Mary' – just how brave was she: was that comment there when the book was next handed in, or was it only written later, hidden by subsequently filled pages? But even then there was surely a risk of the book falling open at the page with that bold retort, which is still sitting there, clearly visible, four decades later, provoking wonder… A forgotten rebellious side is certainly evident, maybe it is still there now in this troubling of the traditional academic thesis format, the challenging of academic writing practices away from representation and analysis towards writing as immanent doing? After A-levels came further study, predominantly of German literature, but, with examinations only in the final year, most of the books have not been written in. There are no annotations in the MA books

some of which have become PhD books (creating issues with their categorisation). Although, similarly, PhD books will not be taken into any exams, there could be a trial rupturing of the uniformity of a few pages as later 'Marys' just see if writing in books in a way mirroring reading, simply adding their thoughts, might initiate conversations with the author(s), with other 'Marys'…

Is that first paragraph written in immanence? Written immanently? Is that why it is written in pink? Is there a connection here with Deleuze and Guattari's (2015a) 'Pink Panther'?[245] The use of 'I' and 'me' are avoided: does that make the writing immanent practice?[246] Is immanence other bodies, forces, emerging as the particularities of individuals fade?[247] Is this writing working 'in and of itself' (Gale, 2020: 99), working immanently? Contemplating Gale's (2020a) suggestion that 'each new writing is an utterance, it encounters and it is an event' (p.99), is this writing (encountering younger 'Marys', books, a junior school teacher) potentially event/ful? 'Lines of flight' are emerging, 'open[ing]…possibilities of innovation and thought' (ibid.: 100), creating connections with other 'landing sites', other writing, although not necessarily, in immanence; 'lines of flight' different for all writers, readers, are always emerging, leading in many directions, intersecting the points within this 'landing site'…

Writing immanently is proving difficult: sitting in a pub garden and so somewhere away from the worry about not conforming to convention, about writing this thesis differently, a 'line of flight' is emerging here, there, leading far away where thinking flows fluently on another level, a 'plane of immanence'; a breakthrough suddenly feels close - in the air, in the simultaneous 'striating' and 'smoothing' of the words flowing across the pages, in-between those 'very varied lines' 'people are made up of' (Deleuze and Parnet, 2012: 8) where concepts are created, events happen. Deleuze (2001) describes '*a* life' as having 'only between-times, between-moments…offer[ing] the immensity of an empty time where one sees the event yet to come and already happened, in the absolute of an immediate consciousness' (p. 29), bringing Manning's (2013) 'not-yet-ness' to mind. In those 'between-times, between-moments' (Deleuze, 2001: 29) where potential lies for animating intensities and becoming in writing, are there also opportunities for changing the way education is perceived, creating second chances for all our 'Chloes'?

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[245] Another 'Mary' discusses the 'Pink Panther' with Deleuze (see page 76-7*).*
[246] It is a long time before a 'Mary' realises that it does not, and that '[a] writer isn't a writer-man; he is a machine-man, and an experimental man (who thereby ceases to be a man in order to become an ape or a beetle, or a dog, or mouse, a becoming-animal, a becoming-inhuman, since it is actually through voice and through sound and through a style that one becomes an animal, and certainly through the force of sobriety)' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2012: 7). Later 'Marys' experiment with exemplifying writing in immanence both in this 'landing site' and elsewhere within this thesis and their *thesisising*.
[247] Written just months before the final submission date, this is an early indication that a sense is being grasped of individuation: of a collective, not necessarily only human, emerging.

Could there be *a* writing: a writing perhaps without those identifying features of persuasive, informative, descriptive and instructional texts,[248] reports, essays, or dissertations, and without those strict regulations around formats, font size, line-spacing? What about this thesis with its (non) methodological approach? Could this be *a* writing seeking to escape expectations, to write differently, but, nonetheless making some form of contribution to knowledge? Writing immanently feels both almost within grasping distance, and just out of reach; never capable of being grasped because it is in-between, not-yet, dissolving meness, youness, humanness… Creating a 'plane of immanence'[249] on which to write, think, read, do feels so close now in this aspiring to be writing into the not-yet, writing with those forces of affect, percept and concept, creating space away from those defining individual human characteristics with the Deleuzo-Guattarian 'lines' running through them; with *composite selves* 'Chloe/Chlo' and 'Paula' troubling those 'lines', is there an enabling of movement, rupture, 'becoming'?

With *thesisising* flying, freely emerging, released from those perceived fixities pervading conventional academic theses, there is a sensing of increasing movement towards 'writing in immanence' (Gale, 2020) becoming possible, becoming like one of Massumi's (2002) 'parables for the virtual', exemplifying multiple registers of sensation, affect; like the playing of Gabriel Pierné's Canzonetta, fingers effortlessly moving without sheet music intervening, skin no barrier as bodies entwine becoming one with the beautiful silver keys,[250] the smooth holes; there is no stopping the clarinet, no stopping the writing…are these 'haecceities', all the senses, energies and forces coming together in a moment, one of Virginia Woolf's (2002) 'moments of being'?

"Hi Mary!" Chlo! I was so lost in thought I did not see her coming; looking different in sunglasses and baseball cap – have we ever met outside before? - she is waiting patiently for the pen to stop moving… "Hi, sorry, how are you?"

"Good thanks." Sitting down opposite me at the far end of the table, almost certainly sharing my concerns about this, our first meeting in person since the coronavirus outbreak last year, Chlo asks what I am writing:

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[248] This 'Mary' is thinking here of the Functional Skills English Standards 'Mad Mary' used to teach the 'Chloes' at Grasslands College.

[249] Further discussion around the 'plane of immanence', particularly in relation to St. Pierre's (2017; 2019) papers, occurs in *Writing Post Qualitative Inquiry?*

[250] Silver keys and a magical, expressive tone compelled eleven-year-old 'Mary' to swap violin lessons for clarinet ones. Later 'Marys' have never regretted her decision!

"It's just something towards my PhD; you can read it, if you like…"

I watch the ducks while Chlo is reading;[251] they remind me of the ones in the pond opposite the sea in Paignlake. Beautifully lit at dusk, creating a magical green glow, the pond has become a haven during the pandemic…

"What a load of rubbish!" exclaims Chlo, pushing the notebook away. "Why are you writing like that – it's weird! Writing doesn't write itself: no-one is going to think for one moment you didn't write it. And all that stuff about when you were nine – okay, it's funny, even I wouldn't have dared respond to a teacher's comment like that, but, as you often say to me, so what?"

I know I should defend the writing, but, instead, I wonder if her words, her reaction which reminds me so much of sixteen-year-old Chloe, suggest a hint of success at writing in immanence which 'does' (Gale, 2020a: 98) in that it provokes a response, a questioning, bringing both our pasts into the present, reminding me writing is not inviolate and that, in encounter, multiple events are potentiate.[252] Is there a writing in-between those Deleuzian 'lines' on which we live, a creating of new 'lines', a writing with those intensities, in-between methodologies, with those '*forces of encounter*' (Gregg and Seigworth, 2010: 2)? It is interesting that Chlo, who I would not have thought of as being schooled in traditional 'academic' writing practices and methods, objects to the absence of methodology.[253]

"Sorry", says Chlo, pushing her hair behind her ear, "I don't mean to be rude, but all that talk of '*a* life' (Deleuze, 2001) or whatever it is: are you saying people are all the same? As for trying to write on a different '*plane',* it's just…" Chlo falls silent, pulling the notebook towards her obviously thinking… "…unrealistic: we are all here, living our lives, but you can't just pretend we are all the same…"

"That's not the idea, Chlo, although that's what I thought originally too. Deleuze (2001) is discussing '*a* life playing with death' (p. 28). Taking Charles Dickens' character of 'a rogue' near death, Deleuze illustrates a moment as '[e]verybody bustles about to save him' (ibid.). Once he is out of danger, however, the 'rogue' reverts to being 'mean and crude' (ibid.) and 'his saviors turn colder' (ibid.). That in-between moment when everyone tries to help save him, when he could live or die, is imbued with significance: the emphasis is simply on 'life' regardless of whose life… Sorry, Chlo, I haven't offered you a drink; what would you like?"

"Coke please."

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[251] Later 'Marys' notice the role reversal here which provokes interesting discussions between 'Mary' and 'Chlo', encouraging 'Mary' to explain her thinking in ways she would not normally do.
[252] See pages 56-7.
[253] There is also discussion around this in *Writing Post Qualitative Inquiry?*

Waiting for our drinks, my thoughts drift to the ethics of using *composite selves*[254] in my thesis: does 'Chlo' know that is what she is? She is *a* student; I write about 'Chloes' to indicate all those not offered a second chance to fulfil their potential. I am not pretending there was not a 'Chloe' in a FE college whose story moved me so much it became the catalyst for this collection of post qualitative inquiries: the incident is a genuine experience, although repeatedly altered in its many recalls and revised writings, but, 'Chloe's Story' and 'Mad Mary's Story' do not reflect the reflective journal entries written at the time: 'memories are tricksters and shape-shifters' (Sparkes, 2013: 203). Should there nonetheless be attempts to contact the sixteen year old who inspired 'Chloe's Story'? With only a name, age, a college name and year (that college has since, however, merged with other institutions), the chances of tracing someone over a decade later seem remote, but, that does not make it okay to write her story. How 'real' is 'Chloe' though? 'Chloes story' is actually just another version of 'Mad Mary's story', as is also, of course, the imagined perspective of the computer: all these versions are told by 'Marys' more than a decade after the incident occurred. 'Chloe' is not X; She is Y and Z, and probably A and B as well! The 'Chloe' becoming in the emerging thesis is misremembered, misinterpreted versions of an X briefly taught many years ago. There is no 'Chloe', there is no 'Chlo', and so I do not believe it is unethical to imagine what might happen if there had been a second chance to support one of those troubled sixteen-year-olds bravely venturing into a FE college only to have that second chance snatched away. Engaging in a PhD inquiry using *composite selves*, inspired through encounters with others, I believe I have a duty of care to ensure that no-one and no-thing is harmed, upset, or otherwise detrimentally affected by any of my words; I take this duty, as 'becoming' 'researcher' as seriously as I took my duty of care as lecturer; I am confident the scenarios created using these misremembered, misinterpreted, versions will not cause any harm to anyone or any thing: through the use of this storying and other post qualitative inquiries, and in animating intensities and becoming in writing, I intend only to encourage second chances for all.

How would I feel though if I came across a story set in a FE college in which the lecturer lets a student swear, and then, when the computer crashes, stupidly asks her if she is okay? What if the story then describes how the lecturer cowardly informs the Section Manager the student swore at her and walked out of the classroom instead of approaching the student herself? How would I feel reading that story which, sadly, any student could have written? Being a lecturer, however, is not the same as being a student. Perhaps a better example would be how I might feel if I came across a story by a former music teacher about a pupil

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[254] See also page 163 (including footnote 211) for further ethical considerations around the use of *composite selves*.

refusing to sing? How would I feel reading how patient the teacher had been: saying nothing, asking the next girl, asking the one who refused again at the end to sing just one note instead of three, but still she refuses? How would I feel if the story then describes how when the teacher tries to find out why she would not sing, she leaves the classroom? I cannot deny I am now feeling like my fourteen-year-old-self, desperate to explain that I simply cannot sing in front of the whole class and that the more you try to make me, the more I can't do it. I shouldn't have walked out – I knew that then and I know that now; I couldn't stay in the classroom though with everyone staring at me, with you firing questions at me, making me feel a failure, and so, like Chloe, I ran…

It is interesting, imagining a 'Mary' coming across these stories about younger versions of her self: she does not feel upset, or harmed, as long as names have been changed, and other potentially identifying details (as they have been for 'Chloe' - only 'Mad Mary's' name remains). Is that okay? I am trying to think how 'Chloe' thinks, but, obviously, I wrote all of these stories, I am controlling them, choosing to remember, or am I? I do not feel in control of these emotions flooding this 'assemblage' now, the shift from 'a music teacher' to 'you' is telling, those fears are pervading this room, the fields outside, where, sadly, only one horse is grazing in the smallest field;[255] his companion, 'Buddy', led down the alley last Friday night, driven away, leaving the big field to the seagulls…

 Whilst this appears to be a 'line of flight' away from ethics, it nonetheless reminds me of the ethical issues around writing about these composite selves in the thesis, especially those concerning 'Chloe' who could be your 'Chloe', everybody's 'Chloe', written about in the original ethics proposal: the ones space had to be created for as *composite selves* seemingly had no place on the application form; using Manning's (2007) concept (from Simondon) of 'in-formation', however, the formal 'ethical' procedures are opened up: the form is 'cut…apart' (Barad, 2007: 381), altered, and, having created space for my *composite selves*, 'cut…together' (ibid.) again". [256]

"Sorry it took so long Chlo!"

"That's okay. I've been thinking about what you said about Deleuze's (2001) use of 'a rogue': could there be a sense, then, of *a* student? Lives following similar patterns…"

"Definitely: fears, excitement, wonder inspired by learning could be seen as 'singularities and

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[255] Editing this (again) twenty days before submission, there are once again four horses grazing and galloping in the fields.

