

Taking a Posthumanist Stand in CYC Ethics:
An Ethical-Political Experiment

by

Angela Slade
B.A., Vancouver Island University, 2006

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Abstract

This study presents a critical analysis of ethics in child and youth care (CYC) and a posthumanist-inspired approach to sustainable ethics in line with CYC's commitment to *do* ethics. The study constructs the problem of the all-too-humanist-ethical-CYC-body and engages in a rhizodiffractive ethical-political experiment to (re)think/(re)view/(re)write how we come to practice ethics in CYC. Inspired by a posthumanist ontoepistemology, I employ Deleuze and Guattari's concepts of nomadism and becoming as tools to interfere with the current ethical framework in North American CYC. In global, neoliberal times, CYC needs an ethics that focuses, not just on dominant discourses that guide ethical conduct and decision making, but on ethical-bodies-becoming through the unique entanglements of every ethical encounter. What this body of work exposed for the ethical-CYC-practitioner is that taking a stand – one that challenges dominant one-way ethical models for practice – is a necessary precondition for living in global neoliberal times.

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this body of work in memory of my father, Bruce Theodore Scriver. You continually inspire me to push beyond my limits, to see something other than lack, to love unconditionally, and, most importantly, to live life to the fullest.



July 19, 1949 – August 21, 2011

*Live it while you're in it ~ because it is what it is ~ and all that is...is
becoming...xo xo xo*

Chapter 1: Engaging the All-Too-Humanist CYC Ethical Body

Talia and the Ethical Body

Talia¹ is a 14-year-old girl who recently moved to Canada from Costa Rica. Her mother sent her to me for counselling when she found out Talia was purging her food after meals. Talia is taller than average and therefore weighs more than her peers. She has been ridiculed at school in Costa Rica and in Canada for being “bigger” than the other girls, but her height and weight are normal for her age based on BMI charts used by eating disorder counsellors like myself. Talia’s mother repeatedly weighs her as a means to track her purging (through weight loss), but she also fears her daughter being overweight. When I asked Talia where she learned how to purge her food, she told me that she had learned about it in her Career and Personal Planning class at school during a segment on eating disorders. Talia decided that purging her food was much easier than exercising and dieting; she could hang out with her friends and eat whatever she wanted because she would just puke it up. She desires to be skinny, which she views as a means to be accepted by her peers at school. When I ask her what might happen if she stops purging, she replies, “I will get fat and nobody will like me.”

In my professional practice, I do eating disorders prevention work with young girls and one-to-one counselling for girls and women with eating disorders. In the context of my child and youth care (CYC) practice over the past decade, I have worked in private and public schools, private practice, and not-for-profit

¹ Talia is a fictional character created for the purpose of this study. I created her based on a compilation of many clients’ stories.

agencies which have actively shaped my production of knowledge when it comes to working with girls and women who are living with the effects of disordered eating. The practice settings are primarily situated in the developmental, ecological, psychological, and neuro-cognitive epistemologies or, said another way, transcendental epistemologies. Within those settings, I have witnessed numerous indications that disordered eating behaviours, depression, and anxiety are becoming normalized parts of life, in part, through media like the Internet. In the example above, Talia understands her bulimic behaviour to represent a positive solution to fitting in at school. Regardless of where she learnt this diet mentality, when she turned to the Internet to find “truth” for her beliefs, she found distorted validation for bulimic behaviours in many forms. North American pro-anorexia and dieting websites² perpetuate images of “perfect” people living the North American dream: acceptance and belonging through fame, fortune, beauty, sexiness, and youthfulness. However, when Talia’s body no longer functions to keep up with society’s ideal of this “perfect” life, she will be at risk of responding with depression or anxiety. Ultimately, she may die. In my view, the ethical framework that guides my work as a CYC practitioner, with its emphasis on harm avoidance, positions me to be complicit in her death.

This thesis argues for an expansion of the notion of working ethically in CYC. It argues, from a posthumanist stance, that in this era of globalization and neoliberalism, we need to think of bodies differently. We need to perceive “body”

² For examples, see <http://www.prettythin.com/thinspiration.htm>, <http://www.weightwatchers.com> and <http://thinspiration-pictures.blogspot.ca/>

as human and nonhuman assemblages: human bodies; bodies of knowledge; professional bodies; ethical bodies, as in codes, competencies, and evidence-based ethical practices; cultural bodies; economic bodies; political bodies; social bodies; and so on. If we can be curious about how these bodies interact to form assemblages in the life of an individual like Talia, the presenting problem – an eating disorder, for example – loses power. Considering Talia’s eating disorder in posthumanist terms has the potential to sustain her life by shifting our focus away from treating the eating disorder toward understanding it as an experimentation in creating one’s own body as a becoming. The eating disorder body can be seen as transformative processes (ontological processes) that form an assemblage with other bodies and, in so doing, become something different (Arsic, 2008). Viewing the body as an assemblage interrupts transcendental epistemologies and creates different opportunities for responding to the client ethically. I want to turn now to CYC’s ethical body, which is the focus of this research.

CYC’s current ethical and moral framework consists of two key documents. The Code of Ethics and Standards for Practice of North American Child and Youth Care Professionals³ (Association for Child and Youth Care Practice, 1995), which was last updated in 1995, is the ethical framework “to guide thinking and practice for all Child and Youth Care professionals” (Introduction, p. 1). This code of ethics provides the foundation for a second document, the North American Certification Project (NACP) Competencies for Professional Child and Youth

³ In this thesis, I refer to this document as the NACECYC (North American Code of Ethics for Child and Youth Care).

Work Practitioners (Mattingly, Stuart, & VanderVen, 2002, 2010), which illustrates competencies for professional practice. The NACECYC (Association for Child and Youth Care Practice, 1995) document situates the “characteristics of the profession” (Introduction para. 1) under ecological-developmental (transcendental) theory, which shapes the professional culture. The language of the professional culture gets taken up in discourses that are situated in normative neoliberal society.

Taken-for-granted master narratives that are evident in the NACECYC are rooted in normative developmental language. In turn, these narratives are perpetuated in practice standards, professional competencies, and evidence-based perspectives (Newbury, 2009; White, 2007; 2011). For example, the NACP was developed and implemented as a training document to “produce the optimal worker who will, in turn, have a relationship that will produce an optimal child or youth” (K. Skott-Myhre, 2012, p. 301). These prescribed competencies for CYC practice are defined within normative neoliberal society.

Within the eating disorder field, there are multiple “communities of practice” that influence an integrative approach to treating eating disorders that spans diagnosis to recovery (see Horvitz Nathenshon, 2009). In my work as “an eating disorders counsellor” I am influenced by multiple practice tools (e.g. cognitive behavioural therapy, acceptance and commitment therapy, body mass index charts, the diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders, and medical assessments, to name a few) and frameworks (e.g., medical, psychiatric, psychological, mental health, counselling). These tools and frameworks strongly

shape my production of knowledge about good/right/ethical/effective/best-practice for an “eating disorder counsellor.” As a private practitioner, I am shaped by more than the CYC code of ethics. However, because it is the primary document that shapes CYC’s ethical framework and guides practitioners, I am using this document to interrupt the profession. I believe the code of ethics is stagnant and does not reflect the global times in which we live, thus it provides insufficient guidance to practitioners.

Normative/developmental languaging of the other can keep us in the helping profession “stuck” or removed from helping altogether. For example, if I am counselling an individual with an identified eating disorder and I only work on “promoting the well-being of the...youth” (NACECYC, Preamble, p. 1) through preventing, intervening, and/or treating (NACECYC, Current Description of the Field, p. 1) what appears to be the problems (purging, starvation, isolation, loneliness, despair, doubt) without acknowledging the eating disorder as part of an assemblage interacting with other structures (e.g., familial, peer-group, and societal acceptance, media, capitalism, white privilege, to name a few), I am participating in keeping her stuck and limiting her capacity to sustain her life by viewing things in limited ways. The NACECYC instructs CYC practitioners not to “harm the child, youth, or family” (NACECYC, Responsibility for the Client, para. 1), but how can one ever escape doing harm when one is operating from thinking processes rooted in judgment (e.g., you are disordered/ordered)? The NACECYC draws on notions of evaluative judgements like disorder/ordered because it is situated in an ecological-developmental framework that locates

deficits within the individual as localized and contextually dependent interpretations of behaviour (Newbury, 2011) and focuses on individually centred interventions (Garfat & Ricks, 1995).

Talia motivated me, as an ethical CYC practitioner, to take an active role in understanding how primarily referencing an “ecological-developmental perspective” (NACECYC, Current Description of the Field, para. 1) and labelling Talia “ill” or “well”⁴ not only limits my capacity to help her, but positions me to potentially harm her. Therefore, I wanted to create a thesis that would act as an ethical-political experiment to interrupt the profession I practice within. I wanted to understand the limits of my practice and find a way to expand my awareness to work with Talia and all of my clients differently. Moreover, I wanted to take an affirmative stand. I wanted to understand how to remove the judgment of right or wrong, good or bad, to see what I could discover in-between those dualistic categories.

To take an affirmative stand, I required a creative way to rethink ethics in CYC. Through the use of art and a rhizodiffractive methodology, I created a collage. I then read this assemblage against the NACECYC and two pop culture discourses to force myself out of traditional ways of seeing and doing ethical practice. The NACECYC itself provided my starting point. I was encouraged by a statement I found in its preamble that speaks to the overall document:

⁴ I want to acknowledge that defining a client in terms of being “ill” or “well” is influenced by a number of other factors, including agency mandates, service delivery structures, funding requirements, counselling approaches, indicators of success, evaluation efforts, etc. However, the intent of this study is to interfere with CYC’s ethical framework to present an alternative view to doing ethics.

This ethical statement is a living document, always a work in progress, which will mature and clarify as our understanding and knowledge grow. (Association for Child and Youth Care Practice, 1995, Preamble, p. 1)

A code of ethics that is always “in progress” gives me hope that our field’s commitment to “do ethics” in motion can include a different view of CYC ethics. In this thesis I argue for an ethics that focuses not just on dominant discourses that guide ethical conduct and decision making, but on the unique entanglements of every ethical encounter (including social, political, economical, cultural, and individual histories). Therefore, the thesis aims to disrupt traditional ways of “doing ethical practice” to see how I might experiment with my ethical practice to engage with clients like Talia. For that reason, my thesis work is grounded in my practice with girls and how they interact with eating disorders and images of gender and sexuality. I want to clarify that “doing ethical practice” always involves more than simply following a formal code of ethics. I acknowledge many additional influences on how we think about what it means to practice ethically. What I am arguing for is a different theoretical approach to ethics and a significant rethinking of the human individual to invite an expanded view to ethics and ethical discourse.

Study Purpose

The purpose of this study is to conduct a critically informed analysis of ethics in CYC and to present a posthumanist-inspired (and experimental, in the Deleuzian sense) approach to sustainable ethics in line with CYC’s commitment

to *do* ethics. This study suggests a *different* ethical vision, through political action, which is intended to work toward progressive, sustainable futures for children, youth, and families and to provide an approach that can differently serve the needs of people like Talia. Understanding how the forces at play in the current era influence Talia's eating disorder enables me to be creative and transformative in my practice. If I can understand what larger societal structures are influencing Talia, I may be able to work with her eating disorder differently. In that process, I am working toward sustaining her life affirmatively.

Research Questions

This research is guided by three questions:

1. What are the potential impacts of traditional ethical models in CYC ethics and how do the dominant developmental discourses they contain limit or extend ethical CYC knowledge?
2. How can becoming ethical in CYC be rethought by fostering a posthumanist perspective?
3. How do we create a sustainable ethical movement in CYC?

Mapping the Thesis

With this chapter I have introduced the thesis topic and provided some context for it, including my motivation for undertaking this research. Next, in the literature review in chapter 2, I situate the ethical guidelines for the CYC field in the time-space in which they were constructed, expose their limitations in the current climate of global neoliberalism, and highlight some promising alternative views. In chapter 3, I describe my methods and their theoretical underpinnings.

Chapter 4 presents an ethical-political experiment designed to demonstrate a different way of “doing” ethics through the notion of becoming-ethical-CYC-practitioner. The experiment uses imagery to provide a way to see things differently and diffraction as a tool to help disrupt rational thinking and dominant ways of viewing ethics. Finally, in chapter 5, I make suggestions for a different ethical approach for becoming more affirmative, sustainable, and transformative within the CYC profession.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Where do CYC ethical frameworks come from and what are its effects? In this chapter, I situate the ethical guidelines for the CYC field in liberal humanist thought, expose their limitations in the current climate of global neoliberalism, and highlight a promising alternative view – an ethics where the vision of the subject does not restrict the ethical instance within the limits of human otherness, but also opens it up to interrelations with nonhuman, posthuman and inhuman forces (Braidotti, 2009).

