Thinking through Multiplicities: Movement, Affect and the Schooling Experiences of Young Men with Autism Spectrum Disorder

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Abbreviations

ASD: Autism Spectrum Disorder

ATP: *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* by Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, 1987.University of Minnesota Press: Minneapolis

DSM: Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders

EA: Educational Assistant

IPP: Individual Program Plan

SEPM: *Special Education Policy Manual,* Nova Scotia Department of Education, 1996

Summary

Conventional knowledges on autism spectrum disorder (ASD) emerging from medical discourse impact how students with ASD are known and thought about in school. The concern when focusing on the lives of students with ASD through medical paradigms is it only offers partial understandings with limited attendance to the actualities of their everyday schooling experiences. This dissertation responded to contemporary theorizations on ASD and explored the schooling experiences of twelve young men with ASD aged 18 to 34 having attended public school in Nova Scotia, Canada.

The approach was qualitative and poststructural in nature. Data sources included semi-structured interviews as well as documents generated using visual methods including stock photography, participant drawings and participant school artefacts. The study utilized poststructural theory, drawing on Gilles Deleuze, Felix Guattari and Benedict Spinoza to attend to the situatedness and multiplicity of the young men's schooling experiences. Specifically, the dissertation applied Deleuze and Guattari's theory of rhizomes and Spinoza's philosophies on affect to think outside contemporary thought and facilitate a connection to the young men's moment to moment experiences. This involved a mapping of the various trajectories the young men took when experiencing different elements of school (i.e. school arrangements, power forces, school rules, spaces and others). Conceptually this required a focus on movement. Across this dissertation, movement was mobilized as an analytical concept to inform an understanding of the transformative aspects of their schooling experiences.

A diffractive analysis examined the connections the young men with ASD made with both human and nonhuman elements when experiencing school. From a diffractive analysis this study advanced that young men with ASD are single productive forces capable of moving, extending and finding alternative experiences to suit their individual interests at school. Attendance to the young men's situated schooling experiences destabilized conventional knowledges on ASD and demonstrated the bodily potential they possess. Mapping the young men's multiple trajectories revealed how productive they are in utilizing school spaces, manoeuvring social relationships and negotiating school structures when seeking more welcoming experiences. The study also presented the effects various school relations have on the young men's every day encounters. Situated experiences with another can produce

unwelcoming affects or a connection to a nonhuman thing such as a classroom determining a student's future connections; to resist or to take action and find alternative entries.

With a focus on movement and responsiveness to the affective dimensions of the young men's experiences, linear forms of thinking on students with ASD were uprooted in this study. Distinctly, it disrupted previous knowledges which have situated students with ASD as particular kinds of subjects in school. Considering movement and affect as a form of pedagogy invites educators to attend to the dynamic capacities students with ASD possess and to think through possibilities.

Declaration

I declare that:

this thesis presents work carried out by myself and does not incorporate without acknowledgment any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university; to the best of my knowledge it does not contain any materials previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text; and all substantive contributions by others to the work presented, including jointly authored publications, is clearly acknowledged.



Sarah Reddington 09/05/2014

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.0 Introduction

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is understood as a range of developmental disorders often diagnosed in the toddler years influencing individual social and cognitive abilities. *The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders – 5th edition* classifies ASD as a mental disorder with persistent impairments in social communication and social interaction, including restrictive and repetitive patterns of behaviour (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) similarly identifies ASD as "a group of developmental disabilities that can cause significant social, communication and behavioral challenges" (2013, para. 1). Conventional knowledges guided by clinical literature impact the everyday experiences of students with ASD when attending school in Canada. Focusing on students with disabilities through medical paradigms offers only partial understandings on individual experience and does not consider wider aspects of disability (Oliver, 1990). Experiences for students with disabilities is further complicated when their disability is viewed as an individual problem negating the social, political and affective dimensions of people's lives (Linton, 1998; Skrtic, 1995). While poststructural disability theorists in Canada recognize disability as a medical and socially constructed category this is not acknowledged in Canadian school programming with special education policy determining how students with disabilities experience school (Underwood, 2008). One criticism when analysing students with disabilities' experiences is the focus education places on addressing individual medical conditions intended to bring bodies closer to normality (Titchkosky & Michalko, 2009; Underwood, 2008). It is normative understandings which contribute to the constraint students with disabilities embody when navigating school structures and educational systems (Youdell, 2011).

Special education policies, in particular, can place too strong an emphasis on the "inadequacy of the individual" with little attendance to a person's situated experiences (Barnes, 1991, p.33). In turn, special education models "seek to explain disability universally and end up creating totalizing, meta-historical narratives that exclude important dimensions of individual lives, abilities and of their knowledge" (Corker & Shakespeare, 2002, p. 15). The categorical definitions of disability are therefore, problematic for students with a diagnosis as they

"displace lived experience and diminish understanding disability as part of the larger human experience" (Ware, 2005, p.111). As disability scholars and educators working with individuals with disabilities, we cannot underestimate the interwoven realities of their lives (Corker, 1998). Distinctly, what becomes lost when theorizing through conventional knowledges is space for variation in experiences where difference could be dynamic, engaging and satisfying (Scully, 2002).

This thesis is a response to contemporary theorizations on ASD and explores the schooling experiences of twelve young men with ASD having attended public school in Nova Scotia, Canada. The goal is to examine the actualities of the young men's everyday lives in school. Exploring the personal experiences of young men with ASD is important with educational research in North America[1] mainly focusing on the relation students with ASD have to intervention programming; specifically, their level of competency when performing social skills[2], their capacity to create friendships[3] and acquire perspective taking[4] knowledge. While educational research has assisted in understanding students with ASD abilities relative to educational outcomes, there is a paucity of research on the situated experiences of students with ASD in school. This dissertation invites a space to think emergently and explore twelve young men with ASD aged 18 to 34 schooling experiences beyond conventional models of understanding. Thinking emergently in this study includes prioritizing the young men's bodily capacities where their lives are thought about through variation and alterity. Distinctly, through semi-structured interviews, I want to find out about the young men's moment to moment experiences when connecting to multiple school dimensions (i.e. classroom arrangements, power forces, school rules, spaces and relations with peers). The main research question guiding this thesis is:

How do twelve young men with ASD experience public school in Nova Scotia, Canada?

To attend to the main research question the methodological approach is qualitative and poststructural in nature. Data sources include semi-structured interviews as well as documents generated from the use of visual methods namely: stock photography, participant drawings and participant school artefacts. The study also utilizes a diffractive analysis. Diffraction is an analytical method examining data through connections and differences (Barad, 2003, 2007; Haraway, 1992). A diffractive 'reading' of data in this project analyses the connections the young men make with both human and nonhuman elements when experiencing school in

Nova Scotia, Canada (i.e. humans, objects, nature, spaces, arrangements, policies, and atmospheres). My poststructural approach includes theorizations from continental philosophers Gilles Deleuze, Felix Guattari and Benedict Spinoza.

I apply Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) theory of rhizomes and Spinoza's (1959) philosophies on affect as conceptual tools to inform an understanding of the young men's multiple and situated experiences in school. Mobilizing rhizome and affect theories produces a different mode of bodily experience where the view of the terrain is deepened and attention is given to emergent life experiences (Hemming, 2005). A central concept when applying rhizome and affect theories is thinking through variation, which involves mapping the multiple trajectories the young men take when experiencing both human and nonhuman elements of school. Conceptually, this requires a **focus on movement**. Applying movement as an analytical concept can destabilize medical constructions on ASD and inform alternative understandings on the young men with ASD experiences. A focus on movement also involves actualizing the young men's movements between states of being; the affects circulating. Paying attention to the affects surfacing between bodies, between bodies and nonhuman elements offers an extension to learn more about the young men's emergent nature when experiencing school.

In the following sections, I present a) my personal context and provide an explanation for my interest in exploring the young men with ASD schooling experiences outside conventional knowledge; b) inclusion pertaining to students with disabilities in Canadian schools. The intention in this section is to establish the context of how education is delivered to students with disabilities in Canada; c) the educational context in Nova Scotia and its relevance to how students with ASD experience school in the province. It is important to connect to the educational policies that frame educational experiences for students with ASD when attending public school in Nova Scotia; d) the conceptual framework for the study and theoretical underpinnings guiding the study. Additional research questions are presented; and e) organization of the thesis.

1.1 Establishing the Context

1.1.1 Personal Context

As an educator for over 20 years in Nova Scotia, Canada, I have worked as a resource teacher in both private and public school contexts. A resource teacher is identified by the Nova Scotia Department of Education Support Services as a teacher with specialized training to work with students with disabilities (Nova Scotia Department of Education, Special Education Policy, 2008). The role of a resource teacher is to link resource teachers' knowledges on students with disabilities to classroom teachers' competencies to better support students with disabilities in meeting educational outcomes. The additional expertise of a resource teacher includes increased understanding of Nova Scotia special education policy as well as comprehensive proficiency in individualized programming development in the regular classroom for students with disabilities.

My teaching practices were informed by the Nova Scotia Department of Education policies and procedures, which included following the department's special education policy[5] when instructing students with disabilities. My role as a resource teacher involved special education support services in and outside the regular classroom setting for students with disabilities. Students with ASD, for example, received social skill instruction in a small group setting that they would experience with me once or twice a week. I also supported classroom teachers in the development of adaptations for individual students.

Over the course of my teaching career, I questioned how specialized instruction impacted my students' experiences and wondered what they felt like when attending school with special forms of support. My experience in Nova Scotia schools has always revolved around implementation of curriculum and support services and in this study I want to focus on the emergent aspects of school for young men with ASD. This desire to learn about the actualities of their everyday schooling also stems from being a parent of a young man with ASD.

My stepson attends school in Nova Scotia and receives support in the regular classroom. Support services include: the presence of an educational assistant, sensory diet considerations (motor breaks) and social skill instruction. I continually wonder what school is like for him, particularly when navigating less structured moments (i.e. walking the hallways, the minutes prior to class starting, waiting for the school bus, and subtle exchanges with peers). The bulk

of my knowledge has pertained to his social and academic progress with educators citing his achievements relative to social skill support or educational outcomes. However, my spouse and I still do not know what he does during the day or what his experiences are like during informal moments. This thesis arose out of my teaching experiences with students with disabilities and from curiosity about my stepson's everyday navigation of Nova Scotia schools. Explicitly, I want to learn more about the situated dimensions of young men with ASD experiences in school. A preliminary task in this work is to reflect on how Canadian education is delivered to students with disabilities. The next section reviews the federal context of education in Canada, including international disability movements influencing school programming. The provincial context is then detailed.

1.1.2 Federal Context

Students with disabilities have experienced full inclusion in Canadian schools for the past three decades. Prior to this time, students with disabilities attended school in segregated institutions and residential schools. Much of the delay in developing special education programs within regular schools for students with disabilities stemmed from the medical model and this notion that disabilities were more concerns of health professionals than educators. The "normalization movement" in North America, however, shifted focus from medical paradigms securing increased inclusion in regular schools for students with disabilities (Smith, Polloway, Patton, & Dowdy, 2012; Wolfensberger, 1972).

International disability movements also advanced inclusion in public schools for students with disabilities in North America with stakeholders in education recognizing the broader social and political dimensions of disability experience widely referred to as the social model (Corker & Shakespeare, 2002). The social model challenged Western medical thought when analyzing disability with a move from impairment (medical labeling of the body) to the social and societal structures that contribute to the construction of identity (Corker & Shakespeare, 2002). The social model movement emerged from the influential work of British disability scholars in the 1970s that situated themselves in opposition to conventional models of disability, emphasizing the role of social structures in terms of how disability has come to be understood (Campbell & Oliver, 1997). In the United Kingdom in 1975, the Fundamental Principles of Disability Union of the Physically Impaired Against Segregation (UPIAS, 1975) framed the basic assumption of the social model.

> Disability is something that is imposed on top of our impairments by the way we are unnecessarily isolated and excluded from full participation in society. Disabled people are therefore an oppressed group in society (UPIAS, 1975, p.3).

The social model recognized how societal structures and educational arrangements place limits on individual experience creating barriers for how a person's life is spoken and thought about (Barnes, 1999; Finkelstein, 1980; Oliver 1992, 1996). The social model was also useful in challenging the hegemonic power of medical discourses as it analysed disability not as an individual problem rather as a product of a diverse range of discourses and social practices (Molloy & Vasil, 2002). While the social model considered the societal and medical constraints placed on individuals with disabilities, critical disability theorists argue that it has lacked the capacity to address the complexity of individual experience (Corker & Shakespeare, 2002). In recognition of diversity and individuality, several disability movements emerged generating new legislation to support the rights of individuals with disabilities, namely: the International Year of the Disabled Person (IYDP)[6], the Americans with Disability Act (ADA)[7] and the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA)[8]. With changes to legislation internationally and in North America, the Canadian government advocated for new policy in schools to support the inclusion of students with disabilities in regular classrooms across Canada's ten provinces and three territories.

The largest benchmark towards inclusion came with the *1982 Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms,* particularly sections 7 and 15 sections[9]. This legislation acknowledged equal access to education for all students regardless of their ability level. With legislation, the Canadian government extended educational services in the regular school setting for all students. This led to the individual provinces in Canada securing increased legislation and policy to secure full inclusion of students with disabilities in public schools. With education in Canada being a provincial area of governance, the next section outlines educational delivery in the province of Nova Scotia as this is the province in which my study was conducted.

1.1.3 Provincial Context

The provincial government in Nova Scotia is accountable for mandating and setting its own educational program and policies. The Department of Education in Nova Scotia executes all educational services across eight school boards with individual school boards responsible for delivering the goals, visions, and policies set by the Nova Scotia Department of Education.

Today, students with disabilities attending public school in Nova Scotia participate in regular classrooms. Inclusion involves not only a position in the typical classroom but a philosophy that promotes acceptance regardless of one's race, ethnicity, gender, or ability level (Nova Scotia Department of Education and Culture, 1996).

In 1992, the Nova Scotia Department of Education established the Division of Special Services. The Division of Special Services within individual school boards is responsible for coordinating and implementing special education services for students with disabilities (Nova Scotia Department of Education, Public School Programs, 2003). In 1994, the Division of Special Services generated a special education policy manual draft with the policy formally introduced in 1996 entitled, *Special Education Policy Manual* (SEPM). The goal of the SEPM was to "facilitate the membership, participation and learning of all students in school programs and activities" (Nova Scotia Department of Education and Culture, SEPM, 1996, p.13-14). Prior to the SEPM, there was no set or established policy framing educational support for "students with special needs"[10]. The SEPM's release made it uniform ensuring all students in the province receive equitable access to education in a regular classroom setting. The next section provides an overview of the 1996 SEPM document as this is the policy my participants experienced when attending public school in Nova Scotia with two of my participants receiving the revised 2008 version of the policy.

1.1.3.1 Special Education Policy

According to the 1996 SEPM, an inclusive school is one "where every child is respected as a part of the school community and where each child is encouraged to learn and achieve as much as possible ... and where differences are cherished for the differences they bring" (Nova Scotia Department of Education and Culture, SEPM, 1996, p.13). The initiative of the SEPM was to offer support to students with disabilities in the regular classroom with teachers designated as responsible for all students' educational programming in the classroom regardless of their ability level. The SEPM was therefore, not framed as a separate special education program rather a policy document outlining educational guidelines to support classroom teachers when instructing students with disabilities in a regular classroom setting.

Support in the regular classroom as outlined in the SEPM document include: access to other educational specialists hired by the board (i.e. speech language, autism consultant), assigning of a teacher assistant[11] and adaptations in the classroom to support students' learning of educational outcomes. Some of the support services outlined in the SEPM can comprise of short term instruction outside of the regular classroom by a resource teacher or specialist, however, the intention is to have students with disabilities in the regular classroom with the principle of separate instruction to be used only as necessary (Nova Scotia Department of Education and Culture, SEPM, 1996). If students with disabilities require further support, the policy provides the procedures for the development of an individual program plan (IPP) (see Appendix A for summary of IPP process). Individuals responsible for the development of an IPP include classroom teachers, resource teachers, administration, parents, and other specialists from the school board (i.e. speech language, autism consultants) who carry out the design and implementation of the IPP to meet distinctive educational needs. The next section details the level of support students with ASD receive under the SEPM. A review of support services for students with ASD in Nova Scotia schools is important as it identifies how educational experiences for students with ASD are shaped by special education policy.

1.1.3.2 Support for Students with ASD

The SEPM indicates that forms of support for a student with a disability are determined by a student's individual educational needs. For students with ASD, levels of support in the regular classroom can include: adaptations in the regular classroom, the presence of a teacher assistant, the use of visual schedules, and sensory considerations (i.e. wiggle cushion, weighted blankets, tactile desk objects, and noise cancelling headphones). ASD educational support outside the regular classroom setting might incorporate: short term instruction in a learning center[12] or resource room or one on one instruction with a resource teacher. Outside educational professionals hired by the school board can also facilitate support. This may comprise of consultation with a speech pathologist, autism consultant, educational psychologist, occupational therapist or other external agencies (mental health).

One mechanism employed by the Department of Education is the implementation of a separate ASD guideline[13]. The guideline is designed to address the social needs of students with ASD. The ASD guideline is similar to other provincial autism documentation[14]offering instructional considerations in three key areas: social interaction, communication and behaviour with an

emphasis on social skill instruction[15]. The focus of social skill support is to teach students with ASD how to communicate with others premised on normative readings of social contexts. Medical knowledges on ASD are applied in the ASD guideline when outlining social instructional support. The DSM, for example, is utilized in the document to assist classroom teachers in identifying students' level of functioning on the spectrum prior to designing ASD social support.

The current DSM-V uses one central diagnosis, "autism spectrum disorder", replacing previous separate diagnosis in the DSM-IV[16], when determining the ability levels of individuals with ASD. The American Psychiatric Association (2013) identifies 'the spectrum' to be a span of functionalities that accounts for variations in symptoms and behaviors from person to person. The DSM-V uses a 3-point range divided into two domains: social/communication and restricted/repetitive behaviours when diagnosing a person's functional level on the spectrum, including a severity marker to determine the level of support. Level 1 severity marker identifies an individual *requiring support*, level 2 *requiring substantial support* and level 3 *very substantial support* (American Psychiatric Association, 2013).

People on the spectrum with higher levels of functionality commonly referred to in autism discourse as people with 'high-functioning autism' (HFA) would receive a level 1 marker in the DSM-V. A person previously understood through autism discourse to be 'low functioning' would receive a severity marker of 2 or 3. The DSM-V presents the spectrum as heterogeneous intended to be fluid acknowledging individual ranges of functionality where a body can move along the spectrum within the two domains (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Applying the DSM when constructing educational support for students with ASD in Nova Scotia schools is significant as it can impact how students with ASD experience school.

For example, a student with ASD experiencing school with an educational assistant or designated to receive small group instruction outside the classroom can signal to others a separation. The use of a distinct ASD educational guideline, including a separate special education policy places limits on how students with ASD are known and thought about in schools. Later in chapter two, I identify how diagnostic criteria for ASD inform public understandings on autism impacting how students with ASD are received in educational

contexts. I then move to pursue emergent and affective knowledges on the lives of young men with ASD as to date autism literature is mainly premised on reading ASD bodies through medical constructions, which primarily emerge from a parental or teacher's lens (Biklen, 2005 et al.; Osteen, 2008). To do this requires a conceptual framework that can attend to the emergent dimensions of their experiences. The next section introduces my poststructural framework that draws on the works of continental philosophers Gilles Deleuze, Felix Guattari and Benedict Spinoza to mobilize attendance to the young men with ASD situated experiences.

1.2 Conceptual Framework

Poststructuralism in disability studies and education recognizes the personal and political damage that totalizing ideas have on people with disabilities aiming to disrupt contemporary thought (Corker & Shakespeare, 2002; Hickey-Moody, 2007). A poststructural theorizing in this study is a resistance to thinking homogeneously about young men with ASD, with recognition of individuality. A conceptual framework that attends to variation in individual experience has a distinct ontological stance where the focus is turned to 'not what we know' but rather what actually exists, the transformative aspects of experience.

The application of Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) concepts in *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (ATP) present an open extension when exploring the young men's experiences in school with no preconceived notions of what their experiences should look like. This is in keeping with Deleuze and Guattari's views in that a philosophy is not an epistemology, but a process (Deleuze, 1988b; Deleuze & Guattari, 1994). One creative concept derived from Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) work in ATP is the metaphor of rhizomes and its capacity to draw our attention to the multiplicity in experiences.

1.2.1 Rhizome Theory

Rhizome theory applied in this dissertation supports the process of pursuing alternative knowledge on the young men's schooling as it can attend to the multiplicity of individual experience."The rhizome operates by variation, expansion, conquest, capture, offshoots...the rhizome is an acentered, non-hierarchical, nonsignifying system without a General and without an organizing memory or central automaton, defined solely by a circulation of states"

(Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.21). Thinking through rhizomes contrasts with conventional knowledges or what Deleuze and Guattari call the arboreal system, namely: the central functioning arrangements (i.e. rules, policies, structures, hierarchies, and authority figures) designed to code and maintain bodies to rooted lines. A student with ASD, for example, when thought about through tree-like thought is a body with special needs; a body adhered to special education policy when experiencing school in Nova Scotia. Deleuze and Guattari, however, encourage us to disrupt rooted configurations of knowing bodies and follow the movements bodies make outside hierarchical arrangements of state; to think through rhizomes.

Rhizomes applied in this dissertation can destabilize arboreal forms of thinking about bodies with ASD pursuing a space to think differently via bodily capacities. Movement mobilized as an analytical concept in this study assists in following the young men's rhizomatic departures as it allows the mapping of the young men's diverse trajectories when moving across the Nova Scotia educational terrain. The mobilization of Spinoza's philosophies on affect amplifies attendance to the young men's emergent aspects.

1.2.2 Affect Theory

Spinoza defines a body "by relations of rest and movement, of swiftness and slowness among particles" and applies the concept of affect to explain the intensities, energies and flows that operate between bodies (Deleuze, 1988b, p.165). Spinoza uses the word *affectus,* the affects, to contextualize the instantaneous states of being operating between bodies identifying the two types of affects emerging as sad and joyful affects. A body producing sad affects with another or thing will diminish his capacity to move while a body filled with joyful affects will increase one's action. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) following Spinoza explain that it is impossible to know the affects ahead of time; what a body might do when it enters into a composition with other things (i.e. bodies, objects, atmospheres, and spaces). Spinoza's idea of affection or *affectio* is an additional extension that can amplify attendance to a person's emergent nature when intersecting with another body or thing. Specifically, Spinoza's idea of affection can attune us to the effects various school connections have on the young men's experiences.

The idea of affection, *affectio,* occurs when a body is in mixture with other things (human and nonhuman). Deleuze (1978) in his lectures[17] uses the example of eating cheese to explain Spinoza's *affectio*. A body may eat a piece of cheese. A body instantaneously is in mixture

with the cheese. If the body does not like the cheese it will produce sad affects diminishing one's desire to eat the cheese again. The bad tasting cheese is an affection of the body, leaving an image of bad tasting cheese. The image of bad tasting cheese is something a body works to destroy; to decompose the relation.

> 'I don't like cheese'. What does this mean, 'I don't like cheese'? That means that it mixes with my body in a manner by which I am modified disagreeably, it cannot mean anything else (Deleuze, 1978, para. 22).

It is the ideas of affection that can favour a relation or destroy a relation. For example, a student can enter a relation with a school bell. The individual's **situated** experience of being in mixture with the school bell will determine his future **movements**. The student may work to destroy the relation by covering his ears or make a bold move to expel his connection to the sound. In contrast, the student may use the sound to track one's school events and therefore, work to keep the relation to the school bell.

Spinoza's philosophy of *affectus* and *affectio* invite an opportunity to focus on the young men's emergent experiences in school. Spinoza's affect, including Deleuze and Guattari's rhizomes support my diffractive analysis of the young men's schooling where their experiences are thought through movement, difference, affect, variation and extension attending to the main research question. *How do twelve young men with ASD experience public school in Nova Scotia, Canada?*

Applying Deleuze, Guattari and Spinoza's work to this educational research influenced the second major research question. Distinctly, the continental philosophers' theories ignited thought about how rhizome and affect theories support the pursuit of alternative knowledge on the schooling experiences of young men with ASD. The second research question, therefore, pertains to theory and asks:

How do the theorizations of Spinoza, Deleuze and Guattari contribute to more productive ways of knowing young men with ASD in educational contexts?

Other sub- research questions supporting the second research question include:

1. *How can rhizome and affect theories assist in unfolding the young men's schooling experiences in alternative ways outside of contemporary thought?*

2. *What can the mobilization of movement as an analytical concept inform about the young men with ASD schooling experiences?*
3. *What can affect theory inform about the young men with ASD situated schooling experiences?*
4. *What affects emerge for the young men with ASD when experiencing school?*

These research questions are addressed by applying rhizome and affect theories to the analysis of twelve young men with ASD schooling experiences having attended public school in Nova Scotia, Canada. In the analysis, my critical awareness of theorizations on gender, masculinity and its intersections with disability are of crucial importance before I can focus on the multiplicities of each young man's schooling experiences.

1.3 Gender, Disability and Schooling

Poststructural disability theorists recognize schools as complex gendered, heterosexual arenas impacting how students experience school (Mac an Ghaill, 1994; Ware, 2005). Gender shapes and limits how individuals are known and what they can do in public spaces. In essence, the gendered body is rigid, confined and restricted to historical reasoning and illusions of what a man and woman are supposed to be (Butler, 1990). If a man is not quite 'man' he is cast as a typology of some other sort, whether that is a marginalized man, a crippled man, a wimpy man, or feminine man. "It is traditional ways of thinking about gender, the binary of man and woman, that performs a *regulatory* operation of power that naturalizes the hegemonic instance and forecloses the thinkability of its disruption" (Butler, 2004, p.42-43 emphasis in original).

Situating one's body through re-enactments of stylized gendered modes unfolds the complexity of experience in public spaces. Masculine and feminine constructions stemming from language, society and the effects of norms and power relations impact how an individual is known (Butler, 1990). For young men with ASD, conventional knowledges derived from medicine affect the constitution of how they take up their gender in school and how they are understood by others. Given this study focuses on young men with ASD it is important to situate in advance how gender complicates individual experience in school, and the decisions' bodies then have to make around how they choose to navigate the open spheres of school.

1.3.1 Masculinity in Schools

One of the greatest contributions to gender studies has been to examine how boys are constructed within educational contexts. For boys, the construction of the masculine body as 'healthy', 'strong', 'macho' and 'tough' depicted in modernist approaches constrain how boys can experience school. Hegemonic practices, "the culturally idealized form of a masculine character" is one of the largest constraints placed on boys as they are expected to act in traditional white heterosexual ways (Connell, 1990, p. 83; Connell, 2005; Kehler & Martino, 2007; Lusher & Robins, 2009). Specifically, the sizing up of boys is brought to attention when examining masculine practices in school with 'toughness', 'fighting', and 'sexual talk' identified as the key hegemonic requirements for boys to be accepted by their peers (Kehler & Martino, 2007).

Masculinity studies, however, have also suggested that boy acts can no longer be viewed as forming one "singular, cohesive masculinity" critiquing the normal masculine body (Kehler, 2004, p.98). The disruption of defining bodies in relation to the traditional gender binary has presented opportunity to think about young men in more productive ways (Loeser, 2010; Pascoe, 2007). Boys with disabilities, for example, who historically have been ruthlessly pathologized, have demonstrated their capacity to perform versions of hegemonic masculinity to appeal themselves to others (Benjamin, 2001). This growing body of literature in gender and masculine studies considers other dimensions of gender experience acknowledging differences in the lives of young men (Berry, 2007; Loeser, 2010; Pascoe, 2007; Salamon, 2006). In this study I want to think about the young men's connections to others outside gender binaries with a focus on the emergent nature of individual experience. I am interested in finding out what happened in moments between young men with ASD and other boys through an open system with no preconceived of what that should look like. Cutting across gender territory with a focus on multiplicity of relations rather than gender designations follows Deleuze and Guattari's theory of rhizomes where each body is thought about openly, through variation and in a constant state of becoming.

1.4 Organization of the Thesis

Chapter two attends to contemporary theorizations that have situated individuals with ASD to be known predominantly in relation to their medical signifiers. The intention at the onset of

chapter two is to situate how medical constructions on ASD and popular cultural depictions in media can produce a narrow conception on the lives of people with ASD. Deleuze, Guattari and Spinoza's rhizome and affect theories are then explained in chapter two to disrupt contemporary forms of thought and position a research space to explore the young men with ASD experiences through movement and affect.

Chapter three engages with methodology offering a detailed description of the research tools. Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) figuration of a rhizome situates the methodological framework intended to disrupt traditional forms of thinking about individuals with ASD. Diffraction as a form of analysis supports this process as it can attend to the young men's situated entanglements when connecting to both human and nonhuman elements in school.

Chapter four, five and six comprise of three data *assemblages*[18] offering a series of rhizomatic stories on the young men's schooling experiences. Across the three data assemblages, the young men's affective movements are prioritized as evidence. The first assemblage, *Moving in and across the arboreal system,* focuses on the young men with ASD experiences with specific school arrangements (i.e. architectural sites, rules, and special education support). One area of focus in this assemblage is to map the power relations emerging for the young men when connecting to the ordered, rooted arrangements of school. The second assemblage, *Social Manoeuvres,* presents the affective connections the young men experience with peers. The young men's situated exchange with other boys is brought to attention, specifically the movements they make when navigating the hegemonic masculine gender order. The third assemblage, *Trajectories of Smooth,* mobilizes the young men with ASD emergent connections with school spaces. The aim is to find out what spaces the young men are affectively drawn to and in turn what spaces they work to decompose. The conclusion chapter summarizes the findings on the twelve young men with ASD experiences when attending public school in Nova Scotia, Canada. The chapter also addresses how the work in this study might encourage a rethinking of how students with ASD are known in educational contexts outside conventional knowledge.

1.5 Summary

This chapter identified the educational context, including the theoretical framework implemented to respond to my research questions. I explained how students with ASD in

Nova Scotia public schools receive their education, including forms of support through a separate special education policy and ASD guideline. The forms of support used in Nova Scotia schools are premised around remediating students with ASD social nuances signalling the dominant presence medical discourse has in Nova Scotia schools. This is made apparent when reviewing the ASD guideline with instruction given to students with ASD in three main areas: social interaction, communication and behaviour premised around social skill instruction (Nova Scotia Department of Education, ASD Guideline, 2012). A student with ASD is not only contextualized relative to forms of social skill support but also classified under Nova Scotia special education policy as a distinct type of subject, a "student with special needs". A 'young man with ASD' is a medical construction, and it is thinking along medical lines of thought in schools that creates barriers for how educators and others in the field of education can envision bodies otherwise (beyond disability). Spinoza, Deleuze and Guattari, however, present a different way to think about bodies outside medical configurations.

In this chapter, I introduced Deleuze, Guattari and Spinoza concepts of rhizomes and affect as the main theoretical approach for this study to critique medical knowledges on ASD and to think about young men with ASD in alternative ways. My mobilization of rhizome theory with movement as an analytical tool supports this process as it pursues knowledge on the actualities of the young men's experiences. Movement, thinking through rhizomes, is the extension that can unsettle contemporary theories and situate a research to space to consider 'what young men with ASD can do' rather than 'who they are'. Affect theory also amplifies thinking about young men with ASD in more productive ways as it projects attentiveness to the situated connections the young men have with both human and nonhuman elements in school. In future chapters, I continue to progress my thinking through rhizomes and affect to destabilize conventional models of thought in education.

The next chapter begins with a discussion on medical constructions on ASD; distinctly, how medical configurations place restrictions on how an individual with ASD is known to others in public contexts like school. I utilize medical studies in autism research that have focused on the functioning of the ASD mind to make emphasis to the linear forms of thinking created when neurotypical minds are valued over others. I also reveal how popular cultural depictions of ASD in the media shape our ideas on normality and difference. The chapter then shifts to

introduce theorists in the field of critical disability studies who have focused on the mediated dimensions of disability experience. The selected scholars invite an open space to disrupt medical configurations and attend to individuals with disabilities' corporeal capacities. The remainder of chapter two details the theorizations of Deleuze, Guattari and Spinoza and in doing so establishes the theoretical framework for the study. Following Deleuze, Guattari and Spinoza my hope is to pursue knowledge that prioritizes thinking about the young men with ASD schooling experiences in alternative ways beyond medical constructions. Overall, chapter two grounds the theoretical work for the study.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Flows

2.0 Introduction

Autism spectrum disorder and autism are both general terms for a group of complex disorders of brain development (Autism Speaks, 2013). More specifically, as indicated in chapter one, autism is a neurological disorder characterized by impairment in social interaction, social communication, including restrictive and repetitive patterns of behaviour and interests (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Statistics from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) (2013) report 1 in 88 children are diagnosed with autism. The increase in the number of individuals diagnosed in the past 40 years, a ten-fold increase according to Autism Speaks Canada, has resulted in a proliferation of information on autism disseminated through medical literature and the media (Nadesan, 2005). I begin this chapter by reviewing medical constructions on autism as it presents a starting point to show how our ideas on autism have been shaped by clinical research. Distinctly, how diagnostic criteria and medical studies can position others to think about persons with ASD through the normal/abnormal binary informing our understandings on difference and normality (Broderick & Ne'eman, 2008).

Popular cultural depictions of autism in film, television, and a growing body of novels have also taken a prominent role in producing an image of autism in "the public mind" (McDonagh, 2008, p. 113). In the first part of this chapter, I will show how popular cultural depictions of autism can formulate distinct ways of thinking about people with ASD, with images that at times are "not truly *representative*" lacking attentiveness to individual difference (Osteen, 2008, p. 8). Having an understanding of how autism is portrayed in medical literature, and in the media is important as it can infiltrate schools, impacting how students with ASD are received and known to others.

The second part of the chapter then moves to destabilize autism as a uniform, homogeneous essence where the complexity and alterity in individual experiences is attended to. The recent work in the field of critical autism studies, disability studies and cultural studies provides this entry where a shift is made to focus on the corporeal aspects of experience unsettling dualistic notions and contemporary theorizations. The works of Spinoza, Deleuze and Guattari are then detailed as the main theoretical tools in this study to advance thinking about the young men's situated and multiple experiences having attended public school in Nova Scotia, Canada. First,

it is important to situate how autism has been shaped by clinical literature, and the influences medical constructions have on how autism is understood in wider social and public contexts.

2.1 Medical Constructions on Autism

2.1.1 Clinical accounts – what is autism?

Medical and scientific research has dominated the field of autism studies with the prevailing models of research focused on identifying the impaired mental deficits, etiology, and effective diagnostic treatments for persons classified on the autism spectrum (Biklen et al., 2005; Nadesan, 2008; Osteen, 2008). Leo Kanner, an American psychiatrist and physician, was the first to assess the functionality of children who displayed social nuances and labeled their actions 'autistic' behaviours. Kanner (1943) described a group of 11 children (ages 2 to 11 years) presenting with non- communicative gestures and extreme autistic aloneness. Kanner theorized the children had the "biological inability to make affective contact with other people" and appeared "disconnected to the social world" (Kanner, 1943, p. 42-43). He also reported the children's preference was to spend time with objects rather than humans, including a preservation of sameness (Feinstein, 2010; Kanner, 1943; Wing, 1997). The preservation of sameness accounted for the children desiring a routine. This included restricted patterns of interest with a desire to play with the same, familiar objects and follow a schedule. Kanner reported that the parents of these children also responded towards their children in cold ways, "[i]n the whole group, there are very few really warm hearted fathers and mothers" (1943, p. 250). Kanner's initial report on autistic characteristics in a group of children was significant as his work drew awareness to the field of autism, labelling the children's social disorders, 'infantile autism' (Dodd, 2005; Feinstein, 2010; Wing, 1997).