[256] This process is the focus of Appendix Accelerando (page 236); it seems apt that a paper about creating space finds itself moved to the appendices of this thesis…

the events that constitute *a* life coexist[ing] with the accidents of *the* life that corresponds to it' (Deleuze, 2001: 29). So, as students, we have some things in common, but also individualities creating differences occurring during our lives which we could think of as singularities…"

I stop speaking as my thoughts return to *composite selves*. Suddenly seeing them as concepts, I realise they are affective both in terms of relationalities and in their 'becoming': in their continual emergence. With percepts and affects, concepts are always part of a multiplicity, '[t]he three thoughts intersect[ing] and intertwin[ing] but without synthesis or identification' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015c: 198-199). Perhaps, then, this inquiry is illuminating affects and percepts and concepts, enabling them to come into play in the midst of 'Chloe' and her computer; there's also 'Chlo', 'Paula' and me writing to see where that writing takes us, the percepts and affects enabling us students to be experienced: as forces and energies that produce us in relationality. With Deleuze's (Colebrook, 2008: 25) 'concepts of philosophy and literature respond[ing] to a particular problem', there are attempts in my *thesisising* to use and even create concepts (including *thesisising*!) to trouble writing constraints in academia. There is a sense too of new '[a]ffects and percepts', 'the outcome of art' (ibid.), arising through the storying in this collection of post qualitative inquiries as, '[w]ith its concepts, philosophy brings forth events' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015c: 199).

Sorry, I say to Chlo realising I'm getting carried away with excitement, "it is what *a* life does that is important: it creates a focus on human and nonhuman bodies, with their singularities, which are not singular but multiplicities… We often think, for example, we are working alone, but we're actually in a 'gang' (Deleuze and Parnet, 2012: 7) and something is always moving in the 'between' (ibid.). The movement seems to lie in 'the passage from one [sensation] to the other as becoming' (Deleuze, 2001: 25); I know my writing is continually moving, but it would be impossible to identify the origin of the movement or its direction because it's always in the middle/middling. Encouraging 'becomings' to come to life in its writing, particularly in the attempts to exemplify writing as immanent doing, there is a writing with Moten and Harney (2013), with Manning (2016; 2020), away from those controlling, dictatorial rules about what can and can't be written, how to structure, how to write; that is what I'm imagining for this inquiry: a thesis without limits, a thesis where those 'intra-acting' forces of concept, affect and percept overpower, maybe that's a bit exaggerated, but where there is space for them to come into play in between the expected academic writing conventions. I think of those 'between-times, between-moments' (Deleuze, 2001: 29) in writings and how they are usually powerful 'intraludes',[257] when writing is being discussed,

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[257] Later 'Marys' have discussions with earlier 'Marys' about *thesisising* and other potentially contentious thesis-writing issues in the emergent 'intraludes' in this thesis.

potentially creating spaces where anything might happen: spaces actively shaping past, present and future thinking and writing while still being 'in-formation' (Manning, 2007, with Simondon) before being fixed on a page, the pages then bound together. The only way to do that seems to be to write on a 'plane of immanence' because it's there that thought arises differently and thus encourages the emergence of a collective".

"But what is the 'plane of immanence'?"[258]

"Deleuze (2001) says, it

> is itself actualized in an object and a subject to which it attributes itself. But however inseparable an object and a subject may be from their actualization, the plane of immanence is itself virtual, so long as the events that populate it are virtualities (p. 31)"

Chlo looks puzzled, but, I continue, "it's almost like a dissolving of simply humanness, meness, youness, enabling so much more to come into play, those intensities in-between, so often ignored, dominate; so, for example… No, this is where the problem lies; the felt need to always give an example, to analyse… if the self is written out of the writing,[259] as it is in that tale of nine-year-old Mary, those usually hidden forces – affect, percept, concept – thrive…"

"What are they?"

"It's more what they can *do* than what they are; you've heard me talk about the capacity of writing to affect and be affected?" Chlo nods. "'Affects are no longer feelings or affections; they go beyond the strength of those who undergo them' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015c: 164) so, captured in words, or in a painting, we are 'a compound of percepts and affects. The work of art…exists in itself' (ibid.). Percept seems more difficult so I'll come back to that, but concepts are multiple, created in events which then have the capacity to affect and be affected, and of course the perception of them is all-important, and beyond what we humans are capable of perceiving… And so, writing about a younger self, exemplifies writing immanently, writing on a 'plane of immanence' in a space opening up outside of those rules and regulations ruling those junior school pupil selves, sixth form selves and university selves".

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[258] There are other conversations between 'Mary' and 'Chlo' (see pages 143-4, for example) about the 'plane of immanence'; in this early conversation about it, this 'Mary' is only just encountering the 'plane', but, as this 'landing site' exemplifies, the 'Marys'' thinking develops through their writing practices.
[259] The 'Mary' writing this has not quite grasped 'writing in immanence' seeing it as writing itself, forces at work without human intervention, hence the comment here about writing the self in its entirety out of the writing.

"But those selves are still within you; you are always saying that the past is always present".

"True, but, it is not only about selves; in the writing you read, admittedly, it is very focused on 'Marys', and on books and writing - objects and subjects create experiences relationally though: they are in them together. Deleuze (2001) even writes about the 'transcendental field': a space(time) free from all bodies apart from itself perhaps. He (2001) describes it 'as a pure stream of a-subjective consciousness, a pre-reflexive impersonal consciousness, a qualitative duration of consciousness without a self' (p. 25) implying freedom from judgement, from consciousness itself."

"Doesn't consciousness only apply to humans?"

"I thought so too, and animals, but it seems different here; Deleuze (2001) describes it as: 'a-subjective,' 'impersonal' and 'without a self' (p.25) and so it seems like a mode of existence, something plural and relational, something coming alive relating to other bodies with the capacity to affect and be affected by things 'beyond good and evil' (Deleuze, 2001: 29). I think of consciousness now as between, to do with 'becoming', linking with, overtaken by, affect. This relation to consciousness that Deleuze (2001) describes, 'is only a conceptual one' (p. 26); it does not define it, but stops it as 'be[ing] defined as a pure plane of immanence' (ibid). So, consciousness is grounding the 'transcendental field': consciousness does not need a self, but needs '*a* life'? *A* life without individualities.."

"But that's where we started!" conc*ludes* Chlo.

Returning home, after hopefully helping Chlo with her essay – it's so encouraging to see how she's embraced the idea of 'writing to it'[260] - I rush to look up the 'plane of immanence' in Deleuze and Guattari's (2015c) *What is Philosophy?* Perhaps I'll write in the book this time…

The 'plane of immanence' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015c) in all its multicoloured glory immediately attracts my attention: conjuring images of a moving stage, a map to be rolled up, down, across, somewhere for those concept-forming affects and percepts, and those relational forces of encounter, to interplay. How can I make my thesis a 'plane of immanence' on which those intensities and becoming come to life in the writing? How is it possible to be engaging with Deleuze and Guattari for all these years, but only now begin sense-making, sensing how their worlds, their universe, might be looking…? There always were pictures, but they are shifting now, creating very different images. This 'plane of

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[260] See particularly pages 158-62 for discussion of this practice.

immanence' is just beautiful for 'Chloe', 'Chlo', 'Paula' and 'Mad Mary' and all the other 'Marys', this 'plane', music playing, writing flowing, human and nonhuman bodies relationally affecting and being affected by each other; a place where affect is more than emotion, beyond emotion, percept is beyond perception, concepts are alive, being created, the parts of the plane's abstract machine perhaps? The paper planes flown in that first class soaring once again, freely taking off, landing, diverting on this 'plane of immanence' so different to that room in the educational institution where their maiden flights took place although, even then, some ventured further afield… Were there any words written on those first planes or were they simply comma worksheets? The paper planes participating in a subsequent workshop[261] had words inside, extracts (middles) from writings towards the thesis so far, folded to fly, to be unfolded, refolded, flown again, words with capacities to affect and be affected… And to have the opportunity to be writing on this 'plane of immanence', to be a writer

There is a feeling this is about Gale's 'affective presencings', about what happens when writing as Wyatt and Gale (2018) say 'does' (p. 126) and what it does in those 'doings', what occurs when the writer releases control, when writing moves beyond the simply human…

creating words, a student writing post qualitative inquiries, *thesisising*, is such a privilege and a challenge giving new meaning to Elspeth Probyn's (in Gregg and Seigworth, 2010) 'writing shame' for it won't only be the writer's shame, the student's shame, if justice to the 'plane of immanence', to writing as immanent practice, is not done, it will be shared by others.

"So did you do it or not?"

"Do what?" Having been lost in my own thoughts for the last few minutes, Chlo's question has completely mystified me, as has her apparently sudden reappearance.

"Write in the book!" she answers impatiently, expectantly.

"Yes, I did!" It's impossible to conceal the ensuing sense of achievement. Not surprisingly, my first 'intra-actions' involve 'planes': Deleuze and Guattari (2015c) write 'philosophy is at once concept creation and instituting of the plane…Both the creation of concepts and the instituting of the plane are required, like two wings or fins' (p. 41); other writing now sits beside theirs, unique to this copy of the book – 'the plane and paper planes? Flying concepts?'; this 'intra-action' with Deleuze and Guattari feels good: I am sharing the paper planes with them, contributing to the 'plane of immanence', paper planes flying with the witch's broom, and so, sitting in the garden with the horses in the field behind, more

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[261] Workshop held at the Adventures in Posthumanism conference at the University of Plymouth in March 2019.

annotations appear on the pages, strengthening our relationship, disrupting the uniformity on the page, writing emerging between the lines…

"That 'witch's broomstick' continually haunts me now", I say to Paula next time we chat.

"Have you seen it then?"

"It's in every text I open, 'a whirlwind at my back' (Spinoza, 1988: 1) whisking me away with my little black cat! I'm sure I've reached the 'plane of immanence'! It's great, although I could fall off at any moment."

"How did you get there?"

"It just happened; I don't even know if it's possible to return. Reading *What is Philosophy?* (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015c), I was just there, on the 'plane of immanence', stretching beyond… There's the most beautiful description: '[c]oncepts are like multiple waves, rising and falling, but the plane of immanence is the single wave that rolls them up and unrolls them' (ibid.: 36)…"

"So the 'plane of immanence' is one thing then, multiple singularities perhaps, and the concepts are individual things existing on it?"

Standing in the sea recently, watching the waves rolling in and out, far apart, reminiscent of concepts 'rising and falling' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015c: 36), there is a realisation a 'plane of immanence' can be created anywhere…

"I'm not sure it can be expressed in words; it's more an 'image of thought' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015c: 37). An image of the sea at Paignlake yesterday, or any day! Single waves collecting up the smaller, multiple waves and becoming one before becoming multiple again… 'Chlo' and I and our writings becoming one before unrolling, rolling away, rolling back together; me and you and our writing becoming on this 'plane of immanence'…"

"So we are both there then, you and me, chatting about our PhDs, and then we go our separate ways? That's what we do here!"

"It's not like that, it's difficult to explain, and there's a sense of not wanting to explain[262] for fear of destroying this wonderful image of this thesis's contents playing out on a backdrop, on the 'plane of immanence'; our encounters and 'intra-actions' with texts relationally generating affects, percepts and concepts…"

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[262] This realisation that to represent in writing destroys is a new feature emerging within *thesisising*,

"I can see writing as waves *'in a flow, but sometimes the energy of that flow is a flood, surging through the main stream and pulling eddies and back currents into its direction'* (Gale and Pineau, 2011: 322), but…

"The energies in that are so evocative!! It is often how I feel when writing: the suffusing and flooding come alive! Sometimes, I sit for hours hardly writing anything - stuttering – and of course writing is communication and 'in the *moment* of communication or "touch", there is always a flow, a transformation, a *movement*' (ibid.: 331). This movement fascinates me as does the description of concepts as 'the outcome of throws of the dice' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015c: 35) and so as something random, not fitting together neatly. What *is* a concept?" I suddenly wonder, we know they 'are not 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' (ibid: 5).

"But aren't the 'plane of immanence', 'assemblages', and 'lines of flight' all concepts? They've already been created!"

"The latter two are, but it is *how* we use them that puts our 'creator's signature' (ibid.) on them. Is the 'plane of immanence' a concept? Immanence is not a concept: it 'preexists the particular concepts that come to occupy it but that nevertheless cannot be said to actually exist outside of these concepts that presuppose it' (Lambert, 2012: 12)."

"So, the 'plane of immanence' cannot be a concept then?

"No: Deleuze and Guattari (2015c) describe it as 'the image thought gives itself of what it means to think, to make use of thought, to find one's bearings in thought' (p. 37) and, as '[t]hought demands "only" movement that can be carried to infinity' (ibid.), it is never still."

"Nothing ever is in Deleuze and Guattari's universe!"

"True. They say here '[i]t is essential not to confuse the plane of immanence and the concepts that occupy it' (ibid.: 39) as nothing will ever appear 'in the same guise' (ibid.). The 'plane of immanence' is described as 'the breath that suffuses the separate parts' (ibid.: 36) whereas '[c]oncepts are the archipelago or skeletal frame, a spinal column rather than a skull' (ibid.); concepts therefore sound more like a framework holding things together which occur on the plane?"