Situating Ethics: Historical Tracings

Throughout Western history, moral philosophy has been associated with transcendental ways of knowing through the creation of judgmental, individualized, binarized categories such as normal/abnormal, good/bad, right/wrong, and harming/helping through established protocols and sets of rules, including ethical codes and standards (Freeman, Engels & Altekruse, 2004; Sommers-Flanagan & Sommers-Flanagan, 2007; Taylor & White, 2000). Two thousand years ago, the ethical subject was situated within Christianity, where the established protocols took the shape of the Ten Commandments and other biblical laws. In the Judeo-Christian view, moral status was assigned to man's interiority as the body was believed to be mortal while the mind was bound to the status of an immortal soul (Grosz, 1994). Ethical practices were situated within divine thought.

During the Enlightenment, human values shifted from a focus on the divine to a focus on the rational, autonomous human; as a result, ethics became

situated in secular thinking and moral philosophy (Braidotti, 2006b). The rise of reason and philosophical thinking fused ethics in liberal humanistic terms. Such historical tracings are commonly linked to German philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724–1804). Smith (2006) summarizes Kantian ethics as “relying on a belief in a universal moral order based on reason and principle” (p. 7). This universal morality, Smith explains, became a defining feature of modernity, the period of history that spanned from the Enlightenment of the 18th century to the recent past.

Kantian ethics

privileges decision-making based on scientific reason and the regulation of social action through ethical codes. Politically, Kantianism led to the growth of, and finds its home in, liberalism with emphasis in individualism and individual responsibility. (Smith, 2006, p. 7)

During the mid-19th century, modernism paved the way for industrial capitalism (Thomas & Bracken, 2004) based on further secularization and a strengthened nation-state. The importance of the natural and physical sciences increased, and a scientific understanding of human life was privileged (Mattingly, 1995) based on a philosophy of transcendence – fundamentally a splitting of mind, body, and knowledge. Objectivist science permeated the philosophical world and created logical positivism, which, as Thomas and Bracken (2004) point out, “applies the scientific method of the natural sciences to human experience” (p. 363). Within this climate of logical positivism, child psychology was born and the social sciences became independent areas of study (Mattingly, 1995).

Accounting for CYC Ethical History

The field of CYC in North America thus emerged within a liberal society shaped by Kantian ethics which valued scientific thinking to guide rational thought. Individualism was the moral stance and subjects were shaped to value independence and self-reliance. Liberalism was the political framework that guided the subject toward individual freedom; humanism supported the unitary vision of the subject as the primary unit of analysis within scientific rational thought (Burman, 2008). In traditional humanistic views of ethical subjectivity, bodies become ordered and enclosed according to hierarchical binary assumptions (mentally ill/mentally sane, healthy/unhealthy, ethical practices/unethical practices), leaving little room for liminal interpretations.

During modernity, tenets of practice in CYC were situated within behaviourist traditions popular in developmental psychology:

The objectivist view, synonymous with scientific attitude, became predominant and largely overshadowed other perspectives.... The climate strongly supported and rewarded the value-free conception of science.... Values were and still are taken directly and often uncritically from other institutions of the culture such as religion, political ideology, or cultural norms. Science was viewed as the human pathway to changing human conditions and values from other arenas of life were not allowed to contaminate the scientific enterprise. (Mattingly, 1995, p. 382)

By the 1980s, rapid technological advances and the rise of global capitalism had drastically changed the world. In addition, societal disenchantment with modernity's promises of progress – in light of two world wars, the Holocaust, and the nuclear bomb, for example – set the stage for ferment and social unrest that opened the way for critical perspectives and postfoundational theories to emerge (White, personal communication, July 2012). Through the work of thinkers like Foucault, Derrida, and Deleuze, it was becoming clear to some that the only possible ethics for a global world needed to be collectively shared because the scale of emerging problems was planetary and gigantic (Braidotti, 2010).

While there had been a marked receding of ethics work in science, education, and professional arenas at the end of modernity, globalization, the failing economy, and the social unrest of the postmodern era generated pressure to revisit the matters of values and ethics in Western culture and within professionalized environments, including the field of CYC. Mattingly (1995) writes that attempts at ethical/moral dialogue met roadblocks, however, because they were viewed as inconvenient to the progression of science, potentially offensive to the scientific/academic profession, and problematic in terms of funding initiatives. These variables limited discussions of ethics in the CYC field as “ethics [was] often seen as an inconvenient intrusion into professional judgment and decision making or perhaps as just another troublesome hurdle” (Mattingly, 1995, p. 382).

Despite these constraints, the CYC field began to be professionalized in the mid-1990s and thus required “a systematic body of theory, professional authority, sanction of the community, a regulative code of ethics and a professional culture” (Greenwood, 1957, cited in Association for Child and Youth Care Practice, 1995, Introduction, p. 1). In 1995, the *Child and Youth Care Forum* published a special issue that discussed important ethical themes: practitioner self-awareness (Garfat & Ricks, 1995); moral sources for ethical standards (Magnuson, 1995); and the creation of a formal North American code of ethics in CYC (Mattingly, 1995). The ethical discourses also attended to models for ethical decision making (Garfat & Ricks, 1995) from a self-driven model of decision making which included knowing self, thinking critically, considering alternative choices, taking personal responsibility, and evaluating and providing feedback. As well, the discourse provided a rationale and description of the function of codes of ethics and standards of practice (Magnuson, 1995; Mattingly, 1995) in professional contexts.

As noted in the introduction, CYC’s ethical framework consists of two key documents: the NACECYC (Association for Child and Youth Care Practice, 1995) and the NACP Competencies for Professional Child and Youth Work Practitioners (Mattingly, Stuart, & VanderVen, 2002, 2010). From an ethical-political perspective, this ethical framework has produced normative values, beliefs, and concerns for ethical behaviour that have shaped consensual ethical codes and standards for those who practice (Freeman, Engels, & Altekruise, 2004). The NACECYC ultimately endeavours to provide codes of conduct

(Mattingly, 1995) for the self-governing subject. For example, under the revised NACP (2010) document, CYC practitioners must be able to (1) describe the functions of professional ethics; (2) apply the process of doing ethics and ethics as a positive practice; (3) apply specific principles and standards from the relevant code of ethics to specific problems; and (4) carry out work tasks in a way that conforms to professional ethical standards, principles, and values (pp. 11-12). Therefore, the document positions the CYC practitioner as the rational-knowing-governing authority capable of reading, interpreting, and implementing specific client outcomes that “conform to pre-determined standards and principles” (White, 2011, p. 37).

The NACECYC centres on ideals of practitioner responsibility to the self, the client, and the profession as a whole. Its preamble notes that the document is a work in progress, subject to development that will “mature and clarify as our understanding and knowledge grow” (Association for Child and Youth Care Practice, 1995, p. 1). Many of the points rely heavily on the practitioner’s discretion and own personal sense of ethics. This document clearly has been written as a guideline for professional practice, allowing for flexibility of the autonomous rational subject. The codes of conduct are situated inside the individual practitioner’s mind through the production of dialectical binaries – right or wrong, good or bad, ethical or unethical – which limits alternative interpretations. For example, as I read the NACECYC Principles and Standards, Standard II, Responsibility for the Client, states: “A. Above all, shall not harm the child, youth, or family. A.1. Does not participate in practices that are disrespectful,

degrading, dangerous, exploitive, intimidating, psychologically damaging, or physically harmful to clients” (Association for Child and Youth Care Practice, 1995, p. 2). Therefore, the CYC-practitioner is challenged to be situated in transcendental either/or thinking – that is, I am either harming the client or I am not – which frames an ethical dilemma strictly in individualistic and dualistic terms without broader considerations for social, political, and historical conditions. These binaries are reflected in some of today’s other universal codes that attempt to govern practice and evaluation through “a totality of rules, norms, and principles equally applicable to everyone and acceptable to every rational thinking person” (Hansen, 2009, p. 67). In essence, through historical, cultural, and social processes we have produced an ethical code that judges “us and others” discriminately.

In the first part of the last decade, some scholars responded to the limits of the earlier self-driven ethical models of the helping professions that privilege expert-driven, deficit-oriented, narrowly specialized approaches (Anglin, 1999; Ferguson, Pence, & Denholm, 1993). As White (2011) suggests, these approaches to ethics “perpetuate the status quo by framing [an ethical] dilemma in individualistic terms...and rest on the individualized subject” (p. 35) to make ethical decisions. The identities and ethical compositions involved are based on two identifiable subjects: a CYC practitioner and a child or youth (K. Skott-Myhre, 2012). Others in the field started to recognize that presenting practice ethics required a consideration of various social problems and of identities as contextually negotiated within discursive, historical, institutional, and sociocultural

contexts (Ball & Pence, 2006). This participatory inquiry process recognized and described the influence of gender, gender identity, and sexual orientation; geography; religion; ethnic and racial background; socioeconomic status/class; and extraordinary life conditions within a family context, highlighting that social position factors influence a more contextualized and ecological-developmental perspective. As Newbury (2011) suggests, traditional developmental theories commonly equate experiences, identity, and interventions in terms of the individual. The ecological approach expands the focus on individual human experiences within a larger context and considers behaviour largely as responses to other contextual elements. The model enables CYC ethics to consider systemic factors such as poverty, racism, and gender inequity. That said, the model “does not take into account that not all of us are starting from an individualistic worldview and...[it] may not be enough to adequately disrupt the assumptions of individualism.... The ecological model itself may appear to be extremely individual-focused” (Newbury, 2011, p. 92).

In the latter half of the decade, other scholars included a feminist approach to ethical practice (Little, 2011) and a virtues-based approach to ethics (Greenwald, 2008). Professional ethics up to this point translated some of CYC’s values: strength-based, relational, collaborative, empowering and socially just (White, 2011). However, Kantian-derived ethics within the human caring professions considers that “what is...be good/right in one context may be quite different in another, casting suspicion on individualist, universalist, predetermined approaches to ethics and professional practices” (White, 2011, p. 35). In addition,

as Newbury (2011) brings to attention, CYC ethics tends to valorize the mind over the body because we have yet to expand beyond individual-focused thinking. The CYC ethical framework remains situated in ecological-developmental and individualistic contexts.

The Problem of a Humanist Ethical Framework in Global Neoliberal Times

Since the creation of our current ethical framework, grounded as it is in Kantian liberalism and humanist values, our society has transformed. North American culture is individualistic, dominated by capitalism operating under a neoliberal political framework (Braidotti, 2009). Neoliberalism operates within a multifaceted free-market economy where government involvement is declining in favour of corporate and private globalization, which has been promoted as beneficial. However, Braidotti (2006b) warns that “the much-celebrated phenomenon of globalization and its technologies accomplishes a magician’s trick: it combines the euphoric celebration of new technologies, new economy, new lifestyles, new generations of both human and technological gadgets, new wars and new weapons with the complete social rejection of change and transformation” (p. 2). Therefore, the gaze is cast on the “drive” to be a part of the “exponentially of new” as opposed to an awareness that the “new” is really more of the same, just at a rapid-fire rate of exchange. In reality, things are not really changing through the new; they are just multiplying. One consequence of global capitalism is that we have exponential access to technology and media, which increases the ways we can view our world. Through technology we are globally connected in real time, which has eroded nationalistic borders.

Technology, media, and the Internet are now primary ways to connect and share information regarding cultural, societal, political, and economic norms and differences. Based on the multifaceted nature of globalization, Braidotti (2006b) suggests that

the unitary vision of the subject cannot provide an effective antidote to the processes of fragmentation, flows and mutations, which mark our era. In ethics as in many other fields of contemporary endeavor, we need to learn to think differently about ourselves and our systems of values. (p. 31).

What Braidotti is suggesting is the need to shift our view of unitary subjectivity and our systems of values through a consideration of how one is embedded and embodied in certain positions. Neoliberalism's response to sustaining life through economic liberalization and individualism needs another view.

In terms of CYC, our profession operates within the neoliberal society I described above, but our ethical framework, which privileges humanist ethics and a unitary view of the subject, does not account for some of the issues that we as a profession are facing in global times. With the emergence of technology and the erosion of identity based on nationalistic borders and culturally embedded systems, every ethical situation is becoming more unique, complex, and embedded in multiple locations and spaces. These ethical situations cannot be addressed with blanket regulations from one perspective, in particular one that originated in another historical time where different concerns were present.

In terms of helping Talia, for example, the current (humanist) framework is limited; it positions her as dependent and the CYC practitioner as a knowing subject, a rational, conscious, moral, cognitive thinker. Within humanist traditions, the knowing subject works within a framework of “otherness” – other than normal, other than well – where “the Other functions as a negatively framed fraction of the same...of the norm, the norm-al, the norm-ative view of the subject” (Braidotti, 2009, p. 47). Even though the NACECYC cautions the CYC practitioner against the dangers of labels, the eating disorder client’s body is politicized against a normative, neoliberal view of flourishing. This view potentially invites doing harm because Talia is positioned not in terms of and...and, which would allow for multiple versions of the subject, but in terms of either/or – either “well” or “ill,” “normal” or “disordered.” Instead of viewing Talia’s eating disorder as her attempt to do the normative ideal of girl – and, in fact, to do it well, within a humanist ethical framework, Talia is always constructed as excluded from normative life.