Another pioneer in the field of autism named Hans Asperger, an Austrian psychologist, wrote a paper in the 1940s on children with autistic mannerisms. Asperger identified a pattern of behaviour called "autistic psychopathy" meaning autism (self) and psychopathy (personality disease) in a small group of children[19]. Asperger characterized the children as having severe difficulties with social integration, including peculiar eye gaze. He also reported the children had normal verbal communication with distinct patterns of interest and unusual social nuances. Asperger called the children "little professors" because of their ability to talk about their favourite subject in great detail. The previous classification of Aspergers in the DSM-IV

(since removed from the current DSM-V) was derived from Aspergers initial findings in 1944. To qualify for the former diagnosis of Asperger's syndrome in the DSM-IV required an individual to show qualitative impairment in social interaction, as manifested by at least two of the following: multiple nonverbal behaviors, a failure to develop appropriate peer relationships, a lack of spontaneous seeking of shared enjoyment, interest or achievements with other people, a lack of social or emotional reciprocity, restricted stereotyped patterns of behaviors, inflexibility, repetitive mannerisms, and preoccupations (American Psychiatric Association, 1994).

In the 1950s, Austrian child psychologist, Bruno Bettelheim was recognized for suggesting the environment played a role in producing autistic behaviours. Bettelheim theorized the autistic behaviours were caused from the infant's relationship with his "refrigerator mother" (Bettelheim, 1967; Osteen, 2008). Bettelheim centered his concept of cold parenting by comparing the behaviours of children with autism to his own experiences in concentration camps (Bettelheim, 1967). The theory of autism being an environmental condition has largely been refuted with increasing acknowledgement that it is a social neurological disorder rather than a disability emerging from detached parenting (Feinstein, 2010).

Lorna Wing and her colleague Judith Gould were the first to classify autism as a range of functionalities introducing the term *triad of impairments* (Wing & Gould, 1979). Wing and Gould constructed the *triad of impairments* as they determined some children did not meet Kanner's criteria. Wing and Gould's *triad of impairments* marked three areas of dysfunction when classifying autistic behaviours, namely: impairment in social interaction (social understandings), impairment in social communication (verbal and non-verbal) and impairment in social imagination (restricted interests, resistance to change). Wing (1981) then introduced the term, "autistic continuum" categorizing the levels of ability from a low end, "the most profoundly physically and mentally retarded person with social impairments", to a person with the most able "highly intelligent person with social impairments in its subtlest form as his only disability" (p.115). Autism continuum according to Wing later changed to autism spectrum, which better suited the wide range of functioning levels for individuals with autistic traits (Wing, 1988, 1996). Medical constructions on autism eventually led to autism's appearance in the form of diagnostic criteria in the DSM.

2.1.2 Autism Diagnostic Criteria

The American Psychiatric Association in 1980 incorporated the criteria for the diagnosis of autism into the DSM-III. As mentioned in chapter one the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* is a diagnostic tool applied in Nova Scotia schools when assessing students with ASD. Following Kanner's work, the category 'infantile autism' listed six characteristics[20] that an individual had to possess to be labeled 'autistic' (American Psychiatric Association, 1980). Between the DSM-III and the DSM-III-R, however, there were changes made to the criteria for autism; specifically, alterations to make the diagnostic standard more observable in nature with individuals having to show abnormalities in behaviors to receive the diagnosis (American Psychiatric Association, 1987). The criteria also moved from six characteristics to 16 requiring a person to have at least 8 of the criteria including two items from sections A, one from B and one from C. The DSM-III-R provided detailed markers coupled with examples to assist clinicians when observing specific behaviours (see Appendix B for full history and description of DSM criteria for autism). To give an example here is Section A of the DSM-III-R (1987):

> *A. Qualitative impairment in reciprocal social interaction (the examples within parentheses are arranged so that those first listed are more likely to apply to younger or more disabled, and the later ones, to older or less disabled) as manifested by the following:*
>
> 1.Marked lack of awareness of the existence or feelings of others (for example, treats a person as if that person were a piece of furniture; does not notice another person's distress; apparently has no concept of the need of others for privacy);
>
> 2. No or abnormal seeking of comfort at times of distress (for example, does not come for comfort even when ill, hurt, or tired; seeks comfort in a stereotyped way, for example, says "cheese, cheese, cheese" whenever hurt);
>
> 3. No or impaired imitation (for example, does not wave bye-bye; does not copy parent's domestic activities; mechanical imitation of others' actions out of context);
>
> 4. No or abnormal social play (for example, does not actively participate in simple games; refers solitary play activities; involves other children in play only as mechanical aids); and
>
> 5. Gross impairment in ability to make peer friendships (for example, no interest in making peer friendships despite interest in making friends, demonstrates lack of understanding of conventions of social interaction, for example, reads phone book to uninterested peer). (American Psychiatric Association, 1987)

The detailed diagnostic criteria in the DSM-III-R contributed to an increase in the prevalence of autism in the 1990s both in North America and the UK and made for more reliable diagnoses (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2013). The DSM-IV was then published in 1994 with the criteria for autism once again revised. The rationale for changing diagnostic criteria in the DSM-IV emerged from aims to better support health professionals in understanding the constellation of symptoms that comprise autism (American Psychiatric Association, 1994). The DSM-IV consisted of a clinical category Pervasive Developmental Disorders (PDD) that included a list of subgroups: Autistic Disorder (AD), Asperger's Disorder (AS), Rett Disorder (RD), Childhood Disintegrative Disorder (CDD), and Pervasive Developmental Disorder-Not Otherwise Specified (PDD-NOD) (Including Atypical Autism). Each of the PDD disorders had their own code and symptoms. PDD was not a specific disorder; it only referred to the category that all the disorders fell under. The basic triad of impairments underlying autistic disorder in the DSM-IV included: impairment of social interaction, impairment of communication, and restricted repetitive and stereotyped patterns of behavior. The subgroups and triad of impairments coded in the DSM-IV also led to increased diagnosis of autism and awareness of the mental disorder (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2013). The CDC (2013) reported that since 2002 there has been a 78% increase in the number of autism diagnoses. According to the CDC the increase of diagnoses was associated with clinicians having distinct criteria to measure a person for ASD symptoms as well as more diagnostic tools when making an assessment.

The DSM-V published in 2013 has since reduced the criteria to receive a diagnosis of ASD. The former triad of impairments changed to a dyad, namely: impairment of social interaction and communication (as one combined domain) and restricted repetitive and stereotyped patterns of behavior (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). The DSM-V removed the subgroups and introduced the classification "autism spectrum disorder". As indicated in chapter one in order to receive a diagnosis of ASD an individual needs to demonstrate markers of impairment in social interaction, impairments in communication as well as at least two signs of repetitive and stereotyped behaviors.

The recent changes to the diagnostic criteria have been under critique with autism theorists concerned about how individual conditions will be construed by others under the new DSM-V criteria. Distinctly, there are concerns that people previously diagnosed under PDD will not

meet the criteria in the DSM-V for ASD (Lai, Lombardo, Chakrabarti & Baron-Cohen 2013; Wing, Gould & Gillberg, 2011). For example, individuals with a previous diagnosis of Aspergers potentially could not meet the criteria for ASD as it requires a person to present with repetitive behaviour. The change in criteria can significantly impact individuals' lives as many families rely on the diagnosis to receive educational support, government funding as well as access to community services. The diagnostic criterion has also proven helpful for professionals in the fields of education and health as they can use the information to better support people with ASD in public sectors like school. This is evidenced in Nova Scotia schools where the DSM is applied to help structure special education support services for students with ASD. A person, therefore, previously classified in the DSM-IV, who does not meet the ASD criteria in the DSM-V can be severely affected by these changes.

What has also emerged with the development of the new criteria in the DSM-V is increased discussion on what the term, 'spectrum' means and the impact on how a person with ASD is viewed and understood. According to Lai et al. (2013) the spectrum can refer to:

> subgroups and reflect on the substantial heterogeneity within the autistic spectrum... the spectrum can also refer to the continuity between the general population and the clinical population... the autistic traits that run through the whole population that together comprise the quantitative variability in the behavioral domains defined by DSM criteria; and the spectrum can also refer to the dimensional nature of the cardinal features of autism within the clinical population (i.e. differences in the severity and presentation of symptoms among those with a diagnosis of ASD) (p.2).

Individuals with ASD, therefore, can be changed by their classification on the spectrum. For example, the formulating of "high" and "low" distinctions in autism discourse has stigmatized how students with ASD are received in educational contexts (Osteen, 2008). One of the largest implications in education is how students with ASD are positioned relative to typical students thus creating a normal/abnormal binary.

> *Functioning* is, it appears, what people with autism do, and they do it to different levels, although we might note that the high/low split works as an organisational category (not unlike ideas of "high" and "low/popular" culture) that actually erases any real sense of differentiation, offering as it does only two possible positions of identification. For all the supposed received wisdom of the idea of the autistic spectrum, knowing which level of function an autistic person might have can, for a majority audience with a limited knowledge of the condition, offer an initial way to classify what types of autistic presence might exist (Murray, 2010, para. 1).

While a person on the spectrum has individual talents, passions and desires, the ASD body coded according to his varying degrees of 'functionality' on the spectrum can reify notions of a body existing outside normative dimensions and inform our ideas about disability and normality. This is evident when reviewing medical studies on the ASD mind. Medical constructs posit that persons with ASD social and communicative deficits stem from cognitive impairments where they have an inability to understand other people's minds, including the incapacity to read social cues. Frith (1989) explained that individuals with ASD have a weak drive for coherence and understanding of how information is processed. She described how a typical individual can have a conversation and follow the main theme or idea of the story while a person with ASD tended to focus on details rather than the 'big picture'. The focus on details often led to people with ASD not grasping the meaning or nature of the actual situation. Frith suggested the attention to detailed processing is suggestive of a weak central coherence. While the term 'weak' is framed as a deficit, the capacity for a person to remember details and block out external stimuli can be viewed an asset. It is essential to attend to the range of capacities a person possesses rather than predominantly focusing on how a person with a label functions differently than the norm or through deficit driven views. In this study, my hope is to progress beyond thinking through functional capacities relative to normal minds and attend to the situated dimensions of the young men's schooling experiences. Another recognized field of study on the functioning of the ASD mind has been to see if individuals with ASD can attribute mental states to others[21]. The next section provides a review of the theory of mind concept as it has influenced and shaped social programming in schools and how students with ASD are instructed and known in educational contexts.

2.1.3 Functioning of the ASD Mind

The ability of a person to attribute mental states to others, to have a "theory of mind" emerged from Premack and Woodruff's (1978) study, "Does the chimpanzee have a theory of mind?" Premack and Woodruff define theory of mind as an individual having the capacity to "impute mental states to himself and others" (p. 515). While their study analyzed a chimpanzee's capacity to apply mental states to others their "theory of mind" concept has since been used to study the minds of children with ASD. The theorizing of children with ASD mental states involve comparing autistic minds to 'normal' minds to find out if individuals with ASD can identify another person's perspective[22].

In 1985, Simon Baron-Cohen, Alan Leslie and Uta Frith, three prominent autism theorists, examined children with ASD capacities to identify the mental states of others, "that is, knowing that other people know, want, feel, or believe things". Baron-Cohen, Leslie and Frith created a "false-belief" test to assess children with ASD "theory of mind" and compared their mental states to those of typical children and children Down's syndrome. The test consisted of 20 children with ASD, 27 typical children and 14 children with Down's syndrome. They chose to include the children with Down's syndrome as they had lower IQ's (42-89; average of 64) than the children with ASD (78-108).

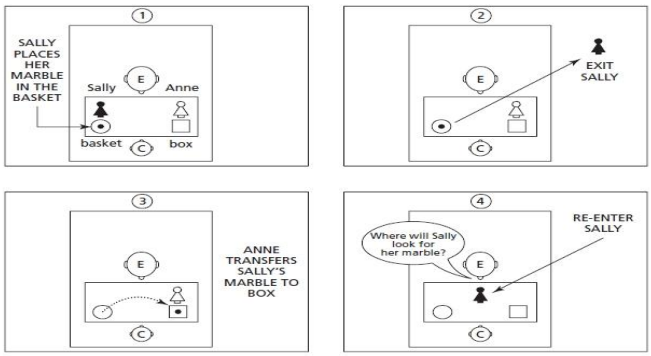


Figure 2.1 False Belief Task

Reprinted, *"Experimental Scenario", Figure 1* from Baron-Cohen, S., Leslie, A.M., & Frith, U. (1985). Does the autistic child have a 'theory of mind'? *Cognition*, 21, 37-46.

The "false-belief" test begins with showing each child two dolls named Sally and Anne. At the start of the false-belief test, they clarified with each child to ensure they knew which doll was Anne and which doll was Sally. The child was told that Sally had a basket, and Anne has a box. Soon after, it was explained to the child that Sally put a marble in her basket. Sally then leaves the room, and she can no longer see her basket. While Sally is away Anne takes Sally's marble and places it in her box. The child is told that Sally comes back inside. The child is then asked: Where is the marble now? Where was the marble in the beginning? Then the "theory of mind" question, 'Where will Sally look for her marble?' If the child realizes that Sally will enter the room and look for the marble in her own basket, then the child can read her mind and understand Sally's perspective. You can say the child has a "theory of mind". If the child alternatively says Sally will look in Anne's box, then it would be said the child does not have a "theory of mind" or lacks the mental capacity to understand another's mind.

Four out of twenty children with ASD got the question correct as to where Sally would look for the marble. 23/27 typical children knew where Sally would look and 12/14 children with Down's syndrome got the question right. The typical children and the children with Down's syndrome had similar results while children with ASD mainly failed the test. The study concluded that children with ASD lack a "theory of mind", unable to assign mental states to others.

Baron-Cohen, Tager-Flusberg and Cohen (2000) describe the lack of a "theory of mind" in individuals with ASD as "possibly a universal abnormality" (p.3). "Theory of mind" has been employed in educational contexts to explain the social and communication deficits of students with ASD and the implications for normative social development (Hughes & Leekam, 2004). Most discussion involves comparing the mental states of students with ASD to typical peers and the implications this may present when communicating with others in school contexts (Holroyd & Baron-Cohen, 1993). The ability for individuals to perspective take and apply mental states to others has influenced the production of social skill programs aimed to teach students with ASD to think about others. One of the most utilized perspective taking programs employed in Nova Scotia schools is Michelle Winner's *Social Thinking* (Winner, 2007). The increase of perspective taking instruction in Nova Scotia schools signals the focus on the mental capacities of students with ASD. This is evident in Nova Scotia schools when medical criteria are applied to determine support services for students with ASD in the regular classroom. If the typology of a young man with ASD is assessed through separate special education policy and presented to his teachers as a socially impaired body through his classification in the DSM, it constrains how he is known to others in educational contexts, including the kinds of experiences he has in school.

The continual emphasis on remediating students with ASD deviations from normal social development shapes our ideas about normality. Other knowledge outside conventional fields like medicine and education also inform ideas on difference, normality and pathology. The next section reveals how the shift in demographics and prevalence of ASD has created a surge of media attention on autism impacting how individuals with ASD are thought about in public contexts. I turn now to unfold how autism has been depicted in media. It is important to contextualize popular cultural depictions on ASD as much of what society learns on autism emerges from novels, television, biographies, magazines and parental testimonials.

2.2 Popular Cultural Depictions of Autism

Television shows in North America in the past decade have created characters that align with autism diagnostic traits as seen on shows like *The Big Bang Theory*, *Bones* and *Community*. While these television programs may not employ the autism label, the characters on the show can trigger the public to associate the character with someone they know who presents with autism. My stepson Will, for example, is often associated with a character on the Big Bang Theory. Friends and family will often tell us that Will reminds them of this television character based on the character's mannerisms, comments and the way he navigates personal relationships.

One of the most popular dominant images of ASD in the media that has influenced individuals' understandings of autism was the 1988 movie *Rainman* starring Tom Cruise with Dustin Hoffman (Huws & Jones, 2010; Murray, 2008). The 1988 movie directed by Barry Levinson creates a character with autism named Raymond, who presents as a savant. Raymond played by Dustin Hoffman is capable of calculating large numbers in a matter of seconds where he later utilizes his savant skills to beat casino tables. Similarly, *Mozart and the Whale* (Naess, 2005) is another movie that depicts the life story of two young ASD people with savant skills.

One main character Donald has the capacity to factorize large numbers. In *Mozart and the Whale* there is a scene where Donald flashes back to his experiences as a young boy at school where a group of children surround him in the playground and ask him to multiply a sizeable number that he successfully calculates in seconds. The children's responses are that of wonderment, astonishment where they incite Donald to perform more 'out of norm' behaviours. Donald's characterization is similar to Raymond in *Rainman*. The characters in these two movies are depicted as having unique and special talents who appear to be out of the ordinary, unusual. While savant skills are present in some individuals with ASD the actual "rates of savantism in the autistic population is around 10%" (Murray, 2008, p. 249). Murray (2008) critiques the portrayal of autistic savants in films identifying that it produces a "misguided understanding of cognitive difference" where the difference is used for fictional means, as a form of intrigue and fascination (p. 249).

Other Hollywood films that make possible to read a person as having ASD include: *Silent Fall* (1994), *Cube* (1997), *Mercury Rising* (1998), *Bless the Child* (2000), *Punch-Drunk Love* (2002), *A Mile in his Shoes* (2011), *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close* (2011), and *The Story of Luke* (2012). The plots of these films are centralized around characters with ASD that depict various social nuances and present as deviating from normal social forms of behaviour.

The Story of Luke (2012) written and directed by Alonso Mayo is one recent film that presents the story of a twenty year old man named Luke with high-functioning autism. At the onset, the film portrays Luke as living a sheltered existence where he resides with his grandparents and is depicted as dependent on his grandmother. That soon changes, however, when his grandmother dies and Luke has to make alternative living arrangements. Not happy with his new living quarters, Luke ventures off determined to live independently, find a girlfriend and show others what he is capable of. The plot centralizes around Luke's capacity to change his life where he secures a training opportunity at a company and begins to explore life on his own. His supervisor at the company, a highly intelligent IT specialist, guides Luke at work and in the process offers mentorship on his social relationships. Over the course of the film, the audience witnesses Luke having to manage his social nuances when encountering new social experiences.

There is one scene in the movie where Zach, the IT specialist, is coaching Luke through an office window on how to communicate with a girl. The two take up a dialogue when noticing another man strike up a conversation with a woman at a water cooler. As they peer through the window watching the couple chat, Zach informs Luke on the subtle social exchanges between the two, both verbal and nonverbal. Luke in this scene is sketched as having the incapacity to read others' social cues. The teaching of social cues in this film is parallel to what educators in Nova Scotia schools do when working with students with ASD. For example, the Winner's (2007) Social Thinking program employed in the Nova Scotia ASD guideline applies a social detective activity where students with ASD are required to observe others' social interactions as a means to recognize normative social behaviours and work on their social skills.

The characterizing of Luke as lacking social skills relative to normals can situate public viewers of the film to think about Luke in specific ways, producing rather contemporary subject positions (Murray, 2008). If a person watching *The Story of Luke* does not know

anyone with autism, popular cultural forms are what people come to exemplify with a particular disability (Baker, 2008). One large area of concern when the focus of films centralizes around a person with ASD social deviances from the norm is that the stories do not capture the complexity of individual lives (Osteen, 2008).

Huws and Jones (2010) identified that lay persons' understandings of ASD emerge from stories represented in popular discourse wherein they base their autism knowledge from socially constructed ASD characters they see on television or in a movie. Lay participants believed individuals with ASD "act in ways that contravened societal and developmental norms, that autism spectrum disorder is confining with dependency on others, and is a condition like mental retardation or learning disability caused by internal or external factors" (p. 342). Characters with ASD have also emerged in the past 30 years as the subject of novels, biographies or autobiographies[23].

Recent novels *Anything But Typical* (Baskin, 2009), *A Wild Ride Up the Cupboards* (Bauer, 2005), *Colin Fischer* (Miller & Stentz, 2012), *House Rules* (Picoult, 2010), *The Civil Wars of Jonah Moran* (Reynolds, 1999), and *Marcelo in the Real World* (Stork, 2011) formulate distinct images of autism. Across these novels, the storyline centers on the ASD characters' social mannerisms relative to neurotypical behaviour.

The novel, *House Rules* (Picoult, 2010) for example, produces a fictional story on the life of a teenager named Jacob identified with ASD, who has an interest in one particular subject, forensic analysis. He has a police scanner in his bedroom and throughout the novel Jacob appears at crime scenes in the city to observe the details of each crime. The writer takes us through Jacob's extensive analysis of crimes showing his restrictive interest in forensics as emphasized when he even makes his own mock crime scenes in his home. Later in the novel, Jacob finds himself in the middle of a real crime investigation after his social aid dies in her apartment where Jacob is falsely accused of her death after entering her home. Jacob soon has to apply his expansive knowledge on forensics to solve the crime. The depiction of Jacob as a young man with a restricted pattern of interest and attentiveness to detail gives a certain portrayal of autism that can perpetuate the formulating of stereotypes, a body working outside normative social parameters.

Colin Fisher (Stentz & Miller, 2012) is another fictional representation on autism that presents the story of a teenage boy with ASD acting outside normative standards. This is made known early on when Colin is characterized as having to carry social cue cards to school in order to read people's expressions and how Colin on occasion cannot control his social behaviours, barking like a dog when he gets upset. The character Colin, however, is also depicted as possessing desirable skills as seen when Colin's capacity to focus on details leads to the solving of a crime after a boy was wrongly accused of firing a gun in a school cafeteria. While the novel attributes Colin as an intuitive and knowledgeable young man the writer still positions Colin as a non-neurotypical character. The situating of bodies outside norms instills certain images, forming stereotypes that can shape how individuals with ASD are known and thought about. Davidson and Henderson (2010) identify how "widely circulating stereotypes and fictional media accounts sketch a problematically flat and highly essentialized image of AS individuals as extremely verbally restricted, largely socially incapable ... and certainly unlikely to 'pass' as neurotypical" (p.155-156).

Writers and film makers have also applied metaphors as a literary device to capture the neurological differences of people with ASD. The applying of metaphors has been taken up in a series of personal narrative and autism case studies emerging from the perspective of parents rather than from individuals with ASD[24]. Popular metaphors taking momentum from medical language include: 'living in a foreign space', 'retreating behind a wall', and seeming 'alien like' imposing particular interpretations often considered undesirable (Hacking, 2009; Osteen, 2008). Other media forms have sketched autism as an "epidemic" and in the process it has captured the imagination of the public, with autism "regarded both as threatening and fascinating" (Nadesan, 2008, p. 79). *Autism Speaks Canada* (2013) frames autism as a global crisis.

> We are dedicated to funding global research into the causes, prevention, and treatments for autism; to raising public awareness about autism and its effects on individuals, families, and society; and to bring hope to all who deal with the hardships of this disorder. We are committed to raising the funds necessary to support these goals. Autism Speaks Canada aims to bring the autism community together as one strong voice to urge the government and private sector to listen to our concerns and take action to address this urgent global health crisis (Autism Speaks Canada, Mission Statement, 2013, para. 2, 3).

Promoting autism as a disease, as a 'global health crisis' presents for people with ASD incredible challenges as it inhibits thinking about other dimensions of their lives. "This positioning of autism as a crisis of 'health' further draws upon a medicalized disease discourse in which people who have labels of autism are constituted not as neurologically different, nor even disabled, but rather as diseased, not healthy, or as ill" (Broderick & Ne'eman, 2008, p.468). Autism viewed as a disease in mainstream culture denigrates attendance to the diverse nature of individual capacities. Broderick and Ne'eman (2008) further suggest autism framed as a disease works to maintain the binary divide between normal and abnormal, reinforcing the notion of autism as a deviation from the norm.

Biklen and Kliewer (2006) acknowledge how "autism as an identity like gender and race have been linked to particular interpretations of what that should be or look like" (p. 183). Part of the complexity when we think about individuals with ASD through pathology is determining what constitutes 'normal'? With autism, the differences can be subtle and only picked up through movement. For example, a student with ASD standing in a school hallway can appear 'normal', and it is just when the child begins to walk on his toes that a person may question his 'normality'. Subtle deviations from the norm add a layer of complexity for individuals with ASD when navigating public spaces.

Bagatell (2007) describes the experiences of one twenty one-year-old man named Ben with ASD and "his complex process of identity construction" (p.413). Bagatell draws attention to how normative categories and how traditional 'deficit-driven' views produce a specific reading of Ben's experiences. Bagatell met Ben at an *Autistic Adults Coming Together* function where people with autism "gather, socialize and find support" (2007, p.414). Over the course of nine months, Bagatell reported on Ben's social experiences. Ben during the nine months explained how his parents encouraged him as a teenager in school to "fit in" and to "act normal" (2007, p.416). When Ben moved and attended college, he described his attempts to appeal to others through the self-medicating of marijuana and alcohol. With time, Ben, however, found this acting normal "stressful" and secretly wished scientists could eliminate his autism (2007, p.417). Ben tells Bagatell.

> There really is basically no way to teach yourself to be normal. You can teach yourself to appear normal but you can never really be normal. And trying to do it is just stressful. I think that's everybody's experience' (Bagatell, 2007, p.419).

Ben later explained how he "fit in" when attending advocacy groups for autism and found comfort in technology through neurodiversity websites but continued to struggle with how to take up his identity as a young man with ASD. He eventually tells of how he was sick of social skill groups questioning why someone can't just go to the bar with him stating this is what he really needed. "Within the discourse of normalcy Ben was a failure ... Ben's sense of self was constructed within a world that clearly let him know that he was a marginal member" (Bagatell, 2007, p.418). For Ben, he became trapped on the periphery of the normal/abnormal binary where he ultimately positioned his body on the margins; a failed entity.

> Authoritative voices label and marginalize individuals who look or act in 'undesirable' ways. As Ben got older, he became aware of the authoritative voices around him that told him that in order to have a meaningful life he would have to 'act normal' (Bagatell, 2007, p.418).

Disability linked to pathology is problematic for persons with ASD when entering school as it focuses on students' deficits, illuminating their distinctions from the norm. The next section expands on notions of difference and what the implications for individuals with ASD when known and thought about through normal/abnormal binaries.

2.3 Differentiation from the Norm

Medical constructions on ASD as well as popular cultural depictions in media have framed how we think about normality, difference and pathology. Biklen et al. (2005) reiterates, "[i]t is inherently challenging to do qualitative inquiry in a field as highly medicalized as autism, for most of the language of the field assumes a shared, normative perspective" (p. 11). For a student with ASD even being labeled autistic in school can be problematic as it produces a gap and a layer of complexity for the student who has to navigate school under a separate paradigm from the norm. Garland-Thomson (1997) addresses the politics of difference and how we operate bodily construction through gender, race, and sexuality where corporeality is often overlooked.

> The term *normate* usefully designates the social figure through which people can represent themselves as definitive human beings. Normate, then, is the constructed identity of those who, by way of the bodily configurations and cultural capital they assume, can step into a position of authority and wield the power it grants them (Garland-Thomson, 1997, p. 8, emphasis in original).

Nova Scotia special education policy reinforces this line of thinking as it assesses students with ASD skill sets relative to social normative understandings. Dominant medical categories that circulate in education construct a certain kind of subject and negate thinking about students with disabilities outside dualistic paradigms. Garland-Thomson (2002) argues how our present ability and disability system has produced subjects by differentiating and marking their bodies. Such power assigned to bodies meeting normate standards is problematic for individuals with disabilities as to be granted full human status requires them to appeal to normals and figure out how to manage relationships (Garland-Thomson, 1997).

Gender theorist Judith Butler (1990, 1993, 2004) critiques the production of norms and the implications norms place on individuals when navigating public spaces like schools. She explains how norms reduce the possibilities of how life can be lived as a person's vitality is relative to how well a body can accomplish traditional gender norms.

> This 'being a man' and this 'being a woman' are internally unstable affairs. They are always beset by ambivalence precisely because there is a cost in every identification, the loss of some other set of identifications, the forcible approximation of a norm one never chooses, a norm that chooses us, but which we occupy, reverse, resignify to the extent that the norm fails to determine us completely (Butler, 1993, p.126-127).

Boys in school who can perform as close as possible to the white, hegemonic masculine have a much better chance of livability than those who do not. "My body is mine and not mine" Butler writes in recognition that all individuals are positioned based on how we get read by others in public spaces (2004, p.21). Butler's public dimension of bodies is valuable as she recognizes we cannot know 'who we are' without drawing on the sociality of norms that "precede and exceed" (Butler, 2004, p.32). This reenactment of "a set of meanings already socially established" dictates much of our bodily agency in public spaces (Butler, 1990, p.140).

> Let's face it. We're undone by each other. And if we're not, we're missing something...one is undone, in the face of the other, by the touch, by the scent, by the feel, by the prospect of the touch, by the memory of the feel (Butler, 2004, p.19).

The borders of living thus become bodies, which do not fit neatly within one particular set gender schema that of "fully" masculine or "fully" feminine. Butler describes few bodies actually meet or maintain the "fully" masculine or "fully" feminine so in a sense we are all failed genders. Bodies, therefore, are all deemed vulnerable with some bodies living on the

peripheries of life more than others. Butler's notion of livable/unlivable lives relative to normative regimes draws attention to the complex dimensions of individual experience, particularly when having to navigate public spaces like school. "Subordinate" or "marginalised" masculine bodies, for example, struggle to locate their position in existing social categories and to meet normative masculine ideals (Connell, 2005).

> This internal hatred of not shaping up well enough leads to self-imprisonment by the more vulnerable boys who are held up by this ideal fantasy which holds the symbolic promise of the idealized self (Salisbury & Jackson, 1996, p.194).

The typology of the body for a young man with a social disability depicted through medical literature and popular media as a socially disordered body, an inadequate communicative body unable to maintain a hegemonic ideal can be suspect to stigmatization and rejection (Saltzburg & Davis, 2010). Scholars in the field of critical disability studies have challenged binary conceptions prioritizing attendance to individual experience (Biklen, 2000). "A failure to understand that another person has a different point of view, another set of feelings and experiences, has pervasive and devastating consequences that permeate every aspect of the person with autism's life" (Procter, 2001, p.118-119). The remainder of this chapter moves to identify the importance of thinking about individuals with ASD through alterity, difference and variation. Explicitly, I place emphasis on thinking through emergence with consideration of the multiple dimensions of individual experience.

The next section begins by introducing recent theorists in the field of critical autism studies who have prioritized the voices of ASD in their research. I then shift to identify poststructural theorists in the fields of disability studies and cultural studies that have examined the experiences of individuals with disabilities through alternative mediums: art, culture and photography. The focus of this section is to illuminate other ways in which individuals with disabilities can be thought about outside dualistic understandings and medical notions. The final part of this chapter details Spinoza, Deleuze and Guattari's theories of rhizome and affects establishing the theoretical framework for this study attending to the twelve young men with ASD schooling experiences in more open ways.

2.4 Critical Autism Studies

Recent approaches in the field of critical disability studies have pursued alternative knowledge on individuals with ASD lives with particular attention to the voices of people with ASD. Prioritizing the stories told by individuals with ASD has been framed as a form of neurodiversity with autism taking on its own cultural designations like deaf or queer culture (Mallett & Runswick Cole, 2012). Ortega (2009) explained the neurodiversity movement is an entry to thinking outside medical knowledge where the ASD condition is "not a disease to be treated...but rather a human specificity (like sex or race) that must be equally respected" (p.425). One area of research warranting the neurodiversity movement and the everyday lives of individuals with ASD is the new field of critical autism studies. Critical disability theorists recently gathered in 2010 forming a workshop entitled *Critical Autism Studies: Enabling Inclusion, Defending Difference*.

The Critical Autism Workshop "address[ed] a strongly felt need among less mainstream autism scholars for an inclusive and interdisciplinary space where genuinely different and less disabling approaches to the spectrum might be explored" (Davidson & Orsini, 2010, p. 131). The workshop was organized by Michael Orsini, Associate Professor of Political Studies at University of Ottawa, Canada and Joyce Davidson, Associate Professor of Geography at Queen's University, Canada and included participants from across North America, Europe, including South America. The scholars were primarily from the social sciences and humanities who were interested in sharing individually and collectively, their bodies of work attending closely to the views and voices of people with ASD (Davidson & Orsini, 2010).
Some examples of the research at the critical autism workshop included Stuart Murray, a critical disability scholar and father of two sons with ASD, who explored the restrictive implications of diagnostic definitions to which his children and others with ASD have been subject. He acknowledged the emotional depth in contrast to the emotional deficits of individuals with ASD. Victoria Henderson's presentation, 'coming out' on the spectrum unfolded the complexities persons with ASD feel when deciding to tell another about their diagnosis, particularly when the ASD can be hidden or not openly visible to an outside observer. Her work spoke to the individual complexity ASD presents when trying to make decisions to conceal or disclose ASD diagnosis. Mark Osteen addressed the challenge of representing autism from an English literature perspective focused on narrative form. Osteen

directs attention to how narrative continues to emerge from "formulaic stereotypes of autistics as, for example, savants, charmingly 'quirky', and / or subject to miraculous cures" where these forms of narrative require disruption with attendance to the actualities of individual lives (Davidson & Orsini, 2010, p. 132).

> One significant finding among those that emerged from the workshop is the need to attend ever more closely to the inevitable ineffable emotions of "others" as...researchers [we] must continually question experience and expression of emotion in all senses and spaces, including, perhaps especially, what counts as 'normal' in mainstream society (Davidson & Orsini, 2010, p.132).

In 2011, Katherine Runswick-Cole also gathered a group of colleagues in the UK to host a *Critical Autism Seminar Day*. On the website, "Critical Autism" is explained as:

> a space which not only challenges 'deficit' understandings of autism but also challenges the category itself. In this respect, we position the emerging field of Critical Autism Studies as having its antecedents in the more critical corners of Disability Studies. This means not only examining how autism challenges the ways in which we think about employability, family, friendship, love, etc. but also how Critical Disability Studies challenges how we think about autism. The papers we have gathered for this day all – to varying degrees – explore these challenges. We are very much looking forward to some interesting presentations and some stimulating discussions[25].

Some of the works in the seminar included: Waltz: *"Wild men", introverts and idols: Negotiating the autism spectrum diagnosis of celebrities in popular music*, Graby: *Social dis-order: Autistic experiences of/in radical political activism*, Mallett and Runswick-Cole: *Buying (into) Autism: The Commodification of 'Disability' in the Academy*, Douglas: *Uneasy Belonging: Autism and Immigration Practice in Canada*, Goodley: *Autism: A poststructuralist analysis*. The emerging field of critical autism studies challenges educators and critical disability theorists to rethink dominant medical theorizations on ASD and attend to diversity in experience. ASD as a neurological difference is not an area that receives much attention when thinking about students with ASD within the Nova Scotia schools as special education policy continues to focus on the social functionality of ASD intended to remediate social deviations from the norm.