"But if '[c]oncepts are events' (ibid.), aren't they more than a framework?"

"Maybe. If we take 'assemblage' as the concept, something to be created and something always changing, it could be thought of as a framework in that it suffuses strata?"

"But, 'framework' has a sense of passivity about it and also of something being imposed. Concepts, however, are the opposite: like 'assemblages', they are always moving…"

"And so is my thesis and *thesisising!* I'm trying to write as immanent practice now, with smoothing and striating always happening, creating new 'lines of segmentarity', 'molecularity' or 'flight' in its territorialising, and reterritorialising, and with the territorialisation, *thesisising* occurs immanently. I'm hoping there won't be too many 'segmentary lines' emerging as their delineations are more likely to be divisive! I'm interested in 'molecular' lines: in the natural movement of the *thesisising*, they might provide diversions from the more usual paths of teaching troubled teenagers like 'Chloe' as well as from the conventions of thesis-writing, as forces of affect frictionally encounter form as in 'in-formation';[263] if, however, a 'line of flight' were created, the strata, the curricula, academic orthodox practices, would be ruptured, making anything possible in the classroom, in writing."

"If we think of the 'frame' of concepts as always 'in-formation', the frame would always be on the move with the force of affect frictionally encountering concepts, shifting them and so, as the 'plane of immanence', or, as I initially thought, a 'BwO',[264] the thesis is 'the horizon of events' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015c: 36) where all concepts in the 'assemblage' 'intra-relate'…"

"And so each one is an event, 'multiple human and nonhuman singularities…contingently and heterogeneously…constantly in becoming' (Gale, 2020b: 305). Would 'agencement'[265] work better than 'assemblage' when thinking about concepts? It seems 'creative-relationally *more-than human*'[266] which is, of course, what concepts are."

"'Agencement' certainly feels more forceful in implying movement for both human and nonhuman entities in 'assemblages', and it recognises the smallest unit as 'assemblage'."

"Yes, and, as this 'action' takes place on the edge of events, perhaps 'the plane of immanence' is indeed a controlling influence: 'the single wave' rolling up the 'multiple waves' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015c: 36) of concepts created in cafés and pubs where conversations take place between us and you and 'Chlo'? Furthermore, the writing is *doing*: generating intensities and becoming within it, challenging discursively constructed academic writing conventions; I love Bennett's (2010) concept of 'agentic assemblage', especially her passage about writing and how '[t]he sentences of [her] book…emerged' (p. 23); I envisage

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[263] This relates to Simondon's theorising of 'in-formation' where 'form' is always on the move. This theorising is also discussed, in relation to Manning's (2007) work, on page 29.
[264] See Appendix Stringendo.
[265] See pages 37 and 80 for more on how 'agencement' is interpreted.
[266] See pages 133 and 154 for more detail around this.

the writing in my thesis as creating opportunities for glimmerings of the not-yet-known, creating second chances for our 'Chloes'... "

One lovely, sunny day sitting in the garden with a coffee, staring at the horses and llamas in their fields, those fields become a 'plane of immanence', rolling up, taking the horses and llamas with them, unrolling, enabling anything to happen inbetween the folding and unfolding, in those '*forces of encounter*' (Gregg and Seigworth, 2010: 2)… Is this where affect, percept and concept interplay? Affect is what is there between the notes, when the musician stops playing, the composer stops composing; it is what is there between the words, what is left when the writer stops writing, when this collection of post qualitative inquiries (temporarily!) stops for submission; Deleuze and Guattari (2015c) emphasise that '[w]hat is preserved-the thing or the work of art-is *a bloc of sensations, that is to say, a compound of percept and affects*' (p. 164). As a 'plane of immanence', will this thesis continue having the capacity to affect and be affected? Percepts are more than simply human: they are 'independent of a state of those who experience them' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015c: 164), existing, with affects, then, as Deleuze and Guattari (2015c) say, independently of their creators, their viewers, their readers. Are there percepts and affects through the renewed and subsequently continual flying of those planes from that first class, that workshop, all with capacities to affect and be affected? '[S]triv[ing] to take thought beyond normality and recognition' (Colebrook, 2008: 25), then, concepts are the *thesisising* conveyed in the footnoting of these qualitative inquiries, in the 'landing sites'; concepts are the *composite selves* and so

[w]hat matters is not…[their] opinions…but rather the relations of counterpoint into which they enter and the compounds of sensations that these characters either themselves experience or make felt in their becomings and their visions

(Deleuze and Guattari, 2015c: 188).

With capaciousness to affect and be affected always there, always in-formationally presencing, there is a sense that it is of its own selfing and therefore it is immanent to and of the relations of affect: will this the capaciousness continue after this thesis has been submitted, and after its viva.…

"What are you going on about!" Chlo? Where did she come from?! I thought I was alone with the horses and llamas…

"Sorry, it's beyond words, something felt, something sensed, this thesis exists in relationality and can be seen to work as an 'assemblage' which is always 'becoming' and which has the capacity to affect and be affected; affects, percepts and concepts are interplaying in the

encounters the writing sets up, in the gaps in between conventional thesis writing and the unconventional aspects of this thesis; that's where freedom lies, space for something other to be becoming, 'racing along a witch's line…gain[ing] the power of the indefinite' (Deleuze, 1998: 3), released from the restrictions of academic thesis writing, expected formats, *a* writing perhaps, enabling those forces, intensities to interplay, to come into being…"

The more *What is Philosophy?* (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015c) is read, the more the picture of the 'plane of immanence' and the concepts created on it develop, like a painting and a piece of music and this thesis: starting with a skeletal image, a vague idea (exactly how this thesis started!), becoming more detailed and more intricate over time: 'images come alive and sparkle in their vivacity' (Gale, 2014b: 1000). Deleuze (2004b, cited in ibid.) writes about a 'wrestling … that rips the painting away from all narrative but also from all symbolisation…it expresses nothing of the violence of sensation-in other words of the act of painting'. It has leapt out at me this breezy, sunny morning that the 'plane of immanence' is 'the image of thought, the image thought gives itself of what it means to think, to make use of thought, to find one's bearings in thought' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015c: 37) so there is something thought-provoking about thinking on 'the image of thought' itself. Thinking on thought, away from those individualising features, free to fly like those paper planes among concepts, 'shap[ing] and reshap[ing] the event in [their] own way (ibid.: 34), connected by 'movable bridges' (ibid.: 23)… This movement of philosophical concepts in their multiplicities becoming more and more present in this thesis, the movement of thought, thinking, the movement of writing, the movement of affects, percepts, concepts interplaying on this 'plane of immanence' creating new thinking, new perceptions, new concepts connecting with each other, co-creating in 'a junction of problems where it combines with other coexisting concepts' (ibid.: 18)… Concepts arising from problems, created to solve problems? Isn't inquiry also intended to solve problems? Concepts are certainly multiple, made up of numerous components making the thing itself not the concept: using the bird as an example, Deleuze and Guattari (2015c) explain the concept of bird is not found in 'its genus or species but in the composition of its postures, colors, and songs: something indiscernible that is not so much synesthetic as syneidetic' (p. 20), not so much in the expected image of a bird, in overall appearance, but in the component parts only identifiable with more awareness, beyond bird… The concept of this thesis is not found in its traditional format, but in the composition of its words, its layers, its themes, perhaps it *is* a 'plane of immanence' where my *thesisising* plays out…

At the risk of spoiling your freedom, you are now **encouraged***, dear examiners and readers, to read the following conc/luding materials* **together***. If, however, you are not yet ready to do this, the aeroplane on the preceding page will fly you back to the 'contents' pages.*

Pre-postlude

And so, there do not seem to be many more possibilities for space-making to be found, at least not within the word and time limits for a PhD thesis. A feeling of deep sorrow sets in, seeing the alignment of the text shifting for the last time, drawing attention to this important occasion: the *concluding* of this collection of post qualitative inquiries.

Having to say 'goodbye' to dear 'friends' along the way has not been easy – some of us have been together for years. There was 'Grace' who, like 'Chloe', needed a second chance: it feels very unethical to have abandoned her on the mountain in January when only the fittest survived the fall; what if Massumi's 'creative-relationally *more-than* human'[267] had been understood then, might she have been able to stay? What if it had been known she could have surpassed expectations, would 'Grace' have continued to meet 'Mary' on-line, discussing her writing? Would she be at university with 'Chlo' now, experimenting with other writing practices? 'Grace' is not alone: 'Clare' (another PhD student who 'Paula' and I sometimes met for coffee) and Chelsea (my hairdresser who, inspired by our conversations, was returning to college to study A-level English: she shared my love of 'each moment in the writing [being] only a sort of room that one can leave by going through a door' (Deleuze and

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[267] See pages 133 and 154

Guattari, 2012: xxvii)) were also abandoned on that mountain, although perhaps Chelsea simply went to college earlier than planned! 'Kitty', my personal writing coach, sadly did not survive the fall (without her willingness to read parts of the emerging thesis and her continual questioning of my (non) methodologies, there would be no thesis; with her, however, this would have been a very different thesis! There are stories starring English lecturer 'Rhodri', Principal 'Marcia', and her secretary 'Sylvia' from Richard Ayres' (2012) novel, *The Further Education of Mike Carter,* now lying abandoned in the 'black cat box' (the one the writings came out of several months ago to see how they 'intra-acted' with each other, which ones might create a thesis-'assemblage'); does it reflect badly on Ayres' (2012) novel that those stories have not been 'selected' for submission (this time)? There was enjoyment in creating those pieces: it is a reflection only on the *thesisising*, on the writing as immanent doing, unsure which way to go and so going all ways until worries about word limits took over... And yet, to a certain extent, space-making is occurring, the 'segmentary lines' are being troubled, 'lines of flight' are emerging, but the writing is then made to stop, not temporarily as when covid-19 first struck Paignlake, sending fear through the thesis-'assemblage', but completely... Will the writing ever flow again? Will justice ever be done to our 'Chloes'? Is there justice here for the work of those philosophers and critics and writers referenced in these pages, whose work has so inspired this writing, shaping it, in-forming it, encouraging it to move, to not just push the boundaries of discursively constructed structures and writing conventions in academia, but to surpass them in 'creative-relationally *more-than human*' ways?

Is there justice for this thesis itself, for this body, for the 'Mary', for example, shyly confiding in one of those texts recently removed from the thesis-'assemblage' that she could visualise "the thesis [being] a 'body without organs', its 'plateaus' being rearranged, reorganised, shifting with every reading" and "an 'assemblage' suffused by 'strata', with those

rigid 'lines of segmentarity', those more flexible 'lines of molecularity', and those far-reaching, rupturing 'lines of flight'"? Is there justice for those 'planes', the paper ones and the Deleuzo-Guattarian 'planes of immanence and consistency'? Have they become imbricated as an earlier 'Mary' hoped, or is that now a loose thread? It will not be the only one: with so many expectations and dreams for this thesis, loose threads are inevitable... What about a 'Mary's' aim '[t]o compose with the minor gesture' (Manning, 2016: 7)?[268] Has the 'minor' been able to 'mak[e] its gesture felt' (ibid.: 65),[269] to evade 'method' (ibid.: 12)? As a 'minor gesture' is 'what makes the work' (Manning, 2016: 65), if the 'Marys' have not achieved this, have they failed to do justice to original 'Mary's' dream? The dream was only ever to *be* a PhD student so the answer to that question is no: the 'Mary' writing to Manning confirms that, if '[these Marys] never graduate. They just ain't ready' (Manning, 2016: 215), the 'thinking-doing' would be 'value in itself' (ibid.: 200)".[270]

But, what about those lovely, wonderful, supportive people who showed faith in the 'Marys', offering a second chance to fufil the PhD dream when it didn't match expectations, helping to realise that dream, never seeming to question their ability to create a thesis-'assemblage'? They have been there from middle to middle to middle; advising, supervising, caring and encouraging the writers to take risks, to set the writing free, 'sprouting deviant' (Massumi, 2002: 18): how could they ever be served?! And, of course, they were this collection of post qualitative inquiries' first readers and first *'affirmative'* (Massumi, 2002: 12-13) 'judges' and, even just thinking about clicking on a link to send this thesis to different readers, to examiners(!), now(!) is terrifying, like sending Saffie away (which would never happen!), wondering what will happen to her, if she will remember me when she returns, and, most importantly, if

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[268] As stated in the email to Manning (p. 174).
[269] As above footnote.
[270] See page 173

her 'little ways', like the ways of this thesis-'assemblage', will be understood...

Postlude

Landing Site: Concert Wind Band

It's three o'clock in the morning: the 'Chloes' and the 'Marys' are sleeping (at last), the laptop switched off, books and papers lying dormant around the room, words no longer flying off the pages; a tiny cry disturbs the silence as a little black shape jumps on the bed, purring, turning round three times before settling down, surprisingly not waking the 'Marys', and so, it's my turn now!

