Disrupting the All-Too-Human Body Through Art in Early Childhood Education and Care

by

Vanessa Sophia Clark
B.A., Simon Fraser University, 2009

A Thesis is Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

MASTERS OF ARTS

in the School of Child and Youth Care

© Vanessa Sophia Clark, 2011
University of Victoria

All rights reserved. This thesis may not be reproduced in whole or in part, by photocopy or other means, without the permission of the author.
Disrupting the All-Too-Human Body Through Art in Early Childhood Education and Care

by

Vanessa Sophia Clark
B.A., Simon Fraser University, 2009

SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE

Supervisor: Dr. Veronica Pacini-Ketchabaw
(School of Child and Youth Care)

Department member: Dr. Sylvia Kind
(School of Child and Youth Care)
ABSTRACT

The purpose of my research is to disrupt the all-too-human body through art in early childhood education and care. This study begins by constructing the problem of the all-too-human body as it is practiced in the classroom and through art. With this study, I attempt to disrupt this way of reading the body through an art encounter. This involves rethinking/rewriting how we come to practice art making. To do this, I turn to the philosophy of Deleuze and Guattari (1987) and employ three concepts: the Body without Organs (BwO), assemblage, and becoming. With these concepts, this thesis is inspired by an immanent relational materialist onto-epistemology.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE ........................................................................................................... ii
ABSTRACT ....................................................................................................................................... iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS .................................................................................................................. iv
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS ................................................................................................................... vi
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION ......................................................................................................... 1
  Research Questions ....................................................................................................................... 3
  Thesis Map ...................................................................................................................................... 3
  Theoretical Framework .................................................................................................................. 4
    The Body without Organs (BwO) ............................................................................................... 6
    Assemblage ............................................................................................................................... 10
CHAPTER II: THE PROBLEM OF THE ALL-TOO-HUMAN BODY ............................................. 15
  The All-Too-Human Body .......................................................................................................... 15
    The Individual Autonomous Thinking Subject ....................................................................... 15
    The Striated Body .................................................................................................................... 20
    Development and the Body ....................................................................................................... 24
    Binary Logic and the Body ....................................................................................................... 29
  The Politics of Art and the Body ................................................................................................. 34
    Art and the body within practice ............................................................................................ 34
    Rethinking Art and the Body .................................................................................................... 39
    Alternative understandings of art ............................................................................................ 46
CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY .................................................................................................... 50
  Ontology and Epistemology ........................................................................................................ 50
  The Architect ............................................................................................................................... 51
    Journal ....................................................................................................................................... 52
    Visual materials ......................................................................................................................... 53
    Image and video ......................................................................................................................... 53
  Considering Material Potential .................................................................................................... 54
  Actants .......................................................................................................................................... 55
  Doing Method ............................................................................................................................. 56
  Analysis ....................................................................................................................................... 58
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank Veronica Pacini-Ketchabaw and Sylvia Kind for their support and trust in my work and me, and for allowing me the freedom to explore new spaces and passions. I thank Ian Clark for his care and patience. I am grateful to the children who helped me write this thesis and allowed me to grow as an educator. I cherish the paint, paintbrush, camera, and Plexiglas for their more “silent” effort in my thesis.
Paintbrushes are strewn on the wooden floor beneath the child’s body.¹ A black bowl holding red paint and a white bowl holding yellow paint dot the ground around her. Mila crouches over her knees, her feet spread to support the weight and angle of her body. The length and width of a red paintbrush suggest how Mila’s hand might connect to wrap around it. Mila shifts her body so her arm can stretch to lift the paintbrush. The wooden end connects with the Plexiglas and machines a tapping sound. Another paintbrush evokes a response from Mila’s body. She bends over her knees and shifts her legs so her other arm can extend to let her hand meet the paintbrush. Her hand is offered to support the smooth, black, wooden body. She pulls the brush up close to her chest and embraces it, while her other arm helps the red brush to connect with the Plexiglas once again: tap, tap, tap.

As educators, we approach Mila’s body in certain ways. Following Deleuze and Guattari (1987), I term this way of reading the body the all-too-human body. In reading Mila’s all-too-human body, we may come to see her as acting on the materials she uses. We might suggest, since she uses the wrong end of her paintbrush, that she does not yet know how to paint. We may conclude that she is not able to engage in the prescribed art project in the same way as the older children. We might approach Mila as though she is in the sensory motor stage and does not yet possess strong cognitive abilities.

¹ I have worked in various early childhood education settings, including daycares, kindergartens, and out-of-school care, for several years. In my practice, I have found moments like the one I describe here to be regular occurrences in the early childhood classroom. It is perhaps a taken-for-granted moment as the routines and practices of doing early childhood unfold.
With this thesis, I attempt to disrupt early childhood education’s construction of the all-too-human body and offer provocations for approaching Mila differently. With the growing institutionalization of childhood, the risk is that only one material-discourse will govern early childhood practice. Ultimately, this material-discourse privileges a Western, white, humanist, neoliberal, and modernist paradigm (Dahlberg & Moss, 2005, p. vi). Over the last ten years, however, a growing body of literature has begun to rethink early childhood education by using educators’ experiences, empirical research, and the theories of philosophers such as Foucault, Derrida, Deleuze, and Levinas (Dahlberg & Moss, 2005). This thesis is situated within the reconceptualist literature in early childhood education and care. It is my hope to add to this growing body of work. I focus on the early childhood field, so the age group of interest consists of children between birth and 6 years of age.

In search of a response to the problem of the all-too-human body, I have turned to the work of Deleuze and Guattari (1987). The space through which I attempt to disrupt the all-too-human body is art. Through art, in the early childhood education setting, I explore three related concepts—‘the Body without Organs,’ ‘assemblage,’ and ‘becoming’—which I describe below in the section titled Theoretical Framework. For the purposes of working with children’s creative potential, like Skott-Myhre (2008), I turn to an account of the body as more than a site for discursive expression. I make use of an immanent relational materialist onto-epistemology. I do not intend to suggest that this approach is the only way to address the problem of the all-too-human body. With this study, I hope to show that alternatives exist, and that “the dominant discourses, far from
being self-evident, are always just one of many choices facing us” (Lenz-Taguchi, 2010, p. ix).

Research Questions

My research questions are inspired by my (re)thinking/(re)writing. I ask: How do Bodies without Organs assemble through the art exploration in the classroom? What becomings can the artistic process make possible in the early childhood education classroom? What are Bodies without Organs capable of through the artistic process in the early childhood education classroom?

Thesis Map

The thesis is organized into six chapters. In this, the first chapter, I sketch the theoretical framework I employ to rupture the all-too-human body. To begin, I describe the abstract shift that the study makes, my process of “going abstract.” I then explicate how I understand the Body without Organs. This requires unpacking the concepts ‘assemblage’ and ‘becoming.’ I also explore how these concepts might pertain to the practice of art.

In chapter 2, the literature review, I construct the problem of The All-Too-Human Body. To do this, I present four ways in which the body might be read in the classroom: (1) as an individual autonomous thinking subject; (2) as a striated body; (3) in terms of development; and (4) in terms of binary logic. In the second section, The Politics of Art and the Body, I discuss how this problematic body is materialized within the space of art in the classroom. The third and final section, Rethinking Art and the Body, presents possibilities for rupture. Throughout each section of the literature review, I engage
autoethnographical moments from my practice. By including these moments, I hope to bring the body into my writing, since typically the body is essentially disembodied within theoretical writing. Davies (1999) argues that “theoretical writing about the body generally constitutes the body in isolation from the physical space in which it exists” (p. 13). Considering my own practice in the context of the literature has also allowed me to rethink/rewrite my body.

In chapter 3, *Assembling Methodology*, I outline the ontological and epistemological view that guides me in this research, as well as the various pieces I considered in the process of doing this research, such as the architecture, material potential, actants, method, analysis, quality and trustworthiness, and possibilities.

In chapters 4 and 5, titled *Becoming-with* and *Becoming Enchanted* respectively, I present my analysis.

Finally, in chapter 6, I summarize and present my concluding thoughts, including what I learned with this research and its contributions to art and to early childhood education.

**Theoretical Framework**

The philosophy I turn to in this study is built with ideas proposed by Spinoza (Grosz, 1994) and carried forward by various philosophers, including Deleuze and Guattari (1987). I choose these theories because, to rethink the all-too-human body, a philosophy is needed that accounts for matter in a different way from that of philosophers going back to Plato, who viewed matter as flawed and the body as a vessel for the mind.

Below I describe the abstract shift this study takes in my attempt to build possible worlds. By using the term ‘abstract,’ my intention is not to create a binary between
abstract and concrete. Massumi (2002), paraphrasing Deleuze, writes, “The problem with the dominant models in cultural and literary theory is not that they are too abstract to grasp the concreteness of the real. The problem is that they are not abstract enough to grasp the real incorporeality of the concrete” (p. 5).

To explore the relationship between ‘abstract’ and ‘concrete,’ on March 26, 2011, I went to hear a panel discussion at the Vancouver Art Gallery in which Izabella Laba, a mathematician, Roy Miki, an artist/poet, and Sandra Meigs, an artist/painter, presented on the topic “Between Concrete and Abstract.” I was intrigued by what Izabella Laba said. I was intrigued by what Izabella Laba said mathematicians do, as it was similar to how I conceptualize what I am doing with the work of Deleuze and Guattari: “We use the abstract to do things such as build…. [In mathematics] we don’t do anything that is not abstract” (I. Laba, personal communication, March 26, 2011). Sandra Meigs echoed this view of the abstract and the concrete as the same: “There is no need to separate them. They are both experienced” (S. Meigs, personal communication, March 26, 2011). Roy Miki recounted his late friend jpNichols’ answer to the question “What is it like to paint?” Nichols, whose work “pages from hell” was then showing at the gallery, described painting as

- like standing in an imaginary house, and seeing an imaginary staircase,
- walking over to the imaginary staircase and walking up to an imaginary door, opening the imaginary door and seeing an imaginary window,
- walking up to the imaginary window, and looking out to the real world.

(R. Miki, personal communication, March 26, 2011)

Sandra Meigs says she “truly believes that art is a realm that exists” (S. Meigs, personal communication, March 26, 2011). In a sense, then, with this thesis I am building
a realm, through art, using the work of Deleuze and Guattari (1987). Below I explore the three concepts that I use to build this realm: the Body without Organs (BwO), assemblage, and becoming.

**The Body without Organs (BwO)**

The human body, Deleuze and Guattari argue, “neither harbours consciousness nor is it biologically pre-determined, rather it is understood through what it can do—its processes, performances, assemblages and the transformations of becoming” (Springgay, 2008b, p. 3).

To understand what the body can do, we can start in the middle with the idea of a Body without Organs (BwO). The BwO is not literally an empty body. It is a body without organization or categorization (Grosz, 1994). Further, the BwO is not necessarily the human body (Coleman, 2008). It can refer to any body, such as a plant, an idea, a paintbrush, or a sound (Davies, 1999). This account of the body highlights material and discursive interconnectedness. “The BwO,” Deleuze and Guattari (1987) explain, “is what remains when you take everything away. What you take away is precisely the phantasy, and significances and subjectifications as a whole” (p. 151). What remains is desire, but in this sense, desire is not a lack (Springgay, 2008b). Desire is different from Foucault’s conception of power. Desire is a productive force (Skott-Myhre, 2008) and a magnetic attraction between bodies.

A BwO is something that is constructed. To make a BwO, we need to take apart the self. The traditional idea of the self, carried forward from Descartes, is the idea of an essential thinking subject. In this view, the “I” is the organizer who represents the world through thought (Olsson, 2009).
Where psychoanalysis says ‘stop, find your self again,’ we should say instead, ‘let’s go further still, we haven’t found your BwO yet, we haven’t sufficiently dismantled our self.’ Substitute forgetting for anamnesis, experimentation for interpretation. Find your body without organs. Find out how to make it. (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 151)

In this view, the thinking self is an effect of life (Olsson, 2009).

A BwO is constructed in two phases: “One phase is for the fabrication of the BwO, the other to make something circulate on it or pass across it; the same procedures are nevertheless used in both phases, but they must be done over, done twice” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 152).

**Phase One: Experimentation.**

A BwO is made through experimenting with different assemblages of bodies: ideas, chairs, sounds, my body, your body, and so on. Each piece that connects within/on a BwO has different movements, vibrations, potentials, and affects. Experimentation unlocks the potentials of the pieces in/on the BwO. Something new is created through this process. BwO are continually made from connections of human and non-human bodies, matter, and discourse that then break down (Lenz-Taguchi, 2010; see also Massumi, 2002).

Deleuze and Guattari (1987) warn against certain BwO. Some BwO block the flow of new assemblages and becomings. They differentiate between a full BwO, an empty BwO, and a cancerous BwO. The full BwO is able to form new relations and continually enter into different assemblages (Buchanan, 1997). The empty BwO is built on the destruction of the structure from which it is made. Deleuze and Guattari (1987)
refer to examples of these empty BwO as drug users, masochists, and schizophrenics. The cancerous BwO is one that proliferates and becomes a molar assemblage. The hope is to create a full BwO where the movements, speeds, and reverberations are productive and allow for the formation of new connections, assemblages, and full BwO (Buchanan, 1997).

One way to create a full BwO is through and within art exploration. When an artist engages in a creative process, the materials and environment make themselves intelligible to her through their own unique qualities. Each material holds different qualities, movements, and reverberations. This event is not about an essential thinking subject who acts on materials through her body. When an artist meets with paint, she feels the paint, embodies the paint, and becomes with the paint. It is a process with few organizing thoughts and is more about finding pieces with which to connect and experiment. Each time the artist meets with paint, they meet one another in a new way. The artist can never know what will become a part of the assemblage. Her mood, ideas, emotions, room, lights, sounds, smells, and other materials all become bodies that may connect within the artistic process. Each body holds the potential to affect and be affected by the others in different ways. Essentially, the artistic process is a set of liberated singularities, if only for a moment (O’Sullivan, 2006). These sets of singularities, through constellations of assemblages, form becomings. Bennett (2010) explains that Deleuze “invented the notion of ‘absorption’ to describe this kind of part-whole relationship: absorption is a gathering of elements in a way that both forms a coalition and yet preserves something of the agential impetus of each element” (p. 35).
The artist does not necessarily choose her materials. The materials and artist are drawn to each other. I use paint in this study because paint excites and interests me. I have worked for many years with paint, and we keep coming back to each other, as do I and the paintbrush. When I was younger, I never cared much for holding a pen, but I wanted to hold a paintbrush. This body and what it was able to do fascinated me. Bennett (2010) contends that because we have the power to affect other bodies, such as paint, we also suffer from the inescapable relation to be affected by these bodies. Artists may collect different materials for an art piece based on a particular felt connection with the materials. For example, I was considering using mirrors in this study, but I foresaw some problems with this material. In a meeting with artist Sylvia Kind, she suggested the idea of using Plexiglas instead of mirrors. When she suggested this material, it intrigued me. I had never met Plexiglas before. When I looked into Plexiglas and its potentials, I became excited. The Plexiglas was sold in large strips, so I bought two; with the help of Ian Clark, I then cut the Plexiglas with a table saw into four long rectangles. I envisioned them as having wooden frames and feet to stand on. I made the frames from wood recycled from a house that was being demolished. When I was building the pieces, I felt uneasy cutting the Plexiglas, as I felt a strange connection to the material. It almost hurt to cut it. I was not sure why at that time. This story demonstrating affect, relation, and assemblage may problematize many concepts, among which are agency, causality, autonomy, and free will (Bennett, 2010). Many materialists and Deleuze-inspired authors have begun to explore how such concepts might work in practice; however, for the purposes of this thesis, I will limit my discussion here.
**Assemblage**

We are not able to know in advance what a body can do or what a body is capable of becoming (Skott-Myhre, 2008). What the body of a child can do is understood by what assemblages it partakes in (Grosz, 1994). An alternative view of how parts and a whole relate to one another is given by the idea of an assemblage:

Assemblages are ad hoc groupings of elements, of vibrant materials of all sorts. Assemblages are living, throbbing confederations that are able to function despite the persistence of energies that confound them from within. They have uneven topographies, because some of the points at which the various affects and bodies cross paths are more heavily trafficked than others, and so power is not distributed equally across its surface. (Bennett, 2010, p. 23-24)

The body is “not the sum of the parts of its assemblages but rather an effect of the assemblage that is not separated from the world” (Olsson, 2009, p. 45). The body does not hold rigid boundaries, nor does it cease to exist. The body is both virtual and actual: material-incorporeal. It is the moment of (en)folding in time and space (Massumi, 2002). The assemblages through the event enfold the child’s body. Here, the context becomes relevant, and the child is reunited with her body. The child embodies the assemblages she partakes in.

**Phase Two: Becoming.**

An assemblage is a composition of bodies. The bodies that constitute the assemblage mingle, resonate, and reverberate with one another within the event (Lenz-Taguchi, 2010). Assemblages come together through/on the BwO. The assemblage is
relational and opens us to the in-between. The event is open and exists within the relationships between the bodies (Springgay & Freedman, 2009). The idea of becoming requires that we focus on how something “becomes through its relations” (Coleman, 2008, p. 186). The future and past come together on a plane. The plane is the ground where nothing has been individuated. The bodies come together against this ground in the event. The ground is the BwO. A BwO is made on different scales and produces different plots of land. The potentials and forces are generated in between the pieces. This is the virtual, the realm of pure potential (Lenz Taguchi, 2010; see also Massumi, 2002). The space in-between is where things fray and undo. To enter in the middle is to become, in the space where the body is in thought (Springgay & Freedman, 2009). Collisions continually form new assemblages and becomes. Becomings are moments of creation and individuation from this ground. This is a process of continual limitless differentiation and diffraction (Lenz Taguchi, 2010; see also Massumi, 2002). The experimentation with potentials, and the connections and assemblages between bodies, actualize these potentials. The actualization of a potential is a becoming (Lenz Taguchi, 2010; see also Massumi, 2002). This is done “through the construction of the plane of immanence in philosophy and the constitution of the plane of composition in the arts” (Grosz, 2008, p. 5).