Over a decade and a half has passed since the NACECYC was written in 1995, and movement has occurred in ethical thinking. For example, theory about subjectivity has been challenged (Braidotti, 1994, 2002, 2006b, 2009; Coleman, 2008; Deleuze & Guattari, 1987; Malins, 2004; Massumi, 1992) and ethical models have evolved (Ahluwalia, 2007; Braidotti, 2009; Ermine, 2007; Jagger, 1998; Keller, 1998; Prilleltensky et al., 1996; Sinclair, 2007; Sommers-Flanagan & Sommers-Flanagan, 2007). The NACECYC has not been rewritten, however. In line with our commitment to “do ethics,” I suggest that it needs to be

challenged. Within the contexts of neoliberalism and globalization, doing ethics needs a different perspective.

Taking a Stand to Resist the All-Too-Humanist-Ethical-Body

Some in the CYC field are advocating for a different approach to ethical practice outside of a neoliberal framework (White, 2011; Pacini-Ketchabaw, 2011; H. Skott-Myhre, 2006; K. Skott-Myhre, 2012). Some question dominant codes of ethics, professional competencies, and evidence-based practices (Bellefeuille & Ricks, 2008; Gharabaghi, 2008; K. Skott-Myhre, 2012; White, 2007). In Canada, H. Skott-Myhre (2006) calls for CYC to “go beyond good and evil; beyond morality” (p. 5) through investigating non-moral (and, I would add, non-Kantian) philosophies. Given the current era of neoliberalism and globalization, we clearly need conceptual frameworks that can “adequately represent the complexities of everyday CYC practice” (White, 2007, p. 225) that force us to rethink humanist and developmental theories (Pacini-Ketchabaw, 2011). A posthumanist view of ethics “defines ethics as the practice that cultivates affirmative modes of relation, active forces and values” (Braidotti, 2009, p. 46). The ethical good is that which acts as empowering modes of transformative and creative becomings. Further, K. Skott-Myhre (2012) suggests a nomadic approach to ethical practice that would allow CYC to step outside of Westernized ethical-subjectivity and move toward a practice that views ethics as an experimentation of ethical becomings.

These alternative frameworks would be helpful to CYC because they interfere with the current ethical framework, which is stuck in a spatio-temporal

continuum of classical humanism (Braidotti, 2006b). Braidotti (2006b) stresses that although we may not necessarily depart from the ideals of humanism, a new ethical-political project is required to disrupt humanist ethical traditions of ethics – a political project that focuses on “becomings as a pragmatic philosophy that stresses the need to act, to experiment with different modes of constituting subjectivity and different ways of inhabiting our corporeality” (p. 1).

This study takes a stand in line with those attempting to resist restrictive ethical frameworks in the field – frameworks where professionals are “entrusted with the task of maintaining social order and reproducing the societal status quo” (Prilleltensky, Walsh-Bowers, & Rossiter, 1996, p. 291). This study adds to an emerging CYC movement that desires an expanded notion of ethics, “making room for multiple, fluid, ongoing, emerging, and narrated identities and becomings” (White, 2011, p. 43).

Chapter Summary

In this chapter I outlined a historical tracing of ethics. Next, I mapped CYC’s history as embedded within the liberal humanist traditions. Then I exposed some cracks and limitations in CYC’s humanist ethical framework. Finally, I put out a call to stand in line with others in the field who are producing micro-political movements to resist the all-too-humanist-ethical-body to amplify the need, in global neoliberal times, for alternative views of ethics.

Next, in chapter 3, I outline the theoretical and methodological tools required for the micro-political movement of creating a rhizodiffractive vantage

point for considering CYC ethical praxis (see White, 2007) in global neoliberal times.

Chapter 3: Theory and Method

Humanist philosophy is deeply embedded in our current ethical framework in CYC. In order to transgress some of the limits of the essentialist, singular self that occupies a prominent place in liberal humanism (White, 2011), and given our current global climate (Braidotti, 2006a, 2006b, 2009), we need to resist such frameworks. To do so, the work of Deleuze and Guattari can be considered as a tool box – “as a collection of...concepts that can be plugged into other...concepts and made to work” (Malins, 2004, p. 84).

In this chapter, I outline Deleuze and Guattari’s theoretical concepts of nomadism and becoming, which I use as tools to interfere with the current ethical framework in North American CYC. I then outline what a posthumanist view of ethics might invite to CYC’s current framework. Next, I discuss two methodologies that I put to work in creating an ethical-political experiment to interrupt CYC ethics. First, drawing on Deleuzian theories, I describe the use of rhizoanalysis to interrupt traditional logic. Second, drawing on Barad’s (2007) theories from science studies, I describe the use of diffraction to interrupt traditional ways of seeing. Together these methodologies create a *rhizodiffractive* tool for considering a different view of ethics in CYC. I end the chapter by outlining how I use the theoretical and methodological tools to perform my analysis in chapter 4.

Theoretical Framework

To interfere with the dominant ethical framework of North American CYC (CYC), this study’s overarching theoretical framework is posthumanist. My

intention is to engage with different theories operating under posthumanism to suggest a different approach to CYC ethics. I utilize the ideas of philosopher Gilles Deleuze (1987), as carried forward by feminist scholars (Braidotti, 2006a, 2006b, 2009) and feminist science scholars (Barad, 2007). In particular, Deleuze's concept of nomadism as it refers to the process of "becoming" is utilized to interrupt a dominant worldview about subjectivity – the idea of "being" – that is evident within the North American CYC profession. In addition, CYC ethics tends to valorize the mind over the body as superior and rational. Following Deleuze, I propose that we as a profession imagine all processes (human and nonhuman) as "becomings" which interact within assemblages. In *A Thousand Plateaus* Deleuze and Guattari (1987) describe their use of the term assemblage:

An assemblage has only itself in connection with other assemblages and in relation to other bodies.... We will never ask what a [human, ethical, cultural, political social, academic, professional] body means. As signified or signifier; we will not look for anything to understand in it. We will ask how it functions in connection with other things. (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987 p. 4)

This concept of the assemblage facilitates movement to destabilize traditional worldviews of subjectivity through the metaphor of the rhizome. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) used the concept of the rhizome to elicit a network capable of "strangling the roots of the infamous tree" (Massumi, 1992, p. xiii). The tree here refers to that of traditional thought, which is based on binary logic,

and linear, ordered systems of thinking, or “arborescent schema” (Parr, 2005). To avoid engaging in binary constructions, “rhizomes are compared and contrasted (but not opposed) to the arboreal metaphors that are often taken up in linear and modernist expressions of thought” (Honan & Sellers, 2007, n.p.). The rhizome “maps processes of networked, relational and transversal thought, a way of being without tracing the construction of that map as a fixed entity” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 12). The rhizome, Deleuze explains, is open to encounters with others – differing systems of thought or environments – to create transversal alliances, which are needed as a precondition for the pursuit of sustainable ethics (Braidotti, 2006a, 2006b, 2009, 2010). In this thesis, the rhizome provides a tool to interfere with dominant CYC ethical theories and discourses as part of a creative critique of the NACECYC.

Nomadism.

Braidotti (2006b) suggests that the dominant view of subjectivity plays ethics “back onto classical humanistic subject positions” (p. 33). In contrast, a nomadic approach visualizes both subjectivity and human ethical interactions as assemblages, which enables movement to create multiple ways of being in the world. Subjectivity becomes more flexible and can interact in a globalized world to dismantle binaries and identity attached to one specific location and time (Braidotti, 2006a, 2006b). A nomadic approach “is not rooted in an ordered space and time, does not comprise a fixed identity, but instead rides difference ... knows no boundaries and wanders across diverse spaces.... This circumstance challenges the unitary, binary, and totalizing models of identity in modernist

thought” (Zembylas & Vrasidas, 2005, p. 63). A non-unitary or nomadic approach can explore the possibilities of multiple systems involved in human ethical values – ones that are not premised on the “white, male, heterosexual...capital owning, standardized vision of the subject” (Braidotti, 2006b, p. 33). Accountability for human ethical values takes "life" as the subject, not the object, of enquiry. A nomadic approach presents ethics as a sustainable and generative reconfiguration of being in the world. This approach requires more conceptual creativity in the production of worldviews that can better enable us to act ethically in a technologically and globally mediated world. A nomadic approach to the sustainability of life is generated through bodies and is defined in terms of processes of becoming. Through Deleuze’s conceptual tool of becoming, we see “a shift from an ontology of being and fixity to an ontology of ‘effectuation’ and affective processes in constant motion” (Ringrose, 2010, p. 4).

Becoming.

During a graduate-level ethics class, I participated in a class exercise which may be useful here to imagine “becoming” as a concept for ethical sustainability. The exercise: Take a moment to imagine “being” ethical in your CYC position/location. What words do you use to describe who you are. Write them down. Now take a moment to imagine “becoming” ethical in your CYC position/location. What words do you use to describe who you are “becoming”? Write them down alongside “who you are.” What do you notice? Where do you notice movement and flow in the languaging of ethics? Where do you notice the ability to invite extensions to “thinking about” ethics? In which category (being or

becoming) do you notice limitations? The reader's willingness to look at this exercise in terms of how I present becoming-ethical as a CYC practitioner might light up areas in thought – and subsequently practice –not yet explored.

The concept of becoming highlights what Deleuze refers to as the "affective turn" necessary to conceive of the ethical/moral subject outside of conventional forms of subjectivity or identity. The affective turn explores affect theory as a way of understanding spheres of experience (including bodily experience) which fall outside of the dominant paradigm of representation (based on rhetoric and semiotics) (see Mussami, 2002). Deleuzian philosophy is critical of internalized subjectivity, acknowledging instead the immanence of becoming as a means of escaping limits and extending possibilities for what we might become. As Colebrook (2002) explains,

the supposed real world that would lie behind the flux of becoming is not, Deleuze insists, a stable world of being; there 'is' nothing other than the flow of becoming. All 'beings' are just relatively stable moments in a flow of becoming-life (p. 125).

For Deleuze and Guattari (1987), becoming relates to transformations – processes of interconnectivity, constantly transforming relations. Becoming does not depict relatively discrete forms of "beings" (subjects/objects, ordered/disordered, normal/abnormal) but rather processes of movement, variation, and multiplicity. Becoming is a means to "get outside the dualisms" that traditionally have governed Western thought; it is an alternative to "be-between, to pass between ... never ceasing to become" (p. 277). Becoming proposes a

different way of existing in a world that otherwise can be sexist, racist, classist, and so on. Ultimately, becomings are a continual process; one never becomes once and for all. The process of becoming involves constantly changing and transforming, moving toward imperceptibility, away from identity and *being* through the plane of immanence (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). Deleuze suggests that the plane of immanence is the surface upon which all events materialize; unified in so far as everything is always becoming and in flux. Such a theory deems that there is no transcendent principle or external cause to the world, and that the process of life production is contained in life itself.

Coleman (2008) notes that a consequence of shifting from a philosophy of being to one of becoming is that “subjects and objects become replaced with bodies” (p. 168). For Deleuze,

a body is not defined by either simple materiality, by its occupying space ('extensions') or by organic structure. It is defined by the relations of its parts (relations of relative motion and rest, speed and slowness), and by its actions and reactions with respect both to its environment or milieu and to its internal milieu. (Parr, 2005, p. 31)

A body, in a Deleuzian sense, can be a human body, an animal body, a body of work, a political body, a cultural body, a social body, or an idea – one which has no interior truth or meaning and exists only through external connections and affects (Coleman, 2008). Deleuze (1987) states that “we know nothing about a body until we know what it can do, in other words what its affects

are, how they can or cannot enter into composition with other affects, with the affects of another body” (p. 257). Therefore, the term bodies refers not to human bodies but to multiple distinct series of connections which assemble at a precise spatial and temporal moment. Through these connections between multiple different things we can understand the notion of subjectivity as something other than bounded subjects. Further, by using the concept of becoming, we can imagine escapes from binaries that create oppositions (majoritarian vs. minoritarian, abnormal vs. normal, order vs. disorder). These escapes can be viewed as shining a light into the liminal spaces of our ethical thinking, allowing us to become more ethical practitioners. By *becoming* accountable to our blind spots, for example, by plugging dominant ethical discourses into posthumanist ethical discourses, we may expose a different way to practice and open up more differentiated and complex ways of actualizing “other” in CYC practice, hence offering an extension, not binaries, to simplistic and dominant privileged truths we currently practice. White (2011) highlights a complex example in her work in youth suicide prevention. A liberal individualistic view of practice may view suicide as an individual, private act linked to mental illness. However, a nomadic view of practice would consider broader interactions with the human body, including oppression and any number of social, political, and historical conditions that may give rise to hopelessness, despair, isolation, or loss of dignity. If we only stick with traditional humanistic views of subjectivity, bodies become ordered and enclosed according to hierarchical binary assumptions – mentally ill/mentally sane, healthy/unhealthy, ethical practices/unethical practices – leaving us little

room to extend our interpretations. This alternative to traditional thinking about ethical/moral CYC bodies is a necessary component to influence changes in the educational, political, and professional systems that operate within the discourse of ethical and moral standards and codes of conduct.