It's not easy being expected to exemplify all that reading, thinking, crafting, and learning that 'Chloe', 'Chlo', 'Paula' and the 'Marys' have engaged in over the last however many years in only eighty thousand words; even if it could be put into words, what's so special about eighty thousand? They are continually trying to stop me flowing, trying to contain me: "that's it!", they exclaim, "you have to be submitted now, there's to be no more of you"; I know I'll be in trouble for writing this, but it needs to be said because these stories, 'Chloes' and 'Marys', will continue forever, there will always be 'Chloes', there will always be 'Marys' (and 'Mad Marys', that actually not so flippant adjective chosen to create a better impression with her students than the first words that came to mind, 'mild' or 'meek': she certainly couldn't use 'marvellous', does anyone still say 'marvellous'…?). These storyings, these post qualitative inquiries, don't simply stop challenging those discursively constructed structures and writing conventions in academia just because there's a 'deadline'; they will never stop, and neither will 'Mary' ever stop learning, or writing, but, yes, there is a

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system demanding an end; there's actually been a series of 'deadlines' trying to constrain me for the last few months: I was coaxed into a first full draft and then into a title and an abstract, which cannot ever be changed, before being crafted into a second full draft (which was really a FINAL one, but the 'Marys' wouldn't admit it), but, I'll never be finished: everyone who knows me and 'Chloe' and 'Mary' knows that! I was supposedly submitted at midnight, but, I'm still here!! We will continue forever, we will not be constrained by these academic conventions, we will not be stopped by an arbitrary 'deadline' because this is such an enjoyable process, this PhD process, apart from the 'deadlines', which are always trying to ruin it (but we don't let them!), and the need to satisfy the criteria determined by some regulatory body somewhere, but who knows what 'standards' have been met here? Only the 'Marys', our supervisory team and I know, or think we know, what we're experiencing: how these processes and the affective forces always relationally at work are moving this 'assemblage'. There's no doubt we are the lucky ones: we have troubled those orthodox academic practices, creating 'lines of flight' out of those rigid discursively constructed structures expecting everyone to learn the same things in the same way, at the same pace, at the same time; there is no denying though that PhD study is different, offers more flexibility than study at other 'levels': those 'Marys' have certainly taken advantage of Massumi's (2015a) suggestion to play with constraints within their thesisising…

It's not easy, you know, being me; I was actually accused of 'resist[ing] organising' at one time, but, that was before we encountered Erin Manning's 'artfulness', before our thesisising. I am flying with the emergence of thesisising – there's no stopping me now! I am like those planes taking off at the 'landing sites' (Arakawa and Gins, 2009), connecting those transversal flight lines,

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and, like the footnoting (which only started occurring recently to try and create a 'whole'), I'm always developing, and adapting to arising needs – just think what it would be like if those structures and writing conventions in academia were as adept at adapting to our 'Chloes'' needs! And what if there simply isn't a conventional 'whole': perhaps each 'landing site' consists only of generative buds growing and growing into the not-yet-known… Oh, what if these wonderful processes could last forever, animating potential for intensities and 'becoming' in writing until the love fades, the words cease flowing naturally, and the 'Chloes' and the 'Marys' and I choose to stop: would that time ever come? Just think what could happen: all those affects, percepts and concepts acting relationally in this Deleuzo-Guattarian 'assemblage' of post qualitative inquiries being recognised across all educational 'levels', creating additional movements and moments quivering with potential for change benefitting 'Chloes' everywhere; the writing continuing, unconstrained, 'writing-moving': 'writing-moving' as immanent doing, creating those second chances for 'Chloes' everywhere. Following a 'witch's line' (Deleuze, 1998: 5), could there be a glimmer of something not-yet-known emerging in these pages just as this writing is told to stop, might the writing and the imaginings 'délirer'?[271] (Deleuze and Parnet, 2012; Gale: 2018a),

going off the lines…   *creating chaos and change…*

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[271] See pages 129-130 for my interpretation of this concept.

Post-postlude

Landing Site: Orchestra

Driving at 30 mph on a dual carriageway behind a 'convoi exceptionnel' – a holiday chalet – would be frustrating even if I were not already late for my viva, but Saffie was missing and so I could not leave on time… This is ridiculous, other vehicles are passing, shooting off to their destinations; I am the only one still stuck! I can barely see through the heavy rain, but I move into the other lane, the chalet is considerably over the white line, but, everyone else has done it: I put my foot down, drive as near to the barrier as I dare, but the chalet suddenly moves towards me and the rain is blocking my view, HELP! I jam my brakes on just in time, in the third lane, aquaplaning, cars hooting behind… When will this nightmare end? I am suddenly struck by the irony of the situation: on my way to 'defend' a thesis aiming to create movement, cross 'thresholds', I am barely able to move! But, of course, this is about this entanglement taking place *now*, these affective forces coming into action, do they have to act right now, reminding me what a posthuman 'assemblage' is?! I wanted to focus on the thesis-'assemblage'! I wonder if they will wait for us, the examiners, they are already in this 'assemblage'…

Glancing at the clock (I am already ten minutes late!), grabbing my bag, I suddenly see my nephew's skateboard still there from the weekend – how hard can it be?! I jump on it and am immediately, miraculously, flying through the air out of the car park towards the University: taking a 'witch's line' (Deleuze, 1998: 5) on viva day! The witch's broom (much better than a skateboard!) deposits me and Saffie(!) outside the building where the viva is due to take place, but, the excitement of the ride evaporates as I am met by my worried-looking supervisors breaking the news that my examiners could not make it, but the viva must still take place today... They accompany me to the room, disappearing before I can thank them, the sun is shining brightly through the windows and I try (discreetly) to catch the 'angel rays' (sent perhaps by my grandparents for good luck!). The thought this could be the last time I ever talk about this thesis, which has been 'becoming' for the last eight years (at least!) and which will always continue to 'become', suddenly strikes me and I am overcome by the importance of doing it justice: would Elspeth Probyn (in Gregg and Seigworth, 2010) agree that, having written the thesis hopefully in a way which does justice to all those, like 'Chloe', just needing

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a second chance, and to writing itself – does it exemplify its capacities for 'sprouting deviant' (Massumi, 2002: 18)? - I must not let it down now. Oh, it is suddenly silent, have I been asked a question? Just as I am about to confess I was not concentrating, the cloak says:

"Well, can you summarise your thesis or not?"

A speaking academic cloak?! Surely it doesn't want me to summarise all of it? I've only practised summarising it in one sentence (www2.le.ac.uk)…
Heart racing, I take a deep breath and start:
"Boarding planes to 'landing sites', pausing…wandering, jumping, lying, standing, staring… taking off again, choosing somewhere else to land, looking around another 'landing site', and another, and another…each one a conversation, a dream, a nightmare, an event: a challenge to perceived discursively constructed structures and writing conventions in academia…

'[w]ander lines, lines thick with the vibrations of' (Manning, 2020: 159) classroom life enabling movement and flexibility, and so challenging fixities effecting learning, encouraging the crossing of thresholds, thresholds at universities, at classrooms, not always welcoming, but by inviting readers to fly across thresholds, to act in the moment, to speculate, to ask 'how does this work?', or to simply let things happen, it is hoped, simply, to encourage different perspectives, an alertness towards notyetness…"

"Is that it? Have you got any questions, Tracey?"

'Mad Mary's' manager? What's she doing here?

"How dare you purport to be me?"

"What do you mean? No-one is purporting to be you! Like 'Chloe', 'Chlo', you're a composite self: as I say of her, she does not exist. You do not exist! These inquiries are only partly autoethnographical and that is to invite readers to join my *composite selves* and me in our worlds, to share experiences in ways other qualitative research may not encourage. I've had to imagine a second chance for 'Chloe': the thesis is written for her and all those like her…"

"What have you written here anyway? Is it an autoethnography or not…"

"I'll be honest, that question troubles me;[272] in some ways there are undoubtedly echoes of autoethnographical inquiry, but at the same time, there is a move away from human-centred thinking towards posthuman theorisings and so St. Pierre's work, Manning's work and Massumi's have been particularly influential. Autoethnography meets posthumanism in this collection of post qualitative inquiries and, yes, there are frictions, but, conventional ethical procedures are grounded upon a fixed, stable, Cartesian 'I' and this is, inevitably, troubled by having multiple 'Marys'. I wonder if this could be 'activist autoethnography' (Gale and Wyatt, 2018a: 567) with an emphasis on relationality as human and nonhuman bodies cannot be separated: they are entwined, as Spinoza says, with the capacity to affect and to be affected. Bennett's (2010) idea of 'vibrant matter' has also been influential, as has writing…"

"I hated writing, but you wouldn't let me give up…"

"Chlo? Of course I wouldn't: you deserved a second chance and I was determined to ensure you got it. Everyone knows someone who did not have the opportunity to fulfil their potential; as I tell you at our reunion in the pub, I was nearly one of them: just two years older than you, I had to fight to retake my A-levels, but, I was lucky, I had the full support of my parents. This thesis is *your* story which exemplifies the posthuman 'assemblage': the wavering, the multiple, 'becoming' subjects within the fixed, immoveable, educational structures. With *writing-moving*…"

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[272] See pages 184-86.

"I still don't get why you couldn't have just written a conventional thesis, like Rob, with a literature review and a methodology chapter. Surely you can't expect it to pass without them!"

"It's not that they're missing Chlo!" I never imagined Chlo would be questioning me at the viva; her questions are always very pertinent! "I've taken an 'ethico-onto-epistem-olog[ical]' (Barad, 2007: 185; 381) approach and so, because these elements are entangled and imbricated in the inquiries, they flow through the whole thesis instead of being divided up into binaries, categories, to be written about one by one and then forgotten about. This avoids a lot of repetition, which isn't necessarily bad (Deleuze (2020a) writes about 'difference and repetition'), but, I felt it would disrupt the flow of the writing. There was actually an ethics plateau, but, then it just seemed terribly out of place with the rest of the thesis with its fluid edgings between writings, and so the plateau was dispersed; ethical discussions are still very present though…"

"Was it ethical to have written 'my story' without interviewing me?"

"Chloe? But you don't exist! I have thought about this a lot;[273] I'm confident ethical procedures and guidelines were followed. I take ethics of care very seriously and I am very aware I could have told your story simply from 'Mad Mary's' point of view. I am not saying this to demonstrate my power, which, admittedly, as lecturer, I had, but to show you how significant our first meeting was, how it has stayed with me for all these years affecting my development personally and professionally. It is for those reasons that I 'speak *with'* (Frank, 2013: 132) you, 'Chloe', especially, for example, in the story I tell about my fourteen-year-old self walking out of the classroom, in the fears conveyed not just in that story, but, also in 'Mad Mary's story', there is '[a]n *ethic of solidarity and commitment*' (ibid.) [274] in the urge to tell 'Chloe's story' for everyone

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[273] See pages 193-194.

[274] If this phrase appears human-centric, it is not intended to be: in their *thesisising* 'Marys' sense and practice 'solidarity and commitment' with nonhuman others; in the computer's version of the 'critical incident', for example, 'solidarity' is present between computer and chair and pen…

ever denied the opportunity of fulfilling their academic potential. To be honest, the way I would have written about the student who inspired your story would still have involved creating *composite selves*…"

"I don't see why: if you had interviewed the real me, you would then have written her story as she told it to you…'

"But there isn't a 'real' you to interview, Chloe! Okay, let's pretend that there is, and that I interview her and tell her story. Her memories, like mine, will have shifted; she will tell only her story as she remembers it at the time of the interview. I'll interpret the data, write it up, anonymising all the details and it will become another composite fictional exercise! I'm certainly not implying that that is what all interviews with human participants are, but, this is a different case, Chloe…Chloe?..."

"I enjoyed our conversations, Mary!"

"Thanks, Paula! They were so useful in practising 'writing to it', in trying to create and 'plug in' concepts, I really felt I was experiencing 'writing as inquiry'; towards the end it felt amazing, as if the writing was turning toward writing as immanent doing, and then, at the very end, I desperately felt the writing needed something else, and suddenly *délire*[275] (Deleuze and Parnet, 2012) jumped out and it really did seem as if the thesis's imaginings, had 'in délire,…actively go[ne] off the rails in experimental and speculative practices of experimentation and creativity' (Gale, 2021: 471)!"

"Haha! Do you remember how we worried about the whole PhD process? What would you do differently, if you started again? (Cryer, 2001)

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[275] See pages 129-130 for more on my understanding of this concept.

"I actually wouldn't do anything differently except not worry so much about it; looking back, the worrying is the only thing which stopped this experience from being perfect." I stop speaking, suddenly aware this is it, this is the viva and I must defend this 'body', this 'body without organs', I have attempted to artfully author, carefully craft, lovingly liberate from the constraints pinning it down, trying to make it be one thing, or another, but not this, and this and this; by shifting the writing in this collection of post qualitative inquiries 'away from [the expected] 'interpretation, representation, and critical analysis…toward a bringing to life, what [Gale] refer[s] to as a *presencing* of worlds of affective relationality, where action speaks louder than words' (Gale, 2021: 467), I sense I am its 'defender', but, am I? Gale and Wyatt (2021: 1) posit 'as writing is never alone…our writing is always creative and relational…"creative-relationally *more-than* human"'.[276] The writing in this thesis-'assemblage' is fluid, it sets up multiple, unstable, encounters, and so, with various forces coming into play at this crucial moment in our lives, there's a sense we can 'defend' it together…

"Doesn't Ken write about 'affective presencing'"?[277]

"Yes, with his concept, 'affective presencing', I have a sense of greater movement, in immanence, and increased action amongst bodies which are 'in a constant play of affective relationality' (Gale, 2021: 467); I love the image of bodies 'engaging in Spinoza's dance between affecting and being affected' (ibid.): it really brings the question of what a body can do to life, emphasising that what is important is:

> What [a body's] 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 and passions with it or to join with it in composing a more powerful body (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a: 300)

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[276] See pages 133 and 154 for additional uses of this concept.
[277] See page 169 for detailed exemplification of this concept.