The notion of becoming relates to the ideas of minoritarian and majoritarian assemblages. A majoritarian assemblage is a binary aggregate of sexes, classes, and races, for example. The binary contains both the privileged molar unity that gains its meaning from the stability of the binary being acted out and the suppressed molecular becoming that acts to destabilize the privileged identities. A becoming is “always
molecular, traversing and realigning molar unities” (Grosz, 1994, p. 172). Becomings are lines of flight or moments of departure from molar assemblages. The extreme becoming is a complete destratification, a becoming-imperceptible (Grosz, 1994). Becomings are only perceivable and something to speak about and approach with humbleness and tension (Olsson, 2009). We can describe the becoming by the intensity of the collisions, movements, and reverberations. Becomings can also be referred to in terms of their characteristics, such as becoming-woman or becoming-child (Buchanan, 1997). This process is different from representational thought, which is tree-like and structuring before the action. Here, we take on nomadic thought as it emerges in-between. Thought becomes rhizomatic, entangled, and complex. The becoming is an offering up of a new way of being, a possible world.

Learning and knowledge.

How is knowledge related to these concepts, the BwO, assemblage, and becoming? The event expresses a sense. Sense is the moment of becoming that is expressed through the event (Massumi, 2002): “Sense, the unconditional production of truth in the event, on the border of language, keeps the event complex, open-ended, and in movement” (Olsson, 2009, p. 53). Sense is produced through the construction of problems and solutions (Olsson, 2009). All concepts are answers to problems (Buchanan, 1997). Problems give meaning to concepts, and, in turn, concepts help isolate problems (O’Sullivan, 2006). Problems are not fully constructed until a solution has been created. Learning takes place through the continual construction of problems and solutions (Olsson, 2009). Learning is embodied sense, the capture of affect or forces. Forces join
together and decompose one another (Massumi, 2002). It is the moment of threshold, the virtual presence of potential. This experience is pure creativity (Olsson, 2009).

Affect is only registered as feelings. There is always something left outside of capture: pure potential. The capture is the possible, actualized, and visible. Ultimately, the actualization of potential becomes a possibility (Massumi, 2002). Painting can be seen as a way of making affects and percepts visible or of actualizing the virtual. The artistic process makes visible the imperceptible potentialities and forces through the materialized event (O’Sullivan, 2006; Deleuze, 2004). Understanding, in this way, can be seen as creating, and through “imagin[ing] we [can] come to know” (Sullivan, 2005, p. 65).

Here we emphasize the importance of immanent experimentation in the attempt to deconstruct and reconnect codes (Olsson, 2009). Creating the new is often a violent act: It ruptures and interrogates binaries (Massumi, 2002; Springgay, 2008a). Thinking is more akin to continually (un)knowing, an artistic process of territorialization and deterritorialization. Such a view of thinking has implications for how we define knowledge. Knowledge is understood in terms of events, crystallized encounters or territories between bodies, which we may map as a rhizome. Here we see knowledge as local and not as a code or representation. Once one territory is created, we need to move on and not use it to overcode. Below is an example of the type of learning I am describing.

*I am watching the children on the playground, this time through the lens of embodied learning. I see how the children came together. One boy discovered how to go backwards, and the rest copied him. They found how to move their bodies to make the
noise of the flying fox louder. When one boy made the loudest noise, they celebrated by wrestling, laughing, and congratulating the boy for being the loudest. The boys’ desire is made visible through this machined assemblage of bodies that are moving together in experimentation (Olsson, 2009). They are experimenting with their bodies and noise, possibly to answer the question, “What is a flying fox?” This drove them to thought. To speak about the noise, what they learned about the noise, and to celebrate the noise. I felt liberated in my observation. Such a view would have engendered a different approach from me toward the children. I could have told the boys they were being too loud, rendering their gestures as boisterous. I could have tried to show them how to swing properly on the flying fox, and tame them. Instead, I was challenged to rethink my approach.

As I have described in this chapter, a body can be any fragment taking part in an assemblage of becoming. In my research I investigated all bodies in the setting. From the start, my body, ideas, and doings have been part of this research. This study, then, is part of an assemblage. The assemblage continues, it morphs and spreads as you, my reader, become part of the study.

In the next chapter I construct the all-too-human body in the context of the relevant literature.
CHAPTER II: THE PROBLEM OF THE ALL-TOO-HUMAN BODY

Over the last ten years, a number of voices in the literature have challenged the invisibility of the body within educational practices (Zembylas, 2007). Davies (1999), Olsson (2009), Lenz Taguchi (2010), Lind (2005), Pacini-Ketchabaw with Nxumalo (2010), and Kind (2010) conceptualize the body in their writing according to the theories of Deleuze and Guattari (1987). The body, they suggest, could be any body, including a body of writing, a sound, a chair, a plant, or an animal. The body is an effect of the assemblage of connections through an event. Lenz Taguchi (2010), in thinking with Barad and Deleuze and Guattari, attempts to disrupt the theory/practice, discourse/matter divide. She employs an immanent onto-epistemology of bodies, where bodies are constantly engaging and diffracting through intra-actions. These voices amount to a call for new ways to think about the Cartesian binary of body and mind in the classroom.

The All-Too-Human Body

To construct the problem of the all-too-human body, I begin by arguing that, in the classroom, the child is understood as an individual autonomous thinking subject. I then suggest how the child’s body becomes territorialized through developmental psychology and research on best practices, and how the teleological view of childhood comes to matter in the classroom. Finally, I describe how binary logic might structure how we approach the child’s body.

The Individual Autonomous Thinking Subject

Since the birth of philosophy in ancient Greece, dominant Western thought has conceptualized the body as Other. Plato privileged the idea, which he conceptualized as
male, and of which he saw matter, conceptualized as female, as merely a flawed version. In this view, the idea gives form to degenerate matter: “The body is a betrayal of and a prison for the soul, reason, or mind” (Grosz, 1994, p. 5). With the rise of Christianity, moral status was assigned to man’s interiority as the body was believed to be mortal and the mind bound to the status of an immortal soul (Grosz, 1994). In response to the hegemony of Christianity, the Enlightenment era took force. Within this movement, Descartes, building on an established tradition of separating mind from body, wrote his cogito (Grosz, 1994): “I think, therefore I am.” Thinking is a necessary property of the self and not the body. Descartes argued that he could reject all properties of the self, except that he was certain he could think. He could not be certain of his body, so he could not be his body (Williams, 1978). Descartes’ theoretical explorations are responsible for linking the self with thinking and knowledge. Only the body is governed by natural laws, whereas thinking becomes separated from the natural world. Now, we may only indirectly come to know the world (Grosz, 1994). The thinking subject is above the natural world and the body; it negotiates and is responsible for both. The subject, Nietzsche claims, is a fiction that has been added to the act:

For just as the popular mind separates the lightning from its flash and takes the latter for an action, for the operation of a subject called lightning, so popular morality also separates strength from expression of strength, as if there were a neutral substratum behind strong man, which was free to express strength or not to do so. But there is no such substratum; there is no “being” behind doing, effecting, becoming “the doer” is merely a fiction added to the deed—the deed is everything. (Nietzsche, 1989, p. 12)
Here Nietzsche (1989) is attempting to problematize the idea of a subject. Then, concepts such as Descartes’ cogito and religious doctrines such as Christianity misconstrue a subject that chooses to act. Within early childhood education, the child has inherited these historical, political, racial, and gendered conditions. For example, when a child hits someone, the child is deemed responsible and is disciplined. The environment is overlooked, and we look for explanations inside the child. The child then needs to own the moral question, “Why hurt another person?” (Davies, 1999, p. 32). This is essentially a humanist reading of the child (Davies, 1999).

**Assembling-ethics.**

I want to turn away from practice based on a moral judgment that one thing is good and the other is bad, toward an emergent ethical practice based on attunement and response to the Other as not-yet-known (Butler, 1993; Bell, 2007). This is a change in lens from ranking and hierarchical thought. Bell (2007) argues that ethics becomes conflated with politics because both become the practice of creating “ethico-ecological environments” (p. 119) in which each entity or assemblage generates its own intensities and potentials. Certain assemblages can give rise to hitting, teasing, or pushing, for example. Bell (2007) suggests that we must “acknowledge that the reverberations of inventions may elaborate themselves in compositions and directions both unintended and unwelcomed” (p. 120). Our task then becomes to continually experiment and evaluate in order to support and transform these assemblages, allowing for productive encounters.

**Sovereign power and disciplinary power.**

*Two large strollers dot the bare lawn. Children zigzag around me as my body is warming in the beaming sunshine. Everything is bustling as we wait outside for the last*
teacher to begin to pack up for our morning walk. As I stand watching the children, I feel a growing tension in my chest and back. My arms and legs feel sticky inside my clothes, and I feel the thickness of the humid air in my lungs. I notice my legs twitching. Suddenly I hear a teacher yell loudly at a child to stop. I look in the direction of the noise and see a teacher run over to a child, kneel down in front of him, and place one hand out, face up, while bringing her other hand sideways onto her face-up hand. This is sign language for the word “stop.” I have been warned about this particular child, that he is a biter. I look back to the child and see the expression of shock on his face. My stomach turns and my chest feels thick and dense. I feel repulsed by the light, false tone of the teacher’s voice as she disciplines the child. The child cannot be trusted this morning. He is not being safe. I watch in silence as the teacher leads the child to the stroller, lifts him inside, and buckles him in for the safety of the other children. I notice that I am holding my breath, and I remind myself to breathe deeply. The child looks over and catches me watching him. As I stare into his eyes, he raises his arm and begins to hit himself on the head repeatedly. Each time he hits his head, I feel an ache growing stronger in my chest. It is hard to swallow as I force down the pain into my stomach.

Foucault elaborates two modes of power: sovereign power and disciplinary power. Sovereign power is more visible, whereas disciplinary power goes more or less unnoticed. Early childhood education exploits disciplinary power through such practices as training children to be quiet, to “walk hallways in single file” (Cohen, 2008, p. 16), to raise a hand to speak, and to sit upright and with crossed legs during circle time. Children need to learn to control and regulate their bodies and to overcome the environment. Foucault argues that forms of discipline throughout history not only train bodies, but also
“produce forms of embodiment that actively partake in their own subjection” (Bell, 2007, p. 14). In the example above, the child hits his own body, taking on the disciplining of his body himself. As an educator, I have found the process of disciplining bodies to be a difficult one for both child and educator. Not only is it difficult, it can be a painful process as well.

**Mastering the body and pain.**

*It is the end of circle time, and the teacher who is running circle time pulls out some stickers from her bag. It is customary for the children to sit “criss-cross-applesauce” (legs crossed) and wait patiently for their turn. Children are given stickers for good behaviour in the group. I feel tense and sit awkwardly with my legs crossed as I listen to the children call out. They are begging to be chosen first. A child gets up and rushes to the stickers. The teacher directs her in a stern voice to sit back down. Since she disobeyed the rules, this child will get her sticker last. I watch how the children are leaning forward while keeping their legs on their spots, to be as close as they can to the stickers. I can see the effect these stickers have on the children. Each child stretches a little closer to the stickers until they are all sitting around the teacher. Only one child is still on his spot. He doesn’t notice that the other children have all moved. I feel hot and sticky as I sit in silence. I hear this boy call out and beg to be chosen next. The teacher reminds him that he needs to wait until he is called. I see him become more distressed and squirm around like a worm on a hook. As I listen to him, I remember being called last for sports at school, and how much pain I felt from waiting until someone chose me. I hear him plead again and moan. My chest slouches and I feel a lump in my throat. I feel a dull throb behind my eyes from my tears being forced down. A voice screams in my*
“How has it become part of our practice as educators to ignore the pain that results from mastering the body?”

The Striated Body

Modernism followed the Enlightenment, with the rise of an industrial and capitalist society (Thomas & Bracken, 2004) based on secularization and a nation-state. The development of social sciences is of particular importance within this tradition. The social sciences are split into different domains, with the field of psychology being the study of the individual. Social sciences are traditionally based on a philosophy of transcendence, essentially a splitting of matter, mind, and knowledge carried forward from Descartes’ cogito. With the mind, we can transcend the material world and attain a higher truth (Lenz Taguchi, 2010). The dominant paradigm used to transcend nature is positivism. Research conducted within a positivist tradition inevitably traces nature and produces static and fixed representations (O’Sullivan, 2006): “Positivism applies the scientific method of the natural sciences to human experience” (Thomas & Bracken, 2004, p. 363). In psychology, the individual is traced and represented. The tracing reduces human experience to a code so that human behaviour can be predicted (Buchanan, 1997). The individual is then placed under surveillance through specific institutions, and his behaviours and comportment are regulated and controlled (Thomas & Bracken, 2004).

The institution of ECEC has traditionally been theorized through the lens of developmental psychology (Lenz Taguchi, 2010), which has treated the body as an object through which we may access the thinking subject. The body’s behaviours have been studied, tested, and categorized into stages of normal and abnormal development.
(Burman, 2008). Foucault named this process of scientific classification and exclusion “dividing practices” (Cohen, 2008). With scientific research, we have represented a static and fixed body. The body is defined outside of context and time: what it is capable of doing is predetermined before children or early childhood educators enter the classroom. Children are routinely assessed to determine whether they are developing normally. Deviations from the norm are regulated and controlled through social institutions, such as early childhood education. As a result, certain social positions become available, and to act in ways outside the privileged positions means to become othered (Butler, 1993). The following practice example shows how developmental psychology can be materialized in the classroom.

**Structuring through rhythm.**

The wind is blowing cold and my coat is bundled tightly. I hear the teachers negotiating which group to take inside first. The children are cheering as they push their bodies against the toy cars and run them around the playground in circles. The teachers gather up a few of the children and one teacher takes them inside. I watch as the last few cars and children continue to circle around the grass. The cars crash with the wooden boards and I feel my body vibrate. The children delight at the sound, bellowing out like thunder, and the cars and children move faster. I see one child run to the back of the playground. The teacher calls for him to come. A car calls for him to push. His body slams against the car as his momentum propels the car forward. The last group needs to be taken in. I check my clock and take a deep breath. We are running late for lunchtime, which will set us behind on naptime and disrupt the entire day’s schedule. The teacher collects the child and brings him to the doorstep. He struggles and begins to cry. The
boy is plopped down inside as the teacher helps the other children with their coats. Tears flow down his face, and he cries out.

In this incident, the rhythm of the bodies, children, cars, and educators is structured through the lens of developmental psychology. Routines are outlined through research on best practice and how to do early childhood education. The rhythm of the car and the boy’s body is seen as disruptive to the scheduled lunchtime, naptime, circle time, and snack time, all regulated by the “educator’s relation to the clock” (V. Pacini-Ketchabaw, personal communication, May 30, 2011). The intra-actions that move away from this structure, such as the rhythm of the car and the boy in the example above, are machined as other.

The othering of bodies.

Books, toys, paper, and glue are strewn around the room. I am aware that it will be circle time soon. I start my 5-, 2-, and 1-minute warnings to put away the toys Darshan is playing with. I hear the empty words leave my mouth: “First clean, then circle time, then you choose. Let’s look at the pictures, see, first clean up, then circle time, then you choose.” He moves to start cleaning but gets off track. A block asks to be picked up and moved to bang a table. This connection between the body, block, table, and noise is rendered abnormal. “That is not ok,” I say. “It is time to clean.” The battle proceeds while the other children are close to finishing. My body becomes hot and I feel my chest ache. I quickly put away his toys. I know that this was wrong to do since he will not learn this way. However, I feel resistance. We all move to the circle. The children know exactly where to go to find their spots on the floor for the story. A chair invites Darshan to sit. I know this is not alright. It is part of our policy for all of the children to
engage in the activities. “It is circle time,” I tell him. “Let’s look at the pictures.” Each time I try to coerce these acts of difference, I wonder to myself, What assemblages are materialized to produce this body’s identity as other? The assemblage of children, books, scheduled circle time, and one-on-one workers like myself is regulated by developmental psychology and mental health. His identity is produced as autistic. His movements, words, and gestures are written as different to the dominant material-discourses that regulate this setting.

In the above example, I am working one-on-one with a boy diagnosed with autism. My body movements and the tools and behaviour techniques I use are prescribed by evidence-based practice. The boy’s body and movements are made intelligible and read through the lens of abnormal developmental psychology. His body is thus positioned and gains its social status through this position and its binary opposite (Davies, 1999). The autistic body is abjected as the abnormal to the normal body and thus has a low social position; the body within a low social position receives more control and regulation through attempts to mold it to the normal body. In the example above, the child experiences the extreme of regulation and control. In the lens of developmental psychology, the body is essentially an instrument, a tool that “requires careful discipline and training” (Grosz, 1994, p. 9). Research conducted within abnormal psychology has outlined specific interventions and training for the autistic body. The child’s body is a contested place for the control and regulation of behaviours through developmental psychology and stage theory (Lenz Taguchi, 2010). Ultimately, the child is being produced as an ideal citizen, one who is “knowable, known, docile and productive” (Burman, 2008, p. 26).

**Development and the Body**

In Western material-discourse, the telos, or the ultimate aim, of the child is adulthood. Childhood thus is a stage on the way to becoming adult. This conceptualization is exemplified in the expression in developmental psychology, “Phylogeny recapitulates Ontogeny” (Burman, 2008, p. 14). Burman (2008) argues, “this notion views young children as animalistic, savages, and dependent, which presupposes a conception of development” (p. 15). Taking such a theoretical position in practice means that the relation between educator and child becomes that of controlling and taming. The place of the classroom is structured and striated so that the children are contained. In my experience, educators worry that giving children freedom will lead to chaos and anarchy. The image of a savage child frames the way in which educators interpret what the child is doing. Below is an example from my practice in which I was directed concerning how the material-discourse of listening is enacted.
Choice and following rules.

Bodies are sitting at tables in front of sand trays, puzzles, and play dough. Baskets lie empty on their sides as bodies, wooden blocks, cars, plastic people, and rocks move around the carpet. The carpet feels rough and prickly beneath my legs. The water table is full with various rubber animals and cups. I notice a boy’s hand connect with a cup. The hand investigates the cup as the cup investigates the hand. The cup offers its body as an opening for water. Together, hand and cup scoop the water, help the water into the air, and turn. The water is pulled toward the floor and makes a splashing sound as they connect. This sound jolts heads and bodies to turn and inspect. I know this type of behaviour as unacceptable within this place. I see heads sharing glances as if to decide who will go over and speak to the boy about his behaviour. I walk over to the boy and say politely, “Would you be able to keep the water in the table so that the floor doesn’t get all wet?” I see the boy furrow his face as he looks at me. He smiles, his hand supporting the cup as it scoops up more water. The cup and hand motion as if to pour more water on the floor. I wonder to myself, “What is he doing?” All of a sudden I notice someone standing beside me. She sounds very angry at my behaviour. My body flushes hot as I frown with disappointment. I look to the floor as she sternly disciplines me. I was disrupting the teacher/child dynamic that has been set in the room. My statement to the child was languaged incorrectly. I should not give the boy the choice to listen to me. I should tell him not to pour water on the floor. What I could say is, “That is not ok. Water stays in the water table and not on the floor.” As a consequence the boy has lost the privilege of playing in the water and he is directed to go somewhere else. The boy starts to protest as
he splashes the water around. I watch as his hands are removed from the water table and his body pointed in a different direction.