Postfoundational ethics.

Moving toward a posthumanist approach to ethics requires looking from other vantage points. Poststructuralist ethics is a helpful approach because it delinks from the liberal individualistic subject embedded in traditional ethics.

Braidotti (2009) explains that poststructuralist ethics is

not confined to the realm of rights, distributive justice, or the law, but it rather bears close links with the notion of political agency and the management of power and of power-relations. Issues of responsibility are dealt with in terms of alterity or the relationship to others. This implies accountability, situatedness and cartographic accuracy. A poststructuralist position, therefore, far from thinking that a liberal individual definition of the subject is the necessary precondition for ethics, argues that liberalism at present hinders the development of new modes of ethical behaviour. (p. 12)

In line with traditional ethics, poststructuralist ethics positions the ethical instance within traditional human subjectivity (Braidotti, 2006b). Braidotti (2009) summarizes a “triple shift” that a posthumanist ethical perspective may invite to step outside of traditional human subjectivity and open up a different ethics based on interrelations with nonhuman, posthuman and inhuman forces.

Posthumanist ethics may invite: (1) an emphasis on the radical ethics of transformation in opposition to the moral protocols of Kantian universalism; (2) a shift in focus from unitary rationality-driven consciousness to process ontology (a vision of subjectivity proceeded by affects and relations); and (3) a disengagement from the emergence of the subject from the logic of negation rather attaching subjectivity to affirmative otherness – “reciprocity as creation, not as the re-cognition of Sameness” (p. 46). These positions are premised on images of thought regarding a posthuman body and, in saying this, posthumanist ethics. As part of a posthumanist ethical approach, the nomadic conceptual tool of becoming-ethical-CYC-practitioner can address CYC’s commitment to “doing ethics,” but it requires a shift in human subjectivity, one that understands bodies as “becomings” rather than “beings.”

Braidotti (2009) suggests that a posthumanist view of ethics: rests on a multi-layered form of relationality. It assumes as the point of reference positive senses of affecting and being affected by others, through couples and mutually dependent co-realities. Containment of the other occurs through the inter-relational affectivity. (p. 49)

I believe this way of imagining ethics has the ability to extend the profession’s current ethical values: “strength-based, relational, collaborative, socially just and empowering practices” (Gharabaghi, 2008; Smith 2006; White, 2007 cited in White, 2011, p. 33) with a generative force. A posthumanist approach through the notion of becoming-ethical-CYC-practitioner enables the

CYC profession to nomadically “think with the times in spite of the times, not in a belligerent mode of oppositional consciousness, but in humble and empowering gestures of co-constructions of social horizons of hope” (Braidotti, 2009, p. 57), or, simply stated, affirmatively. And, as White (2007), Pacini-Ketchabaw (2011), and K. Skott-Myhre (2012) assert, through a process of subjective disidentification, academia has the ability to generate a force of ethical collaborators, enabling limitless extensions to “ethical praxis” in the field of CYC.

Methodology

This research utilizes two methodological movements. First, drawing on Deleuzian theories as described above, I use rhizoanalysis to interrupt traditional logic. The other methodological movement, diffraction, draws on theories from science studies (Barad, 2003, 2007) to interrupt traditional ways of seeing. Together the methodologies create a rhizodiffractive tool for considering a different way to map ethics in CYC. The rhizome pertains to a map that must be produced, constructed, a map that is always detachable, connectable, reversable, modifiable, and has multiple entranceways and exits and its own lines of flight (see Deleuze & Guattari, 1987).

I use the methods of rhizoanalysis and diffractive analysis interchangeably to explore thinking and viewing the politics of a text (e.g., NACECYC) with the goal of creating new texts. In addition, I employ a political, practice-based research strategy (becoming-ethical-CYC-practitioner) that entangles diverse theoretical contributions from philosophy, feminism, and posthumanism with creative arts, other texts, and the researcher. The intention is to produce a

methodology where “ethics emerges as the guiding principal for political action” (Braidotti, 2009, p. 43).

Rhizoanalysis.

According to O’Riley (2003), rhizoanalysis is fluid, flexible, conjunctive, regenerating, and *fun*; it is not a place of dry, linear intellectualization. Thinking rhizomatically involves thinking differently by working in the gray areas in-between the ordered and unordered of binary thinking.

For Deleuze, rhizoanalysis challenges dominant discourses and invites ways of thinking that are creative and dynamic (Stagoll, n.d., p. 13, cited in Parr, 2005). The rhizoanalysis avoids an orientation that culminates in an ending point. Rather than asking what something “means,” rhizoanalysis asks what it does: What does CYC ethics do? How does it function outside of itself? With what other things does CYC ethics connect?

This methodology also invites the researcher to break free of the bounded self; it allows a view of research-practice as not “having to get it right” or not having to follow a prescribed way of knowing, doing and becoming (White, 2007). Rather it invites multiple ways of seeing things as always transforming, always unique, and never stagnant. Ethically, it lends itself to extending a dominant viewpoint of CYC front-line work with solutions, policies, and procedures that occasionally fail miserably and can lead to effects of burnout⁵ and burden.

⁵ It’s important to note, however, that the concept of burnout has been challenged. Vikki Reynolds (2006, cited in Richardson, 2008), for example, believes that “burnout” and “compassion fatigue” are linguistic misnomers and that helping professionals are harmed not by clients but by isolation and by not being able to name the systemic injustices we witness in our work.

St. Pierre (1997) highlights Deleuze's ethical principles, which helped me to understand ethical practice in a different way. Transcendental ethics and morals limited my thinking with "right and wrong," "good and bad," "should and should not" binaries. There was always an elusive "gatekeeper" limiting my creative potential. Deleuze's principles, however, create "thought inspired by disjunction, difference, deindividualization, multiplication, displacement, disunity, mobile arrangements...over unitary, totalizing, sedentary, and systematic thought" (p. 408). Understanding ethics in this way produces another fold in the research process because it allows for *extensions* in interpretation. Writing and inquiring rhizomatically opens up a horizontal text, "a text that appears in new spaces, is fragmented and does not have to explain how it got there" (Honan & Sellers, 2007, p. n.p.). The research becomes every situation, event, and person encountered during the research journey, as well as the journeying itself and the territory negotiated (Honan & Sellers, 2007). St. Pierre (1997) views the rhizomatic research process as a "nomadic adventure that cannot be defined in advance because it takes advantage of flows and multiplicities and disjunctions to make a different sense in different ways or to refuse to make sense at all" (p. 413). Taking a similar view, Honan and Sellers (2007) trouble sense making in a linear, ordered progression of theoretical ideas and practical applications leading to coherent conclusions; they believe that rhizomatic thinking and writing work "to overcome binary polarizations, to go beyond dichotomous thought and linear thinking instead working towards producing points of intersection, overlaps,

convergences, twisting and weaving through infinite folds and surfaces” (n.p.) – creating, in effect, an ontology of becoming.

Diffraction

Using diffraction as a methodological strategy “takes into account that knowing is never done in isolation but is always effected by different forces coming together” (Hultman & Taguchi, 2010, p. 536) in an event to form an assemblage. Diffraction enables me to create interference with how I view ethical practice within the rhizome. For example,

as a metaphor for knowing, the notion of diffraction suggests that knowledge should be construed as an interference pattern; it is not just an image of an object of knowledge, but it is a testament to the interaction between both ‘object’ of knowledge and the knowing ‘subject.’ (Pernrud, 2007, p. 76).

Diffraction is a methodology that problematizes dominant “reflexive methodology” (Hultman and Taguchi, 2010, p. 536). Reflexive methodology cannot bridge the epistemological gap between the knower and the known (Barad, 2007, p. 88, cited in Hultman and Taguchi, 2010, p. 536). It does not account for the middles, gray areas, or in-betweens of binary thinking or reality. Diffraction allows this different way of seeing and thinking as an event, which forms part of the rhizoanalysis. Deleuze and Guattari would say, “Something in the world forces us to think. This something is an object not of recognition but of a fundamental encounter” (1994, p. 139). Similar to diffraction, Colebrook (2002) reminds us that rhizoanalysis is to be thought of as dispersed in networks and

assemblages of matter, organisms, and discursive meaning in an encounter, rather than being based on identification, depiction, or common sense. Therefore the (re)searcher/writer is involved in the event of analysis, writing, and research assemblage. Hultman and Taguchi (2010) define diffraction as “part of an event of *becoming-with the data*” (p. 534). In line with nomadism, this strategy understands subjectivity as a “‘crowd’ of interacting organs, affect, and perceptions” (Mol, 2002, viii, Olkowski, 2009, p.62, cited in Hultman & Taguchi, 2010, p. 534), which forms part of an assemblage in the research event. Therefore, the researcher assemblage is part of the event of *becoming thesis* through the writing machine. This is an undoing of the subject. It illustrates Deleuze’s notion of becoming by questioning “whether subjectivity is produced solely by internal faculties of the soul, interpersonal relations, and intra-familial complexes, or whether nonhuman machines, such as social, cultural, environmental, or technological assemblages enter into the very production of subjectivity itself” (Hultman & Lenz Taguchi, 2010, p. 534). The purpose of using diffraction is so “we might live differently if we [can] conceive the world differently” (St. Pierre, 2008, cited in Hultman & Lenz Taguchi, 2010, p. 534). This method of critique will create some ways of mapping how becoming-ethical-CYC-practitioner works in/between/through CYC praxis.

Additionally, diffraction runs interference to traditional epistemology, which implies that knowledge is somehow separated from the world it speaks about. In transcendental theories of knowing, “political values lead to biased representations (Longino, 1990), and political ideologies are at risk of covering

the world in a proverbial mist (Hartsock, 1997)” (Pernrud, 2007, p. 61). Using a diffractive methodology positions ontology over epistemology and recognizes that knowing occurs performatively as a way to participate with it. It appears problematic to consider politics as something that curtails the access the knowing subject has to the object of knowledge (Barad, 2003; Haraway, 1991). More so, it is problematic to consider knowledge, literature, and language in terms of representations (Barad, 2003). As an alternative to representational analysis of claims to knowledge, I propose, knowledge should be viewed in a diffractive analysis (Haraway, 1997).

The notion of diffraction is here taken to be a metaphor contesting the equally metaphoric notion of reflection, informing representationalist ways of construing knowledge and language. When light is diffracted it is made to interact with itself; light waves reinforce and cancel each other out into interference patterns, sometimes as spectacularly as rainbows. Clearly, a rainbow cannot be reduced either to the sun or to the rain, but it is a realization of the joint agencies of the sun and the rain. As a metaphor, diffraction speaks to me about how the agencies of different parts of the world are joined together into new parts of the world (Haraway 2003, Haraway 2004). (Pernrud, 2007, p.64)

Barad (2007) proposes scholars integrate diffraction and entanglement into their analysis of social phenomenon. She describes diffraction as looking at social issues through a new opening or perspective, to reveal new patterns and

relationships; entanglement involves viewing all social relationships as inherently tied up in each other.

These methodological movements combined encourage an interdisciplinary, globalized view that recognizes that social phenomena are “intertwined with each other... lack[ing] an independent, self-contained existence” (Barad, 2007, ix). Barad’s model necessarily complicates the analysis of social relations and systems of power, by acknowledging and seeking to understand the complicated, entangled nature of such relationships through diffractive processes.

Performing Method

This study is about stepping outside of normativities to consider the immanent possibilities for a different ethical North American CYC profession. I engage in a rhizodiffractive methodological movement as a micro-political act to interfere with some of the unique entanglements of ethical CYC practice. These are affirmative political movements that enable me to disrupt the master narratives of CYC ethics which, traditionally, is identified with the individual as the central agent of all social phenomena (Braidotti, 2006a, 2006b; Hultman & Lenz Taguchi, 2010).

In addition, this thesis is a political act that asks the reader to consider alternatives to traditional ways of doing ethics. John Law (2004) argues that “while standard methods are often extremely good at what they do, they are badly adapted to the study of the ephemeral, the indefinite and the irregular” (p.

4). So, to step outside of traditional ways of doing method, I found ways to respond creatively to the neoliberal project that I described in chapter 2.

Using posthumanist theories, I created a nomadic ethical-political experiment using a life-sustaining approach to ethics. I demonstrate a different way of doing ethics through the notion of becoming-ethical-CYC-practitioner, using my client Talia as a point of reference. The notion of becoming-ethical-CYC-practitioner experiments with different modes of constituting subjectivity and different ways of inhabiting the material body. An ethics of becoming references the project of nomadic subjectivity and life sustainability. Nomadic philosophy enables one's affectivity, which enacts the desire for in-depth transformations, such as Talia's desire to "fit in" to society. I was curious about the kind of subject Talia has become in her quest for that status. Therefore, I explored how her desire to fit in propels her curiosity about how that status limits or extends her threshold for a sustainable life. I viewed her drive for change as difficult, painful, and, at times, life threatening.