I sense this in 'affective presencing', it is 'processual dynamic…enactive; it acts despite the demands of trope or habituating convention' (Gale and Wyatt, 2021, 6)[278] and so it seems more-than-human, 'worlding' (Stewart, 2007) perhaps?"

"It makes sense to me although there is a lot to think about there. What did you worry about most?"

I glance at 'Paula', at 'Chloe', at 'Chlo', at the academic cloak – the one Ken (Gale et al., 2012) 'cast[s] off' (p. 75) having 'stopped searching for meaning' (ibid.), or the 'Stoic sage's…reversible cloak' (Deleuze, 2017: 147) that the 'hard-boiled egg' (ibid.) comes from?! – and I admit how nearly there wasn't a thesis: how it is only thanks to encountering Manning and Massumi's (2014) inspiring use of Arakawa and Gins' 'landing sites' as 'regions of experience within larger experience' (p. 28), as a way of potentially assembling this emerging thesis as a collection of 'landing sites' rather than chapters, and, ironically, a class of teenagers throwing paper planes around in a lesson with me, that these writings can be called a thesis; it is because of them that I am sitting here now having survived sleepless nights and never-ending days with coffee, music, llamas, horses, Saffie, thinking about how to assemble this thesis-'assemblage'… Thoughts drift to how 'without this assemblage of moments, their effects and impacts on the [emerging thesis], and their influences, impacts, and effects on both me and my [*composite selves*]' (Warfield, 2019: 148), without their capacities to affect and be affected, this would be a very different collection of post qualitative inquiries; with the sudden reappearance of that cloak asking another question, however, we suddenly seem very vulnerable again:

"Let's get this over with: what are the thesis's 'main findings…your…contribution(s) to knowledge'? (Cryer, 2006: 243)"

"I don't really think of there being 'main findings': my research is about practices, processes, 'becomings', and so, as I invite readers and examiners to ask in the letter, I think about what work it does rather than what its findings might be. I would love for this thesis to change the ways people think about academic writing and learning English. I would like those emerging 'lines of flight' to break though these constraining

[278] Realising the time, and that all the page and footnote numbers have now shifted (again) and so need to be rewritten (again!), this will probably be the last sentence written of this *full* draft; it therefore seems fitting to be citing the words of my Director of Studies and External Examiner: I hope I am serving them well…

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worlds of Post-compulsory Education, to enthuse our 'Chloes', to make a difference, to offer them a second chance to fly, like the aeroplanes within these pages, outside of the 'strata' rigidly controlling those discursively constructed structures and writing conventions in academia, for everyone to be in my 'privileged' position, for it not to be a 'privileged' position, to have this opportunity to be 'becoming' differently, to…

"Dream on! You use your Director of Studies' work a lot: I suppose you see his book (Gale, 2018a) as a development in your field since you began your doctoral work, but, what other developments have there been?" (www2.le.ac.uk)

"Well, yes, I do 'write to' and 'with' Ken's work: I don't deny that it is influential in the 'becoming' of this thesis; I write 'with' others too and they give me confidence: Jonathan Wyatt…

"He's Ken's collaborative writing partner!"

"Yes, and they both also collaborate with others. As I indicated earlier, my inquiries are also influenced by Manning, Massumi, St. Pierre, Deleuze and Guattari: I write with them all; they are all engaging in similar types of inquiry – that sounds wrong, I don't want to diminish their individualities, but, the idea of a posthuman 'assemblage', of shifting subjectivities, of affect as encounter, of the 'I' not being fixed, but being variable, of there not being an 'I'…"

"'Non-sense'! Just tell us what contribution to the development of your field I make and then we can all go home and not give me another thought!"

The thesis?! "I'm sure I won't ever stop thinking about you, but, well, I think, as a body (of writing), you're actually really interesting: you created the term *writing-moving* because that is what you do! You are never still, I never know what is suddenly going to emerge on the page, on the screen, which affects and intensities are in action, and so you continually surprise me, and, hopefully, your readers too! I don't want to use

labels to describe you, but I feel you contribute to a wide field: you're written for everyone ever denied the opportunity of fulfilling their academic potential. This is something we feel strongly about and I do see you as having 'activist autoethnograph[ic]' (Gale and Wyatt, 2018a: 567) elements which meet posthumanism; you decentre the human, it is easy to forget when considering ethical issues that concepts such as 'care' and 'justice' are forces far exceeding human agency! You also encourage '[b]ecoming-attuned' (Gale, 2021: 468) to other forces relationally at work and so, as you come to your enforced (temporary) end point, there is a sense of 'shifting, orientation, moving toward, and incessantly folding in and folding out in the generation of intimate connection with the more than simply human' (ibid.); you bring to life those frictional energies at play when affective force comes into action with conventional ethical considerations such as, for example, those in standard ethics protocols and ethical procedures that want to see ethics (and you) as being fixed rather than always 'in-formation'; even covid-19 creeps in to you with *writing-moving* from becoming unable to write because of covid-anxieties,[279] to 'writing to' it, from 'plugging in' to 'exemplifying' to 'writing in immanence'…"

"Miaowwww!"

When the work works…it creates its own momentum, its own block of sensations, its own field of forces. When this happens, the work becomes what it does

Manning, 2015: pp. 59-60

Dear Examiners and Readers,

Thank you profusely for reading this collection of post qualitative inquiries; we hope you have enjoyed our storyings and accompanying us on our adventures. Knowing you will, however, be 'judging' this work, and knowing the writing will not stop today (29th October 2021) simply because that is its 'submission date' (the writing equally did not let academic constraints restrain it from fostering inquiry and speculation: from moving away from 'what is' towards 'what if'!), we would be eternally grateful, if you would please consider this as an unfinished product. 'Thinking-with' Manning (2016), we hope you will, as requested in the 'Pre-Prelude', therefore pay attention to the 'manner' (p.46) of writing and ask only, as Massumi (in Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a) does in his foreword to A Thousand Plateaus, 'does it work?' (p.xiv).

With thanks and best wishes, Chloe, Chlo, and all the Marys ☺

Ps You are now invited to engage with the appendices to this collection of post qualitative inquiries; as indicated in our introductory letter to you ('Pre-Prelude') and in 'Pre-pre-prelude, post-post-postlude: Speculative Pragmatism', no decision about which texts are included, and which are not, has been taken without considerable care. Whilst perhaps perceived as being placed outside of the main body of writings, the following are nonetheless considered to be vital to the development of the 'Marys'' thinking-with Deleuze (Appendix Stringendo), essential in 'becoming-

'Marys'' attempts to understand ethical procedures (Appendix Accelerando), and significant in 'Becoming'-'Mary', 'becoming'-writer (Appendix Allegretto-Largo-Allegro), especially during the pandemic from which time this collection largely arises.

Appendices

Appendix stringendo

we always start from the middle of things; a thought has no beginning, just an outside to which it is connected

(Robert Hurley (in his preface Spinoza: Practical Philosophy (1988: i))

This attempt to create this not-my-own-'BwO' (Deleuze and Guattari, (2015a) came from somewhere; reassured by Ken's (Gale, 2018a) emphasis on Deleuze and Guattari's concept of the 'BwO' not being a concept to be defined, but one to be plugged in, used, and used again, but differently, the question of what work I want this concept to do for this thesis arose: where and how will I plug it in?

Starting to write this plateau,[280] I am conscious of wanting to create a conducive atmosphere to shape this text as I am imagining it, encouraging it to do the work I want it to: with my interpretations of Deleuze and Guattari's concept of a 'BwO' enabling me to fly away from the conventional thinking that, despite my best intentions, is dominating this thesis so far,[281] I am hopeful of creating an opportunity to play with a 'Bwo', to plug this concept in in different ways in my thesis to see what its potential is for my research. Thereby exploring the 'connection of desires, conjunction of flows, continuum of intensities' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a: 187) that Deleuze and Guattari posit as the 'BwO', I am playing a CD (Emma Johnson's

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[280] The nature of *thesisising* makes it impossible to say what happened to 'this plateau', how far it progressed, whether it is in this 'assemblage' in some form or another, whether this is all that remains.
[281] This is quite an early sign of that original 'Mary' meeting Becoming-'Marys'.

La Clarinette Française) chosen so that I can write with Emma - Emma's clarinet –
they are one – soaring and swooping, singing freely.[282]

Earlier today I was trying out a new clarinet reed – changing just one part of the
'assemblage'[283] that is my clarinet and I[284] alters the sound, creating a warmer, more
expressive tone enabling me to relax and concentrate on becoming one with my
clarinet and the music - free of the worry created by moving swiftly between low and
high notes. A couple of months ago I also changed the ligature which holds the reed
in place thus 'deterritorialising' the reed on the mouthpiece as its position is shifted, it
is held differently (primarily thus altering the sound) and so it is 'deterritorialised' as
this new mouthpiece, reed, ligature arrangement replaces the previous one; this
reorganisation, both a 'deterritorialisation' and a 'reterritorialisation' as, despite the
slight adjustments, the objects continue to work together in the same way, but,
slightly differently, constituting another change to our 'collectivity'; a small change
enhancing our playing, or at least making me feel more confident about the sound
we are creating. This thinking of me and my clarinet and other singularities as one
body – an 'assemblage', 'a collectivity' – a 'BwO' undoubtedly inspired by Deleuze
and Guattari…

Furthermore, this new way of thinking of us means I am no longer alone when I am
playing: we are many, my clarinet and I, its ligature, its reed, the music, the
composer, anyone who happens to be listening and the walls! Similarly, as a
lecturer, before I encountered Deleuze and Guattari, I felt under pressure,

[282] She doesn't actually say it, perhaps she doesn't realise, but it is that 'freely' she is working towards here.

[283] A later 'Mary' editing this recalls Little Hans's horse which is 'not representative but affective' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a: 300) and is thus more aware of the affects on the 'assemblage' of the alterations earlier 'Marys' make: her clarinet perhaps no longer a member of the woodwind family but an 'individual…defined by a list of active and passive affects in the context of the individuated assemblage it is part of:…affects…transformed within the assemblage: what a [clarinet] "can do"' (ibid.).

[284] It is, of course, so much more than the two of them!

responsible for everything that happened or did not happen. Thinking with them and their concept of "assemblage," I was no longer so powerful; I was not alone, I could not completely control the other humans and non-humans belonging to the same "assemblage"… Is an 'assemblage' the same as a 'collectivity'? What is the difference? A 'BwO' is a 'collectivity' so, if they are the same, is it also an 'assemblage'? It does not seem to be for Deleuze and Guattari do not describe it as an 'assemblage'. They say however that it is necessary to 'descend…to the deeper assemblage' (2015a, 187) to create a 'BwO'.

Having created my conducive atmosphere, my thoughts are settling, wandering to my first encounter with Deleuze and Guattari's concept of 'BwO' through Lisa Mazzei's (2013) article *A Voice Without Organs* which she relates to 'BwO'. At that time however I could not think beyond the image of a body with no organs, and whether or not it could still survive. As I frequently do, I interpreted the term literally, conventionally. My aim now, having written my usual, conventional, review from my readings[285] of first *A Thousand Plateaus* (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a) and subsequently *Anti-Oedipus* (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015b), is to follow[286] a 'line of flight' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a; Deleuze and Parnet, 2012) far away from that with my thoughts on a 'BwO' and what it might do for my research. I have reached that difficult part where my writing usually starts to circulate and I never actually say what a concept might do,[287] but this time will be different as I am now creating my 'line of flight' away from the conventional thoughts dominating my mind. From initially being a human body with no organs, I now think of a 'BwO' as being any body – not

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[285] You have probably already noticed this is written by that original 'Mary' who started this inquiry, but there are some interesting early signs here of Becoming-'Mary', other 'Marys' emerging!
[286] Another sign of earlier 'Mary's' thinking; she hasn't yet grasped that 'lines of flight' are created, taken, not passively followed. She does however make a reference to creating them on the next page.
[287] This is a trait of all of the 'Marys'!

just a human body, but an animal body, a body of people, a mixture of people and non-humans such as me and my clarinet; more significantly for this thesis, a body is also an educational institution with its human and non-human members and parts.[288] Furthermore this is a body capable of being territorialised differently; this is a body capable of change; this is a body capable of being organised differently, then, and a body capable of affecting and of being affected. As I save this text to my computer, I face the dilemma of which folder to save it in: literature review or methodology?[289] It is a review to a certain extent, but it is more than a review – it is also a plugging-in of the concepts into my thoughts, theorising with them. It is difficult to label or categorise this – Deleuze and Guattari would not want to name it so conventionally I am sure!