The recent works by disability and cultural theorists have also invited a space to rethink approaches when exploring disability experience. I will now introduce the works of Crowley (2010), Hickey-Moody (2006, 2009), Hickey-Moody and Crowley (2010), Roman (2009) and Ware (2011) as they have pursued knowledge on the mediated aspects of disability and in the

process have disrupted medical knowledges and dualistic understandings on the lives of people with disabilities. Their work is a wonderful entry point before detailing Spinoza, Deleuze and Guattari theories used in this study as it ignites attendance to the active and mediated dimensions of disability experience.

2.5 Active Mediated Dimensions of Human Experience

Leslie Roman (2009) in *Unruly Salon*, series of performance based 'acts', brings together disability activists, scholars, performers and artists into one space to transcend how different kinds of bodies are represented.

> The power of disability arts and culture is nothing short of the elusive making of truths by disabled people that challenge non-disabled representations, taunt each other, play with each other: representations of people with disabilities as tragic, pitiful or whiney, monstrous, devious or heroically inspirational come back like a bird that slips through your fingers, only to reappear in shapes, forms, unexpected bodies and voices that rejoice with collective sensibilities, flesh, bone and blood, daring to stare back, to create and participate within a movement that cannot be contained to any one particular moment or series of events (Roman, 2009, p.1).

Roman's *Unruly Salon* is a wonderful place to start the discussion on students with ASD who do not necessarily fit into the able-bodied spaces when attending school. Her series of 'disabled' performances in a university space (University of British Columbia) draws attention to how marked bodies can be revitalized and celebrated. Some of the works in the *Unruly Salon* series included:

> Victoria Maxwell, who sheds new light on 'mental illness' in a solo show entitled, 'Crazy-for-Life' about her experience with bi-polar disorder. Christy Couture, who suffered an amputation of a leg at a tender age due to bone cancer and who rocks the house with soulful biting blues-sounding guitar to the rigorous piano playing of classical musician, Stefan Honisch who defies the idea of normalized piano playing as a physically impaired musician, from the comic and at once tragic bite of physical actor and mime, a deaf ex-Russian who immigrated to Canada, Max Fromitchev, to the riveting solo dramatic performance of actor, poet and dramatist, Lynn Manning who at the age of 23 was blinded in a bar shooting and went to accomplish all of the aforementioned in addition to becoming a world-class judo champion (Roman, 2009,p.9).

From these performances, Roman revealed how the audience both 'abled' and 'disabled' is moved reflexively and in activism.

> This Unruly Salon both celebrates and generates the confident claiming of place, space and culture by a people who will no longer be colonized, sidelined or silenced. At the same time, this Unruly Salon ordains and inducts each of us to pay attention, to make connections, to respond – in short to contribute to the opening and unfolding of this cultural space (Roman, 2009, p.7).

Roman's attention to cultural space considers how individuals with disabilities can be known outside mind/body categories where the boundaries between marked and unmarked bodies are blurred, transgressing Cartesian thinking. Hickey-Moody (2006, 2009) similarly employed performance art by applying dance theatre to seek alternative knowledge on the lives of individuals with intellectual disabilities.

> The ways in which bodies with intellectual disabilities are understood in the medical and sociological discourses from which their name is derived mark a limit in thought that needs to be moved beyond (Hickey-Moody, 2006, p.190).

Hickey- Moody's dance theatre envisions individuals with intellectual disabilities as a composite of affects rather than disabled subjects. Her infusion of dance with a focus on the corporeal capacities of individuals with intellectual disabilities disrupts medical conceptions and encourages the seeing of bodies with disabilities as active and emergent.

> Methods of thought pioneered within medical discourses have been shaped to answer a certain style of problem. Medical discourses have not been developed to solve problems of thought (problems which arise within thought) and as such they should not be employed to address social, affective or metaphysical concerns (Hickey-Moody, 2009, p.30).

Demonstrating the corporeal capacities of bodies through performance like dance reveals how bodies with intellectual disabilities can be rethought through aesthetic affect or what Hickey-Moody refers to as the "textual affect".

> Textual affects have the capacity to instigate corporeal affects, to teach new milieus of difference, or imbue new fragments of experience upon the bodies that behold them. Textual affects exist only within works of art (Hickey-Moody, 2006, p. 193).

Hickey-Moody explained how textual affects are made of sensations and composites of creative labour intended to open up how individuals with disabilities are thought about outside contemporary theorizations. Vicki Crowley (2010) also extended outside of medicalized accounts of bodies with disabilities through the use of photography, poetry and multi-textual pedagogy to engage in "the disjuncture" between advocacies and experience (p.543). Crowley

connected to the multidimensionality of experiences employing Deleuze and Guattari's rhizome to uproot linearity and explore the complexity of disability. Crowley employed photography to display alternative forms of becoming, producing a series of affects and intensities when revealing her experiences with deafness.

Hickey-Moody and Crowley (2010) engage us further with the cultural politics of the body by applying the arts, dance, media, and affect to their collection of essays challenging a redefining of bodies where corporeality and variation are prioritized. Linda Ware (2011) similarly invites the arts in exploring the lives of individuals with learning disabilities. Ware frames her work within the humanities based disability literature to make disability more familiar; out there, in existence. She explained the "categorization of humanity" as problematic, inviting readers to "reclaim disability identity" and use art as a medium to generate alternative ways to think about people's lives (p.194). The above works demonstrate the move in cultural studies and critical disability studies to extend knowledge outside medical constructions with increased consideration of the diverse corporeal capacities of bodies with disabilities. I now turn to introduce my main theoretical tools of rhizomes and affect. Definitively, the concept of a rhizome is employed to attend to the diverse paths and trajectories the young men with ASD take when navigating the complex educational terrain. Spinoza's philosophies on affect then follows to support thinking through emergence when studying the experiences of twelve young men with ASD having attended public school in Nova Scotia.

2.6 Rhizomes

Deleuze and Guattari (1987) in ATP describe rhizomes as a type of plant spreading in multiple directions with no centralized root. Deleuze and Guattari in recognition write, "[rhizomes] ceaselessly establishes connections between semiotic chains, organizations of power and circumstances relative to the arts, sciences and social struggles" (1987, p. 7). The workings of a rhizome are explained by Deleuze and Guattari through six principles: *connection, heterogeneity, multiplicity, asignifying rupture, cartography and decalcomania*. I apply these six principles in this study to destabilize linear ways of knowing young men with ASD in educational contexts and produce alternative knowledge on their individual experiences.

Rhizomes through the *principle of connection* invite a space to think about individual experience outside the limits of contemporary thought. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) in recognition of thinking through connections explain:

> any point of a rhizome can be connected to anything other, and must be.
> This is very different from the tree or root, which plots a point, fixes an order (p. 7).

Educational systems are tree-like configurations. The Universal principle of the tree in education is representative of the organizational forces in schools (i.e. rules, policies, structures, and hierarchies) intended to code students; a homogeneous entity. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) identify the workings of the arboreal system as following a molar line.

Molar lines are conventional theories in education, which position students to be predominantly known in relation to their race, gender, disability. Molar lines include the embedded structures situating students to experience school within ordered arrangements. For example, molar properties in Nova Scotia schools might include: classroom rules, individual student timetables, including separate policies such as the special education policy and adherence to the Nova Scotia public school branches policies and procedures[26]. For a student with ASD, a molar line might also involve experiencing school with a teacher assistant or having to adhere to a small room outside the regular classroom for social skill instruction. While molar lines inform knowledge on Western educational practices and the functionality of individual student performance, it provides limited understandings on individual experience.

> We're tired of trees. We should stop believing in trees, roots, and radicles. They've made us suffer too much ... Many people have trees growing in their heads, but the brain itself is much more a grass than a tree (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.15).

Rhizome's *principle of connection* in contrast envisions students through an open system disrupting tree-like thought with a focus on the interconnections emerging across diverse terrain. Thinking through rhizomes and its *principle of connection* in this study pursues knowledge on the young men's lives outside molar designations and follows their fluid connections on a micro level. Travel on a micro level is what Deleuze and Guattari call molecular lines understood as the process in which rhizomes travel; find new paths, diverge, split, break off and pursue alternative entries. The *principles of multiplicity and heterogeneity* speak to how rhizomes travel heterogeneously rather than homogenously.

In this project, the *principles of multiplicity and heterogeneity* are applied to connect to the non-linear paths the young men with ASD take when experiencing school. This contrasts with exploring students' tree travel, moving from point to point with clear orders and destinations. The *principles of multiplicity and heterogeneity*, therefore, advance the production of alternative knowledge outside conventional thought as it considers the young men's experiences in non-hierarchical ways with diversity and alterity prioritized.

When following the young men's rhizomatic paths they are understood to be "always in the middle, between things, interbeing, *intermezzo*" (1987, p.25). This is the principle of *asignifying rupture* that thinks through middles and connects to the moments in which the rhizome breaks, finds new entries or what Deleuze and Guattari call lines of flight. Lines of flight account for changes in trajectory a body makes; they are all the small ruptures that form new becomings outside molar lines. Lines of flight, therefore, travel horizontally with no clear end point of designation. In this study, the young men with ASD lines of flight are mapped. The mapping of the young men's lines of flight is the rhizomatic *principle of cartography and decalcomania*. A cartographic map is a rhizomatic entry that explores the interconnections within relations with no distinct beginning or end. In this study, a rhizomatic mapping involves an analysis of the young men's multiple connections with both human and nonhuman elements. In recognition of rhizomatic mapping Deleuze and Guattari write, "[u]nlike the graphic arts, drawing or photography, unlike tracings, the rhizome pertains to a map that must be produced, constructed, a map that is always detachable, connectable, reversible, modifiable, and has multiple entryways and exits and its own lines of flight" (1987, p.21). A rhizomatic mapping is not a tracing. For example, through conventional readings, students are plotted with centralized hierarchical systems determining student experience across "preestablished paths" in contrast the rhizome is "acentered" and can change in dimension (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 21). Movement applied as an additional analytical concept derived from rhizome theory supports the process of mapping the young men's multiple trajectories.

Deleuze and Guattari's rhizomes have been employed recently in educational research to rethink approaches to how students are thought about in school contexts[27]. The next section provides a review of studies from poststructural theorists who have applied rhizomatic theory in education. I have chosen these studies to advance thinking through rhizomes when exploring the young men's experiences outside contemporary forms of thinking.

2.6.1 Rhizomes in Education

Julie Allan (2008) described contemporary knowledge in education as a "kind of structure" that "relies on the logic of binarisms, for example, normal/abnormal, or able/disable to control, remediate and position certain students into categories" (p.60). Allan by applying rhizome theory argues that alternative thinking is required in education as "spaces of schooling, teacher education and education policy and legislation" are "rigid, striated, and hierarchical" (p.55). By following lines of flight it ruptures dualistic understandings creating "new forms of knowledge" where students in education are known as emergent subjects (Allan, 2008, p. 60). This extension is created by seeking knowledge on what students do in moments rather than thinking about students in terms of 'who they are' in relation to classificatory systems.

Dan Goodley (2007) creatively applied rhizomes to pursue "socially just pedagogies" that construct pedagogies as "becoming" rather than "being" (p. 317).

> Deficit thinking surrounds disabled people. Statementing of children as having special educational needs, the close alliance of their educational provision with the input of practitioners associated with the psy-complex (e.g. educational psychologists, speech therapists, childhood counsellors, special educational needs coordinators) and the desire of parents to get a label for their children are just some of the processes that conceptualize children in terms of their associated conditions (Goodley, 2007, p.319).

Goodley mobilizing Deleuze and Guattari's concept of rhizomes presents a space for educators and researchers to disrupt deficit driven thinking and attend to the emergent nature of the "ever-changing, ever-moving, becoming learner" (2007, p.324). Goodley eloquently brings to our attention that, "we are rhizomes" connecting his readers to the fluid nature of disability experience where students in school are thought about openly rather than predetermined (2007, p.323).

Petra Kuppers (2009) employed Deleuze and Guattari's work in ATP to explore the "tactility of disability" with an emphasis on analysing bodies through touch, vibration and poetry (p.223). "The Deleuzoguattarian toolbox allows for thoughts to be pried open, form familiar things to be disassociated, and unfamiliar things brought into contact with one another" (Kuppers, 2009, p.222). In using touch and poetry Kuppers reminds readers that a rhizomatic

model of disability is a movement rather than a definition. It is not a "new model" if it were "we would be back at a recipe, a fixed state" (p.226).

Deborah Youdell (2011) unsettles normative notions of school when examining school pedagogies in a special school for boys with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties through the concept of rhizomes.

> [Rhizomes] offer a generative conceptual framework for thinking about power and of the place of the state, its institutions, its structures and systems, its legislative and policy frameworks and formulations, its knowledges and its subjects in intimate inter-relation with the meanings and practices that delineate the social, the material conditions of social life, the minutiae of the day-to-day and the identifications and affectivities of social subjects ... Rhizomatics also help us to move beyond the criticisms and the limits of disciplinary power, governmentality and a person subjected in and to relations of power (Youdell, 2011, p.52).

Jason Wallin (2010) took a slightly different entry with rhizomes and explored the materiality of connections. Wallin envisions rhizomes as a "process of material connection in which a machine (such as a bicycle, for example) is connected to another via a process of conjunction" (p.86). Wallin taking up rhizomes through materiality illuminates the intersections between all bodily forces.

> When a human connects with a bicycle in a conventional way, certain potentials of both become operationalized ... what a thing *is* can only be known via the material connections into which it enters ... A guitar player who connects with a guitar operationalizes particular potentials for expression, while a guitar fed through a stack of amplifiers is operationalized differently than one played acoustically (Wallin, 2010, p.86).

Drawing attention to the materiality of the rhizome Wallin reminds researchers of the ongoing series of connections in play between bodies. In this project, the application of movement advances attention to the different rhizomatic paths the young men take inviting opportunity to think about their schooling experiences outside medical constructions and contemporary subject positions.

Spinoza's philosophies on affect compliment Deleuze and Guattari's concept of rhizomes when exploring the young men's schooling experiences as affect illuminates the situated dimensions of individual experience. The next section begins with an overview of Spinoza's

bodily ethics to better situate his understandings of the role of the body, followed with his philosophies on affect.

2.7 Spinoza's Bodily Ethics & Affect

Feminist theorists, queer theorists, and critical disability theorists have turned to Spinoza's philosophies raising pertinent epistemological and ontological issues and in the process have unsettled representational thought driven by medical and binary systems on individual lives. Feminist theorist, Elizabeth Grosz, advances Spinoza's bodily theories positioning a form of thinking that is "nondualistic and antiessentialist" (1994, p.13).

> Following Spinoza, the body is regarded as neither a locus for a consciousness nor an organically determined entity; it is understood more in terms of what it can do, the things it can perform, the linkages it establishes, the transformations and becomings it undergoes, and the machinic connections it forms with other bodies, what it can link with, how it can proliferate its other capacities – a rare, affirmative understanding of the body (Grosz, 1994, p.165).

Gatens (1996, 2009), Gatens and Lloyd (1999) have also employed Spinoza's philosophies to reconfigure how we come to know different kinds of bodies allowing for "the affirmation of bodily difference" (Gatens, 2009, p.13). In recognition of Spinoza's bodily ethics, Gatens writes:

> [t]he human body is understood by Spinoza to be a complex individual, made up of a number of other bodies. Its identity can never be viewed as a final or finished product as in the case of the Cartesian automaton, since it is a body that is in constant interchange with its environment. Spinoza understands the body as a nexus of variable interconnections, a multiplicity (2000, p.61).

Gatens reminds Spinozist followers to see the multiple connections in play between human and nonhuman elements like the environment. Her reading illuminates how a body is not limited when thinking through Spinoza's philosophies rather it is in continuous composition with other things. Gatens with Lloyd (1999) have also applied Spinoza's philosophies to think through imagination, desire and affect with increased recognition of bodily differences.

Spinoza's bodily ethics have been influential in disrupting separation of mind and body as Spinoza did not speak of bodies through dualisms, two lines of separate thought. Instead, Spinoza envisioned a body through movement, connections and emergence, "the mind is

united to the body because the body is the object of the mind" (Spinoza, 1959, *Ethics* II, prop. 21). For Spinoza, there is only *one* substance, and it is this intersecting of mind and body in Spinoza's theories that rejects the dominant mind producing a non-hierarchical entry when thinking about bodies. An individual with ASD analysed through Spinoza's bodily ethics is not cast as a body with an inferior mind or a body lacking mental states but a plurality, continually changing and transforming (Deleuze, 1988b).

> For indeed, no one has yet determined what the body can do, that is, experience has not yet taught anyone what the body can do from the laws of Nature alone, insofar as Nature is only considered to be corporeal, and what the body can do only if it is determined by the mind. For no one has yet come to know the structure of the body so accurately that he could explain all its functions — not to mention that many things are observed in the lower animals which far surpass human ingenuity, and that sleepwalkers do a great many things in their sleep which they would not dare to awake. This shows well enough that the body itself, simply from the laws of its own nature, can do many things which its mind wonders at (Spinoza, 1959, *Ethics* III, prop. 2).

In reading Spinoza's ethics, I was drawn to Spinoza's phrase, "[n]o one has yet determined what the body can do". It speaks to the history of the body yet the possibilities of what the body can be or more emphatically still become. In Gregg and Seigworth's (2010) work, I was once again brought to the attention of Spinoza's writings and his quote, "[n]o one has yet determined what the body can do". Gregg and Seigworth (2010) focus on the "not yet" aspect of Spinoza's philosophies, in that we still have yet to unravel the potential in bodies. I turn to Spinoza's bodily ethics to think through bodily capacities when exploring the lives of young men with ASD in school. Distinctly, Spinoza's concepts of affectio and affectus can help pursue the situational and relational aspects of individual experience, including the movement between states of being.

2.7.1 Spinoza's Affectus and Affectio

Affectus, the capacity for a body to affect or to be affected, presents an opportunity in this study to see the young men's intensities and energies when experiencing connections with both human and non-human things in school. Deleuze eloquently shares in his seminars "[e]very mode of thought insofar as it is nonrepresentational will be termed 'affect'" (Deleuze, 1978, para. 5). To explain further how productive a focus on the affective aspects of the young men's schooling experiences can be I turn to Deleuze's writings and lectures. Deleuze (1988b) explains Spinoza's AFFECTIO and AFFECTUS in his book, *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*.

> *affectio* refers to a state of the affected body and implies the presence of the affecting body, whereas the *affectus* refers to the passage of one state to another, taking into account the correlative variation of the affecting bodies. Spinoza's AFFECTUS translated to "affect" is a mode of thought that is non-hierarchical and non-categorical. Affect ... is not confined to the image or idea; it is of another nature, being purely transitive, and not indicative or representative, since it is experienced in a lived duration' (p.49 emphasis in original).

Deleuze describes how affect is a series of intensities that emerge instantaneously and he uses the example of a person in a dark room to make emphasis to how affect is mobilized. He explains how a person enters a dark room and in this process transcends into a deep, bodily state. His state of being can change, however if another person enters the room and turns on the light. His body in mixture responds! The heart races and is startled by the light. In this instantaneous moment, there is a passage from one state to another, from dark to light. It is so fast; it is precontextual. The transition from dark to light creates the change in state (the heart racing). The passage or what the body experiences instantaneously is **the affect**. In this example, the affect is not a physical movement; it is a biological transition. The affection, the *affectio*, is the dark state and light state mixing together producing the effect on the body[28].

Deleuze (1988b) explains how affect circulates between two bodies (i.e. human and human, human and non-human) including the effect the relation has on a person's experience. Identifying the affects that circulate between bodies can help to understand the emerging dimensions of individual experiences, including the effect bodily encounters can have on a person's experiences, the affection. Brian Massumi's (2002) work on affect is also useful in explaining how affect can draw attentiveness to the emergent dimensions of human experience. Massumi (2002) contends:

> Spinoza defined the body in terms of "relations of movement and rest". He wasn't referring to actual, extensive movements or stases. He was referring to a body's capacities to enter into relations of movement and rest. This capacity he spoke of as a *power* (or potential) to affect or be affected...The Spinozist problematic of affect offers a way of weaving together concepts of movement, tendency, and intensity in way that takes us right back to the beginning: in what sense the body coincides with its own transitions and its transitioning with its potential (p. 15 emphasis in original).

Massumi suggests affect is not a personal feeling; it is *prepersonal.* He conveys affect is "irreducibly bodily and autonomic", an "already felt" state at "the surface of the body"

(Massumi, 2002, p.25, p.28). Massumi (2002) following Spinoza sees the body outside its "definitional framework" putting into scholarship the situatedness of the body.

> Affect is situational: eventfully ingressive to context. Serially so: affect is trans-situational. As processual as it is precessual, affect inhabits the passage. It is pre- and postcontextual, pre- and postpersonal, an excess of continuity invested only in the ongoing: its own. Self-continuity across the gaps. Impersonal affect is the connecting thread of experience. It is the invisible glue that holds the world together. In event. The world-glue of event of an autonomy of event-connection continuing across its own serialized capture in context (p. 217).

Massumi's attendance to the situationality of bodies and precontextual aspects of experience is productive as it thinks about bodies outside a preconfigured framework. Other poststructural theorists have recently turned to affect when examining bodies in schools[29]. In the next section, I have chosen to illuminate a few studies that have applied affect theory in education to assist in advancing my analysis of the young men's experiences beyond medical constructions with emphasis on the emergent nature of their lives. Although these studies have not examined the experiences of individuals with ASD, they demonstrate how productive affect theory is in education to uproot representational thought and dualistic understandings.

2.7.2 Affect in Education

There has been a growing interest in applying affect theory in education and it has been productive in connecting us to the transformative nature of students' experiences. Youdell and Armstrong (2011) have recently employed affect theory to explore the workings of subjectivity and space in schools. Both theorists present their personal stories to have us think beyond "the subject's rational (irrational) ideas, actions or feelings" where instead the affective dimensions of student experience are prioritized (p.145). Youdell and Armstrong begin by describing an experience Armstrong had as a teacher in 1976 when on a field trip with a group of students. She takes us through a walk along a canal and the various points in which students become constrained through school spatial arrangements.

> The students in the crocodile might begin to move with a thought that 'we have to walk neatly', but as the crocodile fragments and then the fragments fragment further these movements are not driven by conscious intent. The bodies that slip out of formation and scatter are driven by affectivities that demand these bodies no longer be in a tight crocodile (Youdell & Armstrong, 2011, p.147 emphasis in original).

Youdell and Armstrong connect readers to the emerging affects the students' produce when walking along the canal in a crocodile formation including the moments when students affectively decide to move outside ordered lines. Later in the story, Youdell and Armstrong draw attention to a moment when one boy fully flees the structured formation and what happens when a teacher decides to pull his body back. Their attentiveness to the affective choreographies the students' experience in situated moments informs a different way of thinking and knowing students in educational contexts. Youdell and Armstrong then take up another series of affective choreographies when describing a research experience Youdell had with a group of boys in a classroom.

> As I take a seat at the side of the classroom two boys, Tom and Anth, come in and head to a small timber and cushion two seated sofa where Ed and Richard are already sitting. Immediately Tom and Anth make for Richard and, grabbing his arms, try to pull him up off the seat. Through laughter Tom and Anth command 'Richard, move!' while Richard squeals and wraps his right foot behind the chair leg, pulling his body back against their force to stay in place. Richard loosens his right arm and holds hard onto the arm-rest of the sofa, anchoring himself in his seat. Tom rushes to the back of the sofa and, placing both hands on Richard's back and planting his feet, tries to push Richard forward while Anth pulls from the front (Youdell & Armstrong, 2011, p.148).

The above excerpt demonstrates the various affects emerging in a classroom for a group of boys. Youdell and Armstrong's affective accounts are useful in showing the different kinds of affectivities that can emerge in educational settings between bodies and the impact affective exchanges have on individual's everyday experiences in school.

Olsson (2009) recently applied affect theory when studying preschool children's experiences. When following the young children's actions through an open system of exchanges Olsson identified that their identities were not fixed rather they were always in the process of transformation. She explained how the preschool children through action created opportunities for themselves ignited by the intensities that flowed through the educational spaces. Olsson's analysis of preschool children's experiences is useful as it moves from defining students "once and for all" to attendance on the emergent subject (Olsson, 2009, p.14). Across the collection, Olsson brings forward the simple idea of following students' interests and reactivating a focus on children's affective movements to produce new pedagogical approaches to education. Stephanie Springgay (2011) similarly applies affect and movement; specifically, she contextualizes how walking as a form of methodology can move beyond the mind/body binary

towards an "understanding of pedagogy that is sensational" (p. 636). I take up Springgay's work in chapter six to support an understanding of what happens to young men with ASD when walking through school spaces.

Bronwyn Davies and Susanne Gannon (2009) also use affect theory to imagine students in schools as creative makers "rather than mere recipients of over-coded, fixed knowledges" (p.1). Their collection of essays in *Pedagogical Encounters* draws attention to individual experience in various school spatial sites and how affect informs pedagogy. Davies and Gannon encourage educators to account more closely to what students may situatedly connect with when experiencing school.

> The notion of affect brings together physical, emotional and sensory dimensions of embodiment with movement...It accounts for repulsion as well as attraction and, as it focuses on the concrete and the lived and our "responses to," can help explain the dulling effect of one architectural space and the transcendence of another, or how an unpromising space is transformed by the relations within it" (Gannon & Davies, 2009, p.147).

Spinoza's affect is a productive tool when studying the schooling experiences of young men with ASD as it connects to the situational and emergent aspects of their experiences. It is thinking along emergent lines through the applying of affect theory that offers opportunity to make extensions outside dualistic understandings and medical constructions inciting alternative ways to know young men with ASD in educational contexts.

2.8 Summary

This chapter established the theoretical context of the study to advance my analysis of the young men with ASD multiple and situated schooling experiences. The onset of the chapter identified how medical constructions shape our ideas on ASD. Distinctly, how diagnostic criteria and medical labels can position educators and others to think about individuals with ASD through dualistic frameworks informing their understandings on disability, difference and normality. This was emphasized when I examined medical constructions that focus on the functionality of the ASD mind perpetuating the knowing of an ASD body mainly through normal/abnormal binaries. I then emphasized how popular cultural depictions in media complicate how individuals with ASD are known as they can produce totalizing images of an ASD subject, a body incapable of performing in normative social ways. Butler's theories on

norms identified how bodies that differentiate from the norm can be placed on the periphery of livability where their lives are valued less than those able to fit within normative parameters. I then turned in this chapter to disrupt binary and medical notions on ASD where individuals with disabilities can be thought about through variation and alterity.

Poststructural theorists in the field of education, disability and cultural studies provided this initial entry and opened a line of thinking that prioritized the active and mediated corporeal dimensions of disability experience. I chose to advance this discussion with the works of selected scholars, namely: Hickey-Moody (2006, 2009), Crowley (2010), and Roman (2009) including theorists in the field of critical autism studies who offer a conceptual space to imagine the lives of individuals with disabilities in more productive ways. Their work supported the groundwork for this study leading to the production and attendance of my research question, how do the theorizations of Spinoza, Deleuze and Guattari contribute to more productive ways of knowing young men with ASD in educational contexts?

Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) rhizomes including Spinoza's (1959) affect are the theoretical extension for this project to unsettle medical lines of thought and to focus on 'what a body with ASD can do'. They encourage rhizomatic thinking where bodies are no longer thought along molar lines with the active capacities of bodies prioritized. Deleuze and Guattari's concepts of rhizomes and Spinoza's philosophies on affect explained in this chapter support attendance to thinking about young men with ASD as emergent and active subjects. As this study progresses, I am also interested in what the analytical tool of movement might incite for education when thinking about students with ASD.

This is in keeping with Spinoza's bodily ethics that encourage a continual examination of 'what a body can do'. I take with me across future chapters Spinoza's phrase, [n]o one has yet determined what the body can do" and seek to advance dialogue in education regarding students with ASD emergent dimensions. Following Goodley (2007), the "time is ripe for experimenting", "to resist over-coding" and to "enter and define new territories" (p.329).

Overall, this chapter grounds the theoretical framework for the study. The next chapter details the multiple methods used to respond to my research questions. I argue that to think through multiplicities and situatedness requires a methodological framework that can unfold and see the diverse trajectories the young men with ASD experience when navigating Nova Scotia

public schools. The methodology for this project will link the theoretical tools from this chapter, rhizome and affect theory, to support my analysis of the young men's schooling outside medical constructions and dualistic frameworks. I turn now to introduce my methodological approach for this study.

Chapter 3: Mobilizing Methods

3.0 Introduction

Traditional educational philosophies dominantly understood through positivist approaches or what poststructuralist theorists, Peters and Burbules (2004) call "the Enlightenment norms that education prides itself on" (p.4) have dominated much of our thinking about education. In the past three decades, however, we have witnessed poststructural theorists applying innovative methodological approaches when studying human experience to unsettle monolithic representations. One area of emergence in poststructuralist thinking when conducting educational research is to consider individual experience beyond human centered approaches. This material shift is known as the 'posthuman turn' or 'the material turn' and it emerged as a means to transgress beyond the universal subject (Coole & Frost, 2010). Distinctly, Braidotti (2013) describes how the posthuman turn is a productive methodological approach as it provides as medium to perceive matter as emergent and ongoing and in the process destabilizes representational thinking. Braidotti (2006) further explains how posthumanist approaches change the way we think about subjectivity "blurr[ing] categorical distinctions" between nature and culture, mind and matter (p. 200). This ontological shift from conventional understandings of humanism to an "embodied and embedded kind" is explored in the field of new materialism (Braidotti in Dolphijn & van der Tuin, 2012, p. 22).

Rosi Braidotti coining the term 'new materialism' with Manuel DeLanda, in the 1990s, explains materialist theory as an "embodied and embedded brand of feminist philosophy" that "break[s] from both universalism and dualism" creating a "specific band of situated epistemology" (ibid, p. 22). Coole and Frost (2010) similarly express "materiality is always something more than "mere" (emphasis in original) matter: an excess, force, vitality, relationality, or difference that renders matter active, self-creative, productive, unpredictable" (p. 9). Several new materialist scholars[30] have begun to analyse movements, forces, where they "conceive of matter or the body as having a peculiar and distinctive kind of agency" (Frost, 2011, p. 70). In this study, I apply new materialist methodological approaches to attend to the young men's emergent and situated relations with both human and non-human elements when experiencing school. A new materialist approach is appealing when exploring the schooling experiences of young men with ASD as it can support a focus on the young men's affective capacities, 'what they can do'. Across this study, three main methodological tools are

applied to support attentiveness to the young men's affectivities and relational capacities when navigating multiple school dimensions. Specifically, I mobilize rhizomes, diffraction and writing as a method of inquiry. At the onset of chapter, I will provide a brief overview of these three methodological tools. The remainder of the chapter then details how these methods are mobilized followed with a description of the specific research activities when wanting to explore the situated schooling experiences of twelve young men with ASD.

Mobilizing rhizomes as a method follows feminist poststructural researchers who have turned to Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) work in ATP as a means to attend to the emergent nature of individual experience. Distinctly, my decision to apply a Deleuzian framework was shaped by Deleuze and Guattari (1994) philosophy that we must "create concepts" (p. 5). Deleuze and Guattari (1987) describe their philosophies in ATP as a 'book of concepts' and invite readers to take their ideas, to create and to experiment. It is this line of thinking, 'of creating' which I was drawn to when wanting to open up the affectivities of young men with ASD when navigating the complexities of school. Their concepts in ATP offered the opportunity to invent a creative methodology that could attend to each young man's multiplicity of experiences; a production of multiple affects that conceives new modes of existing. Colebrook (2002) writes philosophy for Deleuze is "this capacity to create concepts that reorient our thinking" and to "create possibilities for thinking beyond what is already known or assumed" (p.19, 21). Inna Semetsky (2006) similarly identifies Deleuze's approach to philosophy as "artistic creations, like sounds in music and colors in painting, or like cinematic images" (p.73). Peter Hallward (2006) also explains Deleuze's work "is meant to revitalize or re-energize being, to endow it with a primary and irreducible dynamism" (p.13). In this study, when mobilizing new materialist theory it was important to create innovative methods that supported attendance to the young men's multiple, situated experiences, "everywhere we look, it seems to us, we are witnessing scattered but insistent demands for more materialist modes of analysis" (Coole & Frost, 2010, p. 2). In keeping with new materialist approaches, rhizomes are mobilized to support the process of thinking through multiple connections both with human and non-human elements. This follows Deleuze's bodily ethics where Deleuze (1988b) writes, "a body can be anything; it can be an animal, a body of sounds, a mind of an idea; it can be a linguistic corpus, a social body, a collectivity" (p.127). A body imagined through rhizomes is a multiplicity; not a subject of organization. Later in this chapter, the use of rhizomes is detailed further when attending to the young men's multiple, situated experiences.

Diffraction derived from physics and taken up by Donna Haraway (1992) and Karen Barad (2003, 2007) is the second methodological tool. Diffractive methodologies have recently been used by new materialists to think of bodies not as predetermined rather as mutually 'intra-active' agents (Barad, 2007). Barad (2003) identifies a diffractive methodology can formulate alternative insights, changing the relations between nature and culture. Barad (2007) explains diffraction is a "way of understanding the world from within and as a part of it" with a focus on the entanglements of matter and meaning[31] between things (i.e. human and human, human and nonhuman) (p. 88). Diffraction assembled as the second methodological tool is used to support the seeing of the young men's experiences in a "relational, emergent sense" with attentiveness to differences (Coole & Frost, 2010, p. 29). In chapter one, I identified the focus of this study was to think differences and alterity on the experiences of young men with ASD. The application of diffraction allows each young man's experiences to be conceived in a relatively open process with a focus on their inbetween states of being, capacity to affect or to be affected. The mobilization of diffraction is explained later in this chapter. I will show how diffraction is a productive method to meet the aims of this research when wanting to explore the young men's situated, relational schooling experiences with both human and non-human elements.

Laurel Richardson's (1994) "writing as a method of inquiry" is the third methodological tool to address the more intricate dimensions of this research process, namely attendance to the affects circulating when the young men enter various school relations. That is, when writing through Spinoza's affect an ontological shift is made from 'what a subject is' to 'what a body can do'. Writing through affect supports my use of diffraction as it conceives of the young men's experiences as a *relational ontology*. Mobilizing a relational ontology, therefore, makes a shift from a humanist notion to a Spinozist, the capacity to affect or be affected. That is, when thinking relationally a body is not a static subject rather it is production of affects and intensities.

The rationale for using "writing as a method of inquiry" as well as rhizomes and diffraction is detailed across this chapter. The chapter then outlines the specific research activities that support this methodological approach where attendance to the young men's experiences is produced beyond traditional qualitative methods of inquiry. First, it is important to establish why I have chosen to extend outside traditional research approaches when studying the

schooling experiences of young men with ASD. The chapter begins with the works of new materialist theorists to open up questions about conducting qualitative research and what might happen if researchers move beyond linear forms of thinking with increased attendance to the situated, relational dimensions of experience. I open with the work of Elizabeth St.Pierre and Wanda Pillow in *Working The Ruins* (2000) who offer a collection of chapters focusing on the posthuman turn in educational research where feminist poststructuralists contribute to exploring education in other ways by asking questions that "produce different knowledge" , "deterritorial[ize] epistemological conditions" and "established ways of thinking" (p.1-2). Attending to the "crisis of representation" at the onset of this chapter is important as it situates my rationale for choosing diffraction, rhizomes and "writing as a method of inquiry".