I use Talia as an example to understand in practical terms how change and transformation in a globalized world need to be handled with care by CYC practitioners. My desire, as a CYC practitioner, is to ethically work with my clients to sustain life. As I explained in chapter 1, Talia's quest to fit in puts her at risk of dying, and I believe that if I don't attempt to step outside traditional, transcendental ways of practicing, with their emphases on harm, I would be complicit in her death.

To understand how I might practice from a life-affirming viewpoint, I created an artistic collage assemblage with the NACECYC, and pop-culture texts to facilitate my curiosity about Talia's ontological drive to become accepted in society; in the process I mapped new cognitive and sensorial "thresholds of sustainability for bodies-in-process of transformation" (Braidotti, 2006a, p. 6). These mappings generate several micro-political acts, or modes of generative activism, as an ethical guiding principle (Braidotti, 2006a) when engaging with the politics of CYC's ethical task to take responsibility for self and client under the guidance of the NACECYC. I used rhizoanalysis and diffraction combined as tools to interrupt rational thinking and dominant ways of viewing ethics and to open up new ways of practicing ethically in a life-sustaining manner, one that "maintains high standards of professional conduct" (NACECYC, Principles and Standards, I(a)1) and "above all, shall not harm the child..." (II, B, A).

Creating the collage.

In keeping my ethical-political experiment premised on becoming-ethical-CYC-practitioner, I used performative methods to get in-between normative ways of thinking and viewing ethical practice. To understand how I interact with Talia as she constitutes subjectivity and inhabits her material body, I created collages to experiment with different assemblages to disrupt normative notions of ethics and subjectivity. Following Deleuze, this art-based project was used to critique the limitations to my current practice. Coleman (n.d., cited in Parr, 2005) explains that

Deleuze employs 'art' as a category of 'Critique', taking on Nietzsche's observation that the world is emotive and sensory, but any analysis of this world is bound by epistemological structures. For Deleuze, the descriptive nature of art lies with art's ability not merely to redescribe; rather art has a material capacity to evoke and to question through non-mimetic means, by producing different affects. (p. 15)

Using art as a means of becoming-ethical-CYC-practitioner enables a generative and performative approach to critique my practice. Barad (2003) proposes that posthumanist performativity accounts for the incorporation of "important material and discursive, social and scientific, human and nonhuman, and natural and cultural factors" (p. 808) . Art as a performative method forced me to step outside of traditional ways of thinking and viewing what we might call "an eating-disordered client" like Talia.

Having used art to form the assemblages, I then read two sections of the NACECYC against the images I created. Driven by my own curiosity about what I would find, I journaled my thoughts, feelings, and senses as I interacted with the assemblages I had created. Then I selected vignettes from two popular children's texts, *Snow White* (Grimm, 1937) and *The Paper Bag Princess* (Munsch, 1980), to explore how the politics of gender, class, and sexuality may shape my practice with eating disorder clients. I used a rhizodiffractive analysis to produce coordinates between my observations and the collages, the NACECYC, and the vignettes. Rhizodiffractive logic provided a tactic to demonstrate a different way

of thinking and viewing my ethical CYC practice as situated within neoliberal society. I outlined simple moves one can make toward rhizodiffractive logic by interrogating the collage, being nomadic in how I framed it and open to the surprises of this different way to read the subjectivity and the ethical body. Throughout the process, I kept in mind the NACECYC, the two children's texts, myself, Talia, the CYC field, the neoliberal society, and our globalized world. I viewed all of these categories as bodies: bodies of knowledge; professional bodies; ethical bodies, as in codes, competencies, and evidence-based ethical practices; cultural bodies; economic bodies; political bodies; social bodies; and so on. In chapter 4 I share how these different bodies interacted to create new co-ordinates for observation as my ethical-political experiment for becoming more life sustaining in my CYC practices with clients like Talia.

Choosing the images.

In choosing images for the collages, I interacted with a not-yet-thought thesis...taking into consideration how ontology, epistemology, and methodology and different bodies all worked to interfere in my (re)search of the unique entanglements of my ethical encounters with Talia. I viewed knowing as part of the performative art-based process because we are always interfacing with the not-yet-known. Therefore, I viewed myself as always becoming-ethical-CYC-practitioner. For example, when I chose images I interacted with the images as transforming what I know.

Popular media.

I utilized popular media from the World Wide Web to show how diverse fragments of data from the reading of the NACECYC and pop culture texts connect to larger societal structures (how do they overlap, conjoin, disperse, shift). Second, I show how these data fragments link with other data fragments from texts outside of it – showing the overlaps and shifting links between them. In addition I engage in a researcher's ethical-political experiment using the notion of becoming-ethical-CYC-practitioner to show how these data fragments connect to my ethical CYC practice to understand what discourses they bring to life. Finally, I discuss the implications for continuing to produce the same thinking and logic that dates CYC's current ethical foundation.

CYC ethics documents.

I reviewed two codes of ethics within the NACECYC: "Responsibility for Self" and "Responsibility to the Client." I highlight the value and relevance for the document by providing examples of its limitations. The purpose is to show rather than tell of my own capture by dominant ethical practice and assert a need to revisit the NACECYC. Referring to the document, to align with the principles and standards outlined in "Responsibility for Self," to maintain competency one must (1) take responsibility for identifying, developing, and fully utilizing knowledge and abilities for professional practice and (2) obtain training, education, supervision, experience, and/or counsel to assure competent service.

I attempted to interfere with the original architecture of the NACECYC to explore the impacts of Westernized ethical models in CYC ethics and wondering

if Westernized discourses limit or extend ethical CYC processes in current times. I chose to read the NACECYC against vignettes of two pop-culture texts, as described below.

Pop culture texts.

As part of the critical analysis of the NACECYC, I selected two texts from children's literature: *Snow White* and *The Paper Bag Princess*. I read these texts against the NACECYC to experiment with how rhizodiffractive logic can be used to transform the meaning given to CYC ethics using the themes of gender, class, and sexuality. Today's children and youth have grown up in a world pervaded by "the electronic, symbolic, commodity, and ideological signification system of pop culture" (Luke, 1997, p. 45, cited in Trier, 2006, p. 434). Therefore, I chose pop culture because it is an entrenched part of neoliberal life. Using pop culture is a creative way to interfere with traditional ways of thinking and viewing ethical practice. I chose the themes of gender, class, and sexuality to show how ethics and pop culture entangle within neoliberal society and create new coordinates for thinking and viewing as a political ethical practice for CYC. I achieved this by constructing rhizomes of gender, class, and sexuality to plot links between CYC ethical practice and popular culture. Then I engaged with how those coordinates are translated as part of becoming-ethical-CYC-practitioner.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I outlined Deleuze and Guattari's theoretical concepts of nomadism and becoming, which I use as tools to interfere with the current ethical framework in North American CYC. I then outlined what a posthumanist view of

ethics might invite to CYC's current framework. Next, I discussed two methodologies that I put to work in creating an ethical-political experiment to interrupt CYC ethics. First, I utilized Deleuzian theories to describe the use of rhizoanalysis to interrupt traditional logic. Second, utilized Barad's (2007) theories from science studies to describe the use of diffraction to interrupt traditional ways of seeing. Together these methodologies created a *rhizodiffractive* tool for considering a different view of ethics in CYC. I used the theoretical and methodological tools to perform my analysis in chapter 4.

Next, in chapter 4, I engage with the ethical-political experiment I created to interfere with the way we currently view doing ethics in North American CYC. First I engage the reader to rethink current definitions of subjectivity. Second, I use Deleuze and Guattari's rhizome metaphor to support a shift in subjectivity.

Chapter 4: Creating A Different Ethics: An Ethical-Political Experiment

In this chapter, I describe and engage with an ethical-political experiment that I created to interfere with the way we currently think about doing ethics in North American CYC. I ask the reader to consider that this chapter will not make sense the way I made sense when I wrote it. Just as my thumbprints are unique to me, this chapter that I have created is unique to me. In creating it, I interacted with bodies of knowledge, ethical discourses, singularities, time, and other bodies. When you read it, it will make *different* sense because connections occur *in-between* the interaction of words on paper and the writing and the response. The words, the writing, the response “become *different* in their own *different* styles depending on the qualities by which they actively differentiate themselves” (Colebrook, 2002, p. 84). This unfolding process represents *becoming*: seeing as a transformative, generative, and creative event. This consideration suggests that no two individuals will take away the same image or meaning of this experiment. On the contrary, each individual will take away something new. It is not the same reading; it always transforms based on the reader.

Before I “enter the rhizome” to analyze the assemblage of becoming-ethical-CYC-practitioner-through-Talia’s-ethical-body in order to interfere with the NACECYC, I delineate my journey into rethinking subjectivity through Deleuzian concepts.

Rethinking Subjectivity

Historically, Western philosophical traditions of ethical subjectivity are situated in the “I” that resides in a fixed identity (Massumi, 1992). Posthumanists

would argue that this is because subjectivity is situated in the linguistic mediation of binary thinking – normal/abnormal, white/black, male/female (Braidotti, 2009). Therefore, “when identity depends on the human mind, it is by default set up as transcendent” (Parr, 2005, p. 126). Ethical subjectivity embedded in transcendental knowledge embodies me as an individual autonomous thinking subject. Therefore, “I” have an ethical identity as part of practicing with my clients, and I am practicing either ethically or unethically.

I know that, from a Cartesian viewpoint, minds are useful for conceptualizing, planning, or theorizing. Minds are diligent at presenting multiple variations of the past and conjuring them into a future. However, in my practice, I have noticed that these uses of the transcendent mind have limits. The mind is bound by binaries rooted in an ethical identity. Why do we believe exclusively in the mind’s productions? The mind evokes corresponding emotions, which lead to actions or reactions. For example, when I have worked with eating disorder clients from the perspective that they are “unwell,” it has evoked the emotion of frustration, leading me to be skeptical about my ability to “help” anyone – is believing that I can help reality or lunacy? Thus I wanted to think about identity *differently* – beyond the Cartesian mind/body binary.

Deleuze’s notion of becoming moves subjectivity to that of bodies; different bodies – social, political, cultural, economic, individual, and so forth – are constantly affecting and being affected by the other bodies around them. They continually come together and break apart through assemblages of becomings. Becoming-ethical-CYC-practitioner opens up spaces for interacting

in generative and transformative ways. For example, in the collages I created as part of my ethical-political experiment (see Figures 1 through 5), I wondered how I might interact, as human body, through assembling other bodies as ethical becomings. I asked: What questions and problems do the connections between these bodies make visible? 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 connections between these various bodies do? The collage, as a series of stitched-together images, suggests other questions. For example, what other ways can we connect? What other bodies can become part of this assemblage? Questions and problems become expressed through networks of intra-actions, destabilizing the tree-like structure of representational thinking into a rhizome of nomadic thinking.

Below, I enter the rhizome through art to interrupt dominant thought. Here, I pause to remember that

the rhizome is open at both ends. It has no central or governing structure; it has neither a beginning nor end. As a rhizome has no centre, it spreads continuously without beginning or ending and basically exists in a constant state of play. It does not conform to a unidirectional or linear reasoning. The rhizome challenges the sense of a unique direction because it emerges and grows in simultaneous multiple ways. (Holmes & Gastaldo, 2004, p. 261, cited in White, 2011, p. 44)

For Deleuze and Guattari the subject is nothing more (and nothing less) than a particular way in which bodies have become organised and stratified in the post-Enlightenment social world. In order to comprehend the 'human' body, the social world (or socius) reduces the complexity and chaos of an ever-changing multiplicity of bodily flux to discrete categories of meaning and constancy. (p. 86)

My ethical-CYC-practitioner body is ordered according to hierarchal binary assumptions – practitioner/client, well/unwell, ordered/disordered, woman/youth – binaries that human bodies never fully correspond to:

No real body ever entirely coincides with either category. A body only approaches its assigned category as a limit: it becomes more or less “feminine” or more or less “masculine” depending on the degree to which it conforms to the connections and trajectories laid out for it by society.... “Man” and “Woman” as such have no reality other than that of logical abstraction. (Massumi, 1992 p. 86).

Working with Talia as a professional CYC practitioner is problematic under the current restrictions imposed by the NACECYC. The relationship remains reliant upon, and limited to, binary relations that are set up based on a discrete set of bodily possibilities between the CYC practitioner and the client. The ethical work is premised on the notion that the client will subscribe to modern selfhood (and all its bodily and linguistic demands) or the client will be viewed as other than normal (Malins, 2004). I feel trapped because I desire to be an ethical helping professional working with eating disorder clients like Talia; therefore, I

desire to be within some of those categories. The labels help me to understand and communicate “who I am” in my profession: I am CYC practitioner, eating disorder counsellor, preventative educator, helper. Malins (2004) suggests that stratification is the way bodies dynamically and intentionally order themselves in order to have a political social voice and to say “I” – that is, to vocalize what they accept or reject within society:

A body becomes a subject (self–same) in order to interact successfully in the social world. It must accept an identity...and a particular way of organising itself...otherwise it will be incomprehensible. (p. 87)

My ethical identity is reduced to discrete categories bounded in language; as Malins (2004) asserts, “a complex rhizomatic flow of multiplicities reduced to a single grid of social strata” (p. 87) reduces my potential for becoming-other. The potential to view my body as becoming-ethical-CYC-practitioner when interacting with an eating disorder client named Talia allows me to show some cracks in my organized/stratified ethical-body. Rhizodiffractive movements within the images of the collage produce lines of movement that form assemblages and move me away from organization and stratification toward entanglements with multiple other bodies.