In the example above, the connection between the water, the cup, and the boy is inscribed as making a mess. This connection is located as coming from within the boy’s body. The boy’s identity emerges as a savage child, and the corrections made to his body are intended to civilize him. The image of the savage child structures the educator’s intra-actions with this child.

Conceptualizing childhood as a stage toward adulthood also positions the child as lacking knowledge: The child needs to be taught. Early childhood education is concerned with teaching children what we know about the world as though there is a reality a priori to experience. This approach, Olsson (2009) argues, is a problem, as knowledge generated for teaching is a reproduction of an already-changed world. Representational knowledge comes to influence how educators approach the movements of the bodies in the classroom. In the following practice example, the educators plan a learning experience for the children.

**Consumerism and the supermarket.**

*Halloween has just passed and the teachers have decided to introduce new curriculum to the children. Half the room where the Halloween decorations, costumes, and cooking corner used to be has been turned into a supermarket. The teachers spent a great deal of time collecting empty food and drink containers to decorate the place. As I look from right to left around the room, I see a display of plastic and wooden vegetables, fruit, and bakery items. Empty pizza and cereal boxes, milk cartons, and pop cans fill the shelves of a cupboard. A medicine counter with empty Pepto-Bismol, Tums, and Advil*
containers finishes off the shopping centre. Each set of items is marked with a price tag. A checkout area with two plastic cash machines and wooden chairs sits at the left of the shopping corner. Shopping bags and a shopping cart are provided at the entrance. I look at the room with an uneasy feeling in my stomach. I wonder, “What are the children supposed to learn here?"

Chairs are set up to block the children from entering the area. The supermarket is closed for the day since the teachers first want to explain to the children the correct procedures. Throughout the day, I see how time and time again a child goes into the grocery store. Each time, we must direct the child to leave, and a battle ensues. I watch as an item from the shelf draws a child in to pick it up, and I must engage with the material-discourse of teaching and explain to the child, “Put that back down, please; the shopping area is closed.” The child then walks slowly out of the area. I notice the teachers becoming more and more frustrated. I slowly close my eyes and shake my head. “What are we doing here? Who and what is this grocery store created for?”

The morning of the following day, I watch in silence, sitting uncomfortably in my chair, as the children are introduced to the grocery store. The teachers give the children Monopoly money to buy their items. The teachers want the grocery store to be as real as possible. One by one, the children run into the room and grab items off the shelves and put them into their shopping bags. My eyes grow wide as I feel my body tense with shock. Two children begin to scream and cry as they both grab the same item from the shelf. Another child grabs an item from a child’s bag. A child cries out and hits another child. My stomach is in knots, my chest is heavy, and my shoulders are slouched. I think to myself how in the matter of one morning, the activity we introduced into the centre has
decimated the children’s intra-actions. I wonder what this activity was intending to teach the children—perhaps the routines of shopping, counting, and purchasing. But what else have we introduced along with our innocent teaching goals? Possibly assembling the practice of Western notions of consumerism, which facilitate ownership over items in the centre.

In response to the event above, the teachers decide the children need more structure to learn. We draw up three rules for the children and write them on a large piece of cardboard, with a small picture next to each sentence so the children will understand: 1) Only five children at a time. 2) Five minutes per child. 3) Clean up after you are done shopping. A teacher must oversee this learning activity with a timer and sit in a chair nearby to correct the children as they shopped according to the rules. And so this learning experience spread as it striated the space of the centre.

Following this incident, we read the children’s intra-actions in a way that created a hierarchical structure among educators, children, and things. Educators need to teach the children through the mind and intellect by explaining correct procedures and then making written rules to follow. As educators, we need to think about the curriculum and the things that we introduce into our centres: how the children may affect and be affected by the items, what assemblages are elaborated, and how the educators are affecting and being affected by the assemblages that are elaborated. It might be important to discuss what a supermarket means in our Western society and how this meaning is supposed to enrich the children’s learning experience. The educators overlook the children’s interests and curiosities. The children are not given the opportunity to be involved in their curriculum. The information children need to know is preestablished and provided to
them (Olsson, 2009). Educational systems, mediated by the state, ensure that children learn the right information (Burman, 2008).

The following section highlights another way the body is subordinated in the classroom.

**Binary Logic and the Body**

Western material-discourses celebrate dichotomous thinking. Terms are ranked and classified into binaries in which privileged terms establish a boundary and gain their power through suppression of the opposing terms (Grosz, 1994; Lenz Taguchi, 2010). The mind is privileged along with the subject, soul, interiority, form, self, male, masculinity, vision, logic, white, truth, and reason. The body is othered along with matter, exteriority, female, femininity, emotive senses, emotions, feelings, colour, and passion (Davies, 1999; Grosz, 1994; Lenz Taguchi, 2010). The privileged terms attain higher social positions for the self (Grosz, 1994). This practice amounts to a logic of exclusion. In identifying and representing, we have come to control and subordinate (Butler, 1993). Through the lens of representation, we actively produce and maintain minority social positions. The social position that certain terms hold is a political and ethical issue: “Binary divides structure our thinking in simplifying and reductive ways—good/bad, mind/body, theory/practice—where one quality excludes the other and makes mixtures as well as states of both-and and in-between impossible” (Lenz-Taguchi, 2010, p. 20).

When we look at the classroom and make binary logic visible, we can see how the body is suppressed. Children need to learn hygiene, cleanliness, order, and organization
in order to overcome messiness, for example. In the following practice example, a child’s movements with food become territorialized.

**Clean/mess.**

*It is lunchtime in the infant-toddler room. I sit on a wooden stool next to the children around a large wooden table. The children sit in front of their unpacked lunches and look through their food. I watch as each item of food evokes a different response from the children. I open my potato salad and take a few bites before getting up to get drinks and help the children with their meals. I notice Thia enjoying her yogurt. I smile as she dips her hands in the small container. Her hands, covered in yogurt, move around the table and her face. She looks as if she is painting everything Yogurt. As her face becomes covered in yogurt, I wonder what she might be experiencing. “Does the yogurt feel cold and creamy?” I notice one of the teachers becoming distressed. I say to the teachers, “Look at Thia, she is becoming-yogurt.” The teachers look somewhat confused, but assume that the intra-action between Thia and yogurt might be sensory. As Thia continues, one teacher is not able to take it anymore and gets up and moves the yogurt away from her. She takes a cloth from the shelf and tries to wipe down her face. Thia pulls back and moves her face away from the cloth. The cloth succeeds, and the yogurt disappears from her face. Thia whimpers and bangs her fists on the table.*

In the example above, Thia’s body and the yogurt are seen through both molar and minor assemblages. The movements between the body and the yogurt are structured so that Thia is clean. ECE educators follow regulations to protect children from sickness and physical harm. If such codes are not followed, the centre is in danger of being sued.
The following practice example illustrates how the fear of sickness striates the smooth movement of art.

**Structuring power and disrupting an artistic process.**

Varied patterns of yellow paint are smeared on the paper-covered table. The patterns may be read as intentional and mounted on the wall, but to me they are by-products of an event that just took place. Brushes lay strewn around the table, chairs, and floor. I sit stiff in my chair as I watch the last child with the brushes. I notice my body become more uncomfortable as the tension mounts in the room. The paintbrush is cradled in Sarah’s right hand and is moving slowly on her left arm. Her arms are suspended in the air, and she is silent. I look to the other teacher in the room and notice her face becoming red. She moves to another spot in the room where she does not have to see Sarah. The tension in my body melts away as I become engrossed in what Sarah is doing. I think to myself, “I have never seen anything like this before.” “I” begin to break down and lose myself in the moment. Arms and hands are suspended in the thickness of space. Breath is slow and heavy. The smell of tempera paint lingers in the air. An arm is raised, and a paintbrush moves back and forth slowly across skin. The paintbrush then moves toward a mouth and is embraced by teeth and lips. Paint creeps from the paintbrush held in mouth onto a right arm. With the right arm that is receiving the paint, the call of another paintbrush is answered. The right arm picks up another paintbrush and allows the paintbrush to move across a left arm. A circular connection is formed between two arms, a hand, two paintbrushes, and a mouth. A surge of energy pulses up from legs through core to arms. A small thought creeps into my head, “I have found joy in the fragility of losing (my)self in the intra-actions with (an)other.” The beauty and intensity
of this moment move me. All of a sudden, our focus is broken by a loud and angry voice. The teacher wants Sarah to stop. I look to Sarah and notice a dim smile on her face as she takes the brush from her mouth. My stomach is in knots, and I feel my face become hot and red. I taste bitter and find it hard to swallow. My chest aches, and it is hard to breathe. I am reminded that the children are not supposed to put things in their mouths and that it is best if their clothes are not covered in paint. This might cause the children’s parents to complain. I go over to Sarah and say to her, “I am so sorry, but we need to stop now.” I feel my eyes well with tears, and I start to understand how disruptions can become violent. I hear a voice scream in my head, “How can we get educators to open their practice?” I feel my acts of disruption being met with the structuring power of policy and a fear of difference. As I clean the table, I wonder how I can disrupt this powerful structure from another angle.

In the above example, the child was directed to stop painting her body. She had put a paintbrush in her mouth; the centre’s policy is that children may spread sickness this way, and so such behaviour is discouraged. Touch is another example of the body being othered. Feelings and emotive senses, such as touch, are defined as irrational (Springgay, 2008a; Springgay & Freedman, 2009). In the Anglicized societies, touch has become associated with violence and sex. Touching has become risky, if not forbidden, in many classrooms (Piper, Powell, & Smith, 2006). Below is an example from my practice where the binary of touch is assembled.

**Healthy/unhealthy touch.**

It is lunchtime in the infant-toddler room. The children are gathered together one by one and led to the table and high chairs. I unpack the last of the lunch boxes and then
sit next to the children on a wooden shelf. We sit enjoying our lunches as the teachers occasionally encourage the children to eat more. Talia is finished and starts to whimper. Her arms are raised and pointed toward the teacher, Susan. The other teacher, Cara, comes over with a cloth to wipe the child’s face. She starts to cry, and her body moves toward Susan again. Her arms are stretched and raised. Her face is wiped, and Cara offers to take her out. Talia motions her body toward the other teacher again and cries out louder. I notice the teachers getting upset as they listen. Susan continues to help the other children, and Cara leaves Talia in the highchair until she allows Cara to take her out.

The child’s motion toward one of the educators is read as an unhealthy connection, as dictated by attachment theory. The educators try to enforce an equal relationship to each child. These binaries become part of the children’s embodied experiences.

With the issues presented thus far, I have attempted to construct the problem of the all-too-human body within the early childhood classroom. The body houses the individual autonomous thinking subject at an ontological apex above the environment, inscribed with developmental psychology and best practice. The movements of the body are infantilized and read through the logic of binaries. The body therefore requires teaching. The issues described may happen together, as they come to structure the child’s body in the classroom. In the next section, I argue that the all-too-human body comes to matter through the space of art.
The Politics of Art and the Body

In this section, I describe how the body might be read and structured within art in the classroom. In particular, I present the space of art as a mass production line, where the neoliberal practice of art is inscribed upon the movements of the body. This type of art making may present particular ways for the self-expression of the child, and suggests how we come to define difference.

Art and the body within practice

My (re)thinking/(re)writing of the body in ECEC is inspired by my own experiences with art in early childhood. As is common practice in ECEC classrooms, art is defined as a product, splitting the artist from her work. The artist acts on the materials to represent already formed ideas into the materials. The art privileges the rational senses. We judge the art object by the artist’s skill, talent, and technique. The observer may ask what the art object means and what the artist intended to say. The meaning is then seen to be in the object. In this sense, art is representational (O’Sullivan, 2006; Kind, 2010). This view of art comes to frame the way in which we see children engage with art.

A neoliberal approach “with the desire for end-products and for the technologies that will produce those end-products” (Davies & Gannon, 2009, p. 3) can be found in the practice of art in ECEC. When educators discovered that I liked to paint, they suggested that I teach art to the children. This suggestion confused me. How do you teach art? In my effort to figure out how to teach art, I brought in pages of colouring books for the children to learn how to colour inside the lines. I would cut out circles and provide pipe cleaners so that the children could glue them together to make a caterpillar. In this approach, the objectives and goals for the art are predetermined, and the children develop
the skills to mimic. The children were learning the necessary skills to fulfill curriculum requirements, such as fine motor skills. At the end of the day, I was always left frustrated. However, I do not have my early childhood certification, and who was I to say that art should be done differently? As I continued to work as a substitute at various centres, I continued to confront this neoliberal approach to making art.

**Artwork as a product: For mass production?**

Collage is a typical art activity in the centres in which I work. One day in particular, the children were given sparkles, buttons, bits of paper, and glue to paste onto a CD. The children had a clear goal for their work. Children had their own CD, and the CD was mounted on the wall to show parents what their children had been doing over the day. When I spoke to the teacher who did this project with the children, I noticed she was proud that some of the children did more than one CD. So over the days, I was wondering, “What does this artwork set in motion?”

Then, one day when the children were content playing, the teachers and I stood in front of the artwork and began to talk about the children’s work. One teacher expressed that she really liked this particular project. We admired the arrangements of the sparkles, buttons, and pieces of paper on the CDs. Another teacher pointed to a particular CD that was her favourite one. I noticed that she liked how it was organized.

This activity is a way of making art as a mass production, where each child engages with materials in a factory style. Art as a mass production produces pieces that are mounted on the wall. When the goal is to produce an art object, the process of making the art—a process that may involve “encounters and negotiations” (Kind, 2010, p. 125)—becomes lost. The educators engage instead in comparing the pieces of art against
standards of order and organization. These standards are measurable and can be ticked off of the programming guides, which fit neatly within the time frames of an organized and scheduled day (Pratt, 2009). A neoliberal approach to art has implications for how we conceptualize creativity and diversity, as I illustrate in the next example.

**Art as producing the same: Coercing acts of difference?**

*It is dark outside and the windows are fogged up. I hear the wind thrashing through the trees outside. A teacher, the children, and I are all sitting around the art table. The teacher holds up three linked red and green chains. Today, we are making Christmas decorations for our room. The teacher and I hand out some saucers, glue, and glue sticks to the children. A child screeches and moans. Another child contests back, and a fight ensues over a saucer with glue. With a loud bellowing voice, the teacher directs the children to share and indicates how they should go about doing so. Then she goes on to explain to the three-to-fives how the art project should be done. The children are directed, with a brief demonstration using an example piece, to take some glue and put it at the ends of these strips. She shows them how to bend the strip and press the ends together. She overlaps the edges and presses them with her fingers. Then she hands each child a red and green strip. The teacher and I stand and watch the children with their task. I see how each child answers the voices of the glue and paper in a different way. Some push their glue stick hard into the glue, and the glue answers back by globbing onto the stick. The children then wrestle back by trying to balance the glob of glue on the stick and smearing it across the paper again and again. Others barely push their stick into the glue, and the glue responds by gently caressing the tip of the stick. The teacher grumbles, as she is upset with a child for taking too much glue. I wonder what molar*
assemblages are governing her response. I am silent as I feel the tension growing as the children proceed. I notice how calm my body is in response to the children’s intra-actions with the materials and how agitated the teacher is becoming. A smile creeps onto my face as I look from child to child. I notice a different creation in front of each child than the goal the teacher set out. I say in a light voice, “Look, everyone has done something different.” I say, “Sari’s strips could be a basket, or wait, it could be a hat.” I put her basket on my head. “Look at Brandon’s creation.” I see how excited Brandon is with what he made. He has named them “FINGS.” Jo’s are connected on one side only. She holds hers up to show everyone and suggests that she made a butterfly. I look to the teacher and notice her staring at the table. She is upset since she does not know how to put them together now. She does not want to put the ones she made with the ones the children made. As the children move on through the room, the teacher stays behind to take apart each creation the children made to rebuild a neat and tidy Christmas chain for decoration.

When educators take a neoliberal approach to the practice of art making, the relation between educator and child becomes that of enforcing the correct goal-driven behaviours upon the child (Davies & Gannon, 2009). This art project is inscribed with the consumer-religious stereotyped Western Christmas, where we reiterate traditional decoration for the centre using the colours red and green. Within the neoliberal art curriculum that governs practice, cultural, social, and political norms come to inscribe the creative activities of children. Below is another moment from my practice in which we can see the structuring power of cultural, social, and political norms within art.
Art as a mirror of the self: We are all the same?

It is morning, and I am just arriving at the centre. I pause as I hang my coat to listen. I hear a calm room with talking and activity. I take a deep breath and sigh with relief. I enter the room and see some children around the room and some at the art table. I walk over in anticipation. I wonder what is happening. The teacher directing the art activity shows me some leaves. She is getting the children to glue one leaf for each family member on their own sheet of blank white paper: a daddy leaf, mommy leaf, brother and sister leaves, and one for them. I look down to see the children with glue sticks, glue, and leaves sitting in front of large white pieces of paper. I wonder how a child who has no mommy or daddy, or two mommies or daddies, might take up such artwork. I see how each child has large leaves for parents and small ones for the children. My core feels dull and I feel a numb throbbing in the back of my head as I look to the children. I watch how one child picks up a final leaf as she is told, one for her little brother. She glues it on and is finished. The teacher rewards her with praise. Then she gets up and walks away.

Art as a form of mirror presupposes a constant and fixed self. In this case, the artwork is constructed through a self that is based on economic norms of a nuclear family—one where we are all the same, with appropriate gender norms that structure the household. The family becomes a means by which the children express their difference from one another and express who each child is within the group, for example, “I have a mommy, daddy, two brothers, and three sisters.” The nuclear family with one mother, one father, and children is set out as the goal of the project. What do you have? Is your family like mine? Why not? Is there something wrong with you? Such questions may be asked based on this art activity. Identities are expressed through the nuclear family. This
goal excludes and makes categorical differences visible within the striated space of this art activity (Pacini-Ketchabaw with Nxumalo, 2010; S. Kind, personal communication, June 16, 2011).

At this point, we may be left with the following question: If art tends to be a political space for the development of a productive, normal child within the economic, social, and cultural regimes in which we live, then what is art? What are we really doing here with children and materials in early childhood education and care? In the following section, I will suggest ways in which we may start to disrupt this mass-produced and neoliberal process of art making.