3.1 Crisis of Representation

Troubled by categorical representations, poststructural researchers have turned to alternative methodological approaches designed to keep bodily thinking unstable, fluid or as St.Pierre and Pillow (2000) term "undefined" (p.6). Poststructural researchers in addressing the crisis of representation often phrase it as a "non-representational methodology" (Rosenau, 1992, p. 97). A "non-representational methodology" is a research approach that disrupts linear forms of thought wherein the researcher extends outside traditional forms of representation with an emphasis on bodily capacities.

St.Pierre and Pillow (2000) with Lather[32] frame attendance to the crisis of representation as "working the ruins" (p.3-4). "Working the ruins" is a pursuit to think beyond representative forms of inquiry with a focus on the situated engagements emerging in research (St.Pierre & Pillow, 2000). Pillow (2000) identifies "working the ruins" includes a focus on the body and what the body is doing in the research process. To ask, what happens in research when paying attention to bodies? How does it change research, "what we look at, how we look, what we ask, and what we choose to represent?" (p.199-200).

Pillow, equipped with critical, postmodern, feminist and qualitative research methods identified the intricate dimensions of research when embarking on a study of human experience. She explained how she entered ready for the rigours of research, yet found herself "unprepared for the *physicality*" of the research process when studying girls' experiences with

teenage pregnancy (Pillow, 2000, p. 200 emphasis in original). Part of the complexity for Pillow was how to write about each girl's accounts when individual experience was "varied and complex" (2000, p. 200). She described being held in tension not wanting to "simplify" the girls' experiences with pregnancy or claim some "essentialized identity related to the female body" (Pillow, 2000, p.200). When analyzing my data, I connected to Pillow's experience and felt the crisis of representation as I too did not want to fall into the methodological trap of digging up stagnant identity themes or stacking up bodily categories to describe the schooling experiences of young men with ASD.

I was challenged with questions surrounding methodology and theory as I desired a piece of research that presented the young men's bodily agency, intensities and affect acknowledging the situatedness of their lives in school. I questioned; 'how can I produce this?', 'how do I give my work warrant?' and 'how do I stop myself from slipping back into conventional approaches when thinking about young men with ASD in school?' Pillow's research experience on teenage pregnancy and the collection of essays in St.Pierre and Pillow's (2000) book, *Working the Ruins* positioned me to think along alternative lines of entry when approaching this research and critically think about questions such as:

> ...what counts as data? Can the category "data" be enlarged to include "sensual data," "dream data," and "response data"? (St.Pierre, 1997a). If so, what exactly are the "methods" that produce such data? ... Does it make sense to continue to describe and prescribe a step-by-step, linear research process? ... If we resist the impulse to normalize and regulate research... will it be acceptable for each researcher to define her own categories, her own process – to define "research" and "science"? Can research be so situated (hasn't it always been?) and, if so, how will we know it's valid? How will we even know whether its "research?" (St.Pierre & Pillow, 2000, p.10)

The questions put forth by St.Pierre and Pillow offer a space for researchers to consider strongly their research practices and to be aware of the intricacies of research when wanting to explore individuals' mediated, relational embedded experiences. St.Pierre with Lather (2013) illuminate the tension that can arise when trying to produce innovative qualitative methodological frameworks that look beyond humanist notions and coded methods of analysis.

> We always bring tradition with us into the new, and it is very difficult to think outside our training, which, in spite of our best efforts, normalizes our thinking and doing. The categories we have invented to organize and structure humanist qualitative methodology (e.g. the chapter headings in introductory textbooks) – research

> problem, research questions, literature review, methods of data collection, data analysis, and representation – assume depth in which the human is superior to and separate from the material – Self/Other, subject/object, and human/non-human (Lather & St.Pierre, 2013, p. 630).

Lenz Taguchi (2013) similarly remarks on the pull back to traditional forms of inquiry, "despite our intentions, we [get] caught up in the very classical root-book-thinking rejected by both renewed and new feminist materialisms" (p. 707). Lenz Taguchi later explains how modern philosophies "presuppose the human being" as "the only possible starting-point" that create the slip back into traditional forms of inquiry (2013, p. 708). Crucial in this process of identifying the young men's emergent and situated relations is to locate methodological approaches that blur boundaries between bodies, objects; however, with this I equally recognize the challenges when wanting to produce research outside traditional approaches. The conventions of thesis writing alone can create a tension that limits a researcher's capacities to extend fully beyond traditional methods. In acknowledging the challenges, I returned to Deleuze and Guattari (1994) idea of 'creating concepts' where new materialist methods have applied a Deleuzian framework formulating inventive methodologies that attend to individuals' relational capacities, what the young men with ASD can do.

Lather (2013) explains "think differently means to work within and beyond the reflexive turn, to problematize inquiry, to redefine objects as more in networks than in single sites" ... "[t]he actual design and practice of the fieldwork of the future are up for grabs" (p. 638). In wanting to employ creative methods that address the crisis of representation, I began to locate approaches that could seek knowledge outside conventional theorizations on the young men with ASD schooling experiences, including alternative methods to work with data. I found myself returning to Deleuze and Guattari's concepts (1987) in ATP. Specifically, I returned to their concept of rhizomes and how it might be applied as a methodological entry in this research. Choosing to use rhizomes as a form of methodology follows Deleuze and Guattari's (1994) philosophy, to "create concepts" (p.5).

> Concepts are not waiting for us ready-made, like heavenly bodies. There is no heaven for concepts. They must be invented, fabricated, or rather created and would be nothing without their creator's signature (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994, p. 5).

The next section includes a description of the theoretical underpinnings that guided my decisions to apply a rhizomatic framework including diffraction and writing as a method of

inquiry. Following Lather (2000), "the space of knowledge has changed its contours" thus requiring new approaches when examining bodies in social contexts (p.303). It is important to situate the rationale behind these methodological decisions before detailing how they are applied to meet the aims of the research. I begin by introducing rhizomes as the overarching methodological framework.

3.2 Rhizomatic Framework

This dissertation applies a rhizomatic framework to analyze the schooling experiences of twelve young men with ASD having attended public school in Nova Scotia, Canada. Prior to outlining the methodological framework for this study I want to identify how Deleuze and Guattari's rhizomes have previously been taken up in research as a methodological tool, known as "rhizoanalysis"[33]. Rhizoanalysis as a method has invited opportunity for researchers to think through emergence and to "see things in middles" (Alvermann, 2000, p. 188). Examining text in middles when applying rhizoanalysis has made new relations possible as it seeks knowledge through a multiplicity of entries rather than linear coding and categorizing of data (Hagood, 2004; Leander & Rowe, 2006). Leafgren (2008) similarly explained how rhizoanalysis as a method is useful in finding "lateral paths of understanding by linking and folding texts" with "no intent to compare or generalize" but to "describe moments" (p.332-333).

While rhizoanalysis offers a productive space to explore the multiple dimensions of individual experience, Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) rhizomes are mobilized slightly differently in this study. The concept of rhizomes is applied as an overarching methodological framework to support the situational inquiry into the young men with ASD schooling experiences with a **focus on their movements**. Hickey-Moody's (2009) reading of rhizomes is utilized as she explained rhizomes are "texts that have multiple entryways, that employ the power of open connections and are expansive in nature" (p.xviii). Lather (1993) similarly suggests rhizomes "work[s] against the constraints of authority, regularity, and commonsense, and open thought up to creative constructions" (p.680).

The rhizomatic framework used in this project is therefore, not linear as it requires entry in "middles" with no distinct beginning, middle and end format. Alvermann (2000) explained a rhizomatic look at texts "decenter[s] key linkages and find new ones" achieved by "remaining

open to the proliferation of ruptures and discontinuities" (p.118). Thinking through rhizomes methodologically in this research presents an opportunity to map my participants' lines of flight, their movements, without preconceived notions of what that is supposed to look like. "Rhizomes favour exteriority, motion, chance, and variation outside the contrived confines of a text" (St.Pierre, 1997, p.409). A young man with ASD in school thought about rhizomatically is understood as a body in movement, filled with intensities rather than static or known through predetermined sets of relations. The mobilizing of a rhizomatic framework supports the aims of this research as it can decentre representational thinking and traditional forms of knowing young men with ASD. To assist in unfolding the multiple dimensions of the young men with ASD schooling experiences the concept of rhizomatic stories is added.

Sermijn, Devlieger and Loots (2008) have produced rhizomatic stories when studying human experience after discovering their informants told their life events rather rhizomatically. They explained this as a participant taking up one subject and then diverting mid-way through conversation to another topic of conversation with no strong linkage between stories. It was the storytelling in "middles" made by participants that sparked Sermijn et al. (2008) to produce rhizomatic stories; that is, a story that has no single correct point of entry offering opportunity to explore an individual's experiences at any point. I apply the concept of rhizomatic stories in this study as a presentation tool in my data assemblages to support my rhizomatic framework. Later in this chapter, I detail the research activities that led to the production of numerous rhizomatic stories on the young men's schooling. Having introduced the main methodological framework of rhizomes, I turn now to explain how diffraction is employed as a form of analysis. The section on diffraction begins with the work of Haraway (1992) followed by other new materialists who have applied diffraction to support the process of thinking through differences and beyond more than human encounters. Richardson's (1994) "writing as a method of inquiry" is then outlined as the third methodological tool to support my diffractive analysis. Distinctly, I explain how writing through affect can increase attendance to the young men's inbetween states of being. Again, it is important to establish the theoretical underpinnings of my methodological decisions before detailing specific research activities.

3.3 Diffraction

Donna Haraway's (1992) use of diffraction transcends traditional approaches to research as it encourages a seeing through partial understandings where difference is prioritized. To make emphasis to thinking through difference I begin by revealing a piece of artwork that is a representation of diffraction. The artwork was produced by an artist named Lynn Randolph who has worked with Donna Haraway making several pieces of artwork for Haraway's books. Donna Haraway writes, "Lynn Randolph's paintings infiltrate the fibers of my flesh and spirit ... prints of Randolph's paintings appear in my books not as illustrations but as parts of arguments --as sites of meditation, dense feeling, and political reflection" (Haraway, *Living Images: Conversations with Lynn Randolph,* para. 1)[34]. Lynn Randolph titled this piece of artwork (see Figure 3.1), "*Diffraction*" in 1992 and explains:



Figure 3.1 Diffraction

Randolph, L. (n.d.). *Diffraction* [painting]. Retrieved on February 5th, 2012 from http://www.lynnrandolph.com/ModestWitness.

> In my painting an image of a powerful man stands behind the central figure of a young woman. He is a screened memory, one that marks a site of diffraction. The shifts that occur with age and psychic transformations, the multiple selves incorporated in one body are presented in the figure with its two heads, multiple fingers and the metaphysical space in between. Diffraction occurs at a place at the edge of the future, before the abyss of the unknown, the space occupied by the young woman in my painting. I'm trying to create bodies that matter. By imagining a woman's realty in a sci-fi world, a place composed of interference patterns, we might become something different, something inappropriate, deluded, unfitting, and magical, something that might make a difference. I believe we need to be active about this, not removed, transcendental and clean, but finite, real (not natural) and soiled by the messiness of life.[35]

Randolph's imaginings and couplings of diffraction support Haraway's envisioning of bodies through difference. Haraway explained diffraction as a light pattern that records differences caused by movements of rays. Diffraction in recording movement replaces the mirroring or reflection and refraction of light and "maps where the effects of difference appear" (Haraway, 1992, p.300). Diffraction as an analytical tool in this study is useful as it sees not through reflection, but through difference.

New materialist feminist researchers are reigniting the kind of materialism that Donna Haraway (1992) started in the early 1990s as a means to disrupt humanist notions and coded methods of analysis. The use of diffraction has been an innovative methodological approach to think through difference that can attend to what Hultman and Lenz Taguchi (2010) call a "relational materialism" (p. 525). Hultman and Lenz Taguchi (2010) "put to work concepts that open up possibilities to understand the child as *emergent in a relational field* a space in which *non*-human forces are equally at play and work as constitutive factors in children's learning and becomings" (p. 527, emphasis in original). A focus on the relational dimensions of human-nonhuman encounters engages with what Barad (2007) describes as an intra-action, the mutual engagements with matter. Barad describes her engagement with new materialism as giving "matter its due as an active participant in the world's becoming, in its ongoing 'intra-activity'" (p. 803). Barad (2007) explains how intra-activity is the "relationship between" that is not clearly defined. Applying Spinoza's affect when doing a diffractive reading supports attendance to the young men's inbetween states of being, or what Barad frames as the "relationship between". That is, in this study writing through affect can support the diffractive reading as it attends to the young men's affective capacities when entering various relations, both human and non-human.

Such 'new materialist' work challenges linear models and puts into question dualisms; human/non-human, culture/nature, structure/agency (Braidotti, 2013; Coole & Frost, 2010).

> That is, [new materialists] conceive of matter or the body as having a peculiar and distinctive kind of agency, one that is neither a direct nor an incidental outgrowth of human intentionality but rather one with its own impetus and trajectory (Frost, 2011, p. 70).

Barad (2003, 2007) following Haraway has taken up diffraction as a methodological approach to attend to intra-activity. Diffraction offered Barad a method of analysis that could disrupt

linear systemized practices as when reading diffractively there is "direct material engagement" where "instead of there being a separation of subject and object, there is an entanglement of subject and object" (Barad in Dolphijn & van der Tuin, 2012, p. 52).

> [A]diffractive methodology is a critical practice for making a difference in the world. It is a commitment to understanding which differences matter, how they matter, and for whom. It is a critical practice of engagement, not a distance-learning practice of reflecting from afar (Barad, 2007, p.90).

Diffraction supports my rhizomatic framework as it positions data to be read through differences and invites alternative understandings outside contemporary thought on the young men's schooling experiences. A diffractive "reading" of the young men's schooling experiences, specifically, can attend to the intersected relations the young men make with all things when moving across the educational terrain (i.e. humans, objects, nature, spaces, arrangements, policies, atmospheres, the researcher, and the research space). The diffractive reading of the data, therefore, positions this research outside representational thought, with increased consideration of 'what a body can do'. Diffraction as an analytical methodological tool has been taken up recently in educational research[36]as an alternative to traditional forms of representational analysis, including modes of reflection.

Analysing data diffractively "is about reading with the data, and to open up for new ways of understanding the data" (Palmer, 2011, p.8). Lenz Taguchi (2012) similarly encourages a diffractive reading, to "open up data, to defract it, and to imagine what newness might be incited from it" (p.270).

> We need to move, ontologically, from identifying bodies as separate entities with distinct borders to think in terms of processes of entanglements" (Lenz Taguchi, 2012, p.271).

van der Tuin (2011) explained, "[d]iffraction is meant to disrupt linear and fixed causalities, and to work toward "more promising interference patterns" (p. 26). A diffractive reading of data in this project is intended to displace the fixed ASD subject and focus on the connections each young man experiences with various school relations. Explicitly, diffraction is used to analyze the multiple connections each young man makes with attendance to difference, alterity and variation. The application of diffraction also supports attendance to my own engagements and entanglements in the research process.

For example, gender relations were one force emerging in this process as I present through gender configurations as an 'able woman' producing research with 'disabled men'. What intensities emerge in the research process because of this? How does gender unsettle the research space or does it? Other entanglements included the atmosphere of the room during data collection, the intersections between my body and participants, the tone of voices, mine and theirs, the appearance of nonhuman material in the space. A diffractive reading of the data reminded me of how the researcher also intersects and is entangled in the research process.

> Different bodies transform with different intensities and force, always running like waves or vibrations through all kinds of bodies at different speeds ... data is a constitutive force working upon the researcher. A diffractive 'seeing' or 'reading' ... activates you as being part of and activated by the waves of relational intra-actions between different bodies and concepts (meanings) in an event with the data (Hultman & Lenz Taguchi, 2010, p. 533, 537).

Diffraction as a form of analysis can address the situated entanglements that emerge for the young men with both human and nonhuman elements of school. Laurel Richardson's (1994) "writing as a method of inquiry" was another productive tool to advance attentiveness to the complex dimensions of this research process. Distinctly, Richardson's "writing as a method of inquiry" as the third main methodological tool invited opportunity to write myself through the more intricate aspects of the research when studying the multiple and situated experiences of young men with ASD.

3.4 Writing as a Method of Inquiry

Richardson's writing as a method supports a more in-depth knowing of the research or as Deleuze and Guattari (1987) describe the "folding of one text onto another" (p.6). Laurel Richardson (1994) explained the writing process.

> I consider writing as a method of inquiry, a way of finding out about yourself and your topic. Although we usually think about writing as a mode of "telling" about the social world, writing is not just a mopping-up activity at the end of the research project ... writing is also a method of "knowing" – a method of discovery and analysis (p.516).

In this study I mobilized "writing as a method of inquiry" to extract the emergent, affective dimensions of the young men's experiences. Through journal writing, I acknowledged not just the young men's, but also my own desires, affectivities, intensities, interests, ideas, politics,

and feelings in the research process. Richardson encourages us to write informing how it helps shape our ideas.

> [T]here is no single way – much less "right" way of staging a text', the 'same material can be written for different audiences – positivists, interactionists, postmodernists, feminists, humanities professors, cultural studies scholars, policy makers and so on. That is why it is called material. Like wet clay, it is there for us to shape (Richardson, 1994, p.523).

St. Pierre (1997) similarly employs writing as a method to create new lines of thinking, in recognition she writes, as "I write, I think, I learn, and I change my mind about what I think" (p.408). With this acknowledgement St.Pierre also identified the challenges when writing outside representational lines.

> It is very difficult, almost impossible at times, to write and think outside the language of humanism, our mother tongue that constructs and perpetuates with such transparent ease binaries, hierarchies, dialectics, and other structures that are not just linguistic but that have very material effects on people ...Writing seems more accidental than intentional and is often produced by unintended juxtapositions: coreadings of texts on entirely different topics, the discovery of a particularly provocative word as I skim the dictionary page for another, or the memory of a dream that displaces some truth to which I have become attached (St.Pierre, 1997, p.404,409).

The applying of Richardson's "writing as a method of inquiry" is productive in this study as it approaches this research outside representational inquiry and supports attendance to the young men's circulating affects when entering various school relations. Distinctly, writing through affect I could conceive the young men's relational capacities, to affect or to be affected. That is, to make a shift from static notions of agency to a Spinozist notion, what a body can do. As discussed in chapter two, Spinoza's affect offers a conceptual tool to challenge subject/object designations where the young men's experience are conceptualized as relational, no subject, no object – a multiplicity. Clough (2010) indicates affect "has intensified the difference or *difference* of subjectivity and the human body while turning focus to the sociality of the transmission of force or intensity across bodies, and not only human bodies" (p. 224, emphasis in original). Hickey-Moody and Malins (2007) similarly explain the application of affect can produce a different way of knowing bodies that situates a space to think of bodies as in process, through intensities and affect.

Writing through affect across the analysis supports the diffractive reading as it attends to the multiple affects between bodies, the state of being between things (human and non-human). This analytical approach of writing through affect is a *relational ontology*. Spinoza's relational ontology puts into question dualisms: human/nonhuman, culture/nature, able/disable and supports the dissolving of boundaries nature and culture, mind and matter (Braidotti, 2013; Coole & Frost, 2010). As Williams (2010) remarks, "Spinoza's thought is deeply relevant for thinking beyond the subject, calling us to think about the structure of affect and the agency of bodies in new and exciting ways" (p. 246). Writing through affect, I utilize a relational ontology that attends to the multiple affects circulating for the young men when experiencing relations with both human and non-human elements of school. By applying Spinoza's affect, I give attention to the field of new materialism in the analysis as it creates an ontology that "consider[s] anew the location and nature of capacities for agency" and allows multiplicities of affect to unfold (Coole & Frost, 2010, p. 9). Spinoza's affect helps us understand the world not in terms of signifying structures rather to think through relations of affect, rest and movement.

3.5 Summary of Methodological Framework

The beginning of this chapter outlined the main methodological threads for the dissertation. Rhizomes provide the overarching framework to think through multiplicities and focus on the young men's movements. Diffraction as the second main methodological tool pursues a reading of the data where attention is directed to differences, including the emerging intersections the young men experience with both human and non-human elements of school. Writing as a method of inquiry as the third methodological tool is a productive form of analysis as it makes an ontological shift to think relationally when analysing the young men's experiences, the affects circulating between bodies (human and non-human). The next section outlines the research activities which led to producing rhizomatic stories on twelve young men with ASD schooling experiences having attended public school in Nova Scotia, Canada. The section commences with an overview of the research design followed with criteria for participation and a detailed description of research activities, namely: the interview process, analysis of data, presentation of data and issues with validity and ethics when studying the young men's schooling experiences.

3.6 Mobilization of Design

The overarching methodological design for this study is qualitative; following John Creswell's (2003) characteristics. Qualitative research according to Creswell (2003) is "emergent rather than tightly prefigured" (p. 181) and includes multiple methods with attention to emergent participation and rapport building. Adopting Creswell's qualitative approaches, I mobilized numerous methodological tools (rhizomatics, diffraction, writing as a method) when exploring the schooling experiences of young men with ASD. Application of multiple methods in this project is intended to produce an alternative understanding of the young men's experience where their movements, situatedness and differences are prioritized as evidence. The first mobilization when wanting to find out about young men with ASD schooling experiences outside conventional theorizations consisted of framing my research questions. The main research questions:

How do twelve young men with ASD experience public school in Nova Scotia, Canada? How do the theorizations of Spinoza, Deleuze and Guattari contribute to more productive ways of knowing young men with ASD in educational contexts?

Followed with sub-research questions:

How can rhizome and affect theories assist in unfolding the young men's schooling experiences in alternative ways outside of contemporary thought? What can affect theory inform about the young men with ASD situated schooling experiences? What affects emerge for the young men with ASD when experiencing school? What can the mobilization of movement as an analytical concept inform about the young men with ASD schooling experiences?

The second mobilization involved attendance to research questions. This included: establishing criteria for participation, ethics approval, recruitment of participants, data collection methods, data analysis (diffraction), validity and ethical considerations.

3.6.1 Overview of Research Design

Young men between the ages of 18 to 34 years who identified as young men with ASD and had previously attended public school in Nova Scotia, Canada were interviewed on their

schooling experiences. Two semi-structured interviews with each young man were conducted. The decision to use a semi-structured interview was to support the meeting of the research aims and allow for exchange of dialogue between researcher and participant where participants can extend and their voices are heard (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). The format of the semi-structured interview involved face to face interaction between participant and researcher, including a framework of questions to support the aims of the research when discussing particular topics with the young men on their schooling (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). Patton (2002) describes how a guide of questions can serve as a basic checklist during the interview to make sure the topics and intended aims of the research are covered.

I constructed a general interview guide in advance that contained questions on the topics of: school arrangements (i.e. rules, class structures), social activities, including daily school practices (i.e. classes, free time, and routines) (see Appendix C for the general interview guide). The use of a general interview guide allowed for flexibility where information on school topics could be pursued in multiple directions (Patton, 2002). The interview guide also ensured the same basic lines of inquiry were asked to each participant keeping the rigours of academic research. "Thus, the interviewer remains free to build a conversation within a particular subject area, to word questions spontaneously, and to establish a conversation style but with the focus on a particular subject that has been predetermined" (Patton, 2002, p.343). Patton (2002) reminds researchers data gathered from a general interview guide varies from each person being interviewed.

Additional visual methods were used in the second interview, namely: stock photography, paper, markers and access to a computer. The use of visual methods has been employed in previous research when working with individuals with disabilities[37], and the addition of visual methods offered wonderful extensions to the semi-structured interview format. In the second semi-structured interview, participants were also invited to bring in school artefacts to support the telling of their experiences in school. The remainder of this chapter outlines the research activities. It provides criteria for participation followed with specific details on how the interviews were conducted including how visual methods were mobilized in the second interview. The chapter then explains how data was analysed and extracted to produce rhizomatic stories on the young men with ASD schooling experiences.

3.6.2 Criteria for Participants

The criteria for participation included:

- Young men between the ages of 18-40 who identify as having ASD.
- Have attended public school in Nova Scotia, Canada.
- English is their first language.
- Independently converse with another adult.

Adults who identified as young men with ASD and had recently finished school or were near completion of school were chosen as there is great value in hearing stories from individuals who can reflect back on their schooling and who have matured in ways where they can share stories in a deeper manner. Martino and Pallotta-Chiarolli (2003) highlight the value and importance of interviewing men who have finished school as they express a willingness to tell stories that previously may have remained hidden in fear of reprisal from teachers and peers. The decision to interview adults instead of boys also stemmed from my desire to hear their stories rather than those told through secondary sources such as a parent or care worker. The criterion of having an independent conversation supported this objective as it allowed an exchange to occur between participant and researcher. My decision to only interview young men rather than women emerged from my personal context of parenting a young man with ASD. I had mentioned in chapter one that I was curious about my stepson's experiences and those of other young men with ASD. In future, however I would like to explore the educational experiences of young women with ASD as well as students with ASD presently attending school. Exploring the experiences of young women with ASD including students participating currently in school can support a broader understanding on the lives of young people with ASD. Specifically, it allows for the possibility to make meaning outside medical constructions on their lives.

3.6.2.1 Recruitment of Participants

Ethics approval was granted by the University of South Australia Human Research Ethics Committee on July 28th, 2011 and recruitment of participants commenced in August 2011. Recruitment of participants involved:

- Poster advertisements were distributed to Nova Scotia community centers, post offices, local shops and libraries, including a radio announcement and advertisement in local paper.

- Provincial autism centers (three in the province) mailed the advertisement to members on two separate occasions, and the study was presented at an autism social group meeting at the Provincial Autism Center in Halifax, Nova Scotia on one occasion by their lead social group worker.
- The Head of Student Services for the school board granted permission to advertise in local high schools to students just finishing school and were over the age of 18.

From recruitment, nine men contacted me by email and one man by phone. Two parents responded on their sons' behalf by email for a total of twelve participants. The parents who emailed indicated they could assist in arranging a meeting time. Enquiries were made by four other parents, however, after sending information I received no further response even with a follow-up email. Five other enquiries did not fit the criteria, these included; one man over the age of 50, two from parents with daughters who had ASD; parents of boys with ASD who were aged 14 and 16 years.

After eight months of active recruitment interviews with twelve young men between the ages of 18 to 34 who identified as having ASD were undertaken. Eight out of the twelve participants responded from poster advertisements, and four were referred by snowball sampling from educators in Nova Scotia. Six young men recruited identified as having "autism" and six with "high-functioning autism". While the young men employed different ASD terminology, each of the identifications addressed the criteria for ASD in the DSM-V and the criteria in the former DSM-IV (American Psychiatric Association 1994, 2013). The phrasing autism spectrum disorder is often not used in everyday language as it is formal, therefore, the young men identifying with "autism" or "high-functioning autism" was anticipated.

3.6.2.2 Participant Profiles

The participants attended public school in Nova Scotia under the Department of Education's 1996 SEPM except for two participants who experienced the revised 2008 Special Education Policy. It is significant in that my participants would have been some of the first students to experience the 1996 SEPM. All participants attended regular classes with additional support in the form of learning centers, resource classes, and small group instruction. Seven of the young men received support from a teacher assistant. Table 3.1 provides an overview of the participant profiles.

Table 3.1

Participant Profiles

Leo	30 years old, Caucasian - Identified as a young man with autism Education: Graduated from high school Employment: Volunteers in his community
Wes	26 years old, Caucasian - Identified as a young man with high-functioning autism Education: Graduated from high school and university Employment: Self-employed through his business
Frank	34 years old, Caucasian - Identified as a young man with autism Education: Graduated from high school Employment: Employed full time
Arthur	22 years old, Caucasian - Identified as a young man with high functioning autism Education: Graduated from high school Employment: Unemployed at the time of the study
Oliver	21 years old, Caucasian - Identified as a young man with high functioning autism Education: Graduated from high school Employment: Works part time
Liam	24 years old, Caucasian - Identified as a young man with high functioning autism Education: Graduated from high school and university with an undergraduate degree Employment: Full time student - presently pursuing education
Henry	18 years old, Caucasian - Identified as a young man with autism Education: At time of the study he was just finishing his last term of high school
Mason	18 years old, Caucasian - Identified as a young man with autism Education: At time of the study he was finishing his last year of high school
Bobby	27 years old, Caucasian - Identified as a young man with autism Education: Graduated from high school Employment: Unemployed at the time of the study
Luke	24 years old, Caucasian - Identified as a young man with high functioning autism Education: Graduated from high school and attended a university for two years Employment: Unemployed at the time of the study
Adam	21 years old, Black Canadian - Identified as a young man with autism Education: Graduated from high school Employment: Unemployed at the time of the study
Neil	24 years old, Caucasian - Identified as a young man with high functioning autism Education: Graduated from high school and university with an undergraduate degree Employment: Unemployed at the time of the study

Prior to interviewing the twelve young men with ASD, I conducted a pilot interview. The rationale for giving a pilot interview was to assist in identifying which stock photography to use with the young men in the second semi-structured interview, including an opportunity to experiment with the questions on the interview guide.

3.6.3 Pilot Interview

I chose to interview a ‘typical’ woman between the ages of 18 to 40 to see how she would respond to my questions and stock photography. The decision to interview a woman rather than a man emerged from not wanting to know in advance how another man might respond potentially skewing my thoughts on boys’ experiences in Nova Scotia schools. Using a semi-

structured interview format I asked the pilot participant questions on her schooling experiences. In the pilot interview, the first objective was to find out if the topics and questions on the interview guide drew a response. For example, I wanted to know if the question produced further discussion on a school topic as well as if she understood the nature of the questioning relative to her previous schooling experiences. It was important to see how she responded because if she did not discuss her schooling at length or if the questioning was confusing or produced restrictions on the types of responses she gave I would have pursued a different interview guide or even considered an unstructured interview format. The young woman, however, responded in detail to many of the questions.

The second objective of the pilot interview was to get a better sense of what stock photographs to include in the second semi-structured interview. Her responses to the stock photography similarly assisted in making the final selection of photographs to include in the second interview. Any photograph, for example, that did not generate much of a response was tagged including photos that generated a similar response, for example, two photos of school buildings. In this sense, the running through of photographs was helpful in determining which photos to use, and it also provided reassurance in knowing that the stock images offered an additional entry. This was acknowledged when the pilot participant responded positively to the photography producing more data on her schooling experiences, including increased discussion on many schooling topics that may have remained hidden in its absence. After analysis of the pilot interview, I set up times to meet individually with each of my twelve participants.

3.6.4 Semi-Structured Interviews

Twelve participants were interviewed on two separate occasions with each lasting approximately 45 minutes, except for one participant who declined a second interview. The participant who declined indicated he did not have anything else to tell me on his schooling. I explained how I would be employing photography in the second interview however he was still reluctant to return. Safeguarding his wish I asked if he would mind chatting a little longer, and if I could show him some photographs and he seemed happy to oblige. With this participant, I had an extended first interview which lasted approximately 65 minutes where I was able to use stock photos to draw further data on his schooling experiences. It was

important throughout this research to be open and flexible. Creswell (2003) reminds us the data collection can change, and it is the use of multiple strategies in qualitative design, which can support the meeting of our research objectives.

The time frame between the first and second semi-structured interview was approximately two weeks. The time between interviews was used to listen to transcripts and prepare visual tools for the second interview. Information sheets were emailed to participants in advance of first interview to promote informed consent, allowing time to review the information and chat with an advocate about the study if desired (see Appendix D for information sheet).

Interviews with each participant were conducted at locations most suited and preferable for the individual participant. When conducting interviews, I met six participants at the Provincial Autism Center in Halifax, Nova Scotia in a quiet room provided to me by the center. It was a central location, and participants seemed content to meet there. With the other six participants, I met them at alternate sites with participants making the decision on where they would like to meet. Following Creswell (2003) it is important participants have an emergent role in the research process and in this study choice of location was one active component of the young men's participation in the research. In the end, three participants chose to be interviewed at their homes with the other three participants selecting an office setting (one at a parent's place of employment, one in an office space in the town a young man resided in and one at my office at Acadia University). The young man interviewed in my office did not know where to meet and therefore, the office was chosen as it was in a convenient location for the young man to access.

3.6.4.1 First Semi-Structured Interview

The first semi-structured interview involved reading the consent form with each participant (see Appendix E for participant consent form). The participant at this time was informed that he could withdraw from the study at any time with no questions being asked and without reprisal. It was then explained to the participant that both interviews would be tape recorded and all identifiable material removed to protect identity and confidentiality. The participant was also informed that all data would be stored in a locked cabinet in my office in Seminary Building at Acadia University. Each of the twelve young men agreed to tape recordings as indicated with the signing of consent forms.

The first semi-structured interview consisted of a face to face conversation with each participant about his schooling experiences following the general interview guide. The interview guide supported attendance to school topics however the intention was to allow each young man to tell his schooling stories in his own way and to keep the process open to whatever stories emerged. At times, there were silences between us. Charmaz (2002) identifies silences have meanings encouraging researchers to pay attention to the subtleties in bodily expression, participant sighs, smiles, laughter and sometimes groans. Throughout the interview, I recorded moments where a participant paused as what participants do not say can be as telling as what they do say (Charmaz, 2002). With the twelve men, their recollections of experiences in elementary school were often limited, and therefore, most of the conversation revolved around their experiences in middle and high school.

At the end of the first semi-structured interview I invited each participant to bring any school artefacts to the next interview. It was explained that this was strictly voluntary and by no means obligated. I supported the participant's understanding by suggesting he could bring in yearbooks, school photos, drawings, or any other items relevant to his educational experiences.

3.6.4.2 Second Semi-Structured Interview

The second interview took place a week or two later providing time to listen to the interview tape and opportunity for participants to collect school artefacts. The beginning of the second semi-structured interview involved asking the participant if he had anything to tell me that he perhaps forgot to share previous as well as time to member check regarding information from the first interview (Creswell, 2003). Member checking included reviewing responses to improve credibility and accuracy in the research process (Creswell, 2003). After an initial discussion with the participant, the second interview followed the interview guide. In this interview, I returned to some topics from the first interview to clarify any questions that arose from listening to the interview tapes as well as any questions I recorded in my journal which I wanted to return to in the second interview. The use of the interview guide in the second interview was dependent on what was discussed in the first interview as each young man explored topics in his own way and pace. For example, a few young men would talk at lengths about school rules while other participants did not have much of a response to the topic. After

more discussion on school topics, visual methods were introduced, namely stock photography including an opportunity for the young men to discuss any school artefacts they brought in. Several young men chose to bring artefacts to the second interview with the exception of four young men. Participant school artefacts included: school yearbooks (three participants), journals (one participant), art work (three participants), and a personal website (one participant). My use of stock photography in the second interview was applied by following photo elicitation methods.