The crucial intra-actions...the entanglements...the rhizodiffractive lines
appear through

weaving...the stratified ethical-body

I want to escape
feeling captured in
a rut...wanting to
help her see she
has potential to
transform....

desiring ... to resist the norm

How do you expand not
wanting to be captured by
what's not
working.....desiring to see
and think differently...

entangling...the educational bodies



entangling...academia



How can I
Understand
My LIMITS...
keeping her
stuck....ahh...

producing intra-actions with ethics....



SHINING THE LIGHT...exposing the cracks...

shining....

exposing history....



exposing domination....



.....colliding.... and

exposing the self...

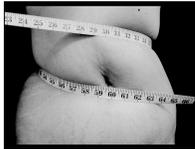


The movements within the collage expose that, within the ethical assemblage, the CYC-ethical body is entanglements with scientific, social, and political practices. “I” am historically embedded in liberal social and scientific theories which privilege the rational-thinking-autonomous practitioner.



Intra-acting...with Talia's condition....

...with the eating disorder ...



....desiring

HELP

exposing...shining



These movements within the collage expose that, as ethical-CYC-practitioner, I speak in a dominant language that represents the all-too-human condition of an eating disorder. Deleuze (1988) warns: “As long as we stick to things and words we can believe that we are speaking of what we see, that we see what we are speaking of, and that the two are linked” (p. 65, cited in Barad, 2003, p. 811).

As my body moves within the ethical-social-political-scientific assemblage, it exposes the image “transcendental bondage.” I become forced to think about how I am embedded in several constraints imposed by Western society. As a stratified ethical body, I am always embedded in transcendental bondage (Barad, 2007; K. Skott-Myhre, 2012), which is set up with boundaries promoting notions of rationality, self-control, and rigid bodily autonomy:

The ideal notion of the human body in contemporary western societies is that which is tight, contained, exercising full control over its boundaries. (Lupton, 1999, cited in Malins, 2004, p. 100)

This notion exposes another crack: As an autonomous, rigid, codified body I engage in a “helping relationship” that is embedded within professional boundaries of helping others; these boundaries produce habitual performances that discipline the ethical-body to the regimen of cultural authority (K. Skott-Myhre, 2012). For example, my professional knowledge-bases about eating disorders, including for example cognitive behavioural therapy, acceptance and commitment therapy, body mass index charts, the diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders, and medical assessments, to name a few have come to dominate the ways in which I counsel clients like Talia. I am always using discursive language to move her toward “health.” Each of these discursive-knowledge-practices upholds the transcendental logic of the mind-body split and the separation of self from ‘other’ (autonomy): well/unwell, practitioner/client, normal/abnormal. Malins (2004) suggests:

The ideal body is one that distinguishes itself from its myriad rhizomatic relations and stratifies according to the limiting logic of the 'self' (self = I = not you). By doing away with (or, more accurately, ignoring) the force of bodily relations, they support the production of subjects who understand and identify themselves in relation to the terms of these knowledges— terms such as '[eating disorder client].... and terms which are constructed as false dichotomies. (p. 100)

Viewing the client as rhizomatic interferes with transcendental thinking: "either you are an eating disorder client or you're not." In the same way transcendental morality works, Malins writes, "these discursive dichotomies also operate to make bodies guilty in advance; forcing them to constantly work to prove themselves; to manoeuvre themselves into the privileged branch of each binary" (p. 100).

Not complicit -
You're more than
an
Eating dis-order

interfering



Politicize

exposing

colliding with the ethical-

order/d
isorder/

body.....

....becoming activist...



These images, when stitched together, expose a micro-political movement within the ethical-social-political-scientific assemblage. If I, as ethical-CYC-practitioner, attempt to renew Talia's life potential through pathologizing terms, the eating-disorder-body (and other abject bodies) becomes politicized in neoliberal terms (Braidotti, 2006a, 2006b, 2009). Talia becomes "a 'person' to the extent that a category (cultural image of unity) has been imposed on it, and insofar as its subsequent actions are made to conform to those prescribed by its assigned category" (Massumi, 1992, p. 55). There is ultimately no such thing as an "eating disorder client" or a "bulimic"; there are only bulimic experiments or events and ongoing processes of stratification or habitualization. Arsic (2008) suggests:

The event is what Deleuze refers to as the happening – an almost imperceptible occurrence – of something; something without any representable identity and hence without sufficient reason. An event, therefore, always occurs as ‘something that happens’ and not as a ‘this’ or ‘that’ that is going on.... This happening of something cannot be represented or identified..... Once the event is identified it has already taken place; identification of it comes only in retrospect. But while it is happening it is the only entity there is, non-appropriated, unnamed, unimagined, just ‘something’ taking its course. Entities are thus neither things nor objects, neither thoughts nor concepts, but purely external relations. (p. 45)

As part of an experimentation called bulimia, a micro-political act can be dangerous, and potentially deadly:

The danger of this micro-politics (the same holds for all other such experiments, with drugs, alcohol, food, sleep, but also for molar experiments, for experimentation by definition involves danger) is, as Deleuze puts it, that it can come ‘close to going off the rails, to becoming lethal.’ (p. 45)

As part of the transforming-ethical-CYC-practitioner assemblage, I realized that understanding others as bodies in processes of becoming has practical implications for how I might work differently with clients like Talia. Instead of psychologizing bulimia and situating it in an ethics that positions me to either help her or harm her, the questions need to be unique to every situation and every

encounter of bulimic/eating disorder body: “We must try to find out what dangers arise in the middle of a real [bulimic/eating disorder] experiment, and not the lack dominating a pre-established interpretation” (Deleuze 1987, cited in Arsic, 2008, p. 111). The ethical drive becomes channelled into sustaining Talia’s life in terms of *and/and* (e.g., Talia is intra-acting with the CYC-practitioner *and* language *and* bulimia *and* acceptance *and* death drive *and* life drive *and* so on) rather than in terms of *either* I am helping her *or* I am harming her; she is ordered *or* disordered. The implications are intentionally non-prescriptive *and* they open up *different* hopes for assisting clients in *different* ways *and* they allow for stepping outside of judgment *and* they interfere with human flourishing knowledges.

Stitch...

Human
Flourishing/Sustaining
Practices in Progress

Figure 3. Human flourishing/sustaining practices in progress.

The image in Figure 3 interferes with and spurs us to rethink ethical knowledges around how we view ethical CYC practice. The question becomes: Under the professions’ current ethical framework, how do we continue to perpetuate judgment-based stratifications that limit life?

Next, “I” read the NACECYC against the images in the collages, “opening the body to connections that presuppose an entire [CYC-ethical] assemblage” (Deleuze 1987, p. 160).

Interfering with the NACECYC.



Figure 4. Interfering with the NACECYC.

As part of becoming-ethical-CYC practitioner, I am affected by the combination of images in Figure 4 in my pursuit to find a different way to work with Talia and others in a more life-sustaining way. The previous section exposed limits imposed by transcendental-ethical-professional bondage. The stitched-together images above produce a micro-political act: to experiment with politicizing the NACECYC to further understand the limits embedded in professional boundaries.



entering the assemblage....

entering the



profession...

interfering with the

LOGIC that produces
stable...
universal **truths** of the
world

known.....

....colliding with

Desiring to be
Competent
Clashing with
Competent

the stratified body....

....colliding with the

corporeal....

**Frustrated with society, practice,
education....it's painful**

Angry

....interfering...

Fighting to depoliticize

*Looking for
the liminal
spaces....*

....

The function of professional ethics is to regulate practice, educating practitioners and raising consciousness in the field (Mattingly, 1995). In the interactive context of CYC, ethical responsibility is central to effective practice (Garfat & Ricks, 1995). In an attempt to hold professionals accountable to the work that they do, “professional groups have generated codes of ethics and standards of practice” (Garfat & Ricks, 1995, p. 393). Gharabaghi (2008) explains that “a code of ethics typically spells out, in writing, the core principles of ethical practice, and as such, it makes reference to the nature of conduct, the type of knowledge, and the relationship with other professionals that ought to be followed by practitioners” (p. 196). Garfat and Ricks (1995) describe standards of practice as “more specific rules to assist practitioners in being effective” (p. 393). Though codes of ethics and standards of practice are essential for the professionalization of a field (Lochhead, 2001) they are not life sustaining in global times. Currently, North American ethical and moral practice is rooted in and driven by the self (Garfat & Ricks, 1995; Magnuson, 1995; Mattingly, 1995; Ricks, 1989). This is problematic because the “self” is embedded within a liberal-rational-autonomous-thinking-subject. What this means is that a liberal individual definition of the subject is the necessary political precondition for ethics. Therefore, the subject takes up ethics as part of the stratified body – ethical identity.

The family
is the most
influential
system....

Stitching practice knowledges....

stitch...



...produces movement.... **WARNING**



GLOBALIZATION IN PROGRESS...and affects....

Burn roots
so we can make
new shoots

....

....deterritorializing...

CONFORMING /BECOMING

....exposing the cracks....

Using my body as an ongoing site for virtual expression (K. Skott-Myhre, 2012) through rhizodiffractive movements, I enter into compositions within the ethical-political-social-scientific-cultural-professional assemblage to deterritorialize judgment-based stratifications of the value-laden principles and standards attached to the NACECYC, which task the ethical-CYC-practitioner to take responsibility for “the self” and “the client.” This ethical-political experiment “has the force to elude the dominant forms of social control...[or]...outside sovereign force” (K. Skott-Myhre, 2012, p. 307).

Reading the NACECYC against the images in the collage above produces evidence of cultural assumptions about human flourishing, such as striving for a “healthy” and “successful” normative-life. The striving, however, is situated within the motives of neoliberal capitalist agendas. These neoliberal flourishing projects are embedded in identity within the everyday interactions of ethical practice (Ahluwalia, 2007; Battiste, 2005; Braidotti, 2009; Dahlberg & Moss, 2005; Ermine, 2007; Jagger, 1998; Keller, 1998; Prilleltensky et al., 1996; Sinclair, 2007; Sommers-Flanagan & Sommers-Flanagan, 2007; Tait, 2008; Taylor & White, 2000). Helping practitioners are required to model a healthy (self-care), successful (academic certifications, positions in agencies and so on) and normative-life (through self-reflexive practices and trainings). Those assumptions reside in the NACECYC (1995), rooted in language. For example, under the current framework, the ethical CYC practitioner is tasked with processing human bodies to bring them into compliance with normatively established standards of health (K. Skott-Myhre, 2012, Bradotti, 2006a). However, as K. Skott-Myhre (2012) asks, “is the processing of bodies the best and most effective model for a relationally built field?” (p. 302). Operating under an ethical code situated within humanism limits each body’s capacity to form other relations (Malins, 2004) outside individualistic definitions. Ethical-political experimentation allows for the mingling of human and nonhuman forms virtualized at any given spatial-temporal moment (K. Skott-Myhre, 2012). Therefore, a humanist ethical framework limits ethical practice because it produces laws that judge discriminately. This is problematic to the ethical-CYC-practitioner who desires to “maintain competency,”

“maintain high standards of professional conduct,” “maintain physical and emotional well-being” and, above all, “not harm the child” while ensuring “that services are sensitive to and non-discriminatory of clients” (Association for Child and Youth Care Practice, 1995, p. 2). Shifting from transcendental to nomadic thought integrates the laws that judge us discriminately into laws that judge us as bodies-in-becoming. As Braidotti (2006b) writes,

the task of turning the tide of negativity is an ethical transformative process. It aims at achieving the freedom of understanding, through the awareness of our limits, of our bondage. This results in the freedom to affirm one’s essence as joy, through encounters and minglings with other bodies, entities, beings and forces. Ethics means...the desire to become. (p. 10)

The implications of nomadic thought for ethical CYC practice is that we can expand the notion of the helping professional so that ill-being and well-being can be “understood as enactments and process of becoming with other” (Lenz Taguchi & Palmer, 2012, p. 2). We need to collectively discuss and imagine how ethical practices and environments can be flexible and change in order to produce well-being rather than ill-being (Lenz Taguchi & Palmer, 2012). It is within our imagination, where we can interconnect with images and stories of ethical practices yet to come, that “our imaginary faculties...support us in the process of constructing other possible realities...to think differently about ourselves...to make thinking and imagining be actualized as material realities...to

increase our power to act” (p. 23) ethically. Next, I experiment with Talia’s ethical body to see what rethinking subjectivities as bodies-in-becomings does.

Experimenting with Talia’s Ethical-Body



Figure 5. Experimenting with Talia’s ethical-body.