**Rethinking Art and the Body**

In this section, I take a theoretical shift to explore alternative ways in which we may rethink/rewrite art and the body within the classroom. I explore how this shift may influence practice, by assembling a new way of thinking politics. I draw on moments from my practice that rupture and fray the all-too-human body, and I follow with pieces presenting an alternative way of approaching art.

Sylvia Kind (2010) asks: What if we took the view that materials and the non-human world had a voice? How might such a view enrich and maybe help our practice with children become worldly? In the following practice example, I engage the voice of materials as a means for political action.

**Assembling-politics.**

*It smells like the first rain on dry earth. We are all huddled under the roof outside around a large, thick piece of paper. I feel the cold cement on my legs as I watch the crayons move their way from child to child. First, the crayons connect with the children’s*
hands and the paper. This I suspected, and I watch how they lie on their sides and make thick marks with the paper. Then my attention is broken. A crayon finds my hand. I look to Damita’s eyes, as if she is acting on the crayon and defining the crayon’s destiny. The crayon tickles my hand, and a surge of energy pulses through my body. My face lights up and I roll my head back. “That tickles, Damita.” I look deep into her eyes, and we smile at each other as the crayon tickles my hand. Suddenly, the crayon marks my coat. I look down to see a red strike on my sleeve. Then I say, “Not on my coat, please.” Then a green crayon comes close to my coat and marks my coat. I say, “I just asked you not to draw on my coat, please. I need to stand up now. When you did that, it showed me that I can’t trust you right now.” I stand paralyzed. I am quiet as I look at the red and green marks on my grey coat. I wonder what assemblages are structuring my intra-actions with this child, the crayons, and my grey coat. This grey piece of fabric and the way we treat it is inscribed with consumerism. It suggests an image of class and gender norms. This coat cost me money, and it needs to be clean and well kept to hold its social value. I bring in trust as a way to excuse my love affair with my coat, as though trust is a question to be addressed in this situation. Trust is not the issue at stake. The issue is the challenge made to my love for clothes.

Over the next few days, I don’t find time to clean my coat. Now and then, I continue to look down at the red and green marks on my sleeve. I feel Damita with me and wonder about the force of a crayon. If only for a moment, the marks make me stutter. I am puzzled by these red marks that I have grown to care about. They have marked more than my coat; the crayons have marked me.
After a few days of sitting with my red and green mark, I respond again. It is morning, and I find Damita next to the shed. I kneel down in front of Damita. I have no idea what I am going to say. My chest feels warm, and I feel my heart beat deeply. I look into her eyes and say, “Remember this red mark?” I point to my sleeve. “Remember when we were drawing over there?” I see her frown and turn her head down, as if she is ashamed of herself. I continue, “Whenever I look at this mark, I think of you and that red crayon, and how you both touched and moved me.” She smiles and wraps her arms around me, and then quickly runs off. I smile as I think about what was just disrupted. I could be worried that she might think it is acceptable to draw on a teacher’s coat now. I could take my response as reinforcing bad behaviour. Instead, I think to myself, “How can we allow ourselves to be affected and become transformed by our intra-actions with children?”

In this way, art making can also challenge economic, cultural, and social norms and ideologies. It is a political and ethical practice that can be transformative (Pratt, 2009). Below I present a moment in my practice in which I was confronted with the disruptions to representation that art can allow.

**Attention to acts of difference: Disrupting representation?**

We have just come inside from our outdoor play time. I am putting out the cut-out fishbowls, bubbles, fish, and greenery on the table and call the children to join me. My body feels tingly as it is caressed in the warmth from the room. The children pick up the glue sticks and begin to attach the various items onto their bowls. I watch as one boy attempts to glue his pieces together. He continually looks around at his peers’ work. My stomach and chest feel uneasy as I see his frustration with his work growing. He furrows
his brow and nose and makes displeased moans. I notice him becoming flustered with the project. All of a sudden, he tears up his art piece again and again. The paper is wet and is sticking to his hands. He starts pounding the torn pieces into a ball between his hands. I am unsure how to respond to him and instead continue to watch. With each pounding of his hand I feel an echo of throbbing in my chest. My arms and legs are limp, hanging from their sockets. Then, to my amazement, once the paper is in a ball, he continues to mold the ball of sticky glue. I am confused and unsure what he holds in his hands when he is finished. For a while after the art activity has finished, he takes his new art object with him where he plays and begins to talk to it. As I write this, I smile as I think how he ruptured our act of representational art by creating something new, thereby engaging in his own artistic exploration instead of my neoliberal goal-oriented project of art as a mode of representational habits of thought.

Instead of asking what the art object means, we can ask, “What does the art work set in motion?” (O’Sullivan, 2006, p. 22). In this sense, art is rhizomatic. A rhizome redefines knowledge as a root system, fraying, opening, and becoming (Irwin, Kind, Springgay, 2005; O’Sullivan, 2006). Looking at art as a process, the boundaries between artist, materials, and audience break down. Creating art becomes an ethical and relational process (La Jevic & Springgay, 2008).

The lens through which I view art in my research is one in which matter has its own force. Deleuze and Guattari suggest that matter is animated, differential, a life (Bennett, 2010).

In the materialist philosophical tradition ushered in by Epicurus and Lucretius, atoms fall in parallel formations into the void, following a slightly diagonal
course. If one of these atoms swerves off course, it “causes an encounter with the next atom and from encounter to encounter a pile-up, and the birth of the world”.

. . . This is how forms come into being, from the “deviation” and random encounter between two hitherto parallel elements. (Bourriaud, 2002, p. 19)

Here we can take matter to have force within the assemblage. Artists come together with materials and collide with different constellations of exploration. As a process, art can involve “encounters and negotiations” (Kind, 2010, p. 125). The collisions of different actants, such as paint, paintbrush, clay, fabric, stone, and body, activate different potential movements and becomings. The body engages with the materials and the materials engage with the body (Kind, 2010; Lenz Taguchi, 2010; O’Sullivan, 2006). Further, the body does not necessarily mean the whole body. The body may mean, for example, hand, arm, leg, and foot, depending on the constellations within the becoming. Materials hold different potentials, intensities, affects, and becomings. Thinking, in this view, is a material embodied practice (Sullivan, 2008).

Below is an example from my practice in which we might see the embodiment of materials.

**What does yellow do?**

*I am rummaging through the closet, with not much luck; I am trying to find materials for the children. I finally take the pencils and paper. I spread out the paper and pencils over the table. I invite the children over and watch them meet the materials. I watch as they move around the pencils and respond to the colours. This provokes me to pick up the yellow and ask Sasha, “What does yellow do?” He looks and smiles at me. He takes a deep breath and begins to bob up and down and blow air and sounds out his*
mouth. I nod and say, “Oh, that’s what yellow does.” He nods, and I give him the yellow pencil. He then begins to make circles with the yellow on the paper with wide eyes. We spend some time with yellow, and then I hold the green and ask, “What does green do?” Sasha hops from foot to foot and waves his arms around while making sharp sounds with his breath.

Art can engage representational habits of thought and produce a product for “distribution and consumption” (O’Sullivan, 2006, p. 24). Art can also be an embodied process that engages all senses (Cole & McIntyre, 2004). In the example above, we might be able to see the effect of the non-human world on the body. The experience of an artistic exploration is like a perceptual/material smudging, a loss of clarity. The process of art making can be uncomfortable and risky.

Art is something much more dangerous: a portal, an ‘access point’ to another world of molecular becoming (our world experienced differently). As Deleuze and Guattari say, this, ultimately, is what makes art abstract, the ‘summoning’ and making visible of otherwise imperceptible forces” (O’Sullivan, 2006, p. 50).

Art making is an opening onto/into another space, onto/into another world.

In my quest for rethinking/rewriting the body through art, I went to the Vancouver Art Gallery. I was particularly interested not in the pieces of art mounted on the walls, but in hearing the artists’ artistic processes. On November 27, 2010, I went to hear Laiwan, a Chinese immigrant born in Zimbabwe. An artist for many years, Laiwan is a lesbian rights activist and a founder of the Vancouver Lesbian Film Festival; she showcases her art in various galleries, including the Vancouver Art Gallery. I went to hear her speak
about a piece she created with bus tickets that she collected. With the tickets, she wrote a poem that was laminated as several large hanging objects. She explained that she collected the tickets more than twenty years ago. It took her around ten years to collect the tickets. She did not know that she would make them into a piece when she collected them; she just really liked them (Laiwan, personal communication, November 27, 2010).

When she said this, it reminded me about the children at the centres in which I work—how the children often collect particular items, such as buttons from the art shelf, and stash them in their pockets. For example, this reminds me of a moment I had with a child at an early childhood center when she showed me over 25 tiny rocks she had meticulously collected outside and kept in her pocket. As I looked at the rocks, I noticed how each one was special, either clear, entirely white, or cream coloured. She held some of these tiny rocks in her small hands close to her face with wide eyes as she marvelled at them. She wanted to take these rocks home and put them into her treasure chest. I gave her the space to put the rocks into her bag to take home. Later, hearing Laiwan speak about her artistic process with the bus tickets made me happy that I had given her the space to take the rocks home. This moment challenges the boundaries of art. We can ask as educators: Where does art take place? Does it always happen at the art table? What does art involve? Where can art go? What can art break down? What breaks down art? What can art do?

Laiwan said she just knew that she was attracted to the tickets and wanted to keep them. Then when she revisited the tickets, she had the idea to write poetry with them. She wanted to write with something outside of herself, so she used a dictionary to write the poems. I thought it was interesting when she said, “There was a moment where there was
She said that her artistic process was about moments. She said she wanted to “open up time and space.” She wanted the piece she created to be a body to engage with (Laiwan, personal communication, November 27, 2010). As I looked at the pieces hanging, claiming space, I noticed a red rope around the pieces. Laiwan apologized for the rope. She said that she intended to let people walk through her hanging objects to encounter them. This piece is the first to be hung in the gallery. They normally do not allow this, she said (Laiwan, personal communication, November 27, 2010). However, because the Vancouver Art Gallery was doing programming with children, the objects Laiwan did had to be roped off so that the children would not wreck them.

In the moments described above, we may begin to see art and the body differently, the body as constituted by the non-human world, where matter has a voice. I take a relational materialist perspective of the body and art. Art is essentially an ethical process, between bodies both human and non-human. The artwork is not necessarily intended to mean something, but sets things in motion, spreading rhizomatically. With all this said about art, how else might we approach the making of art?

**Alternative understandings of art**

Within ECEC, it might be useful to look at alternative ideas of what art could be. My experience with art, and therefore my understanding of what art is, at the moment, is elaborated by the work of Grosz (2008). She writes:

Art is the regulation and organization of materials—paint, canvas, concrete, steel, marble, words, sounds, bodily movements, indeed any materials—according to self-imposed constraints, the creation of forms
through which these materials come to generate and intensify sensations
and thus directly impact living bodies, organs, nervous systems. (p. 4)

An assemblage of bodies is created through “the constitution of the plane of
composition in the arts” (Grosz, 2008, p. 5). The art may or may not involve an art object.
As Grosz (2008) suggests, it may involve bodily movement and words. Here the
becomings created engage the body and may also transform the body, if only for a
moment. What emerges from the artwork is the production of affects and percepts
(Deleuze, 2004).

Art can be a space in which the artist experiences intense connections with
materials. “Art,” Grosz (2008) says, “is not linked to some intrinsic relation to one’s own
body but exactly the opposite: it is linked to those processes of distancing and the
production of a plane of composition that abstracts sensation from the body” (p. 11).
However, if we merely focus on art as a space for intense creativity, we may become
blind to the structuring power of cultural, social, political, and economic ends. It is an
illusion to think that we can work and live only within the creative intensities that art
elaborates. Haraway (1991) reminds us that it is important to be aware of both smooth
and striated space: “The political struggle is to see from both perspectives at once
because each reveals both dominations and possibilities unimaginable from the other
vantage point. Single vision produces worse illusions than double vision or many-headed
monsters” (p. 6).

In this chapter, I have attempted to construct the problem of the all-too-human
body in the classroom: a body with rigid boundaries, between human and non-human,
self and other, and mind and body. The child is responsible for body and world, as
educators come to approach the child as an individual autonomous thinking subject. The movements of the body are inscribed and structured, through development theory and binary logic. This way of reading the body also comes to matter within the space of art, through mass-production and neoliberal art making. I have attempted also to fray this problem by presenting my rethinking/rewriting of the body. With a relational materialist theoretical framework, I suggest alternative ways to approach both art making and assembling politics. In this view, art is a space for the regulation of assemblages, where becomings continually unfold rhizomatically. Attending to both smooth and striated space is always a necessity (Haraway, 1991).

It is not this study’s aim to obliterate Cartesianism with one act. If we break apart this structure, we will have nothing from which to build. We need to use the structure against itself while keeping enough to allow us to leak and seep from it.

There are in fact, several ways of botching the BwO: either one fails to produce it, or one produces it more or less, but nothing is produced on it, intensities do not pass or are blocked. This is because BwO is always swinging between the surfaces that stratify it and the plane that sets it free. If you free it with too violent an action, if you blow apart the strata without taking precautions, then instead of drawing the plane you will be killed, plunged into a black hole, or even dragged toward catastrophe. (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 161)

In breaking apart the Cartesian structure, we need to make deterritorializing movements. Everything is micro and macro at the same time, but a focus on the micro has the potential to move us forward (Olsson, 2009). This study is a micro movement
intended to fray the Cartesian subject. In rethinking/rewriting the mind/body binary, I do not merely want to flip the terms and subordinate the mind to the body (Butler, 1993). Such an approach is an attack on the logic of exclusion, of identifying at the expense of (an)other. The task becomes to think/write about the myriad of possibilities instead of simply dichotomizing thinking. Thus I turn to theory that is premised on pure difference (Grosz, 1994).

Matter is not a blank slate on which the mind acts. The focus turns away from object and subject, as these are static and fixed, toward a new kind of philosophy based on process. Movement precedes positioning; the body is material. The material is in constant movement and is forced to think. We are not able to perceive movement, and there is no dualism here. Thought is on the same plane as materiality: When we think, we freeze the world in time. Thinking stops the process and (re)writes conscious experience. In this sense, we can say, “a thing is, when it isn’t doing” (Massumi, 2002, p. 6). Materiality is the forward loop, experience is the backwards loop, and consciousness is another forward loop. Materiality and consciousness are in a continual (re)doubling (Massumi, 2002). Both materiality and consciousness are actions that create the world we experience. Deleuze (1988, p. 18, as quoted in Buchanan, 1998, p. 76) writes: “An action in the mind is necessarily an action in the body as well and what is a passion in the body is necessarily a passion in the mind.” In this view, the body is no longer subordinate to thought.

Having ruptured the all-too-human body, then, in the chapter that follows, I present the methodology I used with this research.
CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

In this section, I outline my research process for this study. I begin by introducing the ontological (theories of being) and epistemological (theories of knowing) positions that guide my research. In the second section, *The Architect*, I construct the methodology used and go into more detail about specific materials, such as journal and visual materials, and how I approach image and video. I then contemplate the potentials and reasons for the materials used, offer a brief description of the actants within the study, and follow with a description of how the method was performed. Finally, I end this chapter with an outline of how I approach the analysis.

**Ontology and Epistemology**

Similarly to Lenz Taguchi (2010) and her thinking with Barad (1998, 1999, 2007, 2008 as cited in Lenz Taguchi, 2010), what I will elaborate next is an onto-epistemology. Theories of one will inevitably extend from the other. Along with Grosz (1994) and Lenz Taguchi (2010), among others, I use a Deleuzian-inspired ontology of immanence. I understand “ontology in terms of planes, intensities, flows, becomings, linkages, rather than being, objects, qualities, pairs, and correlates” (Grosz, 1994, p. 162). This is to take, along with Skott-Myhre (2008), an immanent view of bodies. Bodies are constantly affecting and being affected by the bodies around them. They are continually coming together and breaking apart through constellations of becomings. Difference is understood not as a comparison of one body to another, or a process of mimesis, but in terms of how a body continually becomes different-in-itself (Lenz Taguchi, 2010; Pacini-Ketchabaw with Nxumalo, 2010). In this account, humans are not given ontological
primacy over non-human bodies. In fact, this distinction breaks down as we look to assemblages and the entanglements between all bodies. Here I understand both human and non-human bodies to be actants, although with “different types and degrees of power” (Bennett, 2010, p. 108). Essentially this is a relational materialist onto-epistemology. The reason it is important to keep a notion of epistemology here is so that we do not fall into the illusion of boundless difference. The idea of epistemology is to know the difference between creative experimentation that breaks apart binaries and codes and merely reenacting binaries and codes. As Haraway (1991) points out, “some differences are playful; some are poles of world historical systems of domination. ‘Epistemology’ is about knowing the difference” (p. 12).

The Architect

For my methodology, as I wanted to explore all the bodies in the early childhood classroom, I used visual ethnography. Ethnography is essentially the study of a system or culture rather than an individual (Carter & Little, 2007). Ethnography has been utilized within many disciplines and can be used within different ontological and epistemological positions. I employ ethnography within the visual arts and through a relational material onto-epistemology of immanence. The visual materials I used are photography and video, as well as writing about the encounters.

Sullivan (2005) argues that visual arts need to be grounded in practices of art making. I brought the selected materials (washable tempera paint, Plexiglas, and paintbrushes) to the classrooms to allow the children and educators to engage in the practice of art. In this way, the classroom became like an art studio. For art practice to be considered research, Sullivan (2005) argues, “artist-theorists need to engage directly with
theoretical concerns that can be investigated in studio contexts as well as through other mediated forms and methods” (p. 98).

My (re)thinking/(re)writing of the body is inspired by my experiences with art. Although I can say that my research is anything but a linear process, I began my analysis by creating my own art piece, a form of poetic ethnography. This art piece can be found in chapter 4. The reason I made my own art piece is that I wanted to meet and explore the materials that I brought to the children and educators. For a one-hour period each, I met the paint, paintbrush, and Plexiglas and then wove images and writing. I wanted to get to know the tempera paint, Plexiglas, and paintbrush. This is not to say that I know all tempera paint, Plexiglas, or paintbrushes, but the materials within the event—a haecceity or a this-ness which can only be illuminated by the event and from the assemblage of elements that took part.