This 'BwO' then can be different for everyone; Deleuze and Guattari (2015a) offer seemingly specific instructions to 'make yourself a Body Without Organs': they begin with saying (deceptively) simply '[t]his is how it should be done…' (ibid.: 187). What follows is, on the surface, a perfect example of an instructional text with each step beginning with a command, a verb, telling the reader what to do… Apart from its subject matter, the text is not unlike the examples I used when teaching students how to write instructions. But how exactly do you follow these instructions to create 'your own little machine, ready when needed to be plugged into other collective machines' (ibid)? For the 'BwO' is not designed to be alone: this is a machine intended to be plugged into other machines, to create 'assemblages', 'lines of flight', to move between. '[M]ade up of plateaus' (Ibid. :183), the 'BwO' is described as something you are *on*; Deleuze and Guattari stress that '(…it is not "my" body

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[288] Later 'Marys' would also think of bodies of writing and thinking in this regard.
[289] It is strange (now) seeing these words being used in relation to this thesis!

without organs, instead the "me" (*moi*) is on it, or what remains of me, unalterable and changing in form, crossing thresholds[290])' (Ibid. :188) and so I imagine lots of plateaus that I am free to move across; perhaps these plateaus represent different times of my life or career that I can revisit, and redraft for this 'BwO' 'is the strict contemporaneousness of the adult, of the adult and the child, their map of comparative densities and intensities, and all of the variations on that map' (ibid. : 191): places where these compositional singularities of student, exams invigilator, former lecturer, musician, daughter, aunt, sister, friend merge, where they are plugged in to each other in different combinations, or unplugged. These compositional singularities can be conflicting at times: when in a non-teaching role in a FE college, for example, my heart and mind fight each other: having been involved in the past in designing and delivering staff development sessions, and conducting lesson observations, my heart wants to join in the conversations about staff development, wants to protest that outstanding grades are being awarded without comments justifying those sessions being outstanding, but my mind knows that it is better to remain silent, just to input the observation details without expressing concern.[291] I am on top of this - my 'BwO' now - I am free to roam, to fly, to experiment. What will I do first?!

Could I remove some of the 'organising' from FE colleges – the organising that dictates the restrictive curricula, that stop students and staff thinking creatively, the organs that don't include reading literature, or writing creatively, in Functional Skills

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[290] A later 'Mary' editing this is reminded of Manning's (2020) 'practicing the schizz', of the description of it as a 'fugitive force that runs through' (p. 14) her book, always on the move. There is more detail around this concept on pages 169-70.

[291] Reading this now, this 'Mary', having recently been offered an administrative post, feels confident in her decision to pursue her dreams of a career in academia at least a little longer! Incidentally, this 'Mary' does not binarise heart and mind in this way, but perhaps that is why the decision was so hard to make…

English?[292] Deleuze and Guattari (2015b) emphasise that 'the body suffers from being organized in this way, from not having some other sort of organization, or no organization at all' (p. 19); I feel this is true of FE colleges, probably of all institutions. How do I approach this? This 'BwO' certainly seems a delicate balance to achieve with its 'smooth, slippery, [and] opaque…surface' (ibid.: 20), and the warning that the assemblage must only ever 'gently tip' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a: 187). Having convinced myself not to worry, but to fly, to be free of conventions, I suddenly notice that Deleuze and Guattari seem to be exercising caution. I have always thought of them as encouraging freedom, flight, change and difference![293]

Thinking about organisation in this way leads to my thoughts drifting to the various restructures I have experienced working in FE colleges: the Senior Management Team making staff redundant, or redeploying them elsewhere. These have been negative experiences rather than positive ones: following the closure of the Foundation Learning Department, the students (and prospective students) were left with no college courses; the removal of the Functional Skills Manager post left us Functional Skills Subject Specialists fighting a losing battle with our plans for improvement blocked by Senior Managers with little or no knowledge of the subjects.[294] What if things could have been organised differently, or if I could have found a 'line of flight'?[295]

What fascinates me from my reading about Deleuze and Guattari's 'BwO' so far is the idea of it being made up of 'plateaus' that I am on top of – that I can cross –

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[292] This 'Mary's' vision of this research project definitely primarily focuses on the institution and its regulations.
[293] This early 'Mary' is certainly very attentive to their work even if she does take it literally.
[294] Later 'Marys' still feel frustrated by this!
[295] It is unlikely Erin Manning's speculative work had been encountered when this was written, but there is definitely a sense here of 'what else'.

revisit – pass swiftly through – linger – and I am interested in what I might find in each of these plateaus,[296] what I might be able to do there – will I be able to revisit and redraft different times in my career in conversation with Erin, "Paula" or in my dreams with Laurel Richardson?[297] What might happen in these various plateaus?[298]

The time feels right now to create my, or rather, 'not' my own 'BwO' by following, as best I can, Deleuze and Guattari's (2015a) instructions:

> *This is how it should be done: Lodge yourself on a stratum, experiment with the opportunities it offers, find an advantageous place on it, find potential movements of deterritorialization, possible lines of flight, experience them, produce flow conjunctions here and there, try out continuums of intensities segment by segment, have a small plot of new land at all times. It is through a meticulous relation with the strata that one succeeds in freeing lines of flight, causing conjugated flows to pass and escape and bringing forth continuous intensities for a BwO. Connect, conjugate, continue: a whole "diagram," as opposed to still signifying and subjective programs. We are in a social formation; first see how it is stratified for us and in us and at the place where we are; then descend from the strata to the deeper assemblage within which we are held; gently tip the assemblage, making it pass over to the side of the plane of consistency. It is only there that the BwO reveals itself for what it is: connection of desires, conjunction of flows, continuum of intensities. You have*

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[296] It is interesting, reading this years later, that the idea of movement has remained in relation to the thesis's 'landing sites', and, of course, each one is 'revisited' with every editing of this work.
[297] An example of that original 'Mary's' vision of this being a more practical project with a focus on her career.
[298] Interestingly, there is a sense of excitement, a feeling something unexpected might occur, despite her plans.

constructed your own little machine, ready when needed to be plugged into

other collective machines (p.187)

Reading through the instructions, they appear to flow quite easily, but there are some phrases there I need to consider before attempting to follow them.[299] I am not quite sure firstly what a 'stratum' is: it is described as 'a thin layer within any structure'; 'a layer of rock / society'.[300] I also have to look up 'conjunctions' – it is unlikely that Deleuze and Guattari are referring to connective words such as 'and'! According to my dictionary, they seem to be two events at the same point in time and space – and 'continuums' are apparently continuous sequences – adjacent elements not perceptibly different, but extremes distinct.[301] I learn also that 'stratified' is the plural of 'stratum' (arranged / classified). Having looked up the vocabulary, I am ready to attempt to interpret and follow the instructions to create 'not' my own 'BwO':[302]

Firstly, then, I have to become firmly fixed in one place which can be a thin layer[303] within any structure, or rock, or society: I am choosing a layer of society as specialist diploma tutor in teaching English in the lifelong learning sector.

I then need to experiment with the opportunities it offers which I see as the chance to introduce students to the experiences of FE and teaching writing portrayed in this

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[299] Other 'Marys' understand '[r]eading up on botany will not bring [them] any nearer to an understanding of the concept of the rhizome' (Buchanan, 2006: 2) and so appreciate that looking the words up in a dictionary is actually futile, and destroys the excitement of the experience.

[300] A later 'Mary' editing this thinks perhaps it is a 'line of segmentarity'.

[301] It occurs to the 'Mary' editing this that they could be spatio-temporal comings together.

[302] Nonetheless, this 'Mary' expresses some doubt that her research will help her here.

[303] This 'Mary' has yet to encounter Duchamp's concept of the 'infrathin' which Manning (2020) describes as 'a variation on lived experience' (p. 19). If a 'stratum', then, is a 'thin layer', it can be tiny, almost imperceptible, but is nonetheless what 'makes [the] difference' (ibid.) and so it makes sense to the 'Mary' editing this that this is where Deleuze and Guattari's instructions for creating a 'BwO' commence.

thesis's selected fictional texts rather than just standard teacher training texts or standard texts about teaching English, and my own and my students' experiences.[304]

I am then told to find an advantageous place on this stratum - perhaps a forward-thinking department within a university or FE college – one open to its staff experimenting with new approaches?

The next step is to find potential movements of 'deterritorialization' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a) so I need to look out for opportunities to leave, to move on;[305] I must not stay in the one place but need to find 'lines of flight' to follow. Perhaps this could be 'lines of flight' to the colleges in the fictional texts?[306] I could then position myself within them, do something different and see where this might lead. I am then told to 'produce flow conjunctions here and there'; I will have to come back to that! Next: 'try out continuums of intensities.' What can these be? It is getting harder now! I do not know how to interpret these two instructions…

I like the next point, however, 'have a small plot of new land at all times' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a: 187) – this suggests space for me - space for something new to occur: somewhere to try out some of these 'conjunction[s] of flow' or 'continuum[s] of intensities' (ibid.)? I will have to come back to these. Deleuze and Guattari then indicate that the 'relation with the strata' is key to 'succeed[ing] in freeing lines of flight, causing conjugated flows to pass and escape and bringing forth continuous intensities for a BwO. Connect, conjugate, continue' (ibid.) – I'm beginning to see it

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[304] This was an aim of an earlier 'Mary', which was partly fulfilled, although some characters were lost along the way.
[305] This is not quite right, but it is how this 'Mary' interprets it whilst writing this that is important.
[306] Originally, fictional texts were going be used to compare 'Mary's' teaching experiences with those portrayed in novels and in the Freedom Writers' Diary (2009) in a more analytical way.

as a whole 'project' now[307] – everything taking place on one stratum. Perhaps this 'new land' is an oasis of calm with a waterfall…

Once I have experienced it, if I did, I am encouraged to 'descend from the strata to the deeper assemblage' (ibid.) thus losing my privileged place on top, or is the privileged place within the 'deeper assemblage'? The next step is the delicate one: 'gently tip the assemblage' (ibid.) to see if the connections hold! And it is at this point that 'the BwO reveals itself for what it is: connection of desires, conjunction of flows, continuum of intensities' (ibid.). So these three – 'connections,' 'conjunctions' and 'continuums' are crucial! Desire – what I desire for me and my students; flow – the continual flow of teaching and learning, experimenting, discovering; intensities - critical incidents perhaps? Or just moments? Kathleen Stewart (2007) writes about moments of intensities in *Ordinary Affects* and as I sit here, invigilating an AS Maths exam for one student, my mind drifts to the 'intensities' at work in this room: sitting with (sprained) left ankle elevated, the invigilator ostensibly watches the candidate but is mainly thinking about her own research; the candidate sits with calculator, formulae book, and question paper frantically working out question after question as the clock ticks... This is his chance to show what he can do, prove he knows enough to be awarded an AS qualification in Maths. We share this moment in this quiet space – this is an important two hours in his life, but it is unlikely to be in mine! For me it is a chance to earn some money to buy *Ordinary Affects* whereas for him it will result in passing or failing a qualification. He is having to work (probably quite hard: he is tapping furiously on his calculator, scratching his head); I am not. There is about a metre between us physically,[308] but this shared moment of intensity means

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[307] If only that vision could have continued: that absence of a sense of a whole is causing so many problems!
[308] This was in pre-covid times when distancing was unimportant.

different things for both of us; our minds are engaged in very different activities: whereas his mind appears focused, mine is flying from one thing to another, enjoying the freedom, the permission to do nothing except be ready if this student needs anything or attempts any malpractice. I remember worrying about what the invigilator was thinking during my own A-levels: was I writing enough? Did I look like I was thinking hard enough? If I'd thought less about what the invigilator, usually one of my teachers, may or may not have been thinking about me, I would have done better!! But this young man seems unperturbed by my presence; I seem more disturbed by the voices penetrating the walls than he does. If I were him, I'd be furious: I cannot concentrate with people talking. They are disturbing me as I try to write this and I'm not taking an exam… I can – I will – I am – sitting down at other times, in other places, reading through this, typing it up, deleting and rewriting parts.[309] This young man will not have another chance – at least not for a while.

Reading this again, in a café, I am not satisfied with my attempt to create a 'BwO': I am still approaching it too literally. I need to free my mind and try again. Perhaps here, by the lake on campus, where boundaries between subject and disciplines, and students and staff merge, is a good place? It seems to be as I suddenly have the idea of lodging myself on a stratum that is the hard, black cover of my unwritten PhD thesis.[310]

Being lodged on my PhD thesis seems to root me in it – stop it moving away from me; it enables me to get a grasp on it for the first time in a while. Being on it is advantageous in itself – I am controlling it now, not the other way around![311] The

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[309] Did that 'Mary' realise that other becoming-'Marys' would be editing the writing?!
[310] As footnote 146, at the time of writing, it was never assumed the thesis would not be bound.
[311] That feeling was only ever fleeting!