3.6.4.3 Photo Elicitation

Photo elicitation[38] often called photo interviewing is one methodological tool that incorporates visual data in the form of photographs, film, or videos to elicit information from participants and trigger discussion on topics that a simple verbal question might not uncover (Harper, 2002). I applied the concept of photo elicitation in the second interview to support increased understanding on the young men's schooling experiences. Mobilizing photographs when producing data is not a new method as it has been done for years in anthropology and ethnography (Collier, 1957; Harper, 2002).

John Collier (1957) mobilized pictures to elicit deeper meaning when studying a county in the Maritimes and in the process found photography productive in shattering the "guarded reply" where he found individuals upon seeing photos disclosed more information (p. 843). Since Collier, photo elicitation has been taken up in the social sciences and humanities when studying individual experience. Recently, it has been applied as a useful visual tool when conducting studies with individual with disabilities. Aldridge (2007) for example, employed photography when interviewing people with learning disabilities. The use of photographs allowed Aldridge to explore complex themes that would not have emerged by other non-visual methods such as: questionnaires or verbal interviews. There is a paucity of research employing photo elicitation techniques when working with individuals with ASD, however, puppet sketches and the application of wordless picture books has been used to elicit information from children with ASD (Capps, Losh & Thurber, 2000; Loveland, McEvoy, Tunali & Kelley, 1990; Tager-Flusberg & Sullivan, 1995).

Photo elicitation in this study was a productive visual method to aid participants in telling stories. The selection of stock photography stimulated relevant conversations on their

schooling and in the process supported participants when telling their stories (Croghan, Griffin, Hunter & Phoenix, 2008). The stock photos used in the second interview were chosen from a public database. Selecting photos to assemble in a photo kit required great consideration as each photo had to be carefully chosen according to the goals of the intended research (Cappello, 2005; Harper, 2007). The selected photos I compiled in the kit emerged from the information derived from the pilot interview as well as my decisions to produce research that worked outside linear forms of representation. For example, I was careful not to choose photographs that portrayed gendered stereotyped practices; only boys playing hockey or girls wearing pink clothing. While it is challenging to extend fully outside gender binaries the intention was to not place limits on their responses, keeping the research process open. In the end, the photo kit included 44 public stock images such as: a picture of a playground, an image of a hallway with lockers, a typical classroom, a school cafeteria, students in a playground, students standing in a hallway (see Appendix F for a sample of stock photographs).

I then had to consider the line of questioning when exploring the stock photographs with participants. I wanted to use the photos to trigger memories on their own schooling. I, therefore, would ask questions like, 'does this picture remind you of anything about your schooling?' I would then get more specific. For example, when looking at a photograph of a school bus I would ask the participant, 'Do you remember your time on the school bus?', 'Where you sat?', 'Did you have to walk to the bus stop?' During the second interview, some participants would talk at length after looking at a photo on a particular school topic, and other stock images would not evoke much of a response. The use of stock photos, however, proved to be helpful in generating some thoughts and ideas on their schooling. For example, the photos were useful to see if a young man had a different response to an empty classroom image compared to a classroom photograph that contained students. In this respect, the photographs were helpful in generating conversation on multiple dimensions of their schooling with both human and nonhuman elements. The young men enjoyed looking at the photographs where one man even said, "I wish my life was like that" making reference to the photograph.

The photographs were also productive in allowing participants in the second interview to take a break and focus on something other than myself. Banks (2001) suggests adding photos in an

interview can remove some of the awkwardness as attention is turned to the images where direct eye contact is not required with the photograph used as a neutral third party. The initial prompts from viewing photographs also produced focused and detailed descriptions with little guidance from the researcher (Croghan et al., 2008). The difference in conducting interviews using photography and interviews using words alone lies in how participants choose to respond to the symbolic representations (Harper, 2002). One limitation when using the photographs however was the tendency for some participants to focus mainly on the physical features of the photo where they did not connect the image to their own schooling experiences. For example, "our school playground had metal bars not coloured ones like this photo". In this respect, there were some limitations in terms of drawing further data on their schooling through stock photography.

3.6.4.4 Other Visual Methods

To support participants' in telling their stories access to paper and coloured markers was provided in both interviews. The use of blank 8' x 11' paper and coloured markers was appealing for many participants, particularly on subject material they struggled to articulate. For example, one participant recorded his school's rules and used colour to differentiate between multiple rules. Another participant employed paper to explain a scenario in school where he was misinterpreted by his peers. The paper was used by another young man to support his explaining of his identity to me where he sketched self-portraits. Other participants drew maps when describing their experiences in school spaces. The use of paper and markers invited opportunity for participants to express thoughts and ideas that perhaps may have remained hidden in its absence. The paper was a useful medium when trying to understand participants' intersections with nonhuman elements like schooling arrangements, particularly their experiences in educational spaces. Blank paper and markers was a simple tool to collect some rich data and unanticipated findings. Following Creswell's (2003) qualitative characteristics the offering of paper to participants supported their capacity to be active agents in the research process including opportunity to have a level of control.

Another visual tool included access to a computer. From this one participant revealed images of his art, and another participant accessed the Internet to show me a popular character he identified with in school. In future studies, I would be open to exploring visual methods further to introduce participants to the use of a camera to engage in their own data collection,

including video recordings in the research process to attend to the affective dimensions happening in the research space between bodies.

3.6.4.5 Post Interview Summary

After two semi-structured interviews (except for one young man) I sent a follow-up email to member check on data from the second interview. The participants were informed at this time that a summary would be sent explaining the findings of the study and that the participant would be contacted if further clarification was needed on their stories. The post summary meeting with the twelve participants was conducted via email rather than in person to support participants who all identified in the second interview that technology was their preferred method of communication (email).

3.6.5 Storage and Confidentiality

All transcripts, audio recordings, audio equipment, digital sources, participant artefacts (drawings, school maps and pictures produced in the research process) and other research materials (journals, maps) were stored in a locked filing cabinet in the researcher's office in Seminary Building at Acadia University, Wolfville, Nova Scotia, Canada. Participants were informed that all materials would be securely locked in the researcher's office for the duration of five years from the time of completion of the project in accordance with the University of South Australia's Human Research Ethics Committee. The participants were also informed that access to this material is restricted to the researcher, her supervisors, and the University of South Australia's Ethics Committee.

Participants were then informed that all identifiable material in the research process would be blurred or removed to protect identity and confidentiality. Pseudonyms were also used in text to protect participant identities as well as any other identifiable indicators such as geographical location, name of school or university institution they attended. Digital sources were locked in a filing cabinet in researcher's office when not in use and the researcher's laptop was installed with anti-virus software. All identifiable material on the digital data was also removed to safeguard the participants' anonymity. All men who took part in the research voluntarily signed a consent form to participate in the research, including a separate consent form granting permission to publish and use their drawings, pictures or maps (see Appendix G for participant

artefact consent form). The yearbooks participants supplied were not used as a form of data to safeguard anonymity. No participants requested a copy of the transcripts. Participants were given contact information for counseling if needed at the end of our time together. Due to confidentiality issues, I cannot identify if any participants accessed the counseling services.

3.7 Diffractive Analysis

A diffractive reading of the data involved analysis of the different connections the young men with ASD experienced having attended public school in Nova Scotia. The diffractive analysis of the data commenced with numerous readings of interview transcripts (23 in total). A diffractive reading takes into account that "thinking, seeing and knowing are never done in isolation but are always affected by different material and human forces coming together" (Palmer, 2011, p.8). In reading the transcripts diffractively, square bracketed notes were added to the transcripts describing emerging actions such as: moments in the interview where the young men with ASD shifted bodily positioning [moved chairs, walked in the room] including dynamic descriptions when a participant connected to objects in the research space. In terms of the notation, conventional transcript coding was used.

Following W.R. Powers (2005) nonverbal sounds were coded with a square bracket [laughing], notes such as interruptions or noises in the background including pauses were enclosed in square brackets [a person knocked on the door], [pause], words delivered with emphasis were indicated by using capitals, including exclamation end marks. In subsequent data chapters an ellipsis (…) signals, a portion of the transcript omitted for succinctness while highlighting important remarks on the participants' accounts. *Italics* and single quotes are used across the data assemblages when presenting the young men's stories to prioritize and make emphasis to the young men's voices.

After reading the transcripts diffractively numerous times the connections the young men experienced with both human and nonhuman school elements were extracted. A focus on the young men's movements supported the diffractive analysis as I could follow the young men's diverse rhizomatic pathways and extract where the men took action including the moments they resisted. Explicitly, coloured markers were used on the transcripts to differentiate between the connections they experienced with human and nonhuman elements to assist in mapping the young men's affective actions with various school dimensions.

A blue marker was applied to diffract data from the transcripts where the young men connected to nonhuman elements. I extracted the data through a process of underlining various sections of transcript text in blue. I framed the nonhuman connections as experiences with school arrangements (i.e. classroom rules and special education support). Green was then used to pull data where the young men made exchanges with human elements; experiences with peers. The green colouring of transcript text illuminated the specific movements the young men made towards or away from peers. Applying movement as an analytical tool was productive as it drew attendance to thinking through middles, signalling a focus on the young men's multiple and situated trajectories when doing a diffractive reading of the data. What emerged from this analysis were other more subtle connections to the young men's experiences with both human and nonhuman elements of school. I applied the colour red to identify the diverging trajectories the participants had when moving across the educational terrain. The red text framed the young men's experiences in school spaces. After colouring texts in blue (connections to nonhuman elements – school arrangements), in green (connections to human elements – experiences with peers, teachers) and in red (connections in school spaces), I then extracted visual data and placed them with either the blue, green or blue texts. Afterwards, I did another diffractive reading that included juxtaposing both coloured texts and visual data onto maps and commenced a *physical* rhizomatic mapping of the young men's affective movements. By *physical*, I mean cutting coloured texts from transcripts and juxtaposing them with visual data (participant artefacts, stock photography) to produce large rhizomatic maps on the young men's schooling experiences.

3.7.1 Rhizomatic Mapping

Concept maps have been used in the social sciences to present information visually and to pull different ideas together onto one page. Some concept maps follow linear formats as seen with fishbone paradigms, spider maps, hierarchy maps, flowcharts. Other maps are more fluid such as a landscape map. In this study, I followed Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) *principle of cartography*. The *principle of cartography* involves a rhizomatic mapping of multiple paths and trajectories a body takes rather than a linear form of representation. It is a mapping that is "open and connectable in all of its dimensions" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.12). Rhizomatic mapping involved juxtaposing onto poster-sized paper (22 in. by 28 in.) segments of transcript

texts, stock photography, participant artefacts, including theoretical linkages to support attendance to the objectives of this research.

To produce the maps, I started by extracting the green coloured text and placing it onto a large sheet of poster paper. The green text included the young men's connections with the human elements of school, experiences with peers. Participant artefacts, stock photography were also added. For example, a stock photograph of a group of students hanging out in a hallway was added to the map. Another example included drawings from a participant that he had made during our interview when explaining his social positioning in school. This process of producing large rhizomatic maps was followed for data coloured in red and blue. For example, participants' drawings of their school spaces were added to the large red map and stock photographs were placed on the blue map based on the young men's responses to photos of specific school arrangements. In the end, three large data maps were produced.
I then began linking the young men's rhizomatic paths on each of the three poster sized maps which required an additional diffractive reading of the juxtaposed data. I included coloured, curved lines across the text and images connecting the young men's exchanges with specific school arrangements, peers and in educational spaces. This weaving and intersecting of text, photographs, theoretical linkages and participant artefacts continued across the three posters slowly building multiple, rhizomatic stories on the young men's schooling experiences. Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) concept of assemblage was then applied to bring the final compilation of rhizomatic stories together producing three data assemblages on the young men's schooling experiences having attended school in Nova Scotia, Canada.

3.7.2 Data Assemblages

Deleuze and Guattari (1987) in ATP identify how an assemblage is a compilation of things which is fluid in nature and "ceaselessly varie[d]" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 30). I apply their concept of assemblage to pull together the young men's rhizomatic stories as it allows their movements, affects, leaks and ruptures to be presented as a multiplicity and in a continual state of emergence. In an assemblage there is no subject or object rather it is a "multiplicity", of "actions and passions", and an "an intermingling of bodies reacting with one another" (Anderson, 2010; Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 88). Assemblages are a productive methodological concept in which to present the young men's schooling experiences as an

assemblage establishes connections and it is "precisely [the] increase in the dimensions of a multiplicity that necessarily changes in nature as it expands its connections" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 8). It is affects flowing fluidly through an assemblage that renders it in a continual relational state, the capacity to affect or to be affected. For example, an emergent relation in this research is the affective connection between the young men and the research tools (paper, photographs). The research tools are additional affects that flow through the assemblage and change its contours. Producing assemblages on the young men's experiences supports my materialist approaches of rhizomes, diffraction, and writing as a method of inquiry as it supports the process of seeing the young men's multiple, situated exchanges when experiencing various school relations.

The first data assemblage explores the young men with ASD experiences with school arrangements titled, *Moving in and across the arboreal system*. The focus of this assemblage is to unfold the young men's rhizomatic stories having experienced school arrangements in Nova Scotia public schools (i.e. rules, policies and their experiences with ASD support services) including the effects various educational arrangements had on their everyday experiences. One intersecting element in this assemblage is the emerging power forces in play for the young men when experiencing distinct structures, including hierarchical relations with teachers, dominant peers and teacher assistants. The second data assemblage explores the young men with ASD social experiences with peers, *Social Manoeuvres*. The assemblage presents rhizomatic stories on the young men's connections to peers. It attends to the affects circulating between bodies in moments, including the effects peer relations have on the young men's time in school. One relation attended to is the connections the young men have to other boys and their experiences when navigating the hegemonic gender order. The third assemblage presents their experiences in school spaces titled, *Trajectories of Smooth*. This assemblage draws attention to the situated dimensions emerging for the young men when navigating the complex educational terrain.

The intention in producing three data assemblages with a focus on the young men's experiences with school arrangements, others and in school spaces is not meant to theme or categorize their schooling encounters, but instead to produce a multiplicity of stories and inform alternative understandings on how the young men experience the Nova Scotia educational landscape. Diffraction as a form of analysis coupled with movement as an

analytical tool supports the seeing of the multiple and diverse dimensions of my participants' experiences. With producing three assemblages it is also to be understood that the data assemblages offer only a partial glimpse into their experiences in school with each participant's experiences told differently across the three data assemblages. For example, some young men connected strongly to school spaces while others did not, therefore, participants' stories may only appear in one assemblage, and other participant's may be told across the three assemblages or in a series of larger interconnected stories. This is in line with thinking through middles, following rhizomatic trajectories and attending to variation when analyzing individual experience.

When producing rhizomatic stories compiled into three data assemblages, I found it difficult to introduce participants' stories. Giving a description of their identities was problematic as I did not want to employ a definitional framework across my analysis. In keeping with Spinoza, Deleuze and Guattari's philosophies, I chose to begin each story with how I met the participant rather than who the person is. The remainder of the chapter details the approaches used to attend to the more intricate dimensions of this research, namely issues surrounding validity and ethics.

3.8 Transgressive Validity

The crisis of representation in the mid-1980s sought new models of truth with qualitative researchers focusing on feminist perspectives to redefine the meaning of reliability and validity in qualitative inquiries (Lewis, 2009). Since this time, researchers have witnessed a proliferation of changes to methodological approaches when attending to the rigours of research. For example, the use of standardized questions for interviews was employed by poststructural researchers to assist with reliability. The use of a general interview guide and member checking with participants in this project attends to producing reliable research methods. Another reliable method employed included multiple diffractive readings of the data.

In this dissertation Patti Lather's (1993) work on validity was also applied. Lather generates four types of validity [ironic, paralogical, rhizomatic, voluptuous] when conducting research (Lather, 1993, p. 686). Lather's transgressive validity challenges researchers to question contemporary knowledge and traditional conceptualizations of validity (triangulation, pragmatic) and consider what new knowledges might be incited if researchers think through

"multiple openings and networks" and through "differences and heterogeneity" (p. 686). Lather's transgressive validity is useful in this work as it unsettles truths fostering thinking through multiplicities. Lather explains, "my goal is to reinscribe validity in a way that uses the antifoundational problematic to loosen the master code of positivism" (p.674). Lather's transgressive validity offers a space in this research project to work against hierarchies, binary constructions, representational thinking and bounded structures.

The decision to employ Lather's transgressive validity when analysing the schooling experiences of young men with ASD is shaped by the theories and methods which guide my research, namely Spinoza's (1959) *affect*, Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) *rhizomes*, Haraway (1992) and Barad's (2003, 2007) *diffractive readings of data* and Richardson's (1994) *Writing as Method of Inquiry*. Given the complexity of the inquiry transgressive validity assisted in thinking heterogeneously in relation to how data gets read and constructed outside traditional forms of representation. Transgressive validity also stimulates thinking about how knowledge gets produced and how research approaches beyond linear applications might incite alternative understandings on the experiences of young men with ASD in school contexts. Challenging traditional forms of validity allow other more fluid aspects of the research to be accounted for and acknowledged. In this study, this includes attendance to affects circulating between bodies (both human and nonhuman) in the research process.

3.9 Intricacies in Research

Analysing the schooling experiences of young men with ASD with a focus on their situatedness when making multiple school connections to both human and nonhuman elements is complex, particularly when mapping the affects emerging between bodies, including affects between researcher and participant. Haraway's (1991) concept of situated knowledges assisted when working through the complexities of this research and with attendance to affect. Haraway's situated knowledges reminded me that all knowledge is partial, situated and influenced by other elements like nature, culture, other humans, spaces, and atmospheres. Haraway (2004) explained, "people are always already in assemblages with worlds" (p. 328) and there are "always more things going on than you thought" (p. 335). Early on I recognized the numerous affectivities emerging not just between myself and participants, but with me and my own thoughts.

I was held in tension in moments as I found myself slipping back and comparing the young men's stories to my stepson's experiences. Thinking to myself, 'oh that happened to Will' or 'Will does that'. In those leaks and ruptures, I had a connection to something else another thing, another assemblage. Fragments of my world started meshing with participants, and I began operating through multiple lenses. I was a researcher, an educator, an advocate, a parent of a child with ASD, an empathetic ear and a body connected affectively to the atmosphere of the research space. I was also trapped in gender relations as a woman interviewing men. Through writing as a method of inquiry, I questioned my own physical positioning and role in the research space. I wanted participants to be comfortable continuously thinking about how to adjust to suit the needs of participants. It was not until I read Pillow's (2000) work where I began to accept my body and affectivities in the process. Pillow challenges researchers to pay attention to "the body methodologically" (Pillow, 2000, p.213).

Attendance to the body methodologically included having a deepened sense of awareness not just for the participants' affective intensities but also my own. I had to accept and recognize the affectivities emerging in the research space, both mine and the participants and to remind myself that studying human experience is complex, a continual negotiation between bodies. Part of this acknowledgement was accepting my own humanness in the research process (St.Pierre & Pillows, 2000).

Deleuze and Guattari's rhizomes supported my connection to the research process and positioned me early on to think openly, to exist in middles. This has always been Deleuze and Guattari's plan, "to lay everything out on a plane" to diverge and create (1987, p.10). Writing as a method of inquiry, in journals, coupled with the production of rhizomatic maps supported my capacity to connect closer to the research process and to track the affects circulating in the young men's stories as well as in the research space between participant and researcher. I could journal the affectivities emerging and this helped me notice how situated the research is. Haraway's recognition of knowledge as situated and partial added to this recognition as her work reminded me that it was okay to accept and welcome my own affectivities into the research space, and that we cannot just separate and exist as researchers outside the process.

3.9.1 Ethics of Immanence

Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) ethics of immanence further supported attendance to the intricacy and situatedness of the research. Their ethics brings forth questions about 'how one might live', 'who we are' and 'what a body is capable of' rather than seeing the body in research in closed ways. Deleuze and Guattari's ethics inspired by Spinoza challenges researchers to produce alternative forms of thinking and to see bodies through possibilities. Ethics of immanence compliments a rhizomatic framework as it reminded me to think about bodies as always in process, what young men with ASD can do and to focus on the intersections in play through multiple lenses and pathways.

3.9.2 Limitations of Study

I had indicated earlier in this chapter that my decision to interview young men with ASD who had recently finished school emerged from wanting to speak to the young men directly and hear their voices on what school was like. While there is merit in having a person reflect back and recall their time, at moments in this research the young men were limited by what they could remember. Specifically, some of the young men had difficulty remembering their earlier years of schooling or the fine details in an event. In future studies, I would be interested in exploring the experiences of students with ASD presently in school as it might allow for increased understanding on the transformative elements of their experiences. Particularly, current students may be able to extract detailed responses as they would have recent memories on their time in school. The use of cameras and other visual methods could support this type of inquiry as it could support the capturing of the emergent elements of their educational experiences.

Other limitations that emerged from this study revolved around the use of visual methods. There are multiple intricacies when conducting human research and in this project it required me to be attuned to the affectivities in the research space between myself and participant. While I applied Haraway's situated knowledge to support my awareness of the situated nature of this research I think my ability to attend to the affective dimensions could have been amplified with the use of a video recorder.

In 2011, I attended the annual meeting of the International Visual Sociology Association (IVSA), and I had the pleasure of listening to Franziska Meyer's research and her use of visual methods when exploring the individual experiences of adolescents with Down syndrome. In her presentation, Meyer showed video segments of the research process when interviewing adolescents with Down syndrome. When I watched the videos I could feel the connections her participants were making to the research including the emergent affects happening between researcher and participant, including participant and materials. I think the use of a video recorder in this research could have amplified my connections to the young men's affectivities and offered even more detailed data to be collected on the young men's experiences. For example, the use of a video recorder in the interviews may have helped to capture the subtle movements in the research space as well as other intricate dimensions. For example, I would have liked to have had a video recording of the young men drawing pictures during the interview as well as recordings when the young men viewed stock photographs.

Goode (2007) has also applied video recording when examining the experiences of students with disabilities at university. Her approach involved video recording students' daily university events as a method to support her participants in remembering their schooling experiences. After conducting the recordings Goode was able to sit down with each participant, watch the videos together and draw further data on their schooling experiences, "selected video extracts [were used] to cover a range of learning and teaching issues, a range of locations, both seen and unseen disabilities and clips which lent themselves to being a 'trigger' for discussion" (p. 40).

Other collection methods such as on-line questionnaires, on-line interviews might have also enriched my data as it may have offered the young men with ASD opportunity to recall their schooling experiences at their own pace with increased time to recall their experiences. As indicated earlier, conducting research on human experience is complex and requires multiple research methods that can support attendance to the actualities of individual experience. In future studies, I would be interested in exploring video recording, digital photography, and perhaps photovoice[39] to assist in collecting further data on the experiences of students with ASD.

3.10 Summary

This chapter explained the methodological tools mobilized to produce alternative knowledge on the young men with ASD schooling experiences outside traditional representational approaches. The methodological approaches I have chosen link theorizations presented in chapter two, attending to the research question, how can rhizome and affect theories assist in unfolding the young men's schooling experiences in alternative ways outside of contemporary thought? Deleuze and Guattari's rhizomes applied as an overarching methodological framework serve to transverse research boundaries and work beyond the limits of traditional research inquiry. Specifically, the theoretical thread of Deleuze and Guattari's six principles of rhizomes are integrated into my methodological tools to mobilize thinking through multiplicities when analysing the young men's schooling experiences. A diffractive reading of data supports this process as it positions a research space to attend to alterity and differences where I can connect to the multiple experiences the young men have with both human and nonhuman elements of school.

I then showed in this chapter the active workings of diffraction to actualize a series of rhizomatic maps on the young men's multiple experiences. Mobilizing movement as an analytical tool assisted and amplified the diffractive reading of the data. Placing data openly onto pages through a rhizomatic mapping of the young men's movements speaks to Deleuze and Guattari's seeing of bodies openly attending to the research question, what can the mobilization of movement as an analytical concept inform about the young men with ASD schooling experiences?

Writing as a method of inquiry added another rigorous element to the research offering a space to focus on the affects emerging in the research space. Writing as a method of inquiry supports the theoretical underpinnings in this study, the use of Spinoza's affect.
The dissertation will now explore three data assemblages on the schooling experiences of young men with ASD. The data assemblages require both readers and researcher to think openly and allow the work to be read through middles. The first assemblage titled, *Moving in and across the arboreal system*, maps the young men with ASD experiences when connecting to school arrangements, including the affects that emerge when navigating ordered sites, rules and special education support.

Chapter 4: Moving in and across the arboreal system

4.0 Introduction

The focus of this assemblage is to analyze the young men with ASD experiences with structured school arrangements. Specifically, I set out to explore the connections the young men with ASD made to various structured sites, school rules and special education arrangements. I employ Deleuze and Guattari's concept of arboreal systems to make visible the fixtures like policies, and school arrangements, such as classroom seating embedded within institutions that impact their movements across the Nova Scotia educational terrain. Rhizomes are then applied to destabilize tree-like thinking and to find out what the young men with ASD could do when moving beyond molar lines.

Deleuze and Guattari (1987) illuminate how the arboreal system works to maintain bodies on a linear trajectory by carrying out a systemized configuration of practices. Deleuze and Parnet (1987) call the "system of points and positions which fix all the possible within a grid" the "plane of organization" (p.25). "The plane of organization" is the conventional model in education, a hierarchical system that transmits orders and establishes students' individual planes of travel (Deleuze & Parnet, 1987). In chapter one I identified how special education support is one system implemented in Nova Scotia schools that positions students with ASD to experience school on a distinct trajectory. If we think back to our own schooling the "plane of organization" was perhaps experienced when having to raise your hand before speaking or given a set of rules to follow when participating in a physical education class. In this assemblage, I want to find out what happened to the young men with ASD having experienced the "plane of organization". More importantly, following Deleuze and Guattari, I am interested in knowing what the young men with ASD could do when moving outside the "plane of organization".

Across this assemblage, I will show how rhizome and affect theories can destabilize arboreal thought and shift to think about young men with ASD in alternative ways, addressing the research question, how do the theorizations of Spinoza, Deleuze and Guattari contribute to more productive ways of knowing young men with ASD in educational contexts? I am therefore, interested in pursuing the bends and curves the young men made from the points, the splitting from the molar lines, and to find out what they could do having experienced Nova

Scotia school arrangements. A rhizome is made of movement, not of stationary points, but of continual foldings which Deleuze and Guattari (1987) call our "lines of flight". A line of flight does not have pre-determined points, and therefore, it is not possible to know in advance what the line of flight will be.

Thinking through movement, following the young men with ASD lines of flight having experienced the arboreal system of school is complex. It involves attendance to the emerging power forces circulating in structured systems that impacted their bodily capacities to take action or not. Social theorist and historian, Michel Foucault's understandings of power relations are applied in this assemblage to assist with the contextualization of how the young men experienced imminent power relations.

4.1 Power Relations Circulating

Foucault (1982) addresses the implications rules and disciplinary measures have on a person when experiencing an institution's practices. Foucault contends, "I wish to suggest that one must analyze institutions from the standpoint of power relations" (1982, p.791). Foucault's theorizations on power within institutions can support a better understanding of what school was like for young men with ASD having navigated multiple school arrangements, particularly to assist in understanding how power worked on their bodies. Foucault envisions power as something which is exercised in mobile relations functioning at the level of the body, a power that circulates between bodies within institutional sites. Deleuze has taken up Foucault's analytics of power giving Foucault the title of "new cartographer"[40]. The title of "new cartographer" is in recognition of Foucault's attention to how power relations get mapped through a "net-like organization" (Foucault, 1982, p. 789).

> [W]hat defines a relationship of power is that it is a mode of action which does not act directly or immediately on others. Instead it acts upon their actions: an action upon an action, on existing actions or on those which may arise in the present or future...a total structure of actions brought to bear upon possible actions; it incites, it induces, it seduces, it makes easier or more difficult; in the extreme it constrains of forbids; it is nevertheless always a way of acting upon an acting subject or acting subjects by virtue of their acting or being capable of action (Foucault, 1982, p.789).

Deleuze (1988a) utilizes Foucault's analytics of power, "actions upon actions", when explaining how power is "diagrammatic" (p. 72-73). Diagrammatic to mean a form of power that is not executed from a top-down approach, but something which moves and circulates

inside institutions. According to Deleuze (1988a), it is the diagrammatic nature of power forces circulating between two bodies (i.e. body and school rules, body and physical architecture, body and educational policies, a body and another body) that places limits on an individual's capacities to take lines of flight. Foucault supports this and makes emphasis to how power can infiltrate through the body.

> In thinking of the mechanisms of power, I am thinking rather of its capillary form of existence, the point where power reaches into the very grain of individuals, touches their bodies and inserts itself into their action (Foucault, 1980, p. 39).

Deleuze (1988a) described this flow of power as lines of force. Deleuze however, when identifying lines of force was not interested in how power is maintained; rather, he desired knowledge on how a body might disrupt the emerging power forces. Across this assemblage, my intention is to show how young men with ASD unsettled power dynamics and moved outside molar designations, rhizomatic travel.

Rhizomatic travel within an arboreal system is a form of movement that Deleuze calls taking a 'line of resistance' where power relations are mapped, and we follow the lines where a body veers off the plane and makes an extension. Foucault supports Deleuze's thoughts on examining resistance, "there are no relations of power without resistances" (Foucault, 1980, p.142). This assemblage will also demonstrate the affects circulating in their relations effecting how they moved in and across the arboreal system by applying Spinoza's philosophies on affect to help with this analysis.

4.2 Affects Flowing

Affects are the situated productions bodies make in moments and in this assemblage, I will show the affective connections the young men with ASD made to arboreal arrangements. Applying Spinoza's affect attends to the research question, what affects emerge for the young men with ASD having experienced public school in Nova Scotia. Paying attention to the affects circulating between bodies when navigating emergent power relations is important as it supports the process of understanding what effects school structures had on their experiences, including attentiveness to the developing moments when the young men ruptured arboreal sites and pursued rhizomatic travel. Deleuze (1988b) addresses the capacity for a body to affect and to be affected by the immanent power relations circulating within educational

institutions. Taking up Spinoza's reading on affect, Deleuze describes how sad affects can inhibit a body's powers to act producing slow movements whereas joyful affects can ignite and incite movement.

> The passage to a greater perfection, or the increase in the power of acting, is called an affect, or feeling, of joy; the passage to a lesser perfection or the diminution of the power of acting is called sadness (Deleuze, 1988b, p.50).

Deleuze also reminds us how a body can be composed of both joyful and sad affects in any given connection that impact future movements. Sad affects can slow a body at first, however the body can then fill with intensity and be ignited to make a shift and change their positioning. It is a body's desire to change, that causes a body to situatedly subvert and take a rhizomatic departure. Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) metaphors of arboreal, rhizomes, molar lines, lines of resistance, assemblages, lines of flight, and lines of force assist in unfolding the affective connections the young men with ASD made when experiencing school arrangements in Nova Scotia public schools. Michel Foucault's notion of power relations circulating within institutions compliments Deleuze's theorizations on power forces in this assemblage. Foucault's "actions upon actions" with attention to resistance can draw emphasis to the embedded effects power had on the young men's capacities to take action or not. It is with these ideas in mind that I present the first assemblage on the schooling experiences of young men with ASD. Grosz (1994) reminds us how assemblages follow "no central or hierarchical order, organization, or distribution" but instead act on "semiotic flows, material flows, and social flows" (p. 167, p.23).

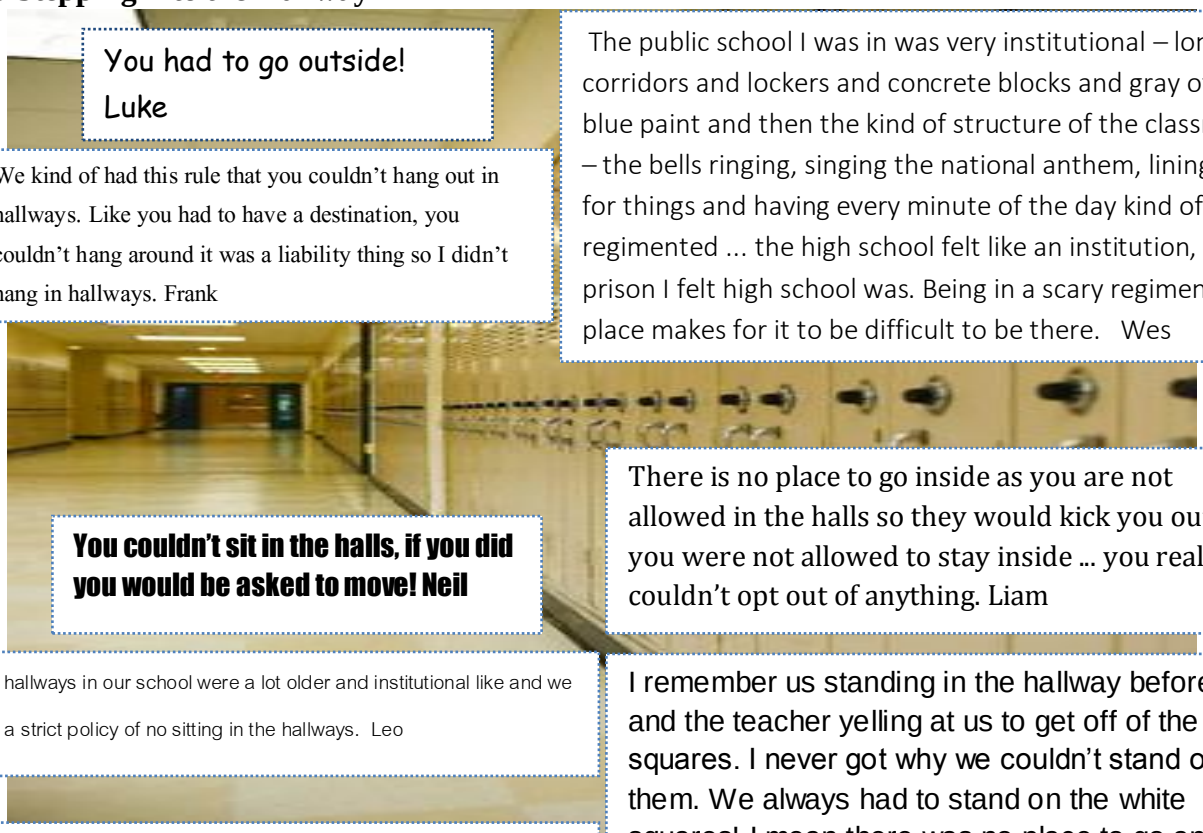
To support my analysis of the young men's movements and affects emerging in this first assemblage stock photography is used to produce an overall affect of what arboreal arrangements were like for the young men with ASD. Participants' texts are juxtaposed with the photographs to show the connections the young men experienced with particular school arrangements, including the effect.

I begin the assemblage with participants' rhizomatic stories after viewing stock photography on various school sites. It commences with the young men's connections to school hallways followed with their experiences in other arboreal sites: locker rooms and later, the classroom setting. The intention is to show what kinds of experiences the young men had in various school sites and to see what movements they made in and across the arboreal system.

After analyzing the young men's experiences with structured school sites with the aid of stock photography, the young men's connections to school rules were identified. I wanted to know what impact school rules had on their daily experiences in school, including the capacities the young men possessed to take a line of flight, resist power forces and uproot school rules. The last part of the assemblage presents rhizomatic stories on their experiences with special education support (i.e. the presence of a teacher assistant and small group instruction outside the regular classroom).