Journal

The artistic process involves the “emotive, affective experiences, senses, and bodies, and imagination and emotion, as well as intellect as ways of knowing and responding to the world” (Finley, 2008, p. 72). It is an embodied experience that privileges all ways of exploring, creating, and knowing. For this reason, I kept a journal of the sounds, smells, tastes, emotions, and experiences that took place between the bodies through the event. I attempted “to offer visual and textual understandings and experiences rather than visual and textual representations” (Springgay, 2008a, p. 37).
Visual materials

In my research, I used visual materials along with my own journaling of the encounter. Rose (2001) presents an interpretation of the complexity of visual materials. The type of camera I used for both picture and video influenced what could become visible. I used a digital Canon ELPH for both images and video, and at times I used a Jazz HDMI camera. The process of developing the image, and the way in which the image is displayed, lend themselves to what can become knowable and seen (Rose, 2001). What picture and video are capable of doing, and what I am able to do to each, is distinct. Using both picture and video provided me with two unique and dynamic methods to play with in my analysis. Each can enhance and offset the other in the attempt to create the new.

Image and video

Image has traditionally been understood as a representation of reality. Western material-discourse has come to conflate vision, image, and reality (Pink, 2001; Rose, 2001). I want to turn away from this notion of vision toward the idea of visibility. Visibility, here, is understood to mean how we come to see something in a specific way, to the construction of a perspective (Rose, 2001). I see with an image, as what we see depends on how we see it. I take the image as a means for making meaning. The way I approach meaning here “is an exposure; a rupture that emphasizes an opening up” (Springgay, 2008a, p. 7).

Meaning making essentially happens through various sites within visual ethnography. Rose (2001) explains three main sites. The first is within the production of the image: how I set up the data collection site, what materials I presented, and what I
paid attention to with my body-camera. The second is within the image itself. The intermingling of elements through the encounter offers up possible worlds. These images provide us with a setting of elements, which offers us a glimpse at an immanent form—a form based on relations between bodies. This is an emergent “form which cannot be essentialized as separate from a web of living bodies that produce, sustain, and decompose it” (Skott-Myhre, 2008, p. 70).

Form is the representative of desire in the image. It is the horizon based on which the image may have a meaning, by pointing to a desired world, which the beholder thus becomes capable of discussing, and based on which his own desire can rebound. (Bourriaud, 2002, p. 23)

The third site through which meaning is made is the site of the audience, or where the image is viewed. This includes a network of bodies, including my own body, the computer beneath my fingers, the books piled up on the desk in front of me, and the ideas produced in between. The connections between the bodies are infinitely becoming, transgressing the divide between human and non-human, researcher and participant, self and other. The video follows the same outline as the image, except that the video also captures duration. A duration of time that announces an event, instead of representing past action (Bourriaud, 2002). Within all sites, what is deemed visible is both material and theoretical. Theory and practice become synonymous in action, and both together construct meaning (Lenz Taguchi, 2010; Sullivan, 2005).

**Considering Material Potential**

How I construct the research environment influences what can become visible. This is the site where the image is produced (Rose, 2001). McNiff (2008) explains: “The
art of art-based research extends to the creation of a process of inquiry” (p. 34). I created an environment with the potential to engage bodies (materials, children, sound, educator) in an art-based exploration. I considered the potential of the materials for this study. The materials that I used were Plexiglas, paintbrushes, and washable tempera paint. The Plexiglas reflects back to the child an image of the body, and the child can see through the Plexiglas. I used various soft paintbrushes. Washable tempera paint is creamy and fluid and has the potential to be used in different ways. Originally, I decided to provide just two colours to the children and educators. Using more than two colours can quickly lead to brown, which can stop the process. The options I suggested were red, blue, and yellow, or black and white (S. Kind, personal communication, June 23, 2010; August 11, 2010). However, after many of the children asked for more colours, I ended up bringing a variety.

**Actants**

The key actants in the study are the children, the educators, the paintbrushes, paint, Plexiglas, and myself. An actant, Bennett (2010) explains,

is neither an object nor a subject but an ‘intervener,’ akin to the Deleuzean ‘quasi-causal operator.’ An operator is that which, by virtue of its particular location in an assemblage and the fortuity of being in the right place at the right time, makes the difference, makes things happen, becomes the decisive force catalyzing an event. (Bennett, 2010, p. 9)

This is not to say there are no differences between humans and things, but that no need exists to describe these differences “in a way that places humans at the ontological center or hierarchical apex” (Bennett, 2010, p. 11).
Doing Method

McNiff (2008) suggests that an art-based exploration should be as simple as possible. I therefore constructed the art-based exploration with simplicity in mind. I conducted my data collection at two different daycare centres. The first site was a multi-age daycare, with children between the ages of eighteen months and six years old. The number of children present varied each day between five and twelve children. One to three educators were present during the days of data collection. The centre was closed the week before data collection, so I was not able to meet the children beforehand as planned. Instead, on the day of data collection, I asked the children what two colours they wanted to use. The children decided on red and yellow. Every morning at 9:45 a.m. over a period of four days, I came to the classroom, set up the materials (Plexiglas, paint, and brushes), and invited the children to the space to meet the materials. No instructions were given to the children, as I wanted to let the art unfold organically. I had a drop cloth, which I was hoping to use, but the educators decided against using it. Instead they cleaned the paint off the ground as the artwork unfolded. The materials were set up on the wooden floor in the middle of the classroom. At the end of the exploration, I washed down the Plexiglas. This same procedure was repeated for four consecutive days. I had planned to bring the same materials for a five-day period; however, I encountered some issues with the educators. There were some concerns with the paint, and I therefore decided to bring in pencils and paper for the final day. On the fifth day, I brought in my computer to show the children the pictures and video I had taken of them and to speak about what had taken place. Then we did some drawing together to close our week of art.
The second site was an in-home multi-age daycare with children between the ages of twenty-one months and six years old. I visited the centre the week before data collection so that the children, the educators, and I could spend some time together. I spoke to the children about the art project and asked them what colours they wanted to use. The children decided on red and blue. The number of children present during the days of data collection varied between three and four. One educator was present the entire time of data collection. I came to the centre at different times over four non-consecutive days that fit with the centre’s schedule. At times I came at 10 a.m., and at other times I came at 1 p.m. I came three times during one week and, due to illness of the children, I came one time during the following week. As with the first centre, I set up the Plexiglas, brushes, and paint. This time I used the drop cloth. The materials were set up in the garage of the house where the daycare was located. The children selected the brushes they wanted to use and then were invited to encounter the materials. At the end of each art exploration, as I did at the other centre, I washed down the Plexiglas pieces. During the children’s art exploration at both centres, I took pictures and video.

MacLure, Holmes, MacRae, and Jones (2010) argue that the “video method is artless in more than one sense of the word” (p. 546). This is because the video method has not changed in many years. To embrace my aim to create as opposed to access reality, I held the camera. The mobile camera “allows images to incorporate movement and time” (MacLure et al., 2010, p. 546). The still camera offers limited potential to rupture molar assemblages and open up new ways of seeing. Deleuze suggests “cinema as a technological event of modern life that is ‘a mode of ‘seeing’ that is not attached to the human eye’” (Colebrook, 2002, p. 29 as quoted by Mazzei, 2010, p. 515). As a
detached mode of seeing, the mobile camera can be used, not as a means of applying theory to images and video, but as a means to provoke philosophy (Mazzei, 2010).

**Analysis**

With this research, I turn away from the notion of representation, which aims to depict practice accurately, to the notion of partial connections. Jensen and Lauritsen (2005), in thinking with Haraway (1991), suggest that research is a relational issue, as research is of this world:

This makes research a partial enterprise for, if knowledge is always situated in the relationship between knower and known, then science is about the hard work of creating sensible and sustainable relationships with different entities. (p. 63)

This is not a human activity, as situations emerge between assemblages of bodies. In this way, researchers do not represent, but “partially construct relationships with what they study: no more or no less. This partiality is not in itself a problem; indeed, our argument is that it is a *condition* of research” (p. 68).

For the analysis, my aim was to experiment with a variety of ways of exploring practice. For this reason, I chose to create my own art piece, shoot a video, and produce images and textual understandings. For my art piece, I present an ethnographic weaving of image and text—“an imaginative writing grounded in an intense attention to the poesis, or creativity, of ordinary things” (Stewart, 2007). For my written analysis, I chose to experiment with an assemblage of embodiment pieces and different textual ways to explore with the images. “From the present point of view, qualitative research should be precisely about experimenting in order to learn how to articulate what takes place in
practice” (Jensen & Lauritsen, 2005, p. 68). Along with Hultman and Lenz Taguchi (2010), I take a relational materialist approach to reading some of the images. This is a way to explore the interconnectedness of bodies in the world and how they affect and are affected. Both in my embodiment writing and textual explorations with the images, I follow the network of bodies, including my own. Jensen and Lauritsen (2005) write that “instead of looking for humans using tools and ascribing meaning to their activities, Latour encourages us to follow ‘chains of associations’ of human and non-humans. With the slogan ‘follow the actors.’ (65)

For part of my data analysis, I created a video based on an article by MacLure, Holmes, MacRae, and Jones (2010). The authors detail their process of creating a video, where they experimented with video by making “an assemblage of still and moving images, written text, snatches of voices speaking and singing, instrumental music and other sounds, such as a gunshot, or the click of a camera” (p. 547). Like MacLure et al. (2010), I began by outlining some themes that came up for me as I reviewed the data. I wrote down art, bodies, learning, and power. Then I searched the Internet for images and video to add to my data. I came upon artwork by specific artists surrounding paint. Also, in thinking with material force and bodies, I came upon a video of a plastic bag floating in the wind. I remembered reading in the book Political Matter about footage like this, so I decided to include it. In thinking with learning, I came across footage of Piagetian theory, which I also included. As I searched the Internet, I started to follow different connections that came about through my original themes, such as images of birds’ nests, x-rayed hands, and fetuses. I am not able to say why I chose all the images and videos, except that they affected me and helped to spread the network of connections with my
data. I also broke up the video and spliced in images to keep the pace of the video unpredictable. Finally, I chose music because of the quality of affect between it and my body. With the video I wanted to create a space for thinking differently. MacLure et al. (2010) provide an evocative way to move beyond representing in research. Each time I watch the video, due to the place where I view the video and the bodies I view it with, I come to think with the video differently. This method, MacLure et al. (2010) argue, presents a unique way to interrupt habitual ways of signification in video.

I chose such diverse means of analysis in order to create a problem. This thesis contains no findings section. The analysis is left open, as an assemblage of bodies, all experiments, all given to my reader. Massumi (2002) argues that this type of research leaves readers

with a very special gift: a headache. By which I mean a problem: what in the world to do with it all. That’s their problem. That’s where their experimentation begins. Then the openness of the system will spread. If they have found what they have read compelling. Creative contagion. (p. 19)

Quality and Trustworthiness

To develop quality and trustworthiness, I have approached this study with the notions of internal consistency, resonance (Cole & Knowles, 2008), and repeatability. Jensen and Lauritsen (2005) argue that “if research is not about representing practice but about exploring common features with practices, then both methodical rigour and reflexive subtlety become less interesting” (p. 73). The simplicity of the method allows for the study to be repeated. What happens will always be different due to the element of
creativity and experimentation (S. Kind, personal communication, October 22, 2010).
The study is designed with the intention of internal consistency, so that the concepts and ideas work together. The analysis is a product of resonance—moments in which I was touched and moved, as well as moments in which I was provoked to think (Cole & Knowles, 2008; S. Kind, personal communication, October 22, 2010).

**Possibilities**

The major limitation of this study is the haecceity of the outcome. With this study, I am not producing evidence-based practice. Essentially, I hope to present a process of disruption, a way of rethinking the body. This research is meant as a provocation for thinking differently in practice. With this study, I am presenting a set of encounters in practice. This study is based on the context within which it unfolds, and it is both contingent on and constrained by the setting. The data collection was carried out for about one hour a day for one week in two different centres. This is a small amount of time in the classroom. I used Plexiglas, paintbrushes, and paint, and I am not able to say anything about how other materials might become in practice. This is not to say that with this study, I am able to say anything conclusive about Plexiglas, paintbrushes, and paint, since each time they are used will be different. Each attempt to disrupt the all-too-human body will depend on the bodies within the encounter (S. Kind, personal communication, August 11, 2010).

With this chapter, I have assembled the various pieces to make the methodology section. In the subsequent two chapters, I present the weavings between the abstract movements I described in chapter 1 and the data. I now attempt to build with my theoretical framework. In chapter 4, *Becoming-With*, I begin by meeting the materials.
Since I cannot articulate the children’s experiences (S. Kind, personal communication, August 11, 2010), I do so through my own art piece. In chapter 5, *Becoming Enchanted*, I present an assemblage of moments. I attempt to articulate the relation between my body and the bodies within my research in different ways. In particular, I was guided by moments, through which my body became enchanted, as Bennett (2010) describes, in “the mood of enchantment or that strange combination of delight and disturbance” (p. xi).
CHAPTER IV: BECOMING-WITH

Inspired by the article, *Colouring the Virtual*, by Manning (2008)

**Paint.**

What am I doing?
What will become of me?
Am I able to continue?
What if someone comes in?
What will they see?
How will I be seen?

My insides turn out for the world to see
I feel my skin becoming paint, and paint becoming skin

Soft and smooth like jelly
Streaks of cold yellow and red

Shiver and cold chills
Legs and shoulders become rigid and sharp

Where next?
Bright and florescent, exciting rushes up and down
I am forced to communicate in other ways

You can only see me in red

Red is the stable support for my existence, but at the same time as you come to see me I
am conditioned to self-destruct
Somewhere between perception and an image coming to form
I am becoming-imperceptible

Where am I now?

What has become part of me, and what have I become part of?
It is breaking down
Don’t lose me
Can you find me?
How will you do this?

For me to happen you need to allow me to exist
  Look for me?
  Become part of me too
    I am so alone
  I want to exist but I need your help

Feel me inside and I will find my way out
  I am hot and intense
  Hurting deep inside
  Let’s see what we can do together

At the moment in-between

Where we create friction together
  Are you with me?
  Let’s see what we can set in motion

Where will we go?
How will we do this?
  Let it happen
    I trust you
    I am with you
Do you trust me too?
Are you with me too?

Yes

Where did you go?
I had to go ask them
  Why?
  I need to exist too
What did they say?
  She can see it
  She said we can go on
This is the first time one of them has ever seen me
What did it feel like?
Aching inside turning inside out
Becoming-love with the not-yet-known

It is fragile and becoming
It is letting me exist
Legs shake and breath rushes
Expanding out to the world
Was she looking for me?
I think she was
Where did she find you?
In an article
Go back farther
Go out farther
Go forward farther

I am ready to go with you
She is with us too
She trusts us too
Where shall we go?
How will we get there?
Let it happen
Let’s go together
We will find it together

**Paintbrush.**

Where did you find me now?
I went back to the images.
I was here all along
I never left you
You got lost but I found you
I came to you painted in blue
I told you to slow down
I told you to take your makeup off
Let us be shown to the world
The beauty of us together
Let me become part of this too

I feel the blue soft and quiet
I am gentle and smooth
Let me come up to you
Let me be part of your body
Show us to the world together
How we become together

I fold into your body and feel you
I feel nervous.
I have never had a material so close to me.
I wonder about you and want to feel who you are.
This moment is so special and I want it to go on.

More blue slides unto me.
I am slowing down.
Half sleeping and half awake.
Half dreaming and half at work.
I can’t tell you where I am but I can tell you how I feel.

I feel myself spreading.
As I spread out I am also spreading in.
I need more paper.
As you come in I am going out farther and farther.
I can’t see you without paper.
I take more pages from the book.
I lay them out so you can go farther.
I feel you growing in me too.
I feel you caressing up my leg.
With each new lick I slow more and more.
I feel you spreading inside out.
I need support.
It is getting too much to bear.
The beauty of this moment overtakes me.

We need someone else.
Who will it be?
Who will we invite?
Let’s see whom we can find.
Let’s see whom we can set in motion.
She found her way to us.
She is becoming part of us too.
Wait.
Where did she go?
I think we lost her.
Is this all going to break down?
Is this all going to fall apart?
I don’t understand.
What did we do wrong?
Did we hurt her?
Where can we find her now?

I need more help.
Who can help?
I don’t want to lose her.
I would die without her too.

Wait.
I have an idea.
Maybe yellow can help.
Maybe that was not the way she wanted to be part of this.
Let’s see if that will work.
Let’s give it a try.
Yellow.
She is wise.
She can make things right again.
She transforms things.
Mixes them up.
Finds new ways to carry on with the process.
She broke us apart to find a better way for the paintbrush to enter.

I see now.
The paintbrush wanted to enter onto my body too.
Not just to be part of what was created without her.
She is here now.
It is hard to hold her.
I need to move in certain ways.
I need to support her.
She needs my help to come alive.
What does she want to do?
Let’s see what she likes.
Let’s see what she can set in motion.
I am excited.
Are you too?
Is it all becoming real?
She is transforming us one by one.
We are turning green.

She is hard to move.
She needs more support.
She needs more structure.
How can I help her?
What can I set in motion to move her too?
She is moving my whole body.
I feel myself becoming paintbrush as the paintbrush becomes part of me too.
What else can I offer her to help her move?
What else can she move of mine?
How can we move together and become together?

We are all painting together.
What are we painting?
Boundaries are being broken down.
I feel my body being released and opening up with the world around.
Together we are becoming-art.
This is a relational process happening between us.
As we move together we make shapes and forms.
What will happen next?
What will we become?
Without thought we move forward.
Like a dance we all move together.
We call to each other to know where we stand.
It is relational happening between us.

We are building up higher and higher.
Higher up to the sky.
I hear her wish.
I have always wanted to fly.
Can we do this?
How will it happen?
Can we move to help us fly?
She creeps up my leg.
  Where will she go?
  How can I help her fly?
What else of mine does she need?
What can I give her to set her free?

I give her my hand, as she becomes part of me.
I feel her becoming finger, as she becomes part of my hand.
  She is helping me write.
  Where will I get her paper?
  How will she be written?
I offer my body as paper for her to write upon.
For her to exist she needs me too.
I feel excited and yellow.
I feel mixed and green.
She is coming up to me closer.
I feel her inside of me coming out and outside coming back in.
How can I help her?
What else does she need?
What else can I give her?

She starts growing out from my body.
She is growing up higher and stronger.
Where will she go next?
Without thought I offer her more.
I care for her.
I love her.
I want her to grow more.
I offer up my feet.
Between me she may come alive.
I feel her growing inside me.
She is soft and coarse all at once.
She is smooth and loud.
Listen to her.
Can you hear her grow?