'lines of flight' are nonetheless numerous and I have experienced some of them in conversation with Erin Gruwell, 'Paula', and 'Chlo'. As I approach the conjunctions of flows' and 'continuum of intensities' I hardly pause – I do not flinch or shy away this time; I am ready for them: my thesis already has at least two events occurring at the same points in time and space – I am often working on two aspects at once, developing two conversations. I think particularly of meetings with 'Chlo' when we share a time and a space. Continuous sequences are also created within those conversations and I feel suddenly one step nearer to creating this – 'not' my 'BwO'. And I can see now how my PhD thesis might be stratified – layer by layer to be 'descend[ed]' through 'to the deeper assemblage within it' for what lies at the heart of it – in that 'deeper assemblage within it' is those experiences of teaching English in FE, the fight to maintain enthusiasm and motivation whilst working with often disillusioned students and staff, and the flight when the pervading negativity becomes too vast to conquer.[312] That is it; that is the place where the 'continuum of desires, conjunction of flows, continuum of intensities' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2015a: 187) come together and that is, then '[my] own little machine, ready when needed to be plugged into other collective machines' (ibid.). My machine is now ready to plug into those fictional texts at the heart of my thesis! And that 'small plot of new land' (ibid.) is there waiting, ready for use: somewhere to try out new ideas, or a space to leave an idea for a while, or just a space to be enjoyed whenever such a space is needed to escape the intensities, desires and flows surrounding this thesis…

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[312] Whilst much has changed within the thesis, the fight for second chances for all our 'Chloes' remains.

Through writing, initially a fairly literal following of a set of instructions, then, I have finally created 'not' my own 'BwO'. I wonder if I can call this 'writing as a method of inquiry' (Richardson: 1997, 2000).[313] Writing this has worked as a method[314] of inquiry for me: I was able to shift from literal to lateral thinking that enabled me, I feel, to engage with Deleuze and Guattari's (2015a; 2015b) concept of a 'BwO' and, at the moment, I feel this concept could be one which underpins the ideas within this thesis… With this idea of reorganisation, being organised differently, being central to this thesis, which has at its heart a desire to think English differently, Deleuze and Guattari's concept of 'BwO' appears to offer a strategy for doing exactly this.

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[313] Later Becoming-'Marys' feel there is also a sense of Wyatt and Gale's 'writing to it' (2018) here.

[314] As indicated in the 'main body' of this thesis-'assemblage', 'method' is subsequently problematised by some of the 'Marys' seeing it as restrictive (see page 154).

Appendix Accelerando

The black font below is an edited version of a paper presented at the 6th British Autoethnography conference in Bristol on 23rd July 2019 with thoughts before, during, and after the presentation in purple (the colour predominantly used throughout the thesis to indicate 'Marys'' voices). Creating, as the paper does, space within formal institutional ethical procedures for a troubling of the divisive Deleuzo-Guattarian 'lines' running through them, the paper is consequently considered worthy of being included here, in the appendices. It does not form a part of the whole collection only because it did not arise in the same manner, inspired from the writing of another text and another text, but arose from having to work towards a 'fixed' milestone (gaining ethical approval) within the PhD process…

It is past two o'clock in the morning: I am due to present my first academic conference paper in approximately twelve hours' time, but are changes needed? Should it be more personal? Most people are sharing their experiences of personal trauma, pain, illness; I admire them, their abilities to cope, their openness with all these strangers: could I stand there and share my shock diagnosis of a rare medical condition last year, is that what I *should* be doing… Instead, this paper is about first encounters with institutional ethical procedures which actually has not been as traumatic as feared: approval from the ethics committee having recently been received (after the second attempt). What if it is not okay, not autoethnographical enough for the British Autoethnographical Conference? Later that day, during lunch, less than an hour before the paper is due to be presented, worry totally takes over: the paper is not as personal, not as emotional, not as intellectual, not as academic as the others. Where does it fit among these autoethnographies? Does it fit? It stands out like wearing dresses (on a boat!), and a toe turning different shades of purple having had a too close encounter with a heavy hotel door a few hours ago…

But, there is no stopping time and so suddenly, it is happening, there is no escape: I am standing here in front of a much larger audience than anticipated, faking not being fazed at the absence of a computer for the powerpoint slides, taking a deep breath and saying:

"Thank you all for coming; I'm going to talk about *creating space by fictionalising autoethnographies within the formal requirements of institutional ethical procedures*."

Almost immediately there is a request to speak louder; trying to act as though shockwaves have not just been sent through the body, smiling, asking if this is better, (surely it must be: this is the voice's maximum volume), I continue reading, but it was so very different reading it to Saffie, to the audiences in the hotel room…[315]

"I always imagined that this - my first formal conference presentation - would focus on one or more of the theoretical concepts in my PhD inquiry, which basically explores the Post-compulsory Education worlds I've lived in,[316] or perhaps one of the tales I tell about Further Education to highlight, for example, the positivity in a sector often portrayed negatively (Daley, Orr and Petrie, 2015); I never really imagined it would focus on ethics, but, whereas I initially thought of ethics as something separate – an institutional milestone to be overcome – since writing my ethics application I have realised it is an integral part of the project and, of course, there is no escaping others[317] if we are to tell our tales…. As I hope this paper will demonstrate, then, it is its integral nature that is leading to my need to create space

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[315] This 'Mary' still sees 'assemblages' as being here, or there, rather than as a whole, as emergent.
[316] Presented in July 2019, there have been changes to the focus of this inquiry, but the paper appears here largely unchanged to keep it authentic.
[317] The 'Mary' editing this realises earlier 'Mary' is mainly referring only to human 'others' here.

within the formal requirements of institutional ethical procedures by fictionalising autoethnographies.

As this conference presentation is a significant moment for me, and this research project, I foresee potential ethical issues arising: it seems inevitable that this event will become a tale in the PhD project. We are becoming an 'assemblage'[318] – this paper I am holding, this pen, you, me, this room, this amazing environment here in Bristol – as Baruch Spinoza would perhaps say, we all have potential to affect and be affected by this paper, by each other, by *all* the bodies (not just human) in this 'assemblage' - but I won't be asking any of you for your consent to me writing about this as part of this project because the only versions I would tell would be my versions, as I re-member experiencing this event now,[319] as I am presenting this paper to you. No-one here will be named because I am not interested in any of us as individuals: I am interested in the whole 'assemblage' emerging here, in this paper's potential to affect and be affected by us. I am saying this to hopefully exemplify that it is the texts and technology that are at the heart of this becoming thesis, and this is where some of the ethical difficulties lie which will be discussed in this paper.

The research project I am seeking ethical approval for takes an autoethnographical approach. I am drawn to autoethnographies because of their flexibility, their encompassing of creative writing, poetry, emotion and affect which enables tales to be told in a way which hopefully invites readers / audiences to share those worlds. This inquiry explores English – specifically writing – within Further Education and

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[318] A later 'Mary' disagrees with the wording here, but resists the urge to alter these words.
[319] Re-reading this, editing it for inclusion (perhaps) in the 'final' thesis, this 'Mary' realises the earlier 'Mary' writing this would have thought memories were hers alone. She is not seeing them as bodies in a Spinozist sense with capacities to affect and be affected, as relational, as subject to change like 'assemblages', and so she is not thinking of her future 're-membering' as processual, as something moving toward something not-yet-known (Barad, 2007).

Higher Education. Supporting students with coursework – not with the content - but the writing itself, the communication of ideas, makes 'text' very much central. As with this presentation, then, I am interested in the potential affect of that text on reader and writer, and on how that text is potentially affected by reader and writer. It does not matter who wrote it and so identities are not relevant, this research is not mentioned to students, and there is consequently no handing out of consent forms; as you can probably imagine, this makes it potentially difficult to gain ethical approval. I have recently been told by the ethics committee to anonymise where this work was undertaken and so I do now have quite a lot of rewriting and reimagining to do, including imagining a different context for my job role, and creating a number of fictional cafés! Interestingly, this has also uncovered another aspect of the project – informal learning: it does not really matter where those texts are written and read and edited, it is their capacity to affect that is important… I should mention here that I take a Deleuzian approach to affect: seeing it as something occurring in-between, something becoming within those 'assemblages' with writer, reader, essay and technology. I think of Kathleen Stewart's (2010) words: 'everything depends on the feel of an atmosphere and the angle of arrival… Everything depends on the dense entanglement of affect, attention, the senses, and matter' (p. 340) and that is so important with informal learning, creating that relaxed, non-judgemental space where ideas can flow and texts can become other, potentially affecting, and being affected…

My PhD inquiry mainly consists of fictional tales very much influenced by my own experiences, but told by characters I have created such as its teenage protagonist 'Chloe', withdrawn from a fictional Further Education college before the end of her first day. I also draw on novels about post-compulsory education in the inquiry:

creating fictional versions of the characters I read about; I think of these 'research participants' as being like those in Peter Clough's (2002) *Narrative and Fictions in Educational Research* 'found…in my imagination' (p. 17, cited in Clough, 1995: 134), created to be who I want them to be, to tell the tales I want them to tell, 'the event symbolis[ing] in a way which data and analysis could never do' (ibid.)… And it is these characters that I feel the need to create space for within the formal requirements of the institutional ethics procedures for what are the ethics of presenting fictional conversations and characters connected to real people? I have thought about how I would feel if I encounter something that, for example, a former student has written about an event involving me, or perhaps something one of my former teachers has written about me[320] would be a more appropriate consideration as it maintains that same student – teacher power dynamic? But is that enough?

As soon as I looked at the institutional formal requirements, I realised that using *composite selves* could be more problematic as far as gaining ethical approval was concerned than having 'real' research participants. With *composite selves*, I am obviously not interviewing participants, recording, analysing and interpreting their responses, and storing their data. This means that I cannot provide the ethics committee with the required information. In addition to this, something else was troubling me and I eventually realised – just last week actually – that it was having to divide the data into two areas: data in the public domain, and data not in the public domain. I consequently feel forced to separate the *composite selves* from the characters I have adopted from published texts, and yet there are no divisions in the emerging thesis; I am not even writing in chapters, but in Deleuzian plateaus with a 'rhizome' – which I think of as like a seed - from one scattering and growing in

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[320] These scenarios are subsequently written about in detail (see pages 193-94)

another and another[321]… Not wanting to change the whole approach of the project, however, my only option seemed to be to construe my material as 'data' for the purpose of completing the form, and to split my participants into composite selves, and my versions of others' characters, in the hope of finding a way to create space for both within those formal requirements."

My inner voice interrupts here reminding me to pause, breathe out, slow down: people can't hear a word you're saying, it says, gabbling on like you're in a race. No wonder everyone looks bored. There's time, there's a whole thirty seconds to play with and you definitely read slower than this before: pausing for water, pausing for affect, pausing to potentially be affected… Just pretend, pretend this is the hotel room, and you're not nervous, you're not afraid…

"Luckily I am no stranger to creating space for something new. Applying Judith Butler's (1990) performativity theory in the past (by repeatedly introducing new texts and opportunities to write in my classes) enabled me to push institutional and curricula boundaries.[322] It was over a decade later that I encountered Deleuze and Guattari, and, with them, came to realise that it was possible to not only disrupt, as Butler does, Lacan's symbolic order with its controlling structures, but also to escape it, and that humans are not actually central to our universe: Deleuze and Guattari (2015a) showed me humans and nonhumans 'becoming' together in the same 'assemblages', their forces entangling and separating, 'intra-acting' and diverting, crossing boundaries, following 'lines of flight' rupturing and escaping from the Lacanian symbolic, creating something new, not bound by any pre-existing rules, but

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[321] As demonstrated elsewhere, particularly in the dreams with Deleuze, understanding of the concept of the 'rhizome' has shifted since this was written.

[322] See *Deleuze in the Classroom*.

something free, free to continually 'become' other. And with that, I feel, there is a new ethics emerging; an ethics relating to not just humans, but, nonhumans too, an ethics entangled with, as Karen Barad (2007) suggests, knowing and being in the world: an ethics I think of as being entangled within the autoethnographies being fictionalised within my inquiry, and no longer, therefore, capable of being separated out for discussion.

With Barad's (2007) 'ethico-onto-epistem-olog[ical]' (p. 185) approach, then, with its emphasis on 'an appreciation of the intertwining of ethics, knowing, and being' (ibid.), ethics becomes active: it is happening now, it is 'becoming', it is not fixed, but continually changing: incapable, therefore, of being captured and confined within a form… Me, the ethics committee, my supervisory team, Barad, Deleuze and Guattari and Erin Manning are engaging with creative-relational[323] space making for the ethical issues arising within the emerging project. This suggestion of movement within structure enables a move towards the idea that a form is not necessarily rigid, and that there may therefore just be a way into that ethics form for my fictionalising autoethnographies.

'Thinking-with' Gilbert Simondon's idea of 'in-formation' – that is in hyphen formation – which Manning (2007) refers to in *Politics of Touch*, fluid spaces can be created which are capable of shifting those formal ethical requirements back into being 'in-formation' – not yet formed, not yet fixed - and so it becomes possible to create space for a different kind of content within the form. No longer in control of the content, the structure expands, shifts, alters to accommodate the content. Seen as

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[323] This refers to an early acquaintance with the concept of 'creative-relationally *more-than-human*' (Massumi, 2015b: 14); later 'Marys' will also encounter, and introduce into this thesis, 'creative-relational inquiry' (Wyatt, 2019).