The first section, *Stepping into the Hallway*, explores the young men with ASD responses after viewing a stock photograph of an empty hallway (see Figure 4.1)[41]. My participants' responses in Figure 4.1 emerged from looking at stock photographs and through conversations with each participant. This is followed by my analysis.

4.3 Stepping into the Hallway



You had to go outside! Luke

We kind of had this rule that you couldn't hang out in hallways. Like you had to have a destination, you couldn't hang around it was a liability thing so I didn't hang in hallways. Frank

The public school I was in was very institutional – long corridors and lockers and concrete blocks and gray off blue paint and then the kind of structure of the classroom – the bells ringing, singing the national anthem, lining up for things and having every minute of the day kind of regimented … the high school felt like an institution, like a prison I felt high school was. Being in a scary regimented place makes for it to be difficult to be there. Wes

There is no place to go inside as you are not allowed in the halls so they would kick you out … you were not allowed to stay inside … you really couldn't opt out of anything. Liam

You couldn't sit in the halls, if you did you would be asked to move! Neil

The hallways in our school were a lot older and institutional like and we had a strict policy of no sitting in the hallways. Leo

I remember us standing in the hallway before class and the teacher yelling at us to get off of the blue squares. I never got why we couldn't stand on them. We always had to stand on the white squares! I mean there was no place to go and no room to talk. What are we supposed to do stand in a line and try to talk. I mean all she did was yell at us every day to get off the blue squares! Mason

It was just the same routine everyday nothing changed much… You weren't allowed to hang out where you wanted. Like you had to be supervised. I wanted to go to a different place sometimes. I don't want to go to the same place every time. If I walked around (in the halls) the teachers would get mad and think I am skipping class, like if I go to my locker they think I am skipping and stuff like that. It is like the teachers are bothered with me. Henry

Figure 4.1 Empty School Hallway

Radius Images. (n.d.). *High School Hallway* [Photograph]. Retrieved February 6th, 2011, from http://www.corbisimages.com ©Corbis Images

After viewing the photograph of the empty hallway, the young men presented similar responses. Their initial phrasing: '*weren't allowed*', '*you couldn't*', '*we had a strict policy*', '*you had to*', '*they never let you*', '*we kind of had this rule*' signal the connection the young men had to imminent power relations lingering in the hallway. Deleuze and Parnet (1987) describe the communication between teachers and students as the teacher providing order-words; "she transmits order-words" … "order-word[s]: have correct ideas" (p. 22). Neil, Leo and Frank recalled their teachers' 'order-words' and the restrictions it presented when navigating their school hallways. Specific accounts of not being allowed to use the hallways

outside their designated function were recounted with Leo stating there was a *'strict policy of no sitting in the hallways'* and Frank, *'you couldn't hang out in hallways'. 'Like you had to have a destination, you couldn't hang around it was a liability thing'*. Neil similarly remarked, *'you couldn't sit in the halls, if you did you would be asked to move!'*

Liam explained that at his school, *'they would kick you out* (if you tried to hang out in the hallways)... *you were not allowed to stay inside ... you really couldn't opt out of anything'*. In conversation with Luke, he emphatically stated to me*, 'you had to go outside!"* Luke also felt restricted by the imminent power words projected through the hallway and struggled to understand why he had to go outdoors. The young men's recollections identify the effect the order-words had in the hallway site in terms of how they could move. The 'order-words' positioned Leo, Frank, Neil and Liam on a molar line, at the root of the tree where authority figures worked to maintain their linear positioning. It is the lines of force that the young men affectively connect to when recalling their time in the hallways with power words having placed restrictions on their experiences.

Henry after glancing at Figure 4.1 remarked how he desired a different trajectory. He did not like it when teachers told him where to hang out and he was frustrated with constantly having to be supervised. This was evident when Henry reasoned, *'I wanted to go to a different place sometimes',* '*I don't want to go to the same place every time*". His body when moving through the hallways did not affectively agree with the ordered practices and craved movement outside molar lines. The 'order-words' of the teacher, however, were enough to slow Henry's capacities to act and his body remained adhered to the point, travelling the "plane of organization" (Deleuze & Parnet, 1987,p.25). The lines of force in the hallway site do what they are intended to do; move bodies in a straight line preserving the tree-like configurations of the arboreal system.

After studying Figure 4.1, Leo affectively described the physicality of his school hallways and stated they were, '*older and institutional like'*. Wes similarly related his experiences in the hallway with its physical nature, remarking, '*very institutional – long corridors and lockers and concrete blocks and gray off blue paint'*. Wes then recalled further dimensions of his experiences with the arboreal fixture; *'bells' ringing, singing the national anthem, lining up for things and having every minute of the day kind of regimented'*. Wes affectively coming

into mixture with his experiences in the arboreal site went on to state that he felt school was, *'like a prison*', '*a scary regimented place'* making it *'difficult to be there'.*

The photograph of the hallway stirred something in Wes. His body entering and having to follow the rules; lining up, singing anthems and listening to bells produced unwelcoming affects. It was the continuous molar forces coming into mixture with his body that over time produced an image of a prison. The image of the prison for Wes is *the affection*, the effect of the rooted regimes, the power forces impressed on his body. The continual subtle power forces circulating in Wes' school hallways day after day left a trace on his body, an unwelcoming one. Wes connecting his school experiences to that of a prison is powerful and exemplifies the impact certain arrangements can have on a body. In Wes' case, the effect is *'a scary regimented place'*.

Mason recalled a specific event he experienced with a teacher in his school hallway. He remembered the teacher had *'yell[ed]'* at him to '*get off the blue squares!'* Mason elaborated and explained that the teacher monitoring the hallway did not like it when students would move from the white squares and stand on blue. The power dynamic between Mason and the teacher occurred when Mason took a line of flight, moving from white to blue, disrupting the "plane of organization" [white square to white square]. Movement on white squares was considered acceptable by the authority figure, and he could remain without reprimand, as long as he adhered to the point, stayed on white. When Mason decided, however, to take a line of resistance from the white, a new series of affects circulated, including new power relations, between Mason and the teacher. Mason's affective movements to blue are held in tension with his exclamation, *'I never got why we couldn't stand on them. We always had to stand on the white squares!'* Mason struggled with this linear line of thinking and questioned the rule, *'what are we supposed to do stand in a line and try to talk', 'I mean there was no place to go and no room to talk'.* Mason's connection to the hallway demonstrates what subtle power forces circulating in school arrangements can do to a student over time. In Mason's experience it was the constant pull back to ordered lines that impeded and impacted his daily interactions in school hallways.

Foucault identifies how "power only exists when it is put into action" (1982, p.788). In this case, the power relations only emerged when Mason started to move from white squares to blue squares. Foucault would identify the intersections between Mason, the teacher and the

colored squares as "an ensemble of actions" (1982, p. 786). Foucault explained the "ensemble of actions" as the relations in play when individuals are required to navigate power forces circulating within institutions. When thinking through Foucault, it is the action of the teacher upon Mason disrupting his capacity to take a line of flight and experience school on alternative lines outside molar designations.

I now move to show the responses participants had to two other stock photographs of hallways. Hallways are a rooted site that students travel frequently, and so it is important to contextualize what the young men's experiences were like. The next two stock photographs contain peers in the images. The intention of showing young men with ASD photographs of hallways containing students was to see if the presence of others in the photographs would produce a different series of affects. The young men's responses are juxtaposed under Figure 4.2 and 4.3 followed with my analysis of their experiences.



Figure 4.2 Hallways and Peers 1

Mouton/Photo Alto. (n.d.). *Kids Hanging Out in the Hallway of a Secondary School* [Photograph]. Retrieved February 6, 2011, from http://www.corbisimages.com ©Corbis Images.



Figure 4.3 Hallways and Peers 2

Devon, C. (n.d.). *Students Socializing in Hallway* [Photograph]. Retrieved February 6th, 2011,from http://www.corbisimages.com ©Corbis Images

"I would avoid those areas" "I didn't really hang around with people in the hallways, I didn't hang around with people period" (Frank)

"I wasn't anywhere near that stuff I only saw it when I was walking in the halls to my next class" (Adam)

"I would hang out in the halls very rarely" "I would usually go straight through the hallways there and very few times I would interact with people in the hallways"

"I would go directly to my locker and then to the computer lab" (Henry)

"I passed through these spaces as quickly as possible" (Wes)

"I'd find myself a quiet hall somewhere in the middle of nowhere and sit there and contemplate whatever it is" (Leo)

"Can't say I remember spending any time with students in the hallways" (Arthur)

"When people are walking in the hallway there are several hundred people in the hallway walking, like there wasn't any room, you really didn't have a choice, you just went to your class" (Liam)

"I just went around or went through" (Luke)

After looking at Figure 4.2 and 4.3, Wes remarked, '*I passed through these spaces as quickly as possible*'. Moving fast was the mechanism Wes employed to derail his body from the hallway and find entry elsewhere. The affects circulating in the hallway between his body, others and the architecture, the "action upon an action" ignited Wes to take action, move swiftly and destroy his relation to the ordered site (Foucault, 1982, p.789).

Frank having studied the photos stated, *'I would avoid those areas', 'I didn't really hang around with people in the hallways, I didn't hang around with people period*'. Frank's response demonstrates how the presence of others can evoke a different series of affects for a body. For Frank, the affects are not welcoming ones and his line of resistance to move

elsewhere signifies what a body will do when wanting something else. "The relation to oneself will be understood in terms of power relations" and with Frank's experience, it was the power relation between his body and peers that signalled his affective response to escape and take measures to expel the given relation (Deleuze, 1988a, p.103).

Neil after viewing the photographs told me, '*I would hang out in the halls very rarely'; 'I would usually go straight through the hallways'*. Moving '*straight through the hallways* identifies how Neil adhered to the molar lines of school. Henry and Luke's experiences were akin to Neil's. Henry described, '*I would go directly to my locker and then to the computer lab'*, and Luke explained, '*I just went around or went through*'. Henry and Luke took no time to linger as they moved linearly through the hallways. Neil, Henry and Luke moved along the points of the grid, not veering. "A whole apparatus [is] planted in thought in order to make it go in a straight line and produce the famous correct ideas" (Deleuze & Parnet, 1987, p. 25).

Having examined Figure 4.2 and 4.3, Adam stated, *'I wasn't anywhere near that stuff I only saw it when I was walking in the halls to my next class'*. The affects Adam produced were connected to his social relations with others. His body was clearly at a distance from his peers, moving on a different trajectory. Adam having remarked, he *'wasn't anywhere near that stuff"* identifies the separation he experienced when traveling on a distinct path from others. The young men's movements show how tight and constraining navigating the "points" and "knots" of the arborescent system can be in moments where their capacities to find alternative trajectories are often constrained (Deleuze, 1988a, p.89).

The above responses also show that the young men's movements were largely determined by the affects circulating in the site. The mixture of their bodies with others in the hallway ignited many of the young men to take lines of flight and change their paths to satisfy their needs at the time. A focus on movement supported seeing the emergent nature of their lives when navigating school hallways.

The assemblage now turns to bring together another dimension of the young men's experiences when moving in and across the arboreal system. I continue with the exploration of stock photography and the young men's responses to experiencing school in various structured sites. Again, the intention with starting the first assemblage with stock photos of arboreal sites

is to produce an overall affect of what the young men's relations were like to typical structured school arrangements.

The locker room is another structured arrangement the young men with ASD experienced in Nova Scotia public schools. Students in Nova Scotia schools use locker rooms to prepare for physical education classes. It is a type of arboreal arrangement in which students are usually expected to enter before engaging in physical activity. Figure 4.4 is juxtaposed with participant text to map my participants' experiences in school locker rooms.

4.4 Entering the locker room

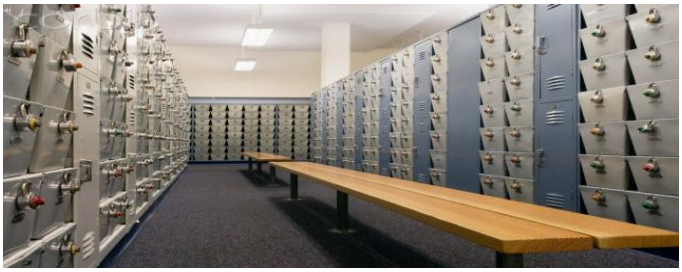


Figure 4.4 Locker Room

Ross/Space Images. (2006). [Untitled photograph of a locker room]. Retrieved February 6, 2011, from http://www.corbisimages.com ©Corbis Images.

"I had anxiety about being in the locker room so I only did it for one day" (Wes)

"I sometimes went a few minutes before the other boys entered the locker room" (Arthur)

"I never went down there, I heard some of the horror stories" (Leo)

"I didn't go into the locker room… I mostly wore my sneakers" (Oliver)

"I would just use the upstairs bathroom or I had my shorts on under my jeans" (Mason)

"I ate my lunch in the change room. It was somewhere I could not be seen" (Frank)

"I never went there, I had my shorts on under my pants" (Liam)

"I remember getting sprayed Axe down my pants once in there" (Neil)

The young men after viewing Figure 4.4 revealed how the locker rooms in Nova Scotia schools are not docile, rooted sites on the grid just for changing rather they produce for the young men a series of affects. Arthur in our discussion of his time in school locker rooms

explained how he would enter a few minutes early to avoid other boys. He told me that he did not like changing in the presence of others nor did he like the thought of connecting to other boys in the locker area. Just the thought of a potential interaction was enough for Arthur to move in advance. "There are lines which do not amount to the path of the point, which break free from the structure" (Deleuze & Parnet, 1987, p.26). Spinoza's theories of affect remind us of the affects circulating between two bodies and what happens in that instantaneous state between two things where one either works to keep the relation or move away from it. In this case, Arthur affectively connected to an image of his body colliding with other boys and this image was enough for Arthur to divulge his relation to the locker room. Arthur entering the room early demonstrates what emerging power forces can do to a body in moments that affectively trigger a body to move elsewhere. Frank built up his own series of affects with the locker room site, however, in contrast to Arthur his affects were welcoming ones. Frank over the course of his schooling actively sought out the site at noon hour, *'I ate my lunch in the change room it was somewhere I could not be seen'*. Frank in securing the locker room took a rhizomatic entry and worked outside the boundaries of the locker rooms intended purpose to suit his needs at the time. His creative use of the locker room signifies the capacities his body possessed to find other possibilities for himself in school. "A new rhizome may form in the heart of a tree, the hollow of a root, the crook of a branch" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.15). Foucault contends (1982) "points of resistance are present everywhere in the power network" as evident with Frank securing the locker room at noon (p.787). Frank and Arthur's extensions off the grid demonstrated their means to think through multiplicities and form rhizomes.

In my conversation with Liam, he explained, '*I never went there, I had my shorts on under my pants'*. Liam knew what kinds of activities other boys took up inside the locker room and moved to avoid the rooted site. He later disclosed, '*I know a few of the times the majority of boys were in the locker rooms just being mischievous I guess would be the best word ... example ripping a locker door off and running down the stairs'.* Liam defined the boys in the locker area as '*rambunctious'*. The unstable power relations circulating in the locker area positioned Liam to take a line of resistance by wearing his shorts under his pants. 'What might happen' was enough for Liam to reconfigure his form of entry into physical education class.

Leo after looking at Figure 4.4 explained how he too '*never went down there'* as he had '*heard of some of the horror stories about the things that go on...you know they compare each other if*

you know what I mean, they whip each other in the rear end with wet towels, they look at girlie magazines'. Leo's avoidance of the locker area based on what he thought might happen is comparable to Liam and Arthur's experiences. Just thinking about the mobilization of hegemonic masculine practices inside the locker area, the image of dominant boys acting on other boys, fuelled Leo's desire to move elsewhere, *'I would just change in the upstairs bathroom or wear shorts under my pants'*.

The capacity for some of the young men to avoid, move in advance, and take alternative entries into physical education class reveals the potential they possessed to find cracks and ruptures in the arboreal system. Foucault (1982) explained the exercise of power is a "total structure of actions brought to bear upon possible actions; it induces, it seduces, it makes easier or more difficult" (p.220). The interior power forces of the locker room were what incited Arthur, Leo and Liam to destabilize the power order and take affective action to meet their needs.

Neil when glancing at the locker room photograph stated, *'I remember getting sprayed Axe down my pants once in there'.* The dominant boy forces imposed on Neil in that moment stratified his body to the hierarchical arrangements of the locker room. The 'action upon action' in the locker area, the physical act of another spraying deodorant down Neil's pants, positioned Neil to subvert his relation to the locker room, *'I then avoided the locker room'*. "The exercise of power is not simply a relationship between partners, individual or collective; it is a way in which certain actions modify others" (Foucault, 1982, p.788). His experience draws attentiveness to what happens when a body situatedly comes into mixture with another body, *the affection*. The image of the dominant boy taking physical action towards him leaves a lasting impact where Neil then moves to take a line of resistance to expel the dominant power relations emerging in the locker site between his body and others. When I had asked Oliver about the locker room, he said, *'I didn't go into the locker room... I mostly wore my sneakers'*. After asking why he did not go he responded, *'I don't know, I just didn't'*. Oliver's response reveals how the intensities and flows a body possesses cannot always be identified, labelled or explained.

The young men's recollections of their time in school locker rooms and, hallways were filled with affect and identify the impact particular school arrangements had on their experiences in school and support the answering of research question, what affects emerge for the young men

with ASD when experiencing school? I continue to apply Spinoza's philosophies on affect in this assemblage to find out what emergent connections the young men with ASD had when moving in and across the arboreal system.

The next section unfolds the young men's experiences in a typical classroom. I have chosen the classroom as this is an arboreal arrangement which all students in Nova Scotia experience regularly. As indicated in chapter one, the young men attended school under a separate special education policy where they received special education support services in the regular classroom setting. The review of the 1996 Special Education Policy Manual (SEPM) in chapter one identified how students with ASD spent the majority of their school days in typical classrooms with some small group instruction in a separate setting situating them to experience school differently than their peers.

I begin this next series of rhizomatic stories with the juxtaposing of the young men's thoughts after viewing a stock photograph of an empty classroom. This was then followed by providing a photograph of a classroom containing both students and a teacher to find out about their connections in the regular classroom in relation to others and special education support. This section is titled, *Travelling the Classroom,* to produce an overall affect of what their experiences are like in a Nova Scotia classroom setting.

4.5 Travelling the Classroom



Figure 4.5 Typical Classroom

Cultura. (n.d.) *Empty Classroom* [Photograph]. Retrieved February 6, 2011, from http://www.corbisimages.com ©Corbis Images.

"I always had a chair assigned to me if I didn't I would always go to the same chair" Mason

"I liked my assigned seats to be near the front, or alone by myself. I sometimes didn't like the suddenness of the fire drill (the fire alarm was loud) and I seem to recall them testing an air raid siren (I don't know why: this was in the 90's, and the threat of an air raid around here, at least from the Nazi air force, hadn't been a problem since the Second World War ended in 1945. And I don't think the school was that old. So unless we were worried about attacks from aliens, I missed the point" Leo

"I used to do lunch orders in the classroom with my EA for all the kids that showed up like if they wanted milk or something. I would write it down and then I would go to the canteen and bring it back." Henry

"I didn't like hearing the bells to come in. The bells are so loud and so sudden!" Neil

"I was never in classes much ...I don't know I mean everybody goes to the class and I was mostly in the learning center" Oliver

"I think we were locked into wherever we sat...very odd seating arrangements ... there wasn't very many options" Liam

"Some classes gave seating plans, some classes didn't it just depended on the class" Wes

"I always sat somewhere in the middle" Frank

The young men's recollections of their experiences in the regular classroom after viewing Figure 4.5 identify the underlying power relations circulating in the room and the impact on their experiences. The routine practice of being assigned a classroom seat, a point of arborescence, for example, was one power force my participants had to contend with. Liam

having looked at the photo stated, *'I think we were locked into wherever we sat...very odd seating arrangements ... there wasn't very many options"*. Liam allocated a certain seat produced a feeling of being 'locked in' unable to take a different entry in the classroom. Deleuze explains structural arrangements inside institutions like assigned seats are what he calls, "pure function[s]" intended to impose particular forms of code and conduct (1988a, p.72). Foucault (1995) similarly accounts for the assigning of seats as one of the great disciplinary measures institutions apply to distribute bodies and increase the efficiency of the structured site.

Neil and Leo spoke about other ordered forces circulating in the classroom. The hearing of the school bell was one power force that produced unwelcoming affects for both Neil and Leo. The sound did something to their bodies in moments. None of the young men after looking at the photograph of the classroom produced joyful affects rather they connected to the power forces in the classroom. Their stories increasingly consider the impact regulatory power forces circulating in school sites can have on an individual's daily experiences. Distinctly, to consider what territorialized order systems like bells can do to a body over time.

Oliver when looking at Figure 4.5 explained the effect certain educational policies had on his experiences in the regular classroom where it produced a feeling of distance, existence on the periphery. Explicitly, Oliver identified his absence from the typical classroom explaining to me how he spent a considerable amount of his schooling in the learning center[42], *'I was never in classes much ... I don't know I mean everybody goes to the class, and I was mostly in the learning center'.* Oliver having to move inside the learning center produced a level of separation from his peers thus limiting his capacity to experience school like his peers. Being visibly removed from the regular classroom and sent to the learning center situated Oliver further down on the arborescent grid.

In chapter two, I identified how normative understandings in school are problematic for students with disabilities as it positions others to think about them based on their level of functionality and create levels of distinction between students. "Arborescent systems are hierarchical systems... in a hierarchical system, an individual has only one active neighbor, his or her hierarchical superior" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.16). Oliver's routine travel to the learning center meant he was no longer travelling horizontally like his peers, instead he was

positioned vertically, "stratified, territorialized, organized" on a lower branch (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.9).

Oliver thinking back on his experiences recognized his separation from the regular classroom as he mentioned to me how '*everyone was in class'* yet he was mostly in the learning center. The subtle variances in educational instruction, in separate settings, placed limits on how he experienced school. Having to experience school relative to his functional skill cast Oliver as 'a certain kind of subject' and in his reflection, he affectively recognized that his experiences were different from his peers. The next section advances further understandings of the effect special education support in the regular classroom had on the young men's experiences. The subsequent series of rhizomatic stories emerged after viewing a stock photograph of a student sitting at a desk with an adult in the classroom (see Figure 4.6).

4.6 Navigating Special Education Support

Teacher assistants are one special education support service employed by the Department of Education to support students with disabilities as outlined when reviewing the SEPM (1996) in chapter one. The role of a paraprofessional in the regular classroom is to provide educational help to students with ASD as determined by the classroom teacher (Nova Scotia Department of Education, Nova Scotia Teacher Assistant Guidelines, 2009). The presence of a teacher assistant whilst intended to provide support can add a layer of complexity for a student with ASD as the visible presence of another adult signals a level of difference. Special education practices being a root "functioning", "a whole apparatus that is planted" is potentially problematic for a student with ASD as it positions him to move in a straight line from point to point under the direction of their teacher assistant (Deleuze & Parnet, 1987, p.25). In the next series of rhizomatic stories, I show what happens to a few of the young men with ASD when experiencing school with a teacher assistant. The young men's rhizomatic stories emerged after glancing at Figure 4.6 and remembering their time in the classroom with their teacher assistants or what the young men identified as their 'EA's'[43]. I begin with Henry's experiences.



Figure 4.6 Classroom Support

Pelaez, J. (n.d.). *Boys in Classroom Coloring* [Photograph]. Retrieved February 6, 2011, from http://www.corbisimages.com ©Corbis Images.

4.6.1 Henry's Link to his Educational Assistant (EA)

When Henry looked at Figure 4.6 what emerged was a series of connections to his teacher assistant. Henry told me, *'I would come late for class in grade 6, and I remember coming in and my EA sitting down beside me'*. Henry then explained, *'I used to do lunch orders with my EA for all the kids that showed up like if they wanted a milk or something I would write it down, and then I would go to the canteen and bring it back up*'. Henry identified his role was that of *'classroom helper'*. In the role of *'classroom helper'*, Henry executed his job by travelling from point to point collecting milk orders following his EA's instructions. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) describe the transmission of forces in the arboreal system as a mechanism to secure pre-established hierarchies and to keep things homogeneous. Henry maintains the hierarchical grid of organization when complying with his teacher assistant's orders, fulfilling his role as class helper. His body in the process was mobilized on a different trajectory than his peers, producing a level of separation. Henry then recalled his displeasure when thinking about his time with a few of his teacher assistants.

> Henry: I really didn't like them at all cause they thought I was stupid and stuff and they only cared for the smarter kids instead of the autistic kids and stuff cause they think they are all smart and that and they didn't really help me cause they didn't think I wanted to achieve goals and stuff or kids with autism they didn't believe them and stuff so I just told them off the last time I had seen them.

Henry recognized the alterity of experiences he had in the classroom relative to his peers. He was annoyed that his teacher assistants framed his level of functionality as lower, incapable. In frustration, Henry built up of a series of intensities and energies to the point where he decided to '*tell them off*'. Henry's experiences reveal the emerging energies that intersect when two

bodies collide. He produced unwelcoming affects when coming into mixture with his teacher assistants and later took action to expel the power dynamic. In the process, Henry revitalized his body to something more to his liking.

Foucault (1982) identified how institutions produce specific power mechanisms that have a "specific nature" (p. 786) intended to program actions and keep bodies "order[ed] in time" (p. 71). The specific nature in this analysis is the special education branch implanted within the classroom that rigidified Henry to a definite position. Henry's experience signals how ordered arrangements in school can be so 'tight' that students do not question their position within the arboreal system; it becomes something just expected of bodies. While Henry, for the most part, accepted his positioning in the classroom with his teacher assistant, he also knew he was experiencing school differently than his peers. The differences over time fuelled Henry to eventually take a line of resistance. Henry agency in 'telling his teacher assistants off' was his affective action to expel his body from a peripheral status. Upon seeing Figure 4.6, Adam spoke in great detail about his time in the regular classroom. Of significance, Adam recalled a much stronger connection to his experiences in the classroom after viewing Figure 4.6.

4.6.2 Adam Meshing with his EA

While firmly grasping Figure 4.6, Adam unfolded his experiences in the classroom with his teacher assistant.

> Adam: I think the hardest thing was doing work while having all the other stuff going on around me. Like everybody (his classmates) seemed to be very close to one another, like they were sitting beside one, another and everything. I never got to sit beside anyone as I was assigned an EA.

Adam explained how the presence of his educational assistant impeded his capacity to connect with others in the classroom. His description of how others were '*close to one another'* yet he '*never got to sit beside anyone'* signifies the separation Adam felt when experiencing the classroom with a teacher assistant. Adam further explained the effect.

> Adam: She [Adam's teacher assistant] had this way of having to conduct things about how people should act and where things should be and everything, and it got on my nerves...What bothered me the most was that I always needed help with things because I couldn't do anything on my own. And most of the time I would usually be taken out of the class by an EA and sent to some other room where me and some other students that also had EA's would all be working together on the same thing during school...I

> was usually having to always be taken out of class during the middle of it, even if we were watching movies in the French class, and you have to go into this separate little room, and I would have to fill in some papers that we were doing on an assignment...I was broughten all the way downstairs to this room away from everybody else you know and that happened a lot, that happened a lot I remember.

Adam did not like the lines of force his teacher assistant cast towards him. The power forces circulating between Adam and his 'EA' left a trace on his body, an image of a conductor. Adam was bothered by his peripheral position and physical removal from the classroom to a *'separate little room'* to do assignments. He emphasised his displeasure when he described his movements, *'I was broughten all the way'* downstairs '*away from everybody else'*. He affectively wanted to be with his peers. Soon after, Adam released the unwelcoming affects during our conversation. Raising his voice, he projected:

> Adam: I just wanna be around people my own age you know! I don't want to have to be always followed by an adult!

The intensity of his accounts, the velocity of his affect is powerful. Deleuze and Parnet (1987) define sad affects "are those which reduce our power to act" (p.60). Sad affects can slow a body's capacity to act as evident when Adam does not dispute or attempt to take a line of resistance where he remained stratified to the system (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). Adam's stratification emerged from his body classified less functional than his peer counterparts, with supports in place to fix his deviations from the norm.

Adam desired to form a rhizome, increase his territory, to '*be around people [his] own age'* yet his body remained trapped, moving slowly in and across the arboreal system. Adam's story identifies the tension students can experience in moments when navigating school on different trajectories than their typical peers. Adam then told me about his experiences at recess and noon hour. Thinking through middles and, still grasping Figure 4.6 Adam stated:

> Adam: Like it would have been a whole lot better if I could have been able to at least you know be allowed to go into town by myself without having an EA with me, but they wouldn't allow that cause, I always needed help, so I always had to stay in the cafeteria and eat my lunch. They wouldn't allow that unless I was with somebody... I never really snuck off although I really wanted to, but I knew I would get in trouble for it... It is just I wish I could have been able to join them in town instead of having to stay in the cafeteria all that time.

Adam was restricted. He was told by his teacher assistant to stay on school property. Foucault asks us to think about how power gets exercised inside institutions and to examine the "system of differentiation" (1982, p.792). The "system of differentiation" was exercised when Adam was given a different set of rules than his schoolmates at noon hour. His body was told by authority figures to travel on a straight line from point to point, his body territorialized to the molar properties of the cafeteria. Alternatively, the power was exercised differently for his fellow peers. His schoolmates at noon hour could move more fluidly and slightly outside the arboreal system by taking entry into town. Adam affectively wanted to reject the differentiation as he desired what his peers had. He even imagined sneaking off into town with others. His fear of being reprimanded by his teachers however, diminished his capacity to act and break the rules of the ordered arrangements.

The exercising of power relations produced Adam's unwelcoming affects, the building of "actions upon actions" (Foucault, 1982, p.791). The *affection* in Adam's case were the separation practices he experienced on a routine basis, including the daily supervision where his every action felt monitored, compared and differentiated. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) identify how regular intersections tighten the striation, "the more homogeneous the space tends to become" (p.488). Such tight striations placed limits on Adam's capacities to connect with his peers leaving a lasting impact. Given Adam's limited access during noon hour I asked him to expand on his experiences with peers, and he responded:

> Adam: Nothing that was really memorable I don't think... But you know sometimes I had some problems with the people. There was this guy that wears glasses, he does all these silly noises to people. I think he was mostly doing it to me and when he did I was always usually running away. He would even do it to me in the cafeteria there just walking right by me when I was sitting somewhere either when I was alone, or I was with people. It really annoyed me and sometimes I chased after him as he doesn't like anybody touching him so sometimes I would do that to him... And I also met this guy, he was always wearing his hat on his head. I always use to play with him by taking his hat away, and he would chase after me. He didn't really like that very much there, but I didn't really mind I had fun doing that but sometimes I would get in trouble for doing that to him too... bothering him like that.

Adam collided with other bodies and in moments, he relished the connection. Foucault reminds us, "where there is power, there is resistance" (1990, p.7). Chasing another boy was Adam's line of resistance to uproot his marginalized status and gain entry to the social arena

of school. Deleuze (1988b) imparts that it is joyful affects which incite and increase a body's ability to take action.

> [W]e know nothing about a body until we know what it can do, in other words, what its affects are, and how they can or cannot enter into composition with other affects, with the affects of another body (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 257).

Adam's accounts reveal the complexity of school for individuals in moments, the flux of intensities that can emerge for a body when entering into relations with others, including the intense power forces circulating that often determine a body's future actions. For Adam, there was the centralizing force (specific policies, rules of the classroom, dominant peers), its points of arborescence (regular classroom and separate room for small group work), and the axis of rotation, which organized Adam's existence (presence of a teacher assistant, order-words of his teacher assistant and removal from the regular classroom)[44]. Adam's experiences reveal how complex school can be in moments when a body is read as a certain kind of subject unable to escape his coded classification within the system. I turn now to identify Bobby's experiences with special education support. After viewing Figure 4.6, Bobby detailed what happened to him in the regular classroom. Bobby like Adam was affectively drawn to Figure 4.6.

4.6.3 Bobby Enters a Special Class

Bobby immediately recalled leaving the regular classroom to receive small group instruction.

> Bobby: I went to a special class with a handful of kids, and we were taught like any other student. We were in a separate class, and at the time I wasn't aware of how different I was, I was a little aware but not really aware.

Bobby in a '*special class'* with a '*handful of kids'* distinguished himself from his peers and he made this apparent when he told me that he had to travel outside the regular classroom for separate instruction. When recalling his experiences, however, Bobby was held in tension. In his reflection, he affectively wanted to disrupt his peripheral status to me. This was made evident when he stated, '*I was taught like any other student'*. Bobby's declaration of being 'taught like any other student' signalled his immense desire to destabilize his marginalized status during our conversation. Bobby then told me:

> Bobby: I started to notice I was a little different... I started noticing things change about me, and I got in conflicts with people because of my personality, and that was

> when I really began to realize I was different cause for the first time people were going out of their way to make fun of me, but it wouldn't be like you're dumb or you're stupid it would be a punch or a kick or something like that. So when I got to grade 6 I knew I was different, but luckily, I had EA's (educational assistants) to help me.

Bobby returned to acknowledging his differences from peers after recalling being subjected to the power forces of his classmates. Their violent acts towards him, including their derogatory remarks, '*stupid*', and '*dumb*', had stratified Bobby to a lower position within the arborescent system.

> Bobby: I think some of it was because some of them (classmates) grew up in different circumstances, and they were not taught how to deal with disabled people right so as a result they would say things like retard and stuff like that not knowing that you know I am not a retard! I have problems reading and writing, but it doesn't make me retarded. So some of it was they just didn't know any better.

Bobby once again during our conversation attempted to revitalize his body by suggesting his classmates perhaps '*grew up in different circumstances*' and were '*not taught to deal with disabled people'* therefore, their actions must somehow have been warranted. His rhizomatic departure to rejuvenate himself, however, halted one more time when he remembered his peers calling him a *'retard'*. Soon after though Bobby returned to unsettle this notion of occupying a denigrated position by emphatically telling me, *'you know I am not a retard'*. Bobby in a matter of seconds produced both sad and joyful affects during our time together. Deleuze (1988b) reminds us that a body can move between both sad and joyful affects in moments. Bobby then turned to speak in more detail about his experiences with his peers in the classroom. We pick up our conversation where Bobby explained how he learned to 'fight back' towards his peers who had called him a *'retard'*.

> Bobby: I would fuck with their lives and do whatever I could! I would say, 'I heard so and so was having an affair with you' and then this would start a catfight and I would watch these two girls start scrapping...People were jerks to me and after months and months of figuring out who they are and what their hobbies were if they kept doing it I would get into their personal lives and say ok what can I do... I don't want to kill these people or break their property. I just want to take them down a couple of notches right.

Bobby made a move to refute his marginalized status! He made vivid his extended line of resistance when creating rumours. Bobby found new potential and resurrected his body to something else, "points of resistance are present everywhere in the power network" (Foucault, 1990, p.95). By taking action towards his peers Bobby reframed his identity to one of

possibility. Bobby's intuitiveness to 'move', 'to revitalize' was powerful, demonstrating the capacities he possessed in school to improve his experiences.