How will she mark me?
What will she do next?
Blue finds her way back.
She wants to come up to me too.
She creeps up to me and marks me along the way.
How can I feel her?
She is so still.
She does not move on me.
Leaving her body on mine.
How can she move?
How can we help her become me and for me to become her?
I need you to help me.
Paintbrush, can you paint me blue?
I need your help.
Slow me down.
It is so fast.
I don’t want to lose control again.
I need you.
Structure me, paintbrush.
Let me move with you and move with me too.

What have you done to me, paintbrush?
You have turned me blue.
I feel soft and smooth.
I feel slow and calm.
Where were you, paintbrush?
I needed you too.

I feel you growing from me.
Turning me blue.
You are acting me in my hand.
We are all together.
Where will we go?
How will we get there?
What can we set in motion?
What can we do?
Let’s see!

You are growing out from my body.
I am becoming your soil.
I am giving myself up to you.
You may exist inside me turning out.
I trust you.
I love you too.

What am I turning into next?
How will I give up myself now?
What can I offer you to move with me and for me to move with you?
How can I help you grow?
You have transformed me, paintbrush
I feel tears streaming down my face.
By allowing you to exist.
You have allowed me to exist too.
I love you, paintbrush.
A becoming-love for the not-yet-known.

I feel the ground breaking up below us.
But we need paper to exist.
How will we continue on?
I want you to live in me forever.
What can I give you?
How can I help you live?
I will give you my paper.
I will wrap myself inside and out.
I will give you up with care.
Trust me now.
I can move you.
I will listen to you.
I can feel you inside.

I feel the paper come up to me too.
It wraps onto me as I warp onto it.
I feel sticky and held.
I feel paint becoming glue.
I feel myself becoming paper and paper becoming myself.

Here the paintbrush may grow again.
It is a relational process.
We must all move together to grow.
We need to listen to each other.
We need to create structure.
We need to fly.

As I peel back the layers,
I feel my body becoming-paper.
I feel paper becoming-stamp.

As I go on things are constantly changing.
Who will be transformed next?
What will I become?
Can I even make sense of this all?
Should this make sense?

What things don’t make sense?
What can they make?
How can we know they exist?
How will I find them again?
I don’t ever want to lose this moment.
It has changed me forever.  
It has transformed me.  
I will never be the same.

As I stand and look at what has shattered,  
At what has become,  
I can’t quite understand it.  
But maybe we don’t need to.  
Maybe we only need to know what it feels like.  
An experience.

When we look up from this piece we can wonder if I went insane.  
We can wonder what happened to her.  
You can think what you want to.  
But I know.  
I know what happened.  
It touched me and moved me  
I will always remember.  
Even when I wash this piece all off.  
I will always remember.  
I will remember who believed in me.  
I will remember what allowed me to exist.  
I love all those who allowed me to exist.  
Who brought me back when it was almost too hard to find me.  
From an edge that was so thin.  
From a moment that seemed like it might go on forever.
But all I wanted to do
Was FLY!
Plexiglas.

Deterritorialization.

Smooth.

Movement.

Chaos.

Force.

Black.

White.
Potential.

Mixture.

Creation.
Folding.

Unfolding.

Refolding.
Desiring-production.
CHAPTER V: BECOMING ENCHANTED

Actualizing the virtual
Becoming-Paper Blood Hands

Justin encounters the red paint and Plexiglas as the red paint and Plexiglas encounter him. I watch as the Plexiglas and Justin stand right up close to one another, Justin’s face almost connecting with the red paint. My body-camera stands frozen in anticipation. Then the red paint and his finger connect to become touch. Soon after, his hands connect with the Plexiglas, the paint speaking back and marking his hands.

The paint explores Justin’s hands as Justin’s hands explore the paint. All of a sudden, I hear Justin say the following words:

Ah:: bloody hands now (.6) There paper-bloody-hands (.3) You can call me paper blood hands (.2) Cuz I got blood all over my hands (.1) Call me paper blood hands

Justin encounters not only the paint, but his own hands as well. Here we might be able to say that the objects of knowledge are seen to be actants (Bennett, 2010; Haraway, 1992). We might introduce the actants as red paint and hands. All actants engage in experimentation. Through the assemblage, the actants release their force, whereby
transformations take place. The BwO, prior to articulation, is the matters, intensities, and flows, all particles within this assemblage liberated through their singularity.

The form and expression emerges through the experience and breakdown of the red-paint-hands-Justin assemblage.

He used the term *matter* for the plane of consistency or Body without Organs, in other words, the unformed, unorganized, nonstratified, or destratified body and all its flows: subatomic and submolecular particles, pure intensities, prevital and prephysical free singularities. He used the term *content* for formed matters, which would now have to be considered from two points of view: substance, insofar as these matters are “chosen,” and form, insofar as they are chosen in a certain order (*substance and form of content*). He used the term *expression* for functional structures, which would also have to be considered from two points of view: the organization of their own specific form, and substances insofar as they form compounds (*form and content of expression*). (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 43)
If we attend to the form and content, we might be able to see the movement of a minor assemblage, perhaps a nomadic body-thought? As Hultman and Lenz Taguchi (2010) explain, “nomadic thinking produces another kind of knowing: knowing of what emerges in-between” (p. 538). We might be able to see desire here as expressed through new ways of thinking (Olsson, 2009): the assemblages of becoming-paper-bloody-hands offering up another world, disfiguring the molar assemblages through which we habitually come to see the world, disrupting such binaries as human/non-human and self/other.

I am provoked to read this assemblage as a line of flight. It also posits a territory, however, when Justin articulates the BwO. The flows, intensities, and nonstratified matters are expressed: “call me paper blood hands.” As Deleuze and Guattari (1987) explain, “territorialities, then, are shot through with lines of flight testifying to the presence within them of movements of deterritorialization and reterritorialization. In a certain sense, they are secondary. They would be nothing without these movements that deposit them” (p. 55).

**Becoming-Researcher**

The core of my body is light, and it feels like ten thousand tiny butterflies are beating in my stomach. The distinct smell of tempera paint is thick in the air, mixed with the smell of this classroom. I take a deep breath. Sounds envelop the room: laughter, moving bodies, tapping, talking, and brushes falling. I fumble around with the camera in my hands. Yellow and red paint grow higher in my peripheral vision as I look down. My palms are sweaty and hot. I whisper to myself, “Turn it on fast, you don’t want to miss anything. Come on, hurry.” I lift the camera and open the viewfinder. As I hold the
camera in my hands, I feel a numbing excitement creep through my body. My focus is on
the viewfinder; my feet slowly creep forward and feel their way around chairs and tables.
My body glides around gently so that I do not rustle the camera. The movements of my
body around the room, and where I am able to look, emerge with the camera. As I look in
the viewfinder, I feel less and less present. Everything around me seems to melt away,
growing dull as I focus on the little screen. As I cradle this techno-body in my hands, I
feel strange. Chills on the back of my neck rush down my spine. Everything is becoming
more and more bizarre. Suddenly, a thought jolts me upright, “Are these some sort of
 techno-eyes? But wait, it is recording.” I look at the camera in my hands. “Perhaps we are
a kind of bizarre techno-human crossbreed, joined together through the doings of
research.” The camera feels odd in my hands, something so familiar yet now so unusual. I
look at the viewfinder and see a web of co-existing bodies: Plexiglas-people-
paintbrushes-paint-floor-chairs-walls-bowls. These bodies, made up of protobodies, made
up of bodies, and-and. Bodies of sound flow through the room from all sides: “We all live
in a yellow submarine.” From another direction comes, “Orange, Orange, Orange.” The
room feels thick and in motion. My body is a part of something large. Something
breathing. It is alive. All of a sudden my breath chokes. I focus back on the viewfinder
and think, “There are thousands of doings, each one bumping up against the next.” I hear
a voice behind me: “It smells like lemon sherbet.” I take another deep breath. The words
“lemon sherbet” repeat again. Sensations of yellow and red surround me as I move. My
arms and shoulders feel light. I wonder, “Does it even make sense to say ‘I’ anymore?
How does one speak in this body?” I feel myself at the point where language breaks
down.
The room is illuminated with bright light streaming through the windows. Ariel stands with a paintbrush in each of her hands. On the other side of the Plexiglas I sit, supported by the cement floor and wall. The paintbrushes flutter on the surface of the Plexiglas. Pressure is growing in my chest. Something is building, becoming with more force. The fluttering is getting stronger and louder. All of a sudden the paintbrushes dive down into the bowls. Tiny speckles of paint burst forth from the collision of the brushes, paint, and bowls. The speckles of paint are propelled toward Ariel’s body. She freezes, and then a large smile creeps onto her face. My body jolts up straight and I hold my breath. I feel a rush of excitement spread through my chest. The paintbrushes feverishly slap into the paint. Ariel’s hands and arms support the brushes and all move together. The bowls bounce around between paintbrushes and the drop cloth spread upon the cement floor. The drop-cloth-cement floor-brushes-paint-bowls-Ariel, an assemblage of bodies, machines hundreds of tiny speckles of paint into the air, a desiring production in motion. This machine is harnessing, teasing, speeding up, and slowing down the forces catalyzing this event, purposeful through doing (Buchanan, 1997; Grosz, 2008). The paintbrushes move faster and off beat as they gain momentum, crashing against the bouncing bowls. The speckles of paint vary in amount and the distance they travel. Ariel laughs and celebrates this discovery. I feel joy bubbling up in my chest as I begin to laugh, too. The paintbrushes suddenly drop, and Ariel comes over to me and shows me her body, proud.
of her transformation. “Beautiful,” I say. With a big smile on her face, she asks me to take her picture. As I do so, I think about action painting and the work of Jackson Pollock. When I look at Ariel, I can’t help but notice the dots of paint all over her. Pollock’s work was presented on a canvas. Ariel, however, is less concerned about the Plexiglas; instead, she is interested in her own transformation. This machinic assemblage is doing something for her body. “What is it doing for her?” I wonder. We smile together, and then she rushes back to the bowls. I sit down and continue to enjoy the discovery. Ariel enters back into the assemblage of bodies, and I watch the bursts of paint erupt into the air. The machinic assemblage of bodies moves up to the Plexiglas, leaving behind the bowls. The speckles of paint come toward her body with more speed. Ariel’s body sways and jams as she is showered with the tiny bodies of paint. For a moment, I see hundreds of bodies, all moving, all in flight, liberated through their singularity (O’Sullivan, 2006). This entanglement of bodies is no longer defined by the boundary between human and non-human, and, if only for a moment, a becoming-universe unfolds.
The machining of paint speckles is discovered, through the intra-actions of many actants, “rather than being a capacity localized in a human body or in a collective produced (only) by human efforts” (Bennett, 2010, p. 23).

**Becoming-Speeds and Motion**

The sound of dull singing, like in a tin can, fills the room. Bright light shines down from a spotlight overhead. I move on my knees around the Plexiglas. As I turn the corner, I see the white, yellow, and red body of the Plexiglas wrapping around Ellie, as her body is wrapping around a paintbrush. The floor supports me as I lean on my arm. With my other arm I support the camera. Ellie’s feet slide against the floor as the paintbrush and Ellie hurl their bodies toward the Plexiglas, connect, and slide, leaving a yellow stripe. Ellie peers around the corner of the Plexiglas, turns around and then rushes back toward the other side where I am sitting. Between my body and the Plexiglas, the paintbrush and Ellie hurl their bodies toward the Plexiglas again, tap, tap, tap, and slide. I feel a slight bit of vertigo.

My body-camera is a part of this, too, sitting still like the Plexiglas. Then Ellie wraps between my body and the Plexiglas to dive into one of the folds of the Plexiglas.
The paintbrush and Plexiglas connect, tap, and slide. Ellie’s feet glide forward as she wraps into another fold. My thoughts begin to undo: “What is moving me?” As the Plexiglas-paintbrush-Ellie moves, my body-camera moves to follow. We are all moving in relation to one another, weaving like a dance. Yet dancing does not seem to fit. This is something more, the point where dancing meets with painting and then breaks down. Eternity unravels in a few seconds as I become lost in the movements unraveling this event, a moment of pure excess. I feel my body growing warm and my heart beat pounding in my ears. The paintbrush-Ellie-Plexiglas-Vanessa-camera assemblage weaves inside, outside, and around one another. Something in-between has formed. A body emerges through relations of speed and motion.
Becoming-Seen

Can you see us, can you see us, can you see us, can you see us, can you see us?

Can you see us? Can you see us? Can you see us? Can you see us? Can you see us? Can you see us?
Phase One: Experimentation

Ariel, paintbrush, drop cloth, cement floor, Plexiglas, paint, camera, light, temperature, sounds, emotions, and me: a bundle of relations come together and connect. We are drawn to each other through experimentation. Exploring what bodies can do. My camera-body is moving with Ariel-paintbrush-Plexiglas-paint. Pink dots form as bodies connect, making visible imperceptible forces through the event.

The assemblage of bodies, a desiring production, makes its own connections through experimentation. The bodies become different as an effect of their constellations. Not a categorical difference to one another, but each body becomes different-in-itself. A difference that Bignall (2002) describes as “internal to a body as it transforms over time” (p. 202, as quoted by Pacini-Ketchabaw with Nxumalo, 2010, p. 146). This difference emerges not through imitating other bodies. It is a matter of a body joining into a composition with other bodies: “Difference is thus caused by connections and relations within and between different bodies, affecting each other and being affected, whether it is
viruses, humans or sand. This makes each of these bodies differenciate *in themselves*, continuously— one singular event after the other” (Hultman & Lenz Taguchi, 2010, p. 529). When we look at the images, we can ask, How is each body becoming different-in-itself as an effect of its relation with the other bodies?

**Phase Two: Becoming**

The relation between Ariel’s body, paintbrush, and paint produces her body as a surface for the paint on which to spread and move. Ariel’s body unfolds as a becoming-canvas (S. Kind, personal communication, June 23, 2010). In this way, the paintbrush has a voice through the relation within the assemblage. Painting “visualize[s] invisible forces” whereby the paint is becoming-sensation” (Grosz, 2008, p. 81). This is not to suggest that these are the only becomings provoked by these images. To become-with these images through an onto-epistemology of immanence is to continually unfold. Each time I view these images, I view them in a different way. These images present multiple becomings. Expanding the network of connections, we can look at the assemblage of
these bodies all together and through the event as becoming-art. We can look at the connections between these images and my body, the computer beneath my fingers, the books piled on my desk in front of me, and the ideas in between, as becoming-research.

**Becoming-Folded**

A paintbrush held tightly in each hand. A drop cloth spread out on the floor, upon which Charlie is sitting on his knees. My legs crossed on the cold cement floor, my back leaning against the wall. Paintbrushes thickly coated in red and purple glide slowly and rhythmically around Charlie’s body. Both arms stretched out as far as they can go, the paintbrushes moving symmetrically around his body in circular motions. My breath is shallow and my body is still as I watch. The brushes continue to keep some distance from one another as they move. The circle is retraced again and again. Everything seems to slow, and my core softens as my muscles grow limp. The body within the circle becomes through and with the partnership of bodies as a fold. As the circle is retraced again and again, adding more and more layers, the body within continues to be folded, enfolded, and refolding. I feel my body folding too as I notice all the bodies around me. Gradually,
the brushes travel less and less until they move to the bowl of purple paint, where the
brushes tip the bowl, over and over again, smearing paint around on the drop cloth.

Becoming-Yellow, Red, Orange

red yellow red
red YELLOW ORANGE
ORANGE ORANGE RED
orange red orange yellow
yellow red orange
ORANGE
RED red red red red
red orange yellow orange
YELLOW RED

yellow orange red orange yellow red yellow yellow yellow yellow red orange

red orange red red orange orange orange red
Thinking as a Relational Material Embodied Practice

Bodies can come together and connect based on a transcendent reality. This is when bodies are encoded based on form and function from a world already represented (Buchanan, 1997). Engaging with bodies in this way will limit the possibilities of becoming. For example, we can take the image below and suggest that, had the structuring ideas “this is a toy car” (form), and “a toy car is for rolling on the ground” (function), entered into the assemblage within the event, the bodies would never have engaged in experimentation.

As I look at the images in the series below, the philosophical intra-actions between these bodies provoke my body to think that we are not able to tell what a body can do (Skott-Myhre, 2008). The various bodies engage each other in deep experimentation, coming together and connecting in creative and unpredictable ways.
When I look at these images, I wonder how I might approach these bodies through their experimentation and doings. I might ask what questions and problems the connections between these bodies make visible. Some questions might be: What can these bodies do? How might these bodies come together and connect? How might these bodies be transformed by engaging in this assemblage? What can the connection between these various bodies do? Woven across the series of images, we might suggest even more questions and problems. For example, what other ways can we connect? What other bodies can become part of this assemblage? Here we can see thinking as taking place between bodies and through their connection. Questions and problems become expressed through networks of intra-actions, fraying the tree-like structure of representational thinking into a rhizome of nomadic thinking. Thinking can be understood as “distributed in networks and assemblages of matter, organisms and discursive meaning in an encounter, rather than being based on recognition, representation or everyday common sense” (Colebrook, 2002, as quoted in Mazzei, 2010, p. 536).

As these bodies engage each other through questions and problems, we might suggest some transformations that are taking place. We might ask how each body is becoming different-within-itself as an effect of its relations within the composition of other bodies (Pacini-Ketchabaw with Nxumalo, 2010). My body is provoked to think that as the toy car, paper towel, Cohen’s finger, Cohen’s foot, and plastic toy faucet connect
with the paint and Plexiglas, each of these bodies is becoming-paintbrush. In this way, to think through doing has an effect on the bodies within the connections. When we think, we literally change the world in which we live.

**Disrupting the Organism**

Sam: “Look at me. I’m skating.”

With the text and image above, my body is provoked to see bodies transforming. The assemblage paint-Sam-floor-light-music-emotions-words-ideas opens to new connections and creates a territory. A skating rink unfolds where floor and paint are becoming-ice and feet are becoming-skates. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) write:

“Dismantling the organism has never meant killing yourself, but rather opening the body to connections that presuppose an entire assemblage, circuits, conjunctions, levels and thresholds, passages and distributions of intensity, and territories and deterritorializations measured with the craft of a surveyor” (p. 160)
Bodies of sounds jolt my body up and turn my head. “How is that noise being made?” I wonder. It is hard to see. In a cave of paint, enveloped in brush strokes of blue, yellow, and green, Charlie is kneeling. I squint my eyes and see a paintbrush in each of his hands, his arms stretched out as far as they can go. Sitting far enough away from the Plexiglas, taking into account the length of the paintbrushes added to his arms and hands, the paintbrushes come down hard on the Plexiglas. The Plexiglas pushes back, a solid body holding strong. The assemblage Plexiglas-Charlie-paintbrushes collides to machine the bodies of sound:

\[ \text{Bang} \]

\[ \text{Bang} \]

\[ \text{Bang} \]

\[ \text{Bang} \]

\[ \text{Bang} \]

\[ \text{Bang} \]

\[ \text{Bang} \]

The Plexiglas-Charlie-paintbrushes connects slowly and rhythmically off beat. Some collisions come together stronger and produce louder bodies of sound. I am caught off guard when I hear more bodies of sound.