'in-formation', the content of the ethics approval application form, in Barad's (2007) words, is capable of being 'cut…apart' (p. 381), capable therefore of being altered - to being 'in-formation' once again, not fixed - before being 'cut…together' (ibid.) again[324] having created space for my *composite selves* which hopefully fulfils the institutional formal requirements."

Does that make sense? I look up, nearly losing the place in my attempt to make eye contact with the audience! Focus on the paper, not on how bored everyone looks, I tell my self, resisting the urge to jump to the end to put us all out of our misery! Just 'carry on' regardless as in the song Beautiful South sings:

"And having created space within those formal requirements, I now feel able to attach additional statements for the ethics committee demonstrating my thoughts and reflections around potential ethical issues which until now had no place in their application form. There is, for example, a conversation with author Erin Gruwell about the ethics of me using her stories from *The Freedom Writers' Diary (2009) and Teach With Your Heart (2007)* in my thesis.[325] This offered the ethics committee a clear example of how I actually intend to use what they call 'data already in the public domain' in my inquiry. There is also an equally fictitious conversation with

Gruwell in the emerging thesis when we discuss our experiences of teaching teenagers English. It therefore exemplifies my approach to ethics surrounding published texts. In many ways however that is the easy part for those texts have been published – anyone can read them – and, presumably, it is okay to draw on someone else's characters as long as all references and citations from the

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[324] Unhappy with an earlier draft, a later 'Mary' will again experiment with this Baradian practice in order to create another version of this collection of post qualitative inquiries.

[325] Parts of this have since been incorporated into the discussion with Erin Gruwell about teaching practices (see *Deleuze in the Classroom)*.

works are referenced? Or maybe not, perhaps it is not enough to have held an imaginary conversation with the author…

As well as data in the public domain, the application form asks about data not already in the public domain. This is where space is needed for my *composite selves* and I find myself under pressure to prove that they are not 'real', but a blend of real and imagined people (and places and events) which have shaped my inquiry. The *composite selves* are inspired by students I have taught, but did not really *know* - I knew only the versions they presented, or, my interpretations of those versions they presented. But how can I prove that? How can I prove that 'Chloe' is not any one student in particular and that no students are identifiable from the tales I tell?[326] I thought that referring to the inaccuracies within my reflective journals would prove the past becomes misremembered over time. However, this opened further issues with the ethics committee wanting to know if anyone was named in those journals, which leaves me feeling I now have to prove that no-one is named or identifiable in them (even though the journals do not form part of the inquiry). As I just said, then, I did not really know my former students, or their individual stories; I know only what some chose to confide in me and I have no intention of betraying any confidences which is one reason for using *composite selves*; in addition I want to tell my versions of my tales as I remember them – I do not want to have to tell other people's versions.[327]

I'd just like to end – the mouth smiles, relief floods through the body - by stressing that whilst humans were centre stage in my experiences,[328] I think that being at the

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[326] See further thoughts around this on pages 193-94 .

[327] There is a sense here, again, of a 'Mary' not understanding the relationality of 'memories', thinking they are fixed rather than always at play, entangled in discourse.

[328] The 'Mary' involved in those experiences is not yet attune to the capacities of nonhuman bodies to affect and be affected, to the forces at work in classroom 'assemblages'.

centre focused my gaze in ways which, with hindsight, were not particularly helpful. So this inquiry is simply not about individual students or lecturers; it is the 'assemblages' I am interested in – the 'assemblages' emerging with their different forces with ever shifting connections, disconnections, diversions, interruptions and ruptures. The focus is on the rooms, the technologies, the texts – their potential to affect and be affected. I hope the Deleuzo-Guattarian 'lines of flight' escaping the confines of the institution, rupturing the curriculum and the institutional structures, are also rupturing the ethical application form enabling the ethical procedures to be 'in-formation', thus informed by Barad's (2007) practices of 'ethico-onto-epistem-olog[ies]' (p. 185), and by my unconventional research inquiry, and thus creating space by fictionalising autoethnographies within the formal requirements of institutional ethical procedures.

Thank you for listening! Sitting down quickly, trying to focus on the subsequent presentations in the session, but, unable to control the thoughts of failure flooding the mind, it is soon time to return to the front again; sitting with the other presenters and the 'chair', after a few minutes, it actually feels good to be answering questions with the others. There is a sense of us – this paper and I and all the other human and nonhuman bodies – being receptive to the affects, percepts and concepts we are creating, sparking discussions together, which really was the point, encouraging the sharing of experiences with institutional ethical procedures.

Writing with covid: writing-moving towards the not-yet-known

(Adapted from conference papers presented at the University of Plymouth, Institute of Education, Doctoral Event (2ⁿᵈ June 2021) and the Methodological Innovations conference on 7ᵗʰ June 2021,there is a strong focus on covid-19 in this appendix which is felt to push this text to the edges of the thesis-'assemblage'. However, its focus on the frequently recurring themes of writing-paralysis and writing-moving secures it a place within these appendices)

As you now know the 'Mary' starting this PhD loved the challenge of writing 'academically': happily spending hours and hours planning MA assignments (because how can you start writing before you know what you're going to say?) and then trying to adopt a nuanced academic style, and developing what she thought of as an academic vocabulary, whilst carefully adhering to all the conventions. Starting a PGCE course two years later, it was impossible to write 'I' in the required reflective essays and journal, to write about her experiences, her feelings and emotions until another 'Mary' emerges: the journal-writing then continues long after finishing the PGCE! Would this collection of post qualitative inquiries have arisen without such care and thought over writing those reflections? As stated in the main body of this thesis-'assemblage', those journal entries were only consulted again after 'Chloe's Story' and 'Mad Mary's Story' had been written, but 'Mad Mary' did not imagine her reflective journal writing from her first year of teaching full-time would ever be given more than a cursory glance![329]

There is a not unnatural assumption that an excited 'Mary' finally fulfilling her ambition of engaging in doctoral studies would return to that nuanced academic style

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[329] As explained in the 'main body' of this thesis-'assemblage', the reflective journal was reread out of curiosity (to see how time had shaped those memories of the 'critical incident' inspiring these inquiries) only after 'Chloe's Story' and 'Mad Mary's Story' had been written.

of writing earlier 'Marys' had worked so hard to master, and, indeed, for a time, she did. As this thesis-'assemblage' details, however, engagement with other writing practices ensues[330] and a battle develops between the 'Mary' with the lifelong dream of being a PhD student, the one who enjoys writing in what she thinks of as a nuanced academic way, conforming to conventions, and emerging 'Marys' along the way seeking to challenge orthodox academic practices. With writing no longer a tightly controlled process, an often stressful process that cannot even begin without a logically structured plan, which should not be deviated from, and which will end with a finished piece to be submitted, to be assessed, to be judged, writing as Wyatt and Gale (2018) posit '*does*'; writing emerges as immanent doing: a fascinating process capable of leading anywhere, taking the writer and reader to the edges of the writing and beyond.

Engaging with different writing practices, then, the writing seems to simply take over; there are even times when the writing seems to be writing this thesis! The amount of writing flowing during the PhD years is vast with the number of words in the first full draft, including appendices, exceeding 140,000… Nonetheless, when covid first strikes close to home, the writing simply stops. I remember the date well - it was around my birthday, when disasters so often happen: the ferry capsizing just outside Zeebrugge on 6th March 1987; the missing MH370 flight on 18th March 2018. On 2nd March 2020, then, two cases of covid are announced here in Paignlake leading to the closure of five schools (fortunately not the schools my niece and nephew attend) and my brother's GP surgery. The anxiety has actually already started with constant hand-washing, getting cover to avoid going out to work (indeed hardly going out at all), but, whilst writing, reading, and music initially provide solace, these activities are

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[330] These are exemplified within this collection of post qualitative inquiries.

later replaced by jigsaw puzzles, seemingly offering more respite from covid anxieties. At the time though, fingers were still moving over laptop keys, letters running across the screen, spaces in between forming words, when suddenly a message notification sounds, disturbing the almost silence in the room, rupturing the creation on the screen, shifting attention to a nearby smaller screen displaying the message:

NHS Coronavirus Service: The NHS is sending letters and text messages to people who we think are at the highest risk of severe illness if they catch coronavirus…

That was on the 10th April 2020 at 1.36 p.m.[331]

And that's it: no more words appear on the laptop screen. Why not? Why have they just stopped in mid flow? It is as though they have been ruptured, replaced by a thudding, racing heart, a rock in the stomach, the only surviving words 'at high risk of severe illness' resounding around the room; the *if* they catch it disappears, the virus is everywhere, infecting everyone, the next day's message confirms that:

NHS Coronavirus Service: Do you live with others? To stay safe from the virus please try to…

That was on the 11th April 2020 at 1.47 p.m., followed a few hours later with the message to let a friend or family member 'know you are following advice to stay at home until it is safer to mix with others'.

When will that be? And when will words on the laptop screen flow again?

Adrenaline rushing, organs turning over, turning to liquid, reading the last paragraph of the next message (12th April 2020): 'in case you do need to go into hospital during

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[331] All text messages cited here were received from the 'NHS Coronavirus Service' at the dates and times stated.

the coming weeks, get a single bag ready with your key health information and essentials for an overnight stay.'

The messages continue, the words on the laptop do not. On 15th April at 1.58 p.m., '[w]e know staying home for 12 weeks may be frustrating. Having some structure to your day may help.' There used to be a structure: reading a novel in bed with little Saffie and the first coffee of the morning, then getting up and writing (with the second coffee, with Saffie), writing, if going well, continuing into the afternoon, perhaps interrupted by playing the clarinet, trying to play grade eight examination pieces just for fun, or attempting to play the flute (without ever having had any lessons), before returning to reading, thinking, writing, doing… But how to do that with these messages about the coronavirus rupturing bodies of thinking, bodies of writing, entangled bodies, all with the capacity to affect and to be affected…

The what was to be the last message arrives on 16th April 2020 with the words, '[s]tay apart from others until you are advised that it is safe to return to normal.'

When will that be? Will there be no more words flowing until then?

Everything, all bodies, apparently even the text messages from the NHS coronavirus service, now suddenly stopping, stopped by this virus; covid continuing to disrupt writing, thinking, reading, doing; it may even have moved away from Paignlake now, but the fear of the possibility of its presence, its always moving, hidden presence, looks likely to continue into 2022… The writing however needs to return before then, if this PhD thesis is ever to be submitted!

It is 'writing to' covid, to its ability to turn bodily organs upside down, to force a body to stay inside, to treat all other bodies (human and nonhuman) with suspicion of being infected, shifting attention to those nonhuman bodies 'invading' the home - is

covid in the air, on the borrowed screwdriver, on the cardboard packaging and jiffy bags coming through the door or left on the doorstep, and/or on the books inside the packaging, on the food delivered and the bags it is delivered in? - which, whilst not alleviating concerns, definitely eases them; whilst covid initially forces its way into these inquiries, into the emerging thesis, there is no doubt that 'writing to' it, acknowledging its presence in the 'agentic assemblages' (Bennett, 2010) emerging within, animates the writing. Ironically, covid eventually saves the PhD by creating an impossible to resist urge to write: the writing simply flying as those paper planes flew in Grasslands College many years ago.

Are there glimmers of the not-yet in this covid-inspired *writing-moving*? Where did that elision come from? Whose is it? Erin Manning's? She writes a lot about movement, relationality, or could it be Brian Massumi's creation? He encourages risk-taking in writing, an idea which is certainly influential in the creation of the thesis; they seem the most likely creators of the phrase *writing-moving*, but extensive reading and searching fails to find its origin, a reference for it. And yet, it's there, it's in the writing on the screen, there, in black, and in purple, but, unlike covid, it is definitely present in the writing, *writing-moving*. And so, returning to Manning's (2007) use of Simondon's 'in-formation' a troubling of fixities is encouraged, and, inspired by Wyatt and Gale's (2018) 'writing to it', there's a new, possibly covid-inspired writing-moving perhaps offering a glimmer of something new being created, something not yet known as the writing, like those paper planes, is flying, now an animating force, inspiring the adoption of a processual, (non)methodological approach to inquiry, but, then, suddenly…

it is October 2020, five months before the thesis's (at the time) submission date, and panic really sets in around the PhD inquiry: what are these writings so far, if anything, creating? There does not seem to be a cohesive body of writing to submit; there is no thesis; there are two theses – a collection of stories, some about 'Chloe', some about writing. Buchanan (2021) says an 'assemblage' has a 'beating heart' (p. 60) – is 'Chloe' its beating heart? Is it the writing? Can there be two beating hearts? Is that possible? How can all these texts make a thesis? Will that ever be possible? Can these writings, these singularities, ever come together as a whole, as an 'assemblage'? With her idea of 'speculative pragmatism,' Manning is the saviour of this PhD thesis: you have probably already read about this in the 'landing site' *Pre-pre-prelude, post-post-postlude: Speculative Pragmatism*. Of course more 'writing to': 'writing to' organising the emerging 'assemblage', followed, but, it was very exciting to watch those bodies of reading, thinking, writing over several years coming together in completely unexpected and exciting ways creating first one full draft, which most of the 'Marys' were unhappy with, and then, eventually, a second draft felt to do greater justice to our 'Chloes', to writing, to all those who have written with them, supported, encouraged, commiserated and loved them during their journeying so far…

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