Bobby then took an additional line of flight and conveyed to me, '*People can label me all they want; I don't care anymore'.* He then stated, *'You know I just see myself as normal*'. Situating himself within the normal/abnormal binary Bobby signalled his awareness of how others might perceive his body and he wanted me to know that he fit within a normative framework. Given Bobby's response, '*You know I just see myself as normal',* I asked Bobby if he could define what normal means. Bobby responded:

> I don't know what normal is cause, I am not normal, and I don't even know what it is like to be normal. Normal seems a little boring to me. I don't know normal is boring maybe ... being boring! [laugh]

Earlier Bobby identified that he saw himself as normal, yet upon greater reflection, he situated his body outside normative parameters. Bobby's extension outside normal, however, was an agentic action and in the process, he destabilized the normal/abnormal binary by declaring, *'Normal seems a little boring to me'*. Bobby then expanded on his capacities to make extensions and fulfil his desires as a young adult.

> Bobby: I feel like I am still different. I wish I could have done more stuff in high school ... like drugs, well just marijuana and booze, but I should have done that in school because I would have been more popular. I understood the mental aspect (of his disability) but the whole social aspect I have only just figured out in the last couple of years... The best thing I find that works is to go around with an empty liquor bottle in my hand. Just walk around with it because I find if people think I am drunk they will treat me better than if they think I am mentally ill right. Oh he is drunk right. I don't know why and I don't care if they think there is a bottle in my hand, they are nicer to me and will not mess with me as often.
>
> Sarah: So you just pretend you are drunk, and they are nicer to you?
>
> Bobby: Yeah all I am really doing is holding a bottle that is all I am really doing but when they see a bottle, they don't tend to say much... they leave me alone.

Bobby revealed his movements of 'acting drunk'. Acting drunk was the strong line of resistance to circumvent his feelings of difference. Bobby's performing drunk was his productive move to transverse the hierarchical social order, and it worked! He could have more welcoming social experiences as a performative drunk and in the process decompose his marginalized status.

> More often one is dealing with mobile and transitory points of resistance, producing cleavages in a society that shift about, fracturing unities and effecting regroupings, furrowing across individuals themselves, cutting them up and remolding them (Foucault, 1990, p.97).

Bobby's actions towards finding acceptance, performing drunk and stirring rumours, illustrate the complexity an individual can experience when known and thought about by others through classificatory systems. Henry, Adam and Bobby having experienced school on a different trajectory than their peers identified the tension they experience in moments when having to exist on the periphery. The subtle power relations that emerged for the young men when connecting to their teaching assistants, and with dominant peers revealed the tension they embodied when unable to alter their positioning. In education, we often do not think about the imminent power relations circulating within ordered sites, between bodies that can leave a lasting impact on students' experiences.

Other young men with ASD when looking at the image of the classroom did not connect like Adam and Bobby. This happens to all of us when glancing at photos where some images stir something in us, and others do not. Mason did not generate much of a response when viewing Figure 4.6 just stating, '*I had an EA in class'*. Luke responded not to the bodies in the room but to his academic subjects, '*The math classes I absolutely hated. I had issues on how it was being taught. I absolutely loved my physics, loved my chemistry. Loved my tech. English was ok I suffered through that'.* The molar lines of the classroom produced Luke's responses on math as did Mason's recollection of his time with his EA.

Every classroom contains trees and rhizomes. A student can be organized and territorialized according to the roots of the system, and the body can also flee and find "a plurality of resistances" (Foucault, 1990, p.96). I take a departure now from photography to analyze the connections the young men with ASD made to school rules. School rules are a significant arboreal arrangement intended to keep students traveling from point to point along the "plane of organization" (Deleuze & Parnet, 1987). Therefore, it is important to find out how the young men with ASD experienced their school's rules.

4.7 Continuous School Rules

The young men with ASD connections to school rules were similar to the reflections they had when viewing the photograph of the empty hallway with the young men acknowledging that rules existed and they were required to follow them. Oliver however offered me detailed descriptions on his school rules where he chose to record them on paper. Figure 4.7 identifies Oliver's connections to school rules. He carefully listed the rules, starting each rule with an emphatic, "No". Oliver in his recollection returned to the "order-words" circulating within the arboreal system (Deleuze & Parnet, 1987, p. 22). It is order-words like "No" which Oliver is entangled with. The word "no" forms a degree of power, the signal to follow and obey the ordered arrangements of the system.

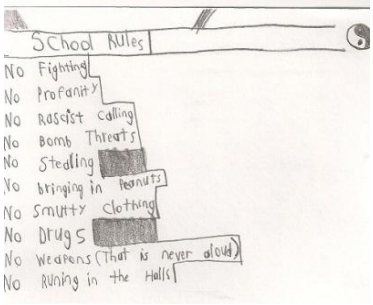


Figure 4.7 Oliver's Rules

Foucault (1995) explained rules are inscribed at the heart of teaching practice to increase the efficiency of bodies. He illustrated how power forces incite certain actions through a system of signals (i.e. posted rules, gestures, bells, or a glance from a teacher) to which students must react, respond and follow. Next, I juxtapose the young men's responses when having a conversation about their school rules. I intentionally pull them together to produce an overall affect of how school rules impacted the young men's experiences (see Figure 4.8).

"It wasn't the rule itself that upset me but the violation that happens of the rule" (Arthur)

"All schools have them – no spitting, no chewing gum in class, no insubordination, no back talking to the teacher, can't be late if you were report to the office and get a late slip. Jeez what school doesn't have rules, they have rules! I was a rule follower, I knew what would happen if I broke the rules" (Frank)

"My teachers were strict. I remember I tried to get out of going to school because I didn't want to go with those teachers" ... "I remember when we first got our agendas, I think the first ten pages were all rules you had to follow, weapon offences etc" (Luke)

"I generally lived my life in that I never broke any of the rules so it was never a concern" (Liam)

"No blocking the hallways, no chewing gum, no fighting, no swearing, just rules" (Mason)

"Don't go around punching people, don't break windows, be respectful of your teacher, stuff like that" (Bobby)

Figure 4.8 Responses to Rules

The young men's experiences with school rules predominantly connected to the circulating power forces within the arboreal system. Like Oliver, the order-words emerge for other young men with ASD when recalling school rules; '*not allowed*', '*no*', '*don't'* or '*can't*'. Their initial responses express the level of power filtering through the rooted system intended to keep their bodies moving linearly.

Arthur connected to the power forces behind the rules, '*it wasn't the rule itself'* but *'the violation that happens of the rule'.* He expressed his frustration when a student decided to break a rule, especially since the rules were clearly marked in classrooms, hallways and in school agendas. While rules and policies are intended to keep students moving forward, it was students' subtle trajectories off the path that created eruptions for Arthur.

Similar to Arthur, Frank also had a strong response to school rules and raised his voice, loudly declaring, '*Jeez what school doesn't have rules, they have rules!*' Frank shouted:

> no spitting, no chewing gum in class, no insubordination, no back talking to the teacher, can't be late if you were report to the office and get a late slip

The continuum of intensities Frank unleashed was powerful as his body worked at variable speeds trying to extract his previous relation to his school rules. Mason's recollection of rules was homogenous to Frank's as he stated, *'no blocking the hallways, no chewing gum, no fighting, no swearing, just rules'*. Bobby similarly responded, *'don't go around punching people, don't break windows, be respectful of your teacher, stuff like that'.* Frank, Mason and Bobby exemplify the power forces, a series of communication forces that tied their bodies to the arboreal schema. Deleuze however, encourages us to follow bodies' ruptures and heterogeneous departures from ordered systems. This is demonstrated by Leo who took such a departure having recalled his experiences with school rules.

> Leo: Structure is good, the problems I sometimes had with rules were the things that weren't clearly posted. They had too many unspoken conditional exceptions, or I didn't understand why they existed. I could easily obey the absolute (the clearly posted rule) ...But sometimes I felt the rule created a double standard in that certain people seemed to get away with everything, and that is when I would sometimes take liberties, just so I could be the same... I was often seen as having diplomatic immunity because the trouble I got into often involved a misunderstanding or confusion, or something that authorities didn't seem to like at first, but it wasn't specifically mentioned in the discipline code as wrong. I could sometimes call in my psychiatrist to clarify that misunderstanding, and that was sometimes seen in my peer group as getting away with it. Fortunately, they didn't allow corporal punishment, and teachers didn't have absolute power over me.

Leo brings forth Spinoza's question: Of what affects is he capable of?

> [O]ur affects are our becomings: sometimes they weaken us in so far as they diminish our power to act and decompose our relationships (sadness), sometimes they make us stronger in so far as they increase our power and make us enter into a more vast or superior individual (joy) (Deleuze & Parnet, 1987, p.60).

Leo was held in tension and frustrated when school rules were *'not clearly posted'* or when the rules had '*too many unspoken conditional exceptions'*. He disliked it when a rule was manipulated and altered, '*a double standard'*. What Leo discovered were the inequities in rule following where some bodies get '*away with it*' and others were reprimanded for the same infraction. He was left to wonder and question why certain students have to follow the rules while others can take a line of resistance and not be reprimanded for veering from the power centers.

Leo then took his own rhizomatic departure from school rules. Leo's escape cited as '*diplomatic immunity'* ruptured the codes of conduct as he worked to find alternative entries

when experiencing school. Leo's '*diplomatic immunity'* signifies 'what a body can do' when desiring something different outside molar lines. Leo uprooting the rules by taking action, by experimenting and occasionally even calling upon his psychiatrist to take entry with him displays the capacities he possessed to rupture his connections to arboreal relations.

For most of the young men, they acknowledged the rules, spoke of their displeasure, and yet never took full extensions to destabilize their connections to school rules. The rules were something that was expected of the body, to follow authority figures orders and travel homogeneously according to the rules of the arboreal system. The young men understood how rules worked and chose to, for the most part, follow the functioning's of the system. Leo, however, also exemplified what is possible, and what a body can do when wanting something different. Leo intuitively applied his own affective series of moves to escape rooted rules and take entries more to his liking.

4.8 Summary

This first assemblage identified the connections the young men with ASD made to various arboreal relations. The use of stock photography including theorizations from Foucault and Deleuze on power assisted in producing an overall affect of what ordered sites and emerging power relations did to the young men when experiencing school in Nova Scotia. Foucault and Deleuze's readings on power were useful in showing how power does not emerge from a top-down approach, but rather circulates between bodies, released through a "net-like organization" (Foucault, 1980, p. 98). Power mobilized at the level of the body produced a closed system at moments in which the young men could operate.

Early on in this assemblage, it was the power of 'order-words' mingling in and across school sites that impacted the young men's bodily capacities to extend. The continuous power forces subjected on their bodies; being told where to stand, how to move and where to sit within various school sites performed a regulatory operation on their bodies (Foucault, 1995). Foucault described regulatory operations as the rules, policies, ordered structures that tie bodies to a certain position. Mapping the young men's movements, I signalled the moments their bodies were restricted by the regulatory power mechanisms of the arboreal system. This was evident when Mason was subjected to the power forces of an authority figure when moving through his school hallway. The power words pressed upon his body fracturing

Mason's capacity to find more welcoming entries. Wes similarly recounted the enduring impact circulating power forces had on his experiences as evident when he connected vividly to an 'image of a prison'. The rooted, routine arrangements of having assigned seats, regimented practices, the hearing of school bells produced the image of a prison for Wes, a lasting, unwelcoming impression.

One power force profoundly impacting the young men's experiences with others was their subjection to a normalizing judgement (Foucault, 1995). Foucault explained the normalizing judgement are the power forces put forward by authoritative figures, dominant peers, surveillance and structures of buildings intended to correct bodies as a means to have bodies appear as close as possible to normal. This was the concern with Bobby, Adam and Henry's stories. The normalizing judgement cast by teachers, teacher assistants and dominant students produced a level of separation for the young men. In chapter two, I identified through Butler's (2004) work how differentiations from the norm can place constraints on how one might live in public contexts. Bobby felt the normalizing effect when his classmates call him *'a retard'*. Adam also felt the effect of the normalizing judgement when sent outside the regular classroom. The physical removal situated him on a different trajectory than constituting his body "outside" normal parameters. Henry similarly was subjected to normalizing practices, situated on a lower grid, when having to experience the regular classroom with a teacher assistant.

While Foucault reminds us that power performs a regulatory operation on bodies that can halt and restrict movement, he also informs how power can ignite action. Power "doesn't just weigh on us as a force that says no", it "produces things" (Foucault, 1980, p. 119). Deleuze (1988a) encourages us to focus on lines of resistance and to map the lines of flight that bodies extend on. By mobilizing the analytical tool of movement, I could follow the young men's lines of resistance.

Wes illustrated his capacity to uproot the power forces in his school hallways by moving fast and taking direct routes. Frank took a line of resistance by actively avoiding his school halls. Both Wes and Frank show how bodies are not fully predetermined by arboreal forces where they can find opportunities to satisfy their interests. Mason, Liam, Arthur and Leo exemplified their capacities to find new trajectories when coming into mixture with hierarchical power

arrangements in school locker rooms. Through movement the young men actively unsettled emergent power relations and took creative trajectories such as wearing their shorts under their pants or entering five minutes early to secure more welcoming school experiences. The affectivities flowing through the molar site of 'what might happen' was enough for many of the young men to take entry elsewhere as evident when Leo and Liam avoided the locker area based on what they thought might happen in the rooted site.

As mentioned at the onset of the dissertation, I wanted to map the young men with ASD movements outside molar designations, and to see what young men with ASD can do. Rhizomes and affect theory provided this entry. In this assemblage, I made a shift from arborescent knowledge to rhizomatic and in the process destabilized medicalized ways of knowing bodies with ASD. Following their movements allowed for a more open way of thinking about the young men's experiences, where knowledge was produced at the level of the body. To increasingly consider: What are the intensities that build in a structured school site between bodies? What happens? Who moves? What is the affection? Knowing the emerging affects was central to understanding how power forces impacted the young men's experiences. In chapter two, I introduced Spinoza's affect to support the process of understanding the emergent aspects of human experience.

> Spinoza never ceases to be astonished at the body: not of having a body, but at what the body is capable of. Bodies are not defined by their genus and species, nor by their origins and functions, but by what they can do, the affects they are capable of, in passion as in action (Deleuze & Parnet, 1987, p.60).

The subtle affects circulating between students often go unnoticed in education; however, in this assemblage, I have begun the process of seeing the transformative aspects of each young man's experiences. This first data assemblage addressed the research questions, what affects emerge for young men with ASD when experiencing school and what can the mobilization of movement as an analytical concept inform about the young men with ASD schooling experiences?

The next data assemblage explores the young men's social connections having attended public school in Nova Scotia, Canada. The aim is to build on this first assemblage and pursue an informed understanding of the social dimensions of the young men with ASD experiences. I

continue to apply Deleuze, Guattari and Spinoza's theorizations to support thinking about young men with ASD in more productive ways.

Chapter 5: Social Manoeuvres

5.0 Introduction

Students in school are categorized according to their biological sex, ability levels and gender order. A young man with ASD can be further stratified in relation to his disability and then territorialized to the hegemonic masculine gender order. In the previous assemblage, I identified the constraints some of the young men felt in moments when entering relations with dominant boys in school locker rooms, populated hallways and typical classrooms. The social relations boys have in school continue to be largely defined by hegemonic practices thus determining the types of social experiences a young man with ASD has in school. The focus of this data assemblage is to explore the connections the young men had with their peers; specifically, analyze what happened in situated moments between the young men and other boys.

To make emphasis to their situated exchanges, the works of masculinity theorists are applied to inform an understanding of the implications various gender relations had on the young men's experiences. Mobilizing masculinity theory can support the process of illuminating the tension that can emerge between boys in schools, including attentiveness to the hegemonic power circulating within gender relations and the effect on the young men's schooling experiences. Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) concept of de/re-territorializing in ATP is also employed to assist in contextualizing the young men's social movements having cut across the hegemonic social grid.

5.1 De/reterritorialization

Deterritorialization attends to the trajectories a body takes on a molecular level. "D is the movement by which "one" leaves the territory...it is the operation of the line of flight" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 508). The concept of deterritorialization in this data assemblage is helpful in showing what happened for the young men with ASD when they moved, took rhizomatic paths and destabilized the established gender order. In chapter three, I mentioned how Deleuze and Guattari encourage researchers to experiment, thereby adding their concept of deterritorialization in this assemblage, supports the shift to think about young men with ASD in more open ways. This is important as indicated in chapter two the majority of

knowledge on the social experiences of students with ASD has emerged from medical theorizations that have assessed students with ASD social functionality relative to neurotypical minds. Applying the concept of deterritorialization, however, can unsettle dualistic understandings and attend to the emergent social capacities a body with ASD possesses. This involves exploring the moments where the young men plunge into new social territories, cut the edges, and insert. "The social field is always animated by all kinds of movements of decoding and deterritorialization affecting "masses" and operating at different speeds and paces" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.220). In working across an educational terrain filled with gendered power relations there is also a need to identify the effect the young men experienced when pulled back to the gender order, reterritorialized.

Reterritorialization according to Deleuze and Guattari (1987) is the return to the strata of coded behaviors. Specifically, in this assemblage reterritorialization are the moments when the young men are constrained by the hegemonic masculine order. Mobilizing Deleuze and Guattari's concept of reterritorialization in this assemblage allows us to see the effect gender relations had on the young men's schooling experiences. I also apply affect theory in this assemblage to advance further knowledge on the young men's situated social experiences.

5.2 Affects Circulating between Bodies

Sara Ahmed's (2004) work on affect has been included in this assemblage to make vivid what happens in moments to the young men when entering a relation with another. Ahmed not making distinctions between emotion and affect identifies how the body produces specific kinds of affects (hate, pain, anger) that impact 'what a body can do' and whether a body will increase or decrease one's actions. Ahmed (2004) for example, explains how bodies can slide between producing pain affects and hate affects which over time impress on the surface of the body, "affect that leaves its mark or trace" (p.6). Ahmed's attentiveness to specific affects is useful in this assemblage as it can show the kinds of intensities and energies that emerge for the young men in moments when experiencing school with others. Producing affective knowledge on the young men's social experiences advances alternative understandings on how the young men with ASD navigated the intricate social dimensions of school.

Applying Deleuze and Guattari's concept of de/reterritorialization coupled with affect theory supports the knowing of the research question, how can rhizome and affect theories assist in unfolding the young men's schooling experiences in alternative ways outside of contemporary thought? Mapping the young men's movements when making exchanges with peers, including attentiveness to the affects circulating between bodies, advances my argument from chapter two to think outside contemporary thought and find out what young men with ASD can do. Following the rhizomatic framework established in chapter three, I take a slightly different entry than the previous assemblage, presenting four young men with ASD social and their experiences in school. These men were expressive when telling me about their experiences with others. I purposely simplified the use of subheadings in this assemblage to allow the young men's rhizomatic stories to flow and build on one another. I begin with Leo's social experiences followed by Wes, Arthur and Frank's.

5.3 Leo

Leo was 30 years of age when we met at the Provincial Autism Center. At the time of our interview, he was living with a family member in metropolitan Nova Scotia and volunteered part-time at a local community center. Leo was candid when telling me about his social experiences in school. Prior to detailing his experiences with others, he explained to me that he was '*awkward*' in school and possessed what he called, '*autistic insecurities'*. Leo surmised his insecurities stemmed from feeling '*old fashioned'* in school and disconnected to popular culture. He did, however, develop strong affinities to one popular, fictional television character named, Shy Violet (see Figure 5.1) [45]. Shy Violet was a female animated figure on the popular mid 1980's children's television program Rainbow Brite[46].



Figure 5.1 Shy Violet

[untitled photograph of Shy Violet].(n.d).Retrieved on August 16th, 2011from http://www.rainbowbrite.net/character/violet.html ©Hallmark Licensing.

Leo expressed how he wanted to emulate Shy Violet as a young boy as he admired her intelligence and confident demeanor. Leo even took measures to locate a pair of thick, round glasses like Shy Violet's to wear to school. After showing me an image of Shy Violet on one of the computers at the center, Leo detailed his connection to Shy Violet. Leo conveyed how he wore glasses like hers, carried a Rainbow Brite lunch box and adorned a purple cape. He remarked how other students made fun of his Rainbow Brite lunch box stating it was a '*girl's lunchbox'* but Leo did not care, emphatically stating, '*it was my lunchbox!*'

> Subordinated masculine identities are ruthlessly pathologized and positioned as 'other' for preferring pursuits that in their absence of physical aggression categorically locate them as 'feminine' (Smith, 2007, p.187).

Leo, determined to keep his lunchbox, challenged the limits placed on his body by the hegemonic gender order. His desire to subvert masculine macho styles was identified when he compared his interests to typical boys' activities.

> Leo: I was a softer personality. I wasn't into the kinds of things that boys were into Masters of the Universe, Transformers, tough-guy stuff. You know watching "R" rated movies you know to prove they are all grown up. I was still watching Rainbow Brite, and now I still do only now I watch it to study the drawings ... I mean I liked Rainbow Brite ... I wasn't into being a jerk, you know a jerk, you know a typical boy. I wasn't into that.

Leo deterritorialized his body from hegemonic masculine stereotypes drawing a strong line of flight, *'I wasn't into being a jerk, you know a typical boy'.* In his flight, Leo found an alternative entry; a softer existence. By emulating the fictional character, Shy Violet, Leo inserted and located new social terrain. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) remind us that "the territory is constantly traversed by movements of deterritorialization" (p.326). Leo dislodging hyper-masculine styles divulged the capacity he had to extend and find lines of flight. The extensions made through affinities to Rainbow Brite produced joyful affects. These joyful affects increased Leo's movements to take a different trajectory not aligned with the collective. This was further evidenced when Leo talked about refuting typical boy styles.

> Leo: You know they pick a few play fights. They are basically shallow, you know they're yucky. Boys are yucky and that about sums, it up ... boys are yucky right! Think of the movie the Nutty Professor. How you got Jerry Lewis a doctor whatever, and he can bind love. He acts like a bit of a bad boy. He acts like a bit of a rebel, a troublemaker. Whereas the scientist, the chemistry professor except for blowing up the lab, he is basically a goody-goody. He doesn't have muscles cause he's like you know,

> he's like this guy. He's this guy they love to give a wedgie to…[pause]… so the popular guys you know have to act like a bad boy ... a rebel ... they had to act like they have something to rebel against... you know they are supposed to be tough, they are supposed to be athletic, they are supposed to treat girls like a commodity ... you know they are supposed to only be interested in sex. They are supposed to be shallow. I didn't.

Leo in his definition of a typical boy conjectured I should have previous knowledge of what a boy is like in school. He phrased his statements with *'you know', 'you know'* as if we did not need to go down the path of defining a boy. I should know 'boys play fight', 'boys are athletic', 'shallow' and 'only interested in sex'. Leo intuitively used popular media, the Nutty Professor,[47] to create a productive image when explaining how typical boys act. He then proceeded to include more descriptive language to support his image by saying boys are '*tough*', '*bad*', and '*rebels*'. Leo interpreted other boys to be one unitary subject, a tough machine. Leo then derailed himself from the tough machine production emphatically exclaiming, '*I didn't'*. Leo's body filled with a series of intensities when connecting his body to typical boy practices and in that moment Leo could not pinpoint exactly why he was disconnected from gendered boy type activities he just was. This is the essence of relations. They are complex and filled with intensities rather than defined. The affects circulating between bodies can position a body to move elsewhere, not knowing why they want to decompose that relation; they just do.

Leo then added another dimension when explaining his connection to typical boys in school and applied art to assist in his contextualization. Visual images are useful forms of expression for bodies when unravelling their feelings and desires. Christie and Bloustien (2010) suggest visual images in particular contexts can educate others through affect; leading potentially to new insights (p.491). Leo picked up a pencil and began to draw for me (see Figure 5.2 & Figure 5.3). As he drew, Leo explained his art.



Figure 5.2 Typical Boy

> Leo: Now a popular boy, a popular boy would always be straight, like clean cut, straight I don't know uh, a brand-name shirt, you know Umbro or something. I'm just doing a quick sketch mind you. You know their hair is either like that you know it's always like this million-dollar Vanilla Ice[48] hairdo. They all seemed to have better looks than I did ... I was like this scrawny little runt (see Figure 5.2).

Leo then affectively explained his body in relation to peers and drew a self-portrait (see Figure 5.3).

> Leo: I had big, my hair used to be all. I used to have bigger hair, though not like afro; it used to be long hair like that and of course people used to say I'd be popular if I got a rhinoplasty. And then of course I always wore these big nerdy glasses. I always wore these thick black frames. I didn't really have acne, but I had freckles. And then of course my voice broke early so here I was twelve years old talking like a grown man, and I never had that problem where I'd pass back between my kid voice and my grown man voice mid sentence. It took me a while to grow into my voice because I always felt like I sounded like a monotonous robot with a cold [makes cold sounds].



Figure 5.3 Leo's Self Portrait

Leo's drawings mark clear distinctions between his body and the popular boys. Leo produced an image of a strong trunk when representing a popular boy. The clean lines and well defined sculpted face illustrate his understandings of hegemonic masculine ideals. He then conjugated a different set of intensities when drawing himself. Leo clearly deterritorialized his body from the dominant trunk sketching his body as a small, weak branch extending from the limb. His body on a lower branch projected a weaker type of masculine positioned on the boundaries of acceptability as a boy in school. After drawing, I asked Leo if he felt he had to act a certain way as a boy in school, and he responded:

> Leo: Of course ... yes! You had to act a certain way. Even today I feel I have to act a certain way. I mean I always felt that having ticks and being weird is unacceptable ... like you probably know about popularity, and you know kids have to act a certain way and peer pressure... You know they [masculine boys] have like big muscles, tough, over sexed, only interested in sex, you know shallow. I was always a softer kind of man.

Deleuze and Guattari (1987) describe how bodies are inseparable from the overcoding and reterritorializations within gender relations. While a body may take a brief line of flight, it is called back; and, this is Leo's experience, continually reterritorialized to the hegemonic gender order. He found himself constrained by traditional masculine ideals in school. By failing to meet the demands, Leo ended up on the periphery of the hegemonic masculine grid. Living on the boundaries, Leo once again returned to citing the characteristics required to gain access to popularity and then explained the tension he felt when failing to meet dominant boy ideals.

> Leo: Like I remember when I was in elementary school one of the things they'd pressure you to have was brand name sneakers, really expensive sneakers. So my parents bought me a hand-me-down pair and they were this ugly blue and orange color, but they were Reebok pumps. They were this bloody ... the pump thing didn't actually work so I went back to my 20 dollar generics. So the thing is peer pressure expects you to dress a certain way but basically, the peer pressure got me to try these things once, and then I'd realize it was not for me.

Locating a pair of Reebok pumps displayed Leo's desire to connect with others intuitively figuring that a pair of brand name sneakers might gain him entry into the social hub of school. His wearing of Reebok pumps was a signal to others that, 'I am one of the boys'. Acquiring the sneakers, he deterritorialized his body from the fringe; however, in the process his body was in rupture. The affects his body produced when wearing the brand name sneakers drove Leo to make a change. In the act of ditching the Reeboks, he "conjugate[d] deterritorialized flows" and took a different trajectory than his peers by returning to his generic sneakers (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 11). "Write, form a rhizome, increase your territory by deterritorialization, extend the line of flight" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.11). Breaks and ruptures are found all over one's movements.

Leo then told me about some of his experiences with schoolmates. He opened with a social encounter which occurred in his art class during his teenage years. Leo characterized his art class as a '*circus*'. Leo explained how he positioned himself in the classroom at a corner desk

away from his peers sketching in his art book, watching his classmates fool around and acting disrespectful towards the teacher. Leo found amusement in many of his peers' actions.

> Leo: I remember I went outside in January in my shorts to retrieve a plant somebody turfed out the window. Students would be throwing tuna cans across the room treating the cans like hockey pucks! [laughing]

Leo then recalled a specific encounter in the art room with his peers:

> Leo: I made this humongous paper mache figure of a character I designed and she [the teacher] never thought I'd finish it. We built frames out of chicken wire, and I guess I just got carried away and built one that was way too big ... she never thought I'd finish it, but I did. So anyway people used to hang chicken wire from my collar and then hang little things off it ... just random bits like 'kick me' or 'stupid' or stuff like that. Then I would go to English class, or I'd go to math class with paper mache paste on my legs of my pants, and they'd be like, 'you know you really should wash your hands after' and I'm like, 'it is paper mache paste' and they are like ... 'that's what they all say'.

Leo found his body physically violated by his peers where they attached chicken wire to his collar and verbally ridiculed him with sexual innuendos. His body became trapped by the masses unable to flee the hierarchical order of the classroom. The incident in the art class stirred something in Leo producing unwelcoming affects. He situatedly was territorialized to the ordered arrangements of his art class; a body stuck. Leo striated by dominant peers was unable to separate and take a line of flight. Leo's encounter exemplifies the power of the gender order that can place restrictions on what a body can do. The eruption of intensities Leo experienced when recalling this uncomfortable social encounter led to Leo expanding on his feelings when having to make social exchanges with peers:

> Leo: ...Like you want to do something, you feel like doing something, but then you say is this going to be misconstrued or not gonna be misconstrued? Misconstrued not misconstrued?

Leo with paper mache paste all over his pants was situated in a space to be '*misconstrued'* by his peers. His body was trapped in sexual discourse and the visible mark on his pants heightened his striated position. Since physical responses were not acceptable within the arboreal grid of organization, Leo tried to take a line of flight by responding to his peers through language. His verbal responses; however, were quickly reterritorialized when his classmate responded, 'you know you should really wash your hands after'. Leo's body on ridicule halted, his desire punctured. "Once a rhizome has been obstructed, arborified, it's all

over, no desire stirs" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.14). Leo was rendered powerless within the ordered system. Leo's declaration of feeling misconstrued exemplifies the unspoken tension he embodies when unable to liberate and free his body from territorialized gender relations. In continuing this conversation, Leo affectively imparted the hardship he experienced when socializing with others in school:

> Leo: The hardest thing about school was that people act like you're so popular but then when they have the opportunity to have popularity, they abandon you ... I mean even today people don't have time for me ... I was always a bit of a 'play a wanna be' if you will. It is just I was clueless about it. You know I was just so hopelessly clueless about it, and then I never had a girlfriend ever, and I mean people saw me as a teacher's pet and a goodie goodie ... I couldn't sow wild oats, I wasn't experimenting with drugs, gratuitous sex, smoking. I wasn't doing that and I was one who would abide by the rules. No smoking in dances means - no smoking in dances! And I still have never smoked because I was too afraid of holding a match that close to my face and frankly, I wouldn't know how to smoke. So I mean ... [pause] ... but the hard part was popularity. They had better looks. They were athletic. They came from rich families. They were known to the neighborhood, and sometimes I think that if you want a woman now that's whatcha need. A cushy job, lots of money, exciting adventures, better looks, you know sometimes I think that's whatcha need.

Leo's relations with his classmates were filled with intense affects. His failed moves impressed on the surface of his body (Ahmed, 2004). The effect of unsuccessful social connections left Leo feeling 'clueless' and disconnected to popular social configurations. Leo continued to decode his social relations through popular idealized versions of bodies making mention that *'better looks', 'athleticism'* and *'wealth'* was the criteria to gain acceptance by others, including the standards to attain a partner in life. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) explained the "social field as always animated by all kinds of movements of decoding and deterritorialization affecting "masses" and operating at different *speeds* [emphasis added] and paces" (p. 220). Leo was performing at an alternative *pace* relative to his schoolmates. He exemplified this when he conveyed his actions. *'I couldn't sow wild oats; I wasn't experimenting with gratuitous sex, smoking'.* The complexity of gender relations unravelled in Leo's narrative informs understanding of how powerful the gender order is in school.

> In a hierarchical system ...the channels of transmission are pre-established: the arborescent system pre-exists the individual, who is integrated into it at an allotted place (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.16).

Throughout our conversation, Leo's affective intensities continued to flow as he moved in and out of feeling trapped by the territorialized gendered order. He later returned to telling me how he felt '*awkward*' as well as a '*burden*' and a '*clutz*' throughout his schooling years. Leo acknowledged his peripheral status yet he desired something more, something better. I turn now to pick up another situated social relation Leo experienced. This encounter was with a group of boys. Leo depicted the boys in this social event as '*the masculine ones'*.

> Leo: In junior high, they [the boys] used to take a paper wedge ... they used to take an elastic like that with a paper wedge, and they'd coat the paper wedges with Scotch tape so it really hurts and then they'd scare me into the corner and pop me in the face several times like it would leave a mark, and anyway. They knew they could get a rise out of me just because being obnoxious kids right.
>
> Sarah: Did you ever do that to anybody?
>
> Leo: I did not really know how to make a flicker, but if I did take one to somebody, it would just be bare paper. I almost never used the Scotch tape, annoying yes but not necessarily painful. Anyway, I would pretend to fall backwards onto the floor after getting hit with a paper wedge [physically acting it out; grabbing his chest and laughing]. I mean I would over react, and that was the whole idea!

There were an abundance of movements flowing through this connection with Leo and the boys. A production of boys exerted power over Leo while he attempted to take an entry into the hegemonic masculine culture circulating around him. Leo in his connection affectively jumped in, taking a turn by making his version of the paper flicker. Leo recognized "the use of violence" as "a compelling mode for masculine conformity" where he responded with his own individual paper wedge (Loeser, 2010, p. 429). He then flung his body in dramatic style, falling back on the floor, grabbing his chest, taking an exaggerated line of flight when exchanging blows back and forth with the boys. His body, however, ends up territorialized unequipped to produce the same 'punch'. Leo positioned in the corner pelted with paper wedges, was again reterritorialized unable to enter at the same level on the hegemonic grid.

Part of his failure to meet dominant boy status was Leo's intuition on what the paper wedge might do to another body. He recognized the acts of violence towards him were painful thereby he adjusted, creating a 'softer' type of weapon to sling at his peer counterparts. Martino and Pallotta-Chiarolli (2003) suggest schools are central to the making of masculinities often constituted through acts of violence against others. Leo's experiences of acts of violence towards him, demonstrates the dominance other boys can exert to secure their

own masculine appeal. He then chalked up the social encounter as a typical social occurrence, stating it was what '*obnoxious kids'* do. Even years later he liked to think their violent actions towards him were to be somehow warranted in the school setting, an expected part of being a boy in school. Leo connected this episode to another series of events with boys:

> Leo: In elementary school, they'd used to walk up in front of me and grab my knee like that [squeezes his own knee]. I remember we went to the planetarium once in elementary school and as soon as the lights went out at least five boys walked up to me and circled around me and squeezed my knee! And anyway…[laugh]… it used to drive me crazy!…[laugh]… and well what they used to do come to think of it is I'd sit in front, and they'd put their feet on the back of my desk and push my desk forward, either that, or they'd get behind me and hit me on the head with a dictionary or a math book or something heavy.... though I will admit there was one of them who used to punch me in the shoulder for no apparent reason all the time. He'd walk up behind me and punch me in the shoulder like that [physical demonstration].

Leo laughed at some of the interactions he had with boys. He interpreted their gang tactics of circling him in the planetarium, a dark public space, as 'typical' boy practices. His affective response of laughter towards their grabbing his knee signalled how he learned to conform to particular hegemonic masculine practices. There is a constant struggle among boys in schools where certain types of masculinities (dominant) exert their power and presence while more subordinated versions are oppressed in this struggle (Connell, 2005).