Da

\[ \text{Da} \]

\[ \text{Da} \]

\[ \text{Da} \]

\[ \text{Da} \]

\[ \text{Da} \]

Charlie’s stomach contracts and expands to vocalize. Another becoming unfolds. Charlie is becoming-sonorous, as the sounds are becoming-Charlie (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). I hear the bodies of sound echo off the Plexiglas and become dull and hollow as
they move through the room. I sit in awe and wonder as I witness the unfolding of this event. I feel the sounds echo and vibrate through my body. The bodies of sound begin to address one another.

Bang

Band

AT TIMES, THE BODIES OF SOUND CONNECT, AFFECTING AND BEING AFFECTED BY ONE ANOTHER. TOGETHER, THEY MIX AND MAKE NEW BODIES OF SOUND. EACH BODY OF SOUND IS BECOMING DIFFERENT- WITHIN-ITSELF, BLAZING A PATH OF DETERRITORIALIZATION.

DaBang

Badang

A desiring production forges new connections between and through bodied relations, becoming a slow and rhythmic broken-down melody. The bodies of sounds echo through the room, morphing and changing as they disappear into silence. The broken-down melody is claiming the room. It does not signify, does not speak. This assemblage is engaging in a deterritorialization of language, the way that music can do (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987).

The assemblage forges on as Brayden comes to the other side of the Plexiglas. Brayden holds a paintbrush and moves with it over the Plexiglas. As the paintbrush slides on the Plexiglas, it is visible on Charlie’s side. This sets something in motion. A surge of energy hits my body as the assemblage Charlie-Plexiglas-paintbrush-drop-cloth-cement-Brayden-paint continues on. Once again, Charlie is becoming-
sonorous as the sound is becoming—Charlie. This time the bodies of sound are different again.

Ha

Pfuu

Ha

Ha

HA

Ha hah

Ha

Hahaha

Ha

Hah

Ha

Hahaha

The paintbrush dives up, then down, then to the side, then down, then up, and shakes around as it glides over the smooth surface of the Plexiglas. Charlie’s body moves fast to keep up with the movement of the paintbrush with the Plexiglas. “What are they doing?” I wonder. I see Brayden is wondering something too. He walks around to Charlie’s side of the Plexiglas and takes a look at the Plexiglas. “What is there?” I think to myself, “What does Brayden see?” Brayden walks back to the other side and continues on.

Ha

Hahaha

Ha

Ha

Hahaha

Ha

Hahaha

The paintbrush embraced by Charlie’s hand slowly dives down to the bowl.

All of a sudden, Charlie jumps out of the painted cave, shouting, “Me, me, me!”
"WHAT DOES THE ART WORK SET IN MOTION?" (O’SULLIVAN, 2006, p. 22)
Video: “Bo dies with out org ans”

The video begins with a title stating, “Bo dies with out org ans.” The title is followed by an image of a child with arms stretched up toward the Plexiglas with red paint, accompanied by the sound of fluttering. Next, footage is shown of children painting, and one child singing the Beatles’ “Yellow Submarine.” Images flash of a Montessori teaching toy consisting of eyedropper bottles on a wooden tray, then a flash of an x-ray image of a skull. Back to footage of children painting Plexiglas with “Yellow Submarine” playing. A glimpse of a woman with long arms pushed against the wall. More footage of children painting Plexiglas, then a flash of a child sliding in paint with bare feet saying, “Look at me skating.” A flicker of an image of a child’s face close up looking through a window with raindrops running down the glass, followed by more footage of children painting Plexiglas with “Yellow Submarine” playing. The guitar strum gets louder with images flashing. First, an image of children standing in a line in a classroom, then, an image of the Vitruvian Man, then a child standing looking at red paint on Plexiglas; next, the child’s hands are on the red paint and Plexiglas; finally, the child is looking at his hands. The guitar strum softens with footage of a man in a suit testing a young child on the conservation task, then testing the same task with an older child. The guitar gets louder again with footage of a child painting and whispering to herself as she paints yellow and red, followed by footage of two children with their hands in red paint, rubbing the Plexiglas. Next an image of a woman with her hands and hair in red paint kneeling head down on white paper is shown, followed by footage of the children with the Plexiglas, feet painting, and speaking about feet painting. Then an image flashes of a laminated paper entitled “What I Did at Daycare” with images of circle time, snack time,
a calendar, quiet time, and dramatic play. Back to footage of two children rubbing their hands in red paint over the Plexiglas with paintbrushes in their hands. The guitar sound still on with piano notes, images flash of a Montessori colour-sorting tray in a wooden box, then a blue playground pole with a spiral around the pole, a black and white picture of leafless trees in a line, and finally an image of foot and hand prints on a drop cloth. The guitar noise and piano notes slowly fade to a crackling sound with footage of a sitting child, a red and purple circle painted around his body, as the paintbrushes tip over a white bowl. Next, footage appears of a child on the other side of Plexiglas making handprints as children talk in the background. Then the sound of monks chanting gets louder and fades as hands and red paint make marks on Plexiglas, and then the sound of monks chanting gets louder again and fades. A quick flash of an image of many-coloured handprints on a white sheet of paper is followed by more footage of hands and paint making prints. The sound of a heart beating loud and a flash of an image of a galaxy system appear, and then back to the hand and paint making marks with the beating heart fading to the next scene. Two children stand by the Plexiglas as they look at paintbrushes and paint arms and hands. This continues for a little while and then footage appears of a woman rolling her whole body in a large amount of black paint. She crawls slowly onto white paper. The next footage goes to children shoveling while a man’s voice explains theory from Piaget. This footage is interrupted by video of a plastic bag floating in the wind to classical music where a woman is singing. Then comes video of two children; one child shows his hand to another and says, “Look it, Carter, I am painting myself.” Both children make sounds and smile. The next footage shows two children using the wooden handles of their paintbrushes and rubbing them on the red paint and Plexiglas,
saying, “I’m making it so you can see.” A series of images is shown with the sound of children speaking about seeing one another. An image of x-rayed hands on a black backdrop, then soldiers marching in a line, oil, a black and white image of a railroad, white paper with cuts, white glass, a black hand. Next is footage of a child standing behind the Plexiglas with her hands pattering on the Plexiglas, with the sound of budgies chirping. This is followed by a man explaining Piaget’s sensory motor period as a baby holds a plastic waterwheel. This is interrupted by the sound of footsteps, along with footage of children pushing paintbrushes into the crack between two Plexiglas pieces. Then an image is flashed of a child’s eye close up, followed by speeded-up footage of a baby in a diaper, painting. Back to the footage of a baby who is sitting with a man in a suit, who is demonstrating theory of mind by hiding keys the baby was playing with, the baby crying, and not looking for the keys. The next footage shows two children on either side of Plexiglas painting; one child is making laughing sounds. Then footage of a child lifting his foot to the Plexiglas, while a child gasps “Oh no,” and another child asks, “Do you wanna do that to your foot, Lily?” the first child responding “Yeah.” This is accompanied by an image of a woolen and hairy knitted head with a cloak in the far background on the wall, and then, back to footage of a child kneeling while his arms are stretched, the brushes banging against the Plexiglas, and the sound “da, da, da.” Music fades in, “The True Art of Music” by Thomas Newman, accompanied by flashes of empty chairs in lines in a classroom facing a TV screen. Next is presented footage of a child painting her hand, then a child painting her body while other children paint Plexiglas. The music continues as images flash, a black and white painting, three rows of still pictures of a girl prancing in a white dress, and a toy wooden puzzle of body parts.
These images are followed by footage of two children making foot and hand prints, interrupted by a flash of a child seated at a desk writing, then back to the footage of the children making foot and hand prints, but this time the footage is shown fast. This is followed by footage of a child making finger marks in red paint on Plexiglas. A series of images is flashed: a woman with her hands and hair in red paint on white paper; a black background and a white, transparent, thin body; an organized grocery store; and, finally, children sitting in a circle around a woman seated on a chair reading. Then footage is played of children painting Plexiglas, while one child stands and rocks her body, followed by footage of children painting Plexiglas, one child’s arms stretched, banging on the Plexiglas with paintbrushes. More footage is shown of a child standing while stretching both arms and painting on two sheets of Plexiglas at once. An image flashes of a Bowerbird’s love nest, then an image of a swamp with mud in the form of a body, a bamboo stick forest with a straight path through it, and footage of a child painting his knee and then the Plexiglas. Next is shown footage of a child, one hand on the Plexiglas and the other holding a paintbrush, painting both the Plexiglas and his hand. This is interrupted by an image of a woman facing a white wall and rubbing her arms down the wall with red paint, followed by children sitting in a circle in a classroom around an empty chair. The next footage shows two children painting on either side of Plexiglas, and then footage of one child rubbing her hands in paint on the Plexiglas. An image flashes of white paper and black charcoal, with cuts in the paper exposing red below, then footage of a child with hands in the paint on the Plexiglas. This is followed by an image of many white gloves laid on a wooden stump and the earth in front of the stump. Next is shown footage of two children sitting in front of Plexiglas, one child rubbing the wooden
handle of the paintbrush on his face. An image flashes of a child sitting at a table with a woman next to him while he does puzzles, followed by a wall of children’s artwork and then an image of Indigenous artwork. Then footage is presented of children showing their red hands to each other. A flash of a red galaxy interrupts this, and a short piece of footage of a child spinning and tapping brushes in bowls. This is followed by an x-ray of a fetus, a painting of many coloured dots covering a canvas, and an image of a woman on her knees with her arms stretched against a red wall. Next is shown footage of a child turning a paintbrush and, with the wooden handle, marking red paint on the Plexiglas.

“The True Art of Music” fades out as footage comes on of two children standing in front of the Plexiglas that is all covered in red paint. The video ends with one child speaking, while another stands and occasionally the paintbrush touches the speaking child’s hands.
Entering the Rhizome

- I hear you flattering in my belly
- I smelled with my skin
- I can see light with my ears

“Yellow submarine”
“Yellow submarine”
“We all live in a yellow submarine”

The Body without Organs calls
There are new mouths and lungs
There are new arms and legs
You are already in my belly
Find out how to make me
Build me inside out and upside down

“You never reach the Body without Organs, you can’t reach it, you are forever attaining it. It is a limit” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 150)

The connections are growing
Everything is getting strange
Hearing with my stomach
Seeing with my ears
Smelling with my skin
What am I becoming now?

Cutting across the chaos
The first step is to build a territory
The next step brings us to art
Move away from the territory
Deterritorialize (Grosz, 2008)
Experiment
The assemblage is necessary
Bringing together and stitching
Then what?
Something comes to pass over it
Intensities

Rabecca Bilmore

Stitch

Stitch

Stitch

Stitch
Stitch
Photograph of Theresa Bynres covered in black paint

Stitch
Photograph of plastic bag in the wind

Stitch
Photograph of soldiers marching

Stitch
Photograph of white paper with cuts
For the BwO is all of that: necessarily a Place, necessarily a Plane, necessarily a collectivity (assembling elements, things, plants, animals, tools, people, powers, and fragments of all of these; for it is not “my” body without organs, instead the “me” (moi) is on it, or what remains of me, unalterable and changing in form, crossing thresholds). (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 161)
CHAPTER VI: CONCLUSION

In this final chapter, I offer summarizing and concluding thoughts and briefly describe what I learned with this thesis, as well as suggest some contributions it may make to art and ECEC. With this thesis, I have attempted to find a way to move beyond the all-too-human body through art in early childhood. I began by constructing the problem of the all-too-human-body in the classroom and through art. As we engage in art making, we are literally involved in creating the world. I have argued that the world we presently create when we engage with children in art making in the classroom is one in which we enact the white humanist body that performs neoliberal art, a body defined to be at an apex above the natural world, which acts on matter, through the mind, to represent. In this world, thinking is seen to take place within the body by a subject who chooses to act. This body is inscribed with binary thinking and chained through rigid binaries such as human/non-human, self/other, and clean/messy.

For Deleuze and Guattari, concepts are proposed solutions to problems (Buchanan, 1997). Thus what I present in this thesis is a particular problem along with a proposed solution: to create other possible worlds through art. I do not claim to have solved this problem. This study is not a critique; it is an attempt to augment the problem of the all-too-human body and to make it stutter. As Massumi (2002) says, it is not that critique is wrong. As usual, it is not a question of right and wrong—nothing important ever is. Rather, it is a question of dosage. It is simply that when you are busy critiquing you are less busy augmenting.

(p. 13)
To move beyond the all-too-human body, I turned toward the ideas proposed by Deleuze and Guattari (1987). I approached their work as tools to build with. By going more abstract, my hope was to use the abstract to build, as Izabella Laba suggested is done in mathematics. The possible worlds I attempted to build were ones in which binary divides such as humans and non-human, self and other, begin to break down. Here the rigid binaries chaining the body may be sloughed off. The body is always seeping. This does not mean that the body ceases to exist (Lenz Taguchi, 2010). The body breathes, as it continually becomes different-in-itself, through rhythms, whereby it enters into assemblages, experiments with them, and becomes. The body opens to the flows and movements of matter. We are unable to see movement, or the virtual. Consciousness redoubles and makes movement concrete (Massumi, 2002). To open to movement is to undo with the body and to brush up against the not-yet-known. Here we enter into the space of art as an emergent process, the point where the body meets with chaos. Art essentially becomes an event with the body, which allows the body to become in rhizomatic ways. Here thinking does not take place within one body. Rather, we turn away from the ontological hierarchy of the human towards thinking that takes place between bodies, and through their connections (Bennett, 2010).

As I engaged with my thesis and the books I read, I found that the ideas I encountered seeped into my practice. I discovered myself doing practice differently. I asked questions I had never asked: What does yellow do? Where does art take place? Does it always happen at the art table? What does art involve? Where can art go? What can art break down? What breaks down art? What can art do? As I practiced early childhood, I attempted to engage with these questions. I spoke differently to the
educators, for example, when I suggested that a child was becoming-yogurt. As well, my autoethnographical writing began to change. I wrote about moments from when I started as I substitute, and I found new ways to understand my experiences. Moreover, I found that these ideas grew throughout my entire world. They went backwards, forwards, and sideways as I began to reinvent the way I see the world.

The solution I propose with this thesis encompasses three concepts from Deleuze and Guattari (1987): Bodies without Organs (BwO), assemblage, and becoming. This solution is to take an immanent view of bodies—as we turn our focus to what bodies are doing, how they experiment, assemble, and become. We cannot know in advance what a body can do or what a body is capable of becoming (Springgay, 2008b; Skott-Myhre, 2008). Bodies assemble and disassemble as they are machined through desire.

A BwO is made on different scales and produces different plots of land. The ground is the BwO. The potentials and forces are generated in between the pieces (Lenz Taguchi, 2010; see also Massumi, 2002). The space in-between is where things fray and undo. To enter in the middle is to become, in the space where the body is in thought (Springgay & Freedman, 2009). Becomings are moments of creation and individuation from this ground. This is a process of continual limitless differentiation and diffraction (Lenz Taguchi, 2010; see also Massumi, 2002). The becoming is an offering up of a possible world. Becomings are ways in which minor assemblages may be expressed. Here we turn away from object and subject, towards the relation. A becoming is not prescriptive, and there is no one way to define a becoming. As I engaged with the bodies through my research, at most I had moments during which I grasped something. As I continued further with the bodies, what I grasped became undone.
In my analysis, I experimented with ways of articulating how these concepts might work in practice. Through the outlined theoretical framework, I attempted to construct relations with the bodies within this study. My body engaged within the assemblages through this research to create partial connections (Jensen & Lauritsen, 2005). As Massumi (2002) explains, “the balance has to shift to affirmative methods: techniques which embrace their own inventiveness and are not afraid to own up to the fact that they add (if so meagerly) to reality” (p. 12-13).

The video, the embodiment pieces, the text and images, and my own art piece might present some possible worlds. The bodies came together, they experimented, and transformations took place. How the bodies came together, the transformations that took place, and what became were always different. Through desire, plots of land machined sound, paint, and concepts. Others were a complete destratification: relations of speeds and motions. Becomings proliferated in/on the BwO, such as becoming-universe, becoming-art, becoming-researcher, becoming-canvas, becoming-paintbrush, becoming-fold, becoming-imperceptible, becoming-red, -yellow, -orange, and becoming-seen. The video might present more BwO through viewing it. All the bodies within the data collection site, the bodies within the site where the video was created, and the bodies within the site of viewing the video come together, spanning the event of the video, and open up a plot of land. Here we might see that “the BwO is never yours or mine” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 164), but what happens in-between the children, the materials, my reader, and myself. A BwO forms in-between through experience. This is not to suggest that a BwO needs proximity. A BwO can be a plot of land that goes beyond time and space, as we look to the event.
A BwO might present a way of breaking down boundaries, such as human and non-human, self and other, man and tool, physical and non-physical, mind and body. This is to assemble a minor politics, a way out of the habitual molar assemblages that govern practice. The BwO might be capable of disrupting through creating possible worlds.

The BwO presents its own dangers. This process can lead to a cancerous BwO or to the destruction of the strata. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) give the example of a fascist to explain a cancerous BwO. The task is an ethical one, of creating environments to give children the possibility of experimenting with bodies. The educators can continually experiment and evaluate in order to support and transform these assemblages. With the evaluation the task becomes to know the difference between the dominations of molar assemblages and creative flight. Smooth and striated space are continually cutting through and realigning one another. As Haraway (1991) emphasizes, “some differences are playful; some are poles of world historical systems of domination. ‘Epistemology’ is about knowing the difference” (p. 12).