To help me to rethink subjectivity as bodies-in-becoming, I next plug in two children’s texts, *Snow White* (Grimm, 1937) and *The Paper Bag Princess* (Munsch, 1980) to experiment with Talia’s desire to become accepted in society and to expose a different way to view ethical practice. I choose these texts with political intent to illuminate the complexity of gender and sexuality reconstituted under a liberal, individualistic agenda. The discourses within the texts suggest

idealized forms of masculinity and femininity that relate to wider dominant discourses of heterosexualized and heteronormative sex and romance (Nayak & Kehily, 2008; Youdell, 2006, cited in Ringrose, 2010, p. 7).

I borrow Matlins' (2004) question "What does the collage do" if I plug in *Snow White* and *The Paper Bag Princess* into ethical-CYC-practitioner? The question propels me to view these images in a different way.

(Re)search..the
ties that bond...
emBODY a
nomadic life

Entering...

wHAT
iS
tHE
mORAL
oF
tHE
sTORY?

entering....

Colliding with gender...



sexuality....

“Looking glass, Looking-glass, on the wall, Who in This land is the fairest of

Interfering with...

Hopeful for acceptance

colliding with



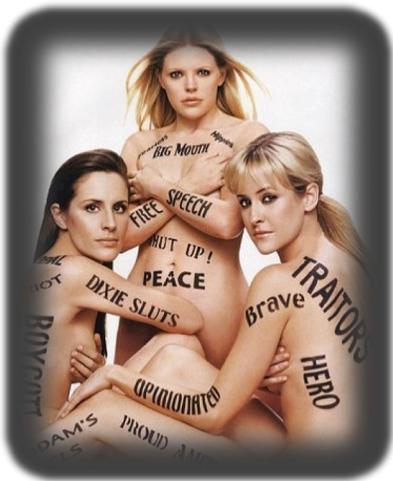
the global body....

...exposing the cracks...

“[Talia] walked right over the dragon and opened the door to the cave.

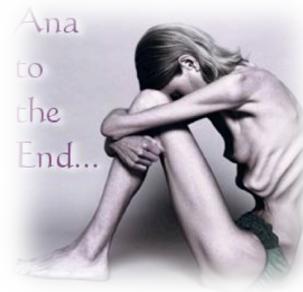
There was Prince Ronald. He looked at her and said, “[Talia] you are a mess! You smell like ashes, your hair is all tangled and you are wearing a Dirty old paper bag. Come back when you are dressed like a real princess.””

colliding with the stratified body...



Painful
 Hopeful
 tick tock
 Tick tock
 TICK





producing a micro-political movement....

**Striving to do
the
cultural ideal
BETTER!**

....

shining the light....

Commoditized
Politicized
Embedded in
multiple
subjectivities

.... Bodily

affects... **Un(sustainable)**  colliding with

the ethical-body **Ir(responsible)** ... **Im(possible)**

My engagement with the collage is an ethical-political transformative process aimed to achieve the freedom of understanding through an awareness of limits. For Deleuze (1987), limits are simultaneously points of passage or thresholds and markers of sustainability. Talia's identity is constructed within a humanist project (Braidotti, 2006a, 2006b; Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) which brings the human organism into compliance with normatively established standards and principles.

Becoming-with the data (and by data I refer here to the images in the collage, the texts I read against the collage, and so on) can be understood as a nomadic process of becoming-ethical-CYC-practitioner through rhizomatic thinking. The images propel my understanding of gender and sexuality and force me to think differently about my current ethical practice. The images become matter of an ethical-body joining into a composition with other bodies:

Difference is thus caused by connections and relations within and between different bodies. This makes each of these bodies

differentiate *in themselves*, continuously—one singular event after the other (Hultman & Lenz Taguchi, 2010, p. 529).

When I look at the images, I ask, How is my ethical-body becoming different-in-itself as an effect of its relation with the other bodies? The relation between my body and the images produced in the collage unfold as a becoming. In this way, the images find a voice through the relations within the assemblage.

In reading *Snow White*, the dominant cultural ideal of the story is made up of specific well-known images or patterns within Westernized culture (Sondergaard, 2002). The storyline is of a helpless young girl falling victim to a dominant male, being ousted from a domestic scene by her jealous, wicked stepmother, and being returned to the safety of a new domestic scene through the agency of a heroic male. Davis (1993, cited in Sondergaard, 2002) writes:

There is evidence that the attraction of the heroic male to the heroine, his desire to save her, depends entirely on her absolute virtue and on her passivity. The relevant desire for any reader positioning herself as Snow White would therefore be to be sufficiently virtuous and passive that she might be saved by a prince who would give her security in an otherwise dangerous world. (pp. 192-193).

Reading *Snow White* against the images exposes complex normative stratifications of what it means to “do female” which organize through the sexually commodified female body (Talia’s), producing affects of “acceptability.” Ringrose (2010) writes: “Femininity is epitomized by performing the position of sexually desirable...passive and ready to service the phallus” (p. 7). What if,

therefore, Talia's interaction with an eating disorder was viewed as "trying to do the cultural norm well" as a means of achieving "acceptable"?

Reading the images diffractively, I consider how female performances of acceptability in the context of heteronormative expectations and binary gender categories produce limits.

Colliding with Snow White...

"Looking-glass, Looking-glass, on the wall, Who in this land is the fairest of all?"

It answered –

"Thou art fairer than all who are here, Lady Queen, But more beautiful still is Snow-white, as I ween." (Grimm, 1937, p. 147)

This passage exposes dominant oppositional models of body/image, subject/object, beauty as a measure of acceptability. The body is embedded within sexualized storylines of what it means to do gender stereotypes well. Everyday practices construct and maintain grids of gendered subjectivities. For example, Talia's mother worrying about her being too thin and overweight exposes a desire for her daughter to "fit in." A mother wishing for her daughter to be "accepted" in life reconstitutes body/image as a cultural and social norm. A view of gender as binary categories with inequitable power relations is limited. It does not capture the dynamic and interconnected subjectivities within discourse; instead, the body is captured as a particular historical, spatial, and temporal moment. The implications for CYC practice involve understanding "bodies and images not as separate and separable entities (subjects and objects, for

example) between which relations operate [acceptability], but as constituted through their relationality” (Coleman, 2010, p. 163). One implication for practice is to consider the ways in which bodies are known to the client, understood and experienced through experiential practices like art, in order to consider the ways in which bodies become through their relations of bodies-in-becoming. For example, I may engage with Talia in a collective art project to politicize some of the historical and sociocultural processes of constructed identity, producing new texts for what it means to do “acceptable.” Acceptable “understood as productions of material-discursive intra-actions (Barad, 2007); that is, the body intra-acting with...thinking/knowing/feeling....the diffractive reading of the data connecting to our own experiences, are constitutive of the girls (and our own) subjectivity” (Lenz Taguchi & Palmer, 2012, p. 8). I wondered how this way of working with clients like Talia undoes my own subjectivity of counsellor, prevention educator, activist, advocate, feminist. I plugged in *The Paper Bag Princess* (PBP) to see what it does.

PBP is a feminist text – a text in response to traditional texts (e.g., *Snow White*) of gender and sexuality stereotypes and bound within an individual definition of the subject. I viewed part of my ethical-identity as “I am activist/advocate,” “I am a feminist thinker,” “I am a preventative educator,” “I am an eating disorder counsellor” to “help” girls overcome some of the traditional cultural stereotypes of female beauty: skinny, beautiful, blonde, blue eyes, successful, educated and so on. However, the images present multiple becomings and the striated identity became undone.

Colliding with The Paper Bag Princess...

Elizabeth was a beautiful princess. She lived in a castle and had expensive princess clothes. She was going to marry a prince named Ronald. (Munsch, 1980, n.p.)

As Lenz Taguchi and Palmer (2012) suggest, when we read diffractively, thinking/knowing/feeling evoke emotions and thoughts. The data connect our own experience constitutive of girls' (and our own) subjectivity. A difference-in-ourselves is evoked in the event of reading this story into our own experiences as young...girls and grown up women.... Things, places, emotions and bodily reactions described in the story intervene and take action in our lives. We connect and become with this data in the event of engaging with it and become, in a sense, different from what we just were. (p. 8).

The story of the PBP invokes embodied memories of having to adjust my body to fit in to the traditional texts of gender and sexuality. The story connects and intra-acts in painful ways and hopeful ways of achieving "acceptance" through clothing, dieting, sexual encounters, make-up, education, marriage, and so on. I can relate to Talia's drive for acceptance. When I plug in posthumanist discourse, a limit to human tradition is exposed. Within traditional humanist models of ethics, identities and ethical compositions of the subject are scrutinized (K. Skott-Myhre, 2012). Through practice standards, ethical codes, and professional trainings, an "optimal worker...will, in turn, have a relationship that will produce an optimal child or youth" (Mattingly, Stuart, & VanderVen, 2002, cited in K. Skott-Myhre,

2012, p. 301). Prominent conceptual frameworks from developmental psychology, humanism, and the ecological model focus on the “human individual as the central interest of child and youth care” (K. Skott-Myhre, 2012, p. 301).

Colliding with PBP and the desire to help others...

Unfortunately, a dragon smashed her castle, burned all her clothes with his fiery breath, and carried off Prince Ronald. (Munsch, 1980, n.p.)

The story now connects and intra-acts with the colonizing force of education as a means of disciplining the body to the regimen of cultural authority (K. Skott-Myhre, 2012). To find a way to work with girls with which I can relate, I required a way to discipline my body through the cultural and social norms of ethical-professional practice. Flows and forces of this rhizodiffractive process, where one encounter connects to another, create a difference that evokes a memory of desiring to help with a feeling of hope for the future of girls and women. (Lenz Taguchi & Palmer, 2012). As K. Skott-Myhre (2012) suggests, “self is a performance constructed of the social elements that produce and are produced by the body.... Self and its habitual performances are historically derived out of the specific historical conditions of a given society” (p. 303). Therefore, traditional models of helping produce “appropriate relationships” and involve “professional boundaries” and “organizational discipline” with constraints around “harming or helping the client” (Association for Child and Youth Care Practice, 1995). Intra-acting with posthumanist texts exposes ethical consequences to prevention efforts aimed at “not harming” a client.

Braidotti (2006b) asserts:

Renewed appeal to the individual's management of his/her bodily resources, health potential and life-capital is the distinctive feature of contemporary neo-liberalism.... It results in a mis-appropriation of the notion of 'responsibility' and a mis-translation of the term into styles of self-management based on 'prevention' and the pursuit of 'a healthy life-style'.... The compulsive and consumeristic pursuit of 'health' entails social, cultural and bodily practices which are in open contradiction with one another. This is the normative force of contemporary bio-politics (Rose, 2001). (p. 10)

As Deleuze and Guattari (1987) put it, contemporary bio-politics brings everything down to the level of a neuro-organic or symbolic code of lack (p. 111). They challenge us to "quit defending ourselves, quit knowing who we are, quit associating ourselves with strict definitions and instead experiment with the border space between us and others" (K. Skott-Myhre, 2012, p. 305) as bodies-in-becoming.

Rethinking subjectivity, then, means shifting focus from human bondage embedded within historical, gendered, political, economic, and academic conditions to view the bound subject as "a collective entity that moves...in-between...plugged into and connected to a variety of possible sources and forces...an embodied affective and intelligent entity that captures, processes and transforms energies and forces...embedded nomadic entity" (Braidotti, 2006b, p. 267). What this means for the ethical-CYC-practitioner is that overcoming the ingrained habit of practice is a necessary interruption for an ethical awakening if

we want to challenge a dominant ethical project that takes “responsibility for self” (NACECYC, Principles and Standards, sec. I) and “responsibility to the client” (NACECYC, Principles and Standards, sec. II) as “promoting the well being of children, youth, and families in the context of respect and collaboration” (NACECYC, Introduction, p. 1) and transform it into one that is life enhancing – an ethical project not through the implementation of ruling standards of morality, but one that concerns the limits of sustainable life through the ethics of becoming. What this shift could mean for Talia is that she might have hope of becoming something different through her drive for acceptance, or through “the force of becoming [accepted]” (K. Skott-Myhre, 2012, p. 308), always moving towards the unknown, towards imperceptibility (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987).

Chapter Summary

This analysis exposed some restrictions and impositions to CYC practice under the current ethical framework. The first experiment, (re)searching the ethical body, exposed crucial intra-actions between the entangled forces of political, social, and scientific bodies which produce an understanding of how the striated body is imposed by disciplinary habits for ethical practice. The second experiment plugged in the disciplinary habits of the striated ethical-CYC-body. It exposed a body in transcendental bondage (Barad, 2007; K. Skott-Myhre, 2012), bound by borders that promote the ethical-CYC-body as rational, self-controlled, and autonomous. As an autonomous, rigid, codified body, I am always embedded within professional boundaries of helping others; these boundaries produce habitual discursive-knowledge-practices that discipline the ethical-body

to the regimen of cultural authority (K. Skott-Myhre, 2012). I realized that, as ethical-CYC-practitioner, I had positioned Talia's life potential through pathologizing terms. Talia's eating disorder becomes politicized in neoliberal terms (Braidotti, 2006a, 2006b, 2009) through abject stratifications and limits her life-sustaining capacity to become other. Overall, the experiment exposed limits imposed by transcendental-ethical-professional bondage.