> Their [marginalized boys] view of the "normal" boy appears to influence how they learn to see themselves as males and relate to others, and they often engage in self-surveillance to police the boundaries of acceptable and desirable masculinities (Martino, 2000, p.103).

Leo wanted to justify their acts to be expected of boys in schools yet he later affectively felt the physical punch to his shoulder was going too far, beyond the threshold. His body in this moment was 'stuck', required to navigate the territorialized lines of boy practices (boys play fight; boys squeeze each other's knees and flick paper wedges at each other). Leo then turned to discussing friendship:

> Leo: People would act friendly because they figured the principal would deal with them if they didn't, but at the same time they act friendly but only to a fair-weather sense because then if real popularity ever came into question they'd choose popularity over me any day. I find friendships a little frustrating because like I said there's not a whole lot that is fancy about me and there's not a whole lot ... [pause] ... I don't have exciting adventures, lots of money, a cushy job, etc. ... people treated me like a burden, a fixation, a parasite, but when I look back some of these people were real friends who

just hadn't ... didn't know how to ... [pause] ... they were just too awkward to express it.

Leo interpreted his own body as an inadequate masculine by saying, '*I don't have exciting adventures', 'there's not a whole lot that is fancy about me'*. He deeply felt others viewed his body as unacceptable, '*a parasite'*. The affective intensities Leo embodied were powerful. He clearly correlated hegemonic prowess with accumulating friends and wanted to connect to the collective, but he could not derail from his marginalized status. Leo reiterated his tensions when we explored a few stock photos of peers in school (see Figure 5.4 & Figure 5.5):



Figure 5.4 Group of Students

Hammond/Design. (n.d.). *Teenage Friends Hanging Out* [Photograph]. Retrieved on February 6th, 2011from http://www.corbisimages.com © Corbis Images

Leo: Well they are normal for one thing they probably know each other better than I knew a lot of people, like again popularity. I obviously wasn't popular enough to engage in that sort of thing. I did feel out of place somewhat because they'd be talking about aspects of popular culture that were utterly over my head. They would be talking about things that I don't know the first thing about because I am completely uncultured in this whole thing.

Leo identified how the students in the photo, Figure 5.4, were normal immediately situating himself within the normal/abnormal binary. Leo in his accounts desired entry but recognized that his body was not capable of attaining popularity; his body was on a different social plane than his peers. Leo then examined a stock photograph of a group of girls:



Figure 5.5 Group of Girls

Dodge, K. (n.d.). *Girls Walking to School* [Photograph]. Retrieved on February 6th, 2011 from http://www.corbisimages.com © Corbis Images

> Leo: I do remember on Valentine's Day I kissed a bunch of girls and then went to the principal and had to be suspended for harassment ....I knew ... I figured myself that I was out of line, but it was Valentine's Day!

The image of the girls walking (see Figure 5.5), stirred a memory for Leo of kissing a bunch of girls on their cheeks. His body at the time was driven to move and make a physical connection. His actions were quickly ruptured however, when his movements were not read the same way by the girls and authority figures. While expression of love to another is recognized on Valentine's Day, his physical kissing extended beyond what authority figures deemed acceptable. Leo acknowledged his actions were '*out of line',* but at the situated moment, he was drawn to escape the limits of his own subjectivity and try something new. His action towards the girls highlighted the potential Leo possessed to take risks and find alternative experiences in school more to his liking.

5.3.1 Leo's: Social Manoeuvre

Leo intuitively acknowledged differences between his body and those of his schoolmates. His rhizomatic stories illustrate how complex the social dimensions of school are in moments. Leo actualizes the complexity evidenced when his body produced a series of affects when attempting to unsettle the gender order and gain new social entries. Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) conceptual tool of de/reterritorialization assisted in revealing Leo's movements when attempting to cut across new social territory and alter his positioning.

As a young boy, Leo showed his capacity to deterritorialize hegemonic boy practices by actively choosing to akin his body to the animated figure, Shy Violet and demonstrated this again when he later rejected popular territorializations by refuting brand name sneakers. His body with each social manoeuvre found something to suit his body at the time evidenced again

when he uprooted his marginal status by making paper wedges to appeal his body to others. The shifts and productions Leo made however did not come without angst.

Tensions erupted throughout his encounters with others; his body in flux, continually reterritorialized to the gender order. This was evident when recounting his time territorialized to a different line; cornered in a planetarium, mocked in an art class, and pelted with paper wedges. He further illustrated his marginalized position through his drawings and references to popular media, Rainbow Brite and the Nutty Professor where he cast his body on the periphery of social acceptability. Leo's social experiences reveal the complexity of social exchanges and how dualistic constructions infiltrated through schools (normal/abnormal, typical/marginal) limited his capacities to cut new social territory and find more welcoming social trajectories. I turn now to explore Wes' rhizomatic social experiences across the Nova Scotia educational terrain.

5.4 Wes

Wes was 26 years of age when we met at the Provincial Autism Center. He was an artist and at the time of our meeting living in a city center. Wes expressed how art was a large part of his identity and asked at the onset if he could show me a piece of his art. Thinking through middles, and allowing for Wes to tell his stories in his own way we began our conversation by looking at a piece of his art that he had uploaded from his USB stick onto my computer. The piece of art was an image of a ceramic bowl. The bowl was a project he had constructed in school, and it was designed to be a 'representation of his identity'. Together, glancing at the image Wes explained its characteristics.

Wes imparted that the lid signified his '*introverted*' nature, and signalled for me to look at the sharp points protruding from the sides of the bowl. He explained that the points were added to reinforce the idea of '*keeping people at a distance'*. Wes' bowl also had two sculpted handles intended to look like bones to connect to his feelings of '*touching bone'*, '*organic*' and '*intimate*'. The bowl, a symbol of Wes' identity, presented an initial means for Wes to build a social connection with myself early in the research space. After exploring the art Wes and I sat down to talk about his schooling experiences.

Wes proceeded to tell me how he lived in a farming village where he woke up early each morning to catch the bus at 6:00am to get to school. Wes explained his elementary years at

school as '*sometimes fun'* quickly identifying that he '*only had one friend at a time'*. I pick up where Wes spoke with me about his social relations during his early years; specifically, his connection to his one friend who lived in his village.

> Wes: I had a few friends over the period, but I would say he was my best friend. He lived just down the street from me in the village, and I think he was three years older than me so it is not a big difference now but then it was quite a significant difference. But yeah we would spend a lot of time together outside of school 'cause, we were neighbours pretty much, and we would spend our recesses together usually.
>
> Sarah: What did you do mostly at recess?
>
> Wes: I remember I would spend my recess just walking around the playground with my friend and talking the whole time.

Wes did not go into great detail about his one friend other than his friend was a companion to spend time with at recess and to ride the bus to and from school. Wes after thinking back on his social experiences with his one friend identified further his social positioning in school.

> Wes: I guess in the social sense I was kind of on the periphery. I was a bit of an outcast [pause] ... I was never ... [pause] I wouldn't say I had a lot of friends, but I wasn't somebody who was picked on either. It wasn't well until later when I didn't have a lot of friends that I was picked on.

Wes initially was hesitant to speak about his social experiences and paused frequently when telling me about his exchanges with others in school. I surmise it was challenging for Wes having to signal to me that he existed on the social periphery in school. Wes even attempted in our conversation to deterritorialize his body from the subordinated position of *'outcast'* by emphatically telling me, '*I wouldn't say I had a lot of friends, but I wasn't somebody who was picked on either'*. Wes then explained how he attended more than one elementary school and recalled his displeasure in having to move and take entry in a new elementary school that he described as '*urban*' and '*kind of ghetto'*. He found the transition to a city setting challenging and worked to uproot his connection to the urban facility by acting '*unruly*'. Wes defined his '*unruly*' actions as refuting entry in the new school. Wes' refusal resulted in his mother having to step in and reterritorialize his body back. At this point in our discussion Wes identified that he did not recall the specific movements as to why he refused entry other than that his continual abstention led to his mother having to send Wes to a new school for grade six, seven and eight.

Wes then shifted and spoke more candidly with me about his time in middle school.

> Wes: I remember kind of resenting being in a different school, and I think I worked really hard to not like it there, but I think it was a much more pleasant place to be in... I found one friend who I would spend a lot of time with, and I did have a sense of inclusion with the rest of my classmates even though I was a bit resistant to it at times I was pretty included in the classroom.

Wes' initial resistance to the new middle school was quickly ruptured as he enjoyed the atmosphere of the school. "[T]he stems of the rhizome are always taking leave of the trees, the masses and flows are constantly escaping, inventing connections that jump from tree to tree and uproot them" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.506). In the classroom, Wes found membership and this produced welcoming affects. Liking his new school configuration Wes chose to participate in familiar social practices and returned to 'finding one friend' to spend time with. Wes then expressed further his social connections.

> Wes: I found that the classrooms were their own social scenes. There was no like popular group. Within the classroom there would be the little niches, but the classroom came first I felt. I felt like I was a part of my class. I didn't know anybody in the other grades because I came pretty late to the school but yeah that's what my impression was different grades kind of stuck to each other, and they were their own social scene. I had this one friend that I would kind of spend the majority of my time with. Although actually as I went through like in grade 8 maybe I kind of distanced myself from him and tried to become more in with the other boys in my class.

Wes had a clear sense of his own positioning and those of his peers in the new school setting. He felt included in the classroom and proceeded to spend the majority of his days with his one friend. By the time Wes reached grade eight, however something had changed. Wes began to deterritorialize his body from his one friend to gain entry with a group of boys. "A body's function or potential or 'meaning' becomes entirely dependent on which other bodies or machines it forms an assemblage with" (Malins, 2004, p.85). I asked Wes why he made the decision to distance himself from his one friend and advance towards the other boys.

> Wes: I don't think it was a conscious decision it was just something that happened. I guess maybe... I am just pulling at straws here, but I had a sense of being a part of a group which I had never really thought of before, and I just pursued it, and I mean I don't know what the word is but I abused or manipulated the friend that I had initially attached to, I kind of put him down in order to become a part of the group.

Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) philosophical concept of the pack is useful when analyzing Wes' decision to move towards the group of boys.

> In becoming-wolf, the important thing is the position of the mass, and above all the position of the subject itself in relation to the pack or wolf-multiplicity: how the subject joins or does not join the pack, how far away it stays, how it does or does not hold to the multiplicity (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.29).

Wes took entry. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) describe this as a body positioning itself within the pack; an attempt to deterritorialize a peripheral position. To gain full access Wes had to make bold moves, and he does this by 'putting his friend down'.

> It is the capacity of the peer milieu to make visible a gender order that encourages boys to pursue the shared enterprise of hyper-masculinity making characterized by physical domination, aggression and a competitive 'macho' bravado (Smith, 2007, p.184).

I wondered what it was about this group of boys that ignited Wes to deterritorialize his friendship with the boy and make a move into the pack.

> Wes: I recognized them as being more uh normal in the sense that like if you were to watch a television show, they were more similar to the characters that would be on a show or the positive characters that would be on that show. I don't really remember them that much to be honest. I guess just like typical boys, there was a mix. I remember there was one who was more bookish, one who was really athletic and had a lot of muscles and umm and yeah and then there was another one who was a bit more on the periphery and introverted I suppose.

Wes employed popular stereotypes to describe what he considered to be 'normal' boys and then expressed his specific social manoeuvres to get in with the "pack".

> Wes: I would just follow along and do whatever it was they were doing. I was mostly a follower. I would tag along and make jokes or just lead people on and that kind of thing. I remember we went to a movie once, and we would make jokes and be very kind of cynical. I was more like playing a role. I knew what I needed to do, like an experiment to become one of them. To put people down basically.

Wes detailed his social manoeuvre to gain entry into the pack. Explicitly, how he made moves such as: tagging along, making jokes and putting other people down in order to fit in with the dominant boys. "They swirl, go north, then suddenly east, none of the individuals in the crowd remains in the same place in relation to the others" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.29). His rhizomatic moves to experiment and take different entries were productive for Wes. Wes possessed the capacity to act and intuitively read pack dynamics knowing what moves to make to exist within the collective.

> This is how it should be done: Lodge yourself on a stratum, experiment with the opportunities it offers, find an advantageous place on it, find potential movements of deterritorialization, possible lines of flight, experience them, produce flow conjunctions here and there, try out continuums of intensities segment by segment, have a small plot of new land at all times (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.161).

As we moved along in Wes' schooling, he explained the tension he embodied when existing in the pack. He could see the inequalities of membership and continually shifted from collective action to introverted individual action. Deleuze and Parnet (1987) describe the body as always in "a zone of intensity or flux" changing depending on the relation the body finds itself within (p.112). They explain it is as existing "*in the middle* of a real experiment" in which individuals find out what dangers arise (Deleuze & Parnet, 1987, p.111 emphasis in original).

> I know that the periphery is the only place I can be, that I would die if I let myself be drawn into the center of the fray, but just as certainly if I let go of the crowd. This is not an easy position to stay in, it is even very difficult to hold, for these beings are in constant motion, and their movements are unpredictable and follow no rhythm (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.29).

Wes having to negotiate some of the dangers associated with being a member of the pack affectively decided it no longer met his social interests, and as he entered high school in a new sizeable public institution, Wes positioned his body back to the periphery. Upon entry, Wes read his own social existence as '*not being noticed by his peers'*. In the following excerpt, I reveal Wes' social transition to high school.

> Wes: It was just this pervading feeling of dread and depression. A certain amount of fear about facing a lot of things I didn't want really to face in school, whether it was things like sex and drugs or autopsies like dissecting frogs in biology. I guess just being in this huge school with nobody that I knew with people who were significantly older than me.

Wes was "shot through with affectivities" as he recalled his time in high school and his body filled with unwelcoming affects, '*dread*' and *'depression'* (Youdell, 2011, p. 112). Wes proceeded to move slowly. He attended class and explained how he had little interaction with others characterizing himself as '*an outcast, a loner'.* Wes then told me how his mother soon after had to drag him out of bed to get him to school.

> Wes: I guess I probably had a feeling of being judged somehow and also feeling of just being me and the world and like there's only these two groups, and it is kind of hard to explain, but I guess just a feeling that I am separate from the rest of the world and not really knowing how to relate or anything and just that anything that someone else does

> is separate from what I can do ... It is this feeling of like I am stumbling into a room, and you don't know what's beyond the door, you just kind of trip and fall into this room, and you have to take everything in and have some kind of response to something.... A feeling of stumbling through something and not knowing how and having this feeling that there should be something, there should be an easy response to what is going on, but it is not necessarily obvious or like you haven't been told the rules maybe or you don't know the etiquette or something like that.

Wes made vivid the uncertainty he felt when navigating the public sphere of school. The atmosphere and the flows of bodies coming together produced unwelcoming affects for Wes and left a trace on his body. He then worked to expel his relation to others, but his actions were short lived as his mother reterritorialized his body back, *'I remember my mom having to come in and force me to get out of bed and I often missed the bus'*. When Wes told me about the discomfort he felt in high school, the atmosphere filled with intense, sad energies and there was silence for a moment between us. I found myself wanting to offer him reassurance, but found myself just sitting there in silence. Our bodies held in tension (Field Notes, September 26th, 2011). Ahmed (2004) explains encounters between bodies are channelled through affect with intensities and affectivities binding bodies together in situations. Shortly after, Wes unleashed our bodies from the unwelcoming affects and proceeded to tell me that he dropped out of high school at the age of 14.

> Wes: I just stopped going and then I think a few weeks later I had a lot of appointments with social workers and therapists and psychologists and that kind of thing...They tried home schooling where I had this big book of exercises I could do at home, and I did some of them but then I just I stopped bothering with them. So I would just start a lot of things and not go through with it and well, that continued until I was 16 at which point I could legally just not got to school.

Affects have the capacity to disrupt habitual ways and "force us to relate to, and think about, the world differently" (Hickey-Moody & Malins, 2007, p.8-9). Wes' flight from his high school displayed the capacity he possessed when wanting to pursue a different trajectory. Wes continued this line of flight from school for six years. He explained that over the course of the six years, he mostly played video games and only left his mother's house for appointments. At the age of 20, however, Wes decided to insert and cut across new terrain.

> Wes: I guess by the age of 20, I was just feeling like I needed to do something. My mom wasn't kind of expecting me to live in her basement for my entire life [laugh]. I took a night class in ceramics. I found it really rewarding... I never thought about what a plate was made of. If someone asked me what it was made of I would say it was a plate but then seeing this potter mold the clay, I liked it, and I also felt comfortable

> with the potter, with the people there, and I liked how the potter who was giving the workshop. He started to give a little history of his life and was proud of the fact that he never had a real job, and I guess it appealed to me this way of carving your own path ... being like a misfit but fitting in at the same time I guess. I got my GED equivalency, and I had a really supportive instructor there, and she pushed me to apply to a number of different universities, and I got into all of them ... so in the fall, I started an arts program in the city... I was really engaged and I really enjoyed the work. I remember my first year I would get to school at 7 in the morning, and the janitor would let me into the studio working, and I would get home at 9 o'clock and write in my sketch book until I fell asleep. I was 110% into my school, and I found it really rewarding.

Wes took a rhizomatic departure from his mother's basement finding a university arts program he was affectively drawn to. The engagement with the art became the revitalization Wes needed.

> Wes: I have always really enjoyed my classes and the school work and in social terms, I think I was still on the periphery... I never felt excluded, I am just kind of introverted, and I would keep my distance from people I guess. But that didn't bother me so much because I was really involved in the classes, and in the classroom... I found since leaving high school, I have had very few male friends actually it is only recently that I started to have male friends. I would tend to I guess identify with my instructors a lot. I think it was that they had strong personalities, and these were the instructors I was most drawn to. They were just big characters. They had a lot of confidence, and they had a unique way of approaching things, and I guess they were just people who had a lot of wisdom too where they could give good advice and could influence or shape situations.
>
> Sarah: How would you describe your social connections now to people?
>
> Wes: Um well I would say I still tend to be on the periphery, but I don't keep people away, and I have a lot of people who know me, and I know a lot of people even though I may not have involved conversations or relationships with people. It is hard for me to go through a day without like saying hi to someone, and I don't feel like I am separate from the rest of the world. I don't feel like there are these two groups existing in the world. I don't have any sense of insecurity about being judged. I am more confident.

University created welcoming affects for Wes, increasing the social territories he could enter. Through art, Wes connected better to others and began to feel more confident. Wes at university was no longer on a different trajectory than his peers allowing him to build new social connections. Wes then showed me another piece of his art on the computer. The discussion of his experiences in university fuelled Wes' desire to return to his art. Returning to the computer, Wes showed me an art form he created that was a symbol of his rejection of labels.

> Wes: I chose to use ceramic bricks as an opportunity to make an expression of my rejections of labels all together. So in this project I was basically looking at labels and how I don't like to apply labels to myself and how I feel that labels can have a lot of influence and control over you, so I worked with ceramic bricks. The bricks used in the project represent the "building blocks" or pre-conceptions that we use to build our identity and my melting and altering them into new forms was to show that even the most concrete of ideas or concepts that lie behind one's identity can be liquefied, altered, and made fluid. I chose to make something that showed my rejection of all labels, whether it be cultural or otherwise.

The altering, melting and liquefying of the ceramic bricks symbolized Wes' deterritorialization of labels. Wes through art creatively projected his resistance to coded territorializations. The dynamic trajectory his body took through art was a liberating exercise for Wes allowing him to follow more fluid lines.

5.4.1 Wes': Social Manoeuvres

Throughout his schooling, Wes similar to Leo took several rhizomatic flights when navigating his social experiences. Wes' movements inform the potential he possessed to find alternative social entries in school more to his liking. Wes actualized this in elementary school when securing a single friend to ride the bus and spend time with on the playground. In middle school, he took increased risks to extend his social line and gain entry with dominant boys. Through experimenting and existing in middles Wes cut across territorialized gender orders and inserted himself as a member of the hegemonic pack. He achieved this by performing tough masculine acts that included manipulation tactics and verbal abusing of his one friend to successfully find entry with the dominant boys.

Wes later rejected his pack status recognizing the inequalities that existed and returned to his peripheral status when entering high school. Wes, however, produced a series of intense, unwelcoming energies in high school that he worked to decompose. The painful affects built to a point where Wes' later decided to make a bold move by dropping out of high school to fulfill his own needs and wants. Wes' determination to drop out of school and refute the unwelcoming social space speaks to the agency he possessed to take risks and extend. Wes then finds art and it is the revitalization he needs to secure new social territory. The nonhuman connection Wes had with art increased his social access to others. In this case, Wes' connection to something other than human was a productive medium to fashion future social exchanges with others. In education, we cannot underestimate the connections students make

to nonhuman things and what these connections might offer students in moments. Wes' rhizomatic stories demonstrate the constant pull back and forth he felt when navigating the social arenas of school. His actions equally show the potential his body possessed to reinvent his social and find more welcoming social experiences. The next series of rhizomatic stories are on Frank's social experiences.

5.5 Frank

Frank was 34 years of age when we met. At the time of our meeting he lived in a city center and was employed full time. Frank was extremely candid when talking about his social experiences in school. Early on Frank recalled how he followed one boy named Ted during his elementary years as he had recognized that Ted was '*the most accommodating'* of his schoolmates. Frank's relationship with Ted, however, ended in upper elementary. He told me that he tried to preserve the friendship by making continual attempts to advance towards Ted, yet his moves were unsuccessful with Ted choosing to distance himself. I pick up the part of our conversation where Frank told me about his social experiences when attending a small rural elementary school.

> Frank: I would hang around people and try to engage and associate myself with them how receptive various boys and girls were to that varied. It varied greatly actually. There were some people I didn't like at all and there were some people I considered bullies. I was a target of bullies and the shape of bullying came into effect more so in junior high than elementary but yeah, a target for bullies.
>
> Sarah: When you say a target of bullies what do you mean by that?
>
> Frank: Um getting made fun of, getting physically attacked at times.
>
> Sarah: Do you remember what kind of things they did?
>
> Frank: Very little good. I can't remember the exact terminology now. Nerd was a big one; this is elementary now. Um ... jerk, dork, brainy also scaredeecat these kinds of things.
>
> Sarah: Do you remember what you did when they said these names?
>
> Frank: I would lash out somehow... I didn't really use my words that much. I would throw rocks. I would try to punch back. And I got to admit I was pretty big on using the physical stuff myself. I remember hitting someone over the head with a lunchbox. One of those old crate style ones also doing something similar with a baseball bat as we were playing softball one day and a disagreement erupted, and I remember picking

> up the bat; it was my bat and chasing after this guy, and the captain came and ended it. I think I got enough gumption to say a few times, 'Fuck you' and that's when they got physical, and I remember in grade 6 a boy looking around and then 'pow' right in the gut!

Frank took a "destructive line of flight" towards his peers to "break out of and rupture the normative strata" determined to deterritorialize his peripheral positioning (Ringrose, 2011, p. 609, 612). Deterritorializations are everywhere. Lines of flight, big or small, are available at any time and can lead in any direction. Frank's line of flight was fighting back by throwing rocks, hitting someone over the head with a lunchbox and chasing another with a bat.

> In paying attention to embodiment and affects of marginalization, Deleuze and Guattari suggest that rather than knowing what something or someone "is" ... we can only know what a body "is capable of" (1987:257) (Hickey-Moody, 2009, p.9).

The intensities circulating between Frank and others ignite him to move and look for alternative social entries when navigating the intricate collective dimensions of the playground. I then asked Frank why he may have been a target for bullying.

> Frank: I don't know. I have a bunch of theories and this is a 34-year-old man looking back on it now, but I was probably smarter than everybody else and acted like I knew more than everybody else. I was a little cooler than everybody else, and a fundamental thing that I didn't get at the time was that maybe you do get good grades, but that doesn't mean you are better than everybody else, and best-case scenario is whatever ... worst-case scenario was [shows a punching action].

Boys "can be subordinated for following too closely the school regime (working too hard, being too compliant, speaking too formally)" which is Frank's experience at the onset of elementary (Swain, 2006, p.339). He was positioned outside the legitimate forms of masculinity based on his ability to perform well in school. Frank, however, desired something else as he wanted to cut social terrain and find alternative, more liberating social experiences. The lines of flight in the school yard, fleeing, lashing out and even getting up enough '*gumption*' to say, '*fuck you'* made vivid his desires to rupture his peripheral status. I was curious given his connection with his friend Ted, if any boys ever came to Frank's defence.

> Sarah: The people you hung out with, Ted and so forth, did they help defend you with the bullies?
>
> Frank: Not really no ... I didn't have anyone jumping in to defend me or anything. Interestingly enough I remember a similar altercation in junior high and I remember

> saying to Ted, 'Can you give me a hand here' and him saying, 'I am not getting involved' and this is in junior high not elementary.

Frank's social manoeuvre to seek peer support failed leaving him to manage his bullies in isolation. Ted and other boys perhaps recognized the danger of challenging hierarchical practices in schools, unwilling to put themselves into the mix in fear of retaliation. Frank thinking back on his time described the boys whom he aspired to have a connection with.

> Frank: The boys were athletic, popular, bold, well liked; some were rough around the edges; the big things were athletic. Some were smarter than others, and it is hard to put a finger on it, but I remember the boys who were the most popular were those traits I just reamed off.
>
> Sarah: When you say bold what do you mean?
>
> Frank: [big loud voice] THEY MAKE A LOT OF JOKES, AND THEY WOULD BE REALLY ANIMATED, REMEMBER THAT ON DUKES OF HAZARD REMEMBER THAT REMEMBER THAT, they were confident. They were loud, but they were in on the jokes.
>
> Sarah: How would you describe yourself?
>
> Frank: Unbold [laughs], the opposite of that. I have always had a hard time having that free and easy conversation getting away from awkwardness. I have always struggled with that like days like this. It has taken a long time to get to some level to be comfortable with it. I would be stunted. I couldn't go in some locker room with a funny rant of something I saw on the, A Team or something I was just not that kind of person. It would sound stunted and just really dumb.

Athleticism, boldness, and confidence signified to Frank what was required to be a successful boy in school. Frank positioned his own body outside the boundary of acceptability. He revealed the awkwardness he experienced when confronted with hyper-masculine practices where he could not perform at the same masculine level as his peers. Frank then recalled some of the uncomfortable energies he experienced when connecting to dominant boys when entering junior high school.

> Frank: The influx of people from other elementary schools was something that I was not ready for [entering a larger junior high]. I did not know these people from Adam or Eve, and I had to find a way to relate to these people and I just couldn't. I felt really awkward around them. I felt very closed around them, and girls were something I couldn't even conceive of, and I got picked on because I couldn't advance towards them in any real, shape or form. I got called faggot a lot that became a very very popular word and there was one guy, in particular, in grade 8 who every single day

> when we crossed paths, he would take it upon himself to make sure no one was watching, and then he would smash me in my shoulder as hard as he could along with calling me a faggot. I had a weight problem. I had an acne problem, and hygiene was not where it needed to be, and I didn't understand what this whole puberty bullshit was, and they knew it... That was the transition to junior high it suuckkked!!

Frank spoke candidly about his social experiences in junior high. Frank was marginalized once again through acts of violence and homophobic labelling[49]. Pascoe (2007) explained how dominant boys adopt a fag discourse not to signify feminine qualities to another but to assert power over other bodies. In the moment when Frank was punched in the shoulder and called a faggot, his body was constrained within the institutional gender order. The peripheral social status combined with having to navigate daily physical penetrations and verbal violence towards him generated intense unwelcoming affects for Frank. He was angered by the violent punch given to his shoulder each day, including the isolation he experienced upon entry into a new school. The sad affects increased when he learned he could not meet hegemonic masculine styles when in the company of girls further compounding his marginalized social position.

Frank afterwards told me how he wanted something different where he affectively decided to make a move and sit at tables in the cafeteria with more *'passive and tolerant'* people. The tables were a safe line of travel for Frank in school that ensured him a level of stability. Malins (2004) expresses how "bodies tend to desire their own order and organisation" where individuals will "make their own movements towards stratification and limitation, and toward the reassuring constancy it provides" (p.87). Ahmed (2004) identifies how fear is an expression of affect circulating between bodies. I suspect Frank's earlier altercations with dominant bodies, being pounded in the shoulder every single day, produced fear across his body.

> ...we fear an object that approaches us. Fear, like pain, is felt as an unpleasant form of intensity. But while the lived experience of fear may be unpleasant in the present, the unpleasantness of fear also relates to the future. Fear involves an *anticipation* of hurt or injury. Fear projects us from the present into a future. But the feeling of fear presses us into that future as an intense bodily experience in the present. One sweats, one's heart races, one's whole body becomes an unpleasant intensity, an impression that overwhelms us and pushes us back with the force of its negation, which may sometimes involve taking flight, and other times may involve paralysis. So the object that we fear is not simply before us, or in front of us, but impresses upon us in the present, as an anticipate pain in the future (Ahmed, 2004, p.65 emphasis in original).

The fear of being ridiculed and punched in the shoulder left a trace on Frank's body enough to position Frank to move elsewhere and take entry in the cafeteria with his more *'passive'* peers. Frank then shifted to tell me about a time when he chose to confront his former bully who punched him in the shoulder every day in school; specifically, how he made a phone call actively tracking down his bully fifteen years later. "With the rhizome *roots a*re displaced by *routes*, with unexpected eruptions where desire plays a role and logic is not privileged" (Usher, 2010, p.70 emphasis in original).

> Frank: The gentleman who, I use that word loosely gentleman, who hit me on the shoulder on a daily basis why he felt he needed to do it I never did anything to him. I actually contacted him to ask him what his fucking problem was. And I was able to track him down. I looked up his last name and managed to get him on the phone and said, 'Yeah this is Frank _____ do you remember me and the nickname spud head and do you remember smashing me in my shoulder on a daily basis?' ... Bully: 'Yeah I think I do' ... Frank: 'Why the hell did you do that you son of a bitch?' ... this was basically my theme, and he was taken back by it and rightfully so as I am calling him out of the blue and basically calling him out for a duel. His words were, 'I don't know what to tell ya, I am sorry. I was stupid back then, and again. I am sorry, and if you want to take a swing at me pal you better be ready to fucking put me to sleep'... He could beat the shit out of me back then and I can't see why he couldn't now. But the point is here I was a grown man making a call to a guy essentially challenging him to a fist fight. 'Name the time, name the place you mother fucker, I will take you down' and those three responses, he kind of hummed and hawed about it... the most lucid thing I came up with during the call was... 'If I told you, I have been scarred for life from the shit you put me through and all your brood back in grade 8 would that mean anything to you, does that have any kind of significance for you?'... and it didn't really all he could do was hum and haw and then said, 'I was stupid back then. I am sorry. I don't know what to tell ya you better fucking put me to sleep if you want me'...Obviously ... no contact, I didn't put him fucking to sleep. I couldn't find him, and I probably wouldn't know him even if he was in this room right now.

His phone call produced a series of intensities. The cracks and ruptures seeped open when Frank asked his bully 'why?' Frank through the phone conveyed the hurt he underwent in school. His body produced sad affects. He then quickly unleashed a different set of intensities, affects of hate, '*Why the hell did you do that you son of a bitch!'* Ahmed (2004) explains hate "involves a feeling of 'againstness' that is always, in the phenomenological sense, intentional" (p.49). Hate in Frank's account circulates and makes possible for his body to release powerful feelings onto his bully (Ahmed, 2004). What was the effect of Frank's call to his bully?

> One can never posit a dualism or a dichotomy, even in the rudimentary form of the good and the bad. You may make a rupture, draw a line of flight, yet there is still a

> danger that you will reencounter organizations that restratify everything, formations that restore power to a signifier (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.9).

Frank gets stuck when making the call; his body was held in tension. His projection of hate was soon ceased by his bully's nonchalant response, 'you better be ready to fucking put me to sleep'. His bully's words territorialized his capacity to fight back, his ability to act slowed where little desire stirred. Frank remained trapped under the power forces of his bully. Ahmed (2004) describes how series of affects are connected (pain, fear, hate) and how together they can produce an "unpleasant form of intensity" (p.65). This was Frank's experience with his bully, a series of unwelcoming energies that he could not escape. The bully continues to leave a trace on Frank's body, an image of violence and rejection; it circulates and leaves an impression (Ahmed, 2004). Frank then derailed from this event to tell of another social encounter during his junior high years.

> Frank: I do remember winning an award or being told that I was going to win one, third-best achievement in science. There was actually an awards ceremony to receive awards, and I didn't want to go. I can't remember how my parents found out about it, but they did and they said, 'Frank you won an award, and you don't want to go to school to get it, why not?' Frank: 'I just don't want to'... Parents: 'Why not?' Frank: 'Because I am embarrassed by it' ... It was for being brainy for something, and I honestly believed at that point it didn't matter if you were smart what mattered was could you score a hat trick every time you played and could you bang a chick right. These were things that existed even when you were fourteen or fifteen. Or could you play smoke and water all those things were cool things to be... a nerd in school or academic award winner was not a cool thing to be so rather than pouring gas onto the fire that was already burning I just chose not to go and accept this award. I got talked out of it and ended up going to the show and my parents said, 'You have to go to it'. I went got my little fucking award and hung it up on a little thumbtack in my room, and there it was– happy now! That sort of thing, given the choice to do it again I would do the same, I would not accept it.

Frank recognized social prowess in school as a boy who could embody a macho masculine bravado with acts of '*banging a chick'* and '*scoring goals'*. Frank desperately wanted to emulate this persona and advance to some sort of social positioning where he had some leverage with others and so made an attempt by refuting to attend the awards night. His refusal, however, was quickly reterritorialized by his parents who reordered his body back to the award's night. Frank produced a series of angry affects when re-stratified and forced to claim his '*little fucking award'*. Once again, Frank was held in tension as he desired something else.

Frank was candid in explaining his social experiences during junior high. His stories revealed the tremendous energy applied to revitalize his social status at junctures. Frank thinking through middles then shifted to recount his experiences in high school. This line of thought was triggered when I had asked Frank if he recalled any happy social exchanges with peers. My questioning about more pleasant social exchanges supports the rhizomatic framework and being attentive to the affects emerging in the research space. The build-up of hurtful affects ignited me to rejuvenate Frank, and he seemed content to think about something else, more welcoming (Field Notes, December 5th, 2011). I pick up where Frank told me about his social experiences in high school.

> Frank: Grade twelve that was the year I first felt I was accepted by other people and again, there was a fine line I would draw between acceptance and tolerance. Some people would tolerate me and I honestly thought they liked me. There is an episode of the *Simpsons*[50] where Lisa Simpson is on a summer vacation and tries to befriend some kids hanging out by the beach, and she is feeling shy and doesn't want to go near them and is going to walk away and be friendless. One calls out to her, 'Hey, I like your necklace', and she pauses... scanning brain for sarcasm – 'it's clean'. I was scanning for sarcasm in the majority of statements that people made to me, and they were, for the most part, clean in grade 12 and I would gravitate to people who talked like that and appreciated what I had to offer and frankly, liked me.
>
> Sarah: Would you say you had friends then in grade 12?
>
> Frank: More so than before. Because we shared common interests like music to a lesser extent literature and history. But music was the big touchstone.
>
> Sarah: Were these boys or girls?
>
> Frank: Both but I found myself drawn more