As I mentioned above, this is not to suggest that this study has solved the problem of the all-too-human body. The all-too-human body is not something to overcome once and for all. With this thesis, I attempted to fray and augment the all-too-human body. To do this, I shifted focus and took the view that immanence is already present with bodies (Olsson, 2009). The task is to tap into these flows instead of structuring them. What type of solution then, might the BwO offer? The BwO presents itself as its own problem for practice: The task becomes to find out how to make one. Art presents itself as a space for the creation of a BwO.
What Came Out of the Study/What I Learned

Throughout this study, I was continually confronted by the question “What is art?” I began with the view that there were fixed boundaries around art. That artwork generally involves the regulation of some sort of materials, be they human or nonhuman, as though you could point to art and say, “This is art.” For example, at the Vancouver Art Gallery, the artwork is presented on various canvases, through textiles, fabrics, performances, happenings, and so forth. Art historians might say that artwork comes in movements, such as cubism and surrealism, and that it falls into different categories, such as abstract art and performance art. However, as I looked more closely at the intra-actions between children and materials during my thesis, the neat and tidy definitions we give to art broke down. What became clear to me is that art is not only about an art object. I found art to be a space in which anything can happen. I had to move fast to keep up with the bodies. At times, I related to the bodies as a painting, and then it would quickly morph into a performance. Other times I felt like I was engaging a philosophical production. Many times, I began to unravel as the bodies defied description. The bodies were always in flight, outside of capture.

Two main results came out of this study: a change in the way I theorize/practice early childhood, and a change in the way I see the world. I continued to practice early childhood throughout the process of completing this thesis. As I shifted my theoretical perspective, my practice also began to change. I worked with these theories in my autoethnographical writing. I asked different questions in my practice. Soon I began to set up art provocations in the classroom, and I engaged with the bodies, in new ways.
Doing these things differently seeped into how I saw the children in other spaces, such as free play, outside, and during meals.

It is difficult to write this section, since there is no list of things I can point to and say, “This is what I learned.” I might suggest that this thesis is my learning, the mechanism through which I came to learn. I would say that this thesis was an entire process of learning and unlearning. In a world where everything is constantly changing, for me at this point, to learn is to continually un-know. I must have written several theses by now, as my thoughts have continually changed. I offer this thesis today as a freeze in my thinking, as a pause. Tomorrow I will think differently.

Contributions to Art and ECEC

*Paintbrushes are strewn on the wooden floor beneath the child’s body. A black bowl holding red paint and a white bowl holding yellow paint dot the ground around her.* Mila crouches over her knees, her feet spread to support the weight and angle of her body. The length and width of a red paintbrush suggest how Mila’s hand might connect to wrap around it. Mila shifts her body so her arm can stretch to lift the paintbrush. The wooden end connects with the Plexiglas and machines a tapping sound. Another paintbrush evokes a response from Mila’s body. She bends over her knees and shifts her legs so her other arm can extend to let her hand meet the paintbrush. Her hand is offered to support the smooth, black, wooden body. She pulls the brush up close to her chest and embraces it, while her other arm helps the red brush to connect with the Plexiglas once again: tap, tap, tap.

If we revisit the moment we first encountered in the introduction, we may approach Mila in a different way. We might notice how Mila affects the paintbrushes and
the paintbrushes affect Mila. We may also extend our gaze to the Plexiglas and the wooden floor, and how each provides a surface for the bodies to move upon. The floor pushes against Mila as gravity pulls her down, her body balancing with the floor and the paintbrushes as they all move in relation. The Plexiglas provides a surface for the paintbrush as the bodies engage in machining the sounds: tap, tap, tap. We might wonder what questions and problems the intra-actions among these bodies express. We may see all these bodies as an expression of desire. We might notice how all these bodies produce a plot of land from which we may see all the bodies together and wonder what transformations are becoming. This is a new way to relate to the practice of art making in the early childhood classroom. This way of relating to art making situates the educator in a new relation with children through art. The educator is essentially a part of the desiring productions of the classroom. Moving with the children, the educator becomes with them. It might be useful in the classroom to look at how educators are moving with children as art unfolds. This is a very different way of viewing art relative to the common practice of neoliberal art making and art as a political space for the development of a productive normal child.

As I was working during this thesis, I found that leakages and lines of flight are already present through art and the classroom. It would be useful for educators to search out moments to which they might have reacted as messy or chaotic and activate and mobilize them (Olsson, 2009) instead of restructuring and pruning.

With this thesis, I suggest art as a space for experimentation. Educators might experiment with children, setting up materials as provocations. To take the artistic explorations of children seriously and provide them with the materials to experiment
takes the support of educators. It is an ethical and relational process. The children take risks and enter with the materials into new spaces, which requires educators to enter with them. This is an emergent relation among educators, children, and materials—a relation where the educators move with, and become enchanted with, the children and materials (Hultman & Lenz Taguchi, 2010).

How the educators respond to the movements of bodies can influence the experience of the artistic process. It was interesting to speak to the educators as the artwork unfolded. I noticed how I related to the artwork and how the educators did. In my experience, an idea exists in the early childhood field that removing educator-directed structure will lead to wildness and chaos, as though structure is in place to prevent disorder. In the two centres where I engaged in art making with the children, I found that taking away this neoliberal structure around art making did not lead to chaos. However, disorder is interpreted based on how we come to see it. Where I might see painting in which clothes and body receive paint as art, someone else might see a mess. When the children and materials discovered “feet painting” during my data collection, the educators became worried, and this assemblage was inscribed as unsafe. Instead of inventing a way to move with the children, the educators told the children to stop. It made me realize that to just see the creative explorations of the children is not enough. The theory is also an important part of the process.

With this research, I hope to have explored a way out of dualisms and approaches to early childhood inscribed by white humanism and neoliberalism. I hope to have contributed to opening art’s space in the early childhood classroom as a political and ethical space. Through this space, we may move away from the all-too-human body
towards doing the body differently. I want to leave with a question for my reader: What can this thesis set in motion with you?
REFERENCES


doi:10.1080/09518398.2010.500628


APPENDIX A

Page 120, X-ray of brain

Page 120, Photograph of Ana Mendieta with long arms

Page 120, Child looking through glass with rain drops

Page 120, Drawing of man within circles
Page 120, Image of adult and child at desk with green water in glasses
Davidson films (1989) Piaget’s developmental theory: An overview [Video file],
Retrieved from: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lEam9lpa6TQ

Page 121, Photograph of Rebecca Belmore on hands and knees and hands in red paint
Rebecca Belmore (Artist). (2003) A way of making [Photograph/Performance Art],
Retrieved April 22, 2011,

Page 121, Photograph of white stars

Page 122, Photograph of Theresa Bynres covered in black paint
Theresa Byrnes (2008, August 23) TRACE (part 2) [Video file], Retrieved
from:http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-wBQp1JHsDA
Page 122, Photograph of plastic bag in the wind

Page 122, Photograph of soldiers marching

Page 122, Photograph of white paper with cuts

Page 123, Instillation art of fabric head with cloak in background
Page 123, Series of images of girl hopping

Page 123, Girl writing at desk

Page 123, Photograph of Mud in the shape of the body

Page 123, Photograph of red stars
Christian Vondruska (Astronomer). (2011). The Orion Nebula (M42) [Photograph].

Page 123, Drawing red through torn paper with charcoal

APPENDIX B

Child/Parent Consent

Rethinking the body within Early Childhood Education and Care

Your child is being invited to participate in a study entitled rethinking the body in early childhood education. Vanessa Clark, who is currently a graduated student in Child and Youth Care at the University of Victoria, is conducting this study as part of her master’s requirement. This study is under the supervision of Dr. Veronica Pacini-Ketchabaw and Dr. Sylvia Kind.

Purpose and Objectives

In early childhood education the body tends to be thought about as being separate from the mind. The purpose of my research is to challenge the idea that the body and mind are separate, through an art exploration. I intend on bringing in materials for the children and educators to engage with and explore. With this research I hope to explore another way in which to think about the mind and body in practice.

I have worked for several years in early childhood education and care in various daycares, kindergartens, preschools, and kids clubs. My interest in this research is born from my review of the related literature. From my review of the literature, my curriculum in Child and Youth Care, and my work in early childhood education, I believe that it is important to challenge the way we think about the mind and body in the classroom.

Importance of Research

This study is important because it will problematize current ways in which the binary between the mind and body is understood in early childhood education and might provoke different ways in which to approach this binary in the classroom.

Participants Selection

Your child is being asked to participate in this study because she/he is attending an early childhood education program that has given me permission to invite the attending children to participate in an art enquiry for an hour each day for a one-week period.

What is involved

If you agree for your child to voluntarily participate in this research, your child’s participation will include the following. For approximately one-hour each day, at some point during the day that fits with the programming of your center, for a period of five consecutive days, your child will engage in an art exploration. Your child will be given paint, paintbrushes, and free standing Plexiglas (all non-toxic and child friendly material) to use at his or her discretion with the supervision of his or her teachers and myself. Video-tapes/photos/observations will be taken.

Videotape / photos / observations will be taken of your child with your permission – SEE PERMISSION FOR VISUAL DATA BELOW.

Inconvenience

The only inconvenience is that your child’s regular schedule will be disrupted. In order to accommodate this inconvenience I will accommodate their routines.

Risks
The only potential risks to your child for participating in this study are his/her confidentiality and anonymity. See the appropriate sections below for further information regarding these matters.

**Benefits**
The potential benefits of your child’s participation in this research include the following. Your child will have the opportunity to engaging in artwork, your child will help in the interrogation of the current way the body is conceptualized in early childhood education.

**Voluntary Participation**
Your child’s participation in this research must be completely voluntary. If you decide not to allow your child to participate, then your child will still be given the option to engage in the art so your child is not excluded. I will do my best to avoid taking pictures and video of your child. I am holding the camera and can angle the camera so that I avoid your child. Should part of his or her body be in a photo or video, I will crop your child from the photo or video. I will not write about your child in my observation notes, only in summarized form with no identifying information. Should your child choose not to participate in the art exploration, other activities will be set up in the room that the center has available, such as drawing, puzzles, clay, etc.

If you do decide to allow your child to participate, your child may withdraw at any time without any consequences or any explanation. If you do withdraw your child from the study, video, photos, and observation notes of your child where your child is engaging with other participants are impossible to fully remove from the data base. I will do my best to crop your child from photos and video before their use for analysis and dissemination. It may be more difficult to crop video then photos. Should your child’s arm or leg be in a video clip where I am not able to crop the video clip, then as long as the body part is not able to identify your child (for example I will not include your child’s face) I may use the footage. As well as I will avoid using any of my observation notes about your child. Video, photos, and observation notes just of your child will be erased. Further, if you decide to withdraw your child, your child will still be free to use the materials that I will bring to the center. Should your child choose to participate anyways, I will do my best to avoid taking pictures and video of your child. Should part of his or her body be in a photo or video I will crop your child from the photo or video. I will not include your child in my observation notes, only in summarized form with no identifying information.

**Confidentiality and Anonymity**
In terms of protecting your child’s confidentiality and anonymity I will take the following steps. During the course of this research, as well as after the research is completed, the data will be kept in password-protected files on my computer. Your child’s identity will be anonymous with the following exception. Given your permission, your child’s first name, pictures and video of your child will be used in the following ways: thesis/dissertation/class presentation, presentations at scholarly meetings, exhibition (as in an art exhibition), and published article, chapter or book. Further, with your permission, I will give the center a copy of the pictures and video.

Participants involved in the childcare centre your child attends/and those who know your child will be able to recognize him/her in the photographs/video recordings. We ask all personnel and parents in the childcare centre to respect the confidentiality of the children by not revealing their identity or other identifying information. We cannot guarantee that all members will keep the identity of your child confidential. In addition, your child may be identified by community members especially in a small community.

**Dissemination of Results**
It is anticipated that the results of this study will be shared with others in the following ways: thesis/dissertation/class presentation, presentations at scholarly meetings, an exhibition (as in an art exhibition), and published article, chapter or book. As well, I will like to give a copy of the video and pictures to the center. All work based on this study will not contain any identifying information with the exception of video, pictures, and your child’s first name will be used in the results and dissemination of the study.
– See permission for name and visual data below.

Disposal of Data

Data from this study will be kept on my computer in a password-protected file indefinitely. The reason I want to keep the data is because the art exploration is a special experience with the children/teachers/centers that I treasure. The data is meaningful to me as part of my process as a student.

Contacts

Individuals that may be contacted regarding this study include Vanessa Clark at 604-980-9869 or Vanessa.Vondruska@gmail.com, and Dr. Veronica Pacini-Ketchabaw at vpacinik@uvic.ca or (250) 721-6478.

In addition, you may verify the ethical approval of this study, or raise any concerns you might have, by contacting the Human Research Ethics Office at the University of Victoria (250-472-4545 or ethics@uvic.ca).

Your signature below indicates that you understand the above conditions of participation in this study and that you have had the opportunity to have your questions answered by the researchers.

Visually Recorded Images/Data: Participant or parent/guardian to provide initials:

- My child’s first name may be used for: Analysis _______ Dissemination* ________
- Photos may be taken of my child for: Analysis _______ Dissemination* ________
- Videos may be taken of my child for: Analysis _______ Dissemination* ________

*Even if no names are used, your child may be recognizable if visual images are shown in the results.

A copy of this consent will be left with you, and a copy will be taken by the researcher.
Teacher Consent

Rethinking the body within Early Childhood Education and Care

You are being invited to participate in a study entitled rethinking the body in early childhood education. Vanessa Clark, who is currently a graduated student in Child and Youth Care at the University of Victoria, is conducting this study as part of her master’s requirement. This study is under the supervision of Dr. Veronica Pacini-Ketchabaw.

Purpose and Objectives

In early childhood education the body tends to be thought about as being separate from the mind. The purpose of my research is to challenge the idea that the body and mind are separate, through an art exploration. I intend on bringing in materials for the children and educators to engage with and explore. With this research I hope to explore another way in which to think about the mind and body in practice.

I have worked for several years in early childhood education and care in various daycares, kindergartens, preschools, and kids clubs. My interest in this research is born from my review of the related literature. From my review of the literature, my curriculum in Child and Youth Care, and my work in early childhood education, I believe that it is important to challenge the way we think about the mind and body in the classroom.

Importance of Research

This study is important because it will problematize current ways in which the body is understood in early childhood education and might provoke different ways in which to approach the body in the classroom.

Participants Selection

You are being asked to participate in this study because you are attending an early childhood education program that has agreed to allow me to ask its members permission to conduct an art enquiry for an hour each day for a one-week period.

What is involved

If you agree to voluntarily participate in this research, your participation will include the following. For approximately one-hour each day, at some point during the day that fits with the programming of your center, for a period of five consecutive days, you will engage in an art exploration. You will be given paint, paintbrushes, and free standing Plexiglas (all non-toxic and child friendly material) to use at your discretion. Video-tapes/photos/observations will be taken. A transcription will be made.

Videotape / photos / observations will be taken of you with your permission – SEE PERMISSION FOR VISUAL DATA BELOW.

Inconvenience

The only inconvenience is that your regular schedule will be disrupted. In order to accommodate this inconvenience I will accommodate their routines.

Risks

The only potential risks to you for participating in this study are your confidentiality and anonymity. See the appropriate sections below for further information regarding these matters.
**Benefits**
The potential benefits of your participation in this research include the following. You will help in the interrogation of the current way the body is conceptualized in early childhood education.

**Voluntary Participation**
Your participation in this research must be completely voluntary. If you decide not to participate, then you will still be given the option to engage in the art so you do not feel excluded. I will do my best to avoid taking pictures and video of you. I am holding the camera and can angle the camera so that I avoid your body. Should part of your body be in a photo or video, I will crop your body from the photo or video. I will not write about you in my observation notes, only in summarized form with no identifying information. Should you choose not to participate in the art exploration, you are welcome to go about any of the other daily routines you need to do and or engage with the children who have chosen not to participate.

If you do decide to participate, you may withdraw at any time without any consequences or any explanation. If you do withdraw from the study, video, photos, and observation notes of you where you are engaging with other participants are impossible to fully remove from the data base. However, I will do my best to crop you from photos and video before their use for analysis and dissemination. It may be more difficult to crop video then photos. Should your arm or leg be in a video clip where I am not able to crop the video clip, then as long as the body part is not able to identify you (for example I will not include your face) I may use the footage. As well as I will avoid using my observation notes about you. Video, photos, and observation notes just of you will be erased. Further, if you decide to withdraw, you will still be free to use the materials that I will bring to the center. Should you choose to participate anyways, I will do my best to avoid taking pictures and video of you. Should part of your body be in a photo or video I will crop you from the photo or video. I will not include you in my observation notes, only in summarized form with no identifying information.

**Confidentiality and Anonymity**
In terms of protecting your confidentiality and anonymity I will take the following steps. During the course of this research, as well as after the research is completed, the data will be kept in password-protected files on my computer. Your identity will be anonymous with the following exception. Given your permission, your first name, pictures, and video of you will be used in the following ways: thesis/dissertation/class presentation, presentations at scholarly meetings, an exhibition (as in an art exhibition), and published article, chapter or book. Further, with your permission, I will give the center a copy of the pictures and video.

Participants involved in the childcare centre you attend/and those who know you will be able to recognize you in the photographs/video recordings. We ask all personnel and parents in the childcare centre to respect the confidentiality of you by not revealing your identity or other identifying information. We cannot guarantee that all members will keep your identity confidential. In addition, you may be identified by community members especially in a small community.

**Dissemination of Results**
It is anticipated that the results of this study will be shared with others in the following ways: thesis/dissertation/class presentation, presentations at scholarly meetings, an exhibition (as in an art exhibition), and published article, chapter or book. As well, I will like to give a copy of the video and pictures to the center. All work based on this study will not contain any identifying information with the exception of video, pictures, and your first name will be used in the result and dissemination of the study.
– See permission for name and visual data below.

**Disposal of Data**

Data from this study will be kept on my computer in a password-protected file indefinitely. The reason I want to keep the data is because the art exploration is a special experience with the children/teachers/centers that I treasure. The data is meaningful to me as part of my process as a student.

**Contacts**

Individuals that may be contacted regarding this study include Vanessa Clark at 604-980-9869 or Vanessa.Vondruska@gmail.com, and Dr. Veronica Pacini-Ketchabaw at vpacinik@uvic.ca or (250) 721-6478.

In addition, you may verify the ethical approval of this study, or raise any concerns you might have, by contacting the Human Research Ethics Office at the University of Victoria (250-472-4545 or ethics@uvic.ca).

Your signature below indicates that you understand the above conditions of participation in this study and that you have had the opportunity to have your questions answered by the researchers.

**Visually Recorded Images/Data:** Participant or parent/guardian to provide initials:

- My first name may be used for: Analysis _______ Dissemination* ________
- Photos may be taken of me for: Analysis _______ Dissemination* ________
- Videos may be taken of me for: Analysis _______ Dissemination* ________

*Even if no names are used, you may be recognizable if visual images are shown in the results.

*A copy of this consent will be left with you, and a copy will be taken by the researcher.*