In the third experiment, I stitched together images to produce a micro-political act: to experiment with politicizing the NACECYC to further understand the limits embedded in professional boundaries. What emerged from the experiment was an understanding that the NACECYC is a humanist ethical model for practice that produces laws which judge discriminately, thus it militates against ethical practice.

In the final experiment, I plugged in two children's texts to help me rethink Talia as part of an assemblage of bodies-in-becoming and to experiment with her desire to become accepted in society. In the process I exposed a different way to view ethical practice.

What these experiments exposed for the ethical-CYC-practitioner is that taking a stand – one that challenges dominant one-way ethical models for practice – is a necessary precondition for living in global neoliberal times. The hope is that this analysis creates ways to overcome the ingrained habits and standards of practice as a necessary interruption for an ethical transformation to generate life-sustaining practices for the clients we work with.

I want to pause and clarify that this is *one reading* of the collage(s). I invite the reader to do another reading as part of ethical-bodies-in-becoming. As a reminder, at the beginning of this chapter, I asked readers to consider their own unique rhizodiffractive readings of the information presented within this analysis. The process of becoming considers that no two individuals will take away the same image or meaning of this ethical experiment. As Lenz Taguchi and Palmer (2012) suggest,

this way of doing analysis is not about a researcher interpreting what the data means: where the analysis is supposed to basically mirror reality as a more or less fixed phenomenon – out there! To be studied, reflected upon and deriving meaning/knowing from (Barad, 2007, pp. 29, 81). (p. 5)

Consequently, each reader of this thesis also becomes entangled with this body of work.

Next, in the final chapter, I invite the reader to consider taking a stand for alternative views to ethics in CYC.

Chapter 5: Taking a Stand For a Different Ethics in CYC

With this thesis, I have argued for an expansion of the notion of working ethically in CYC. I stand in line with White's (2011) call "to invite a reconceptualised view of professional CYC ethics" (p. 34), Pacini-Ketchabaw's (2011) call to decentre developmental theories in CYC training by "treating them as frameworks that constantly interact with societal conditions...[and]...a certain kind of child/youth-subject" (p. 19), and K. Skott-Myhre's (2012) call to use the CYC field as a place to begin to decentre "any particular form of life in favour of a politics of life itself" (p. 306). In these global, neoliberal times, CYC needs an ethics that focuses not just on dominant discourses that guide ethical conduct and decision making, but on the unique entanglements of every ethical encounter, each with its own particular social, political, economical, cultural, and individual histories and an ethics that is yet to come, unknown, without guarantees, without specific codes, standards and guidelines.

For Deleuze and Guattari, concepts are proposed solutions to problems (Buchanan, 1997, cited in Clark, 2011). Therefore, this thesis has presented a particular problem – the inadequacy of the current CYC ethical framework to address the complexities of our times – along with a proposed solution: to create other ways to do ethics through the notion of becoming-ethical. Despite having offered a solution, I do not claim to have solved the problem. To solve the problem constructs this study within neo-liberal terms of science. This study is not a critique; it is an ethical-political experiment to interfere with the problem of the all-too-humanist-CYC-ethical-body.

This research has been guided by three questions:

1. What are the impacts of traditional ethical models in CYC ethics and how do the dominant developmental discourses they contain limit or extend ethical CYC knowledge?
2. How can becoming ethical in CYC be rethought by fostering a posthumanist perspective?
3. How do we create a sustainable ethical movement in CYC?

In relation to the first question, this thesis has argued that taken-for-granted master narratives that are evident in the NACECYC are rooted in normative developmental language that is based, in turn, in psychological discourses (Rose, 1985, 1990, 1996, Pacini-Ketchabaw, 2011). In turn, these narratives are perpetuated in practice standards, professional competencies, and evidence-based perspectives (Newbury, 2009; White, 2007; 2011). If, as CYC practitioners, we view a client like Talia through the existing, developmentally grounded ethical framework that deems her either healthy or unhealthy, acceptable or unacceptable, ordered or disordered, her life-sustaining potential is severely curtailed. If, however, we view subjectivity as multilayered, and we recognize that Talia lives in a global, neoliberal society embedded within particular historical, gendered, political, economic, and academic conditions, we can view her eating disorder as part of her process of transformation, of becoming-accepted. If I interact with the notion of becoming-ethical-CYC-practitioner, I am always in movement to understand the materially embedded co-ordinates of how my life plugs into other bodies – including the “client body” –

to sustain transformation in the direction of practicing ethically within the complexities of global times.

In relation to the second research question, this thesis has unfolded a process for a different ethics – a posthumanist ethics – as I describe in the following section. After it, I note some limitations of this study. Then, in *Taking a Stand*, I address the third research question: How do we create a sustainable ethical movement in CYC?

Unfolding the Process for a Different Ethics

Throughout this thesis, I have questioned whether the current ethical guidelines for CYC can adequately address the complexities of our times. As part of the ethical-political experiment, I proposed a posthumanist, nomadic approach to CYC ethics to assess what we do in terms of ways of existing in the world. A nomadic approach to ethics offers three things: (1) It allows us to think differently – by means of bodies-in-becoming (Braidotti, 2006b) – to expand transcendental logic and veer into world/reality in-between dominant perceptions (the gray areas in-between binary thinking); (2) It gives us another view of subjectivity which uses the body as an expansion to identity (humanity), giving us a moral compass to guide us into fresh terrain (White, 2011); (3) It provides a generative, transformative viewpoint as catalyst for reassembling the NACECYC as a living document that upholds its commitment to “do ethics” (Association for Child and Youth Care Practice, 1995).

I wanted to see our ethical conduct through a posthumanist viewpoint, so I conducted an experiment to work towards understanding how the forces at play

in the current era intra-act with CYC practice. My hope was that this experiment would enable me to be creative and transformative in my practice. If CYC can understand what larger societal structures are influencing clients like Talia, CYC practitioners may be able to work with clients through more sustainable and life-affirming methods. If the goal is to “do no harm,” the CYC profession must be accountable for keeping up with the times and account for the times we live in when interacting responsibly with clients. Using ethics as a “guiding principle for political action” (Braidotti, 2009, p. 43), I attempted to outline the dominant philosophical, social, and cultural assumptions that play a role in shaping traditional ethics to present a nomadic approach to ethics.

I began by constructing the problem of the all-too-humanist-CYC-ethical-body through art. Engagement in art making creates new definitions of the world (Clark, 2011). I have argued that the world we presently create when we engage with ethics is one in which we enact the traditional humanist body that performs neoliberal ethics, a body defined to be at the top of the hierarchy above the natural world, which acts on matter, through the mind, to represent (Clark, 2011). Thinking is seen to take place within the body by a subject. This body is inscribed with binary thinking and rigidified, codified, and striated through binaries such as human/nonhuman, self/other, and normal/abnormal (Braidotti, 2006b).

To move beyond the all-too-humanist-CYC-ethical-body, I turned toward ideas proposed by Deleuze and Guattari (1987), Barad (2003, 2007), and Braidotti (2006a, 2006b, 2009). I approached their work as tools with which to build the posthuman ethical-body, which does not mean that the body ceases to

exist (Hultman & Taguchi, 2010). Rather the body opens to the flows and movements of matter. We are unable to see movement, or the virtual. Embedded disciplinary habits make movement concrete (Barad, 2003). To open to movement is to undo with the body to become an “active participant in the world’s becoming, in its ongoing “intra-activity””(Barad, 2003, p. 803). Here we enter into the space of art as a transformative process, the point where the body meets with the messiness of life. Art essentially becomes an event with the body, which allows the body to become in rhizomatic ways (Clark, 2011). Thinking does not take place within one body, as the humanist hierarchy would imply; it takes place between bodies, and through their connections (Braidotti, 2006a).

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 affirmative relations with other bodies to understand all bodies as bodies-in-becoming. A willingness to consider ethical-subjectivity as *affirmative* immediately aligns us, as CYC practitioners, in affirmative action, which evokes curiosity and openness with a lack of judgment. This viewpoint is tied to Gilles Deleuze’s notion of 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 (Barad, 2003, 2007; Deleuze & Guattari, 1987; H. Skott-Myhre, 2008). Bodies assemble and disassemble as they become other. This is a process of continual, limitless differentiation and diffraction in what emerges in mutual engagements with matter (Hultman & Lenz

Taguchi, 2010). The becoming is an offering up of a different reading of the ethical world. Becomings are ways in which assemblages may be expressed. Here we turn away from object and subject, toward performative intra-actions. A becoming is not bounded; it is a materially active role (Barad, 2003), and there are limitless definitions of a becoming. As I engaged with the bodies through my research, I became enmeshed in a thick web of representations. As I interrupted further with the bodies, it produced breaks and ruptures, and what I understood became undone. Importantly, we cannot know in advance what it means to do ethics or to be ethical

Limitations of this Study

This body of work is contextual and the meanings are mediated by locally available discourses, materiality, and individual interpretations. The analysis is limited by the researcher's time and space location. For example, there were limits to the amount of time I could analyze the data. The space of that time only allowed for knowledge making to go so far – which does not mean that this is all that exists – it is merely one limit to this body of work (St. Pierre, 1997). This thesis is also limited by language. A word written will be interpreted differently with each intra-action (St. Pierre, 1997). To return to the thumbprint metaphor I used in chapter 4, no two readings of this thesis will produce the same understanding or potential. Each materialization of meaning making will be produced differently. Similarly, each reading of the NACECYC will produce a different meaning with its own set of problems and limits depending on the intra-

actions that occurred. Therefore, something new is always becoming when interacting with this ethical body of work.

In addition, this study has not solved the problem of the all-too-humanist-CYC-ethical-body. The all-too-human body is not something to overcome (Clark, 2011); rather, it is a body-in-becoming. As Law (2004) suggests, ontological methodology is useful to interrupt certainties in the social and natural sciences. Concern with the striated “truths” about the human condition will not and should not go away; “all sorts of assemblages resonate to produce truths in one way or another” (Law, 2004, p. 154). However, ontological theory and methodology might be helpful in disrupting procedural and organizational issues of “*how to conduct studies well*” (p. 154, emphasis in original). That said, this study is more interested in the creative and generative transformations of the ethical-body so that something new is always created.

Taking a Stand

As I explained at the outset of this thesis, my client Talia motivated me, as an ethical CYC practitioner, to take an active role in understanding the NACECYC’s ecological-developmental perspective not only limits my capacity to help her, but positions me to harm her. Therefore, I wanted to create an ethical-political experiment to interrupt the ethical framework of the profession I practice within.

In reviewing the current framework for ethical practice in CYC, White (2011) suggests that

despite the [positive] intentions of the architects of the CYC Code of Ethics to produce a “living document” which was to be re-visited and revised over time, it appears that the original code developed in 1995 has been adopted by many national, provincial and state organizations with few, if any changes. (p.35)

The world has changed, however. We now live in globalized times, in a militarized social space, under the pressure of amplified security and increasing states of emergency; paranoia is pervasive and the constant imminent threat of disaster prevails (Braidotti, 2009). In the same space, there are pressures to be more educated, healthy, youthful, financially successful, and ambitious. This environment, when coupled with the judgmental thinking of the NACECYC, produces chaos for individuals like Talia.

In this era of globalization and neoliberalism, I believe that we need to rethink ethics from a posthumanist, nomadic vantage point (Braidotti, 2006a, 2006b) as part of an experiment with bodies-in-becoming, learning from the rhizomatic connections we create when we use CYC’s ethical framework to interfere with how we think and do practice. With this thesis, I have attempted to find an affirmative way to interrupt the all-too-humanist ethical-body to present a different ethical approach in CYC. To use Massumi’s (2002) words, “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 meagrely) to reality” (pp. 12-13).

I engaged in this ethical-political experiment because I was troubled that the current ethical framework that guides my work as a CYC practitioner positions me to be complicit in Talia's potential death related to her eating disorder. From a posthumanist stance, I was able to think of bodies differently, as human and nonhuman assemblages: human bodies; bodies of knowledge; professional bodies; ethical bodies, as in codes, competencies, and evidence-based ethical practices; cultural bodies; economic bodies; political bodies; social bodies; and so on. Interacting with the entanglements of these various bodies exposed implications for considering an eating disorder in posthumanist terms as part of becoming-accepted, which has the potential to affirm and sustain Talia's life. The practitioner/client relationship is displaced so that Talia is not the only body in the relation of care, and the eating disorder is no longer centered in a binary with nature, but rather is positioned in a "mingling of human and non-human forms in a platform of [life-affirming] experimentation" (K. Skott-Myhre, 2012, p. 300). I am hopeful about the life-sustaining possibilities a posthumanist ethics brings to CYC, which encourages me to take a stand.

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Ethical Considerations

The research was not conducted with human subjects. Therefore, it did not require approval by the University of Victoria's Behavioural Research Ethics Board. A waiver was obtained to ensure that this research study was exempt from all ethical considerations by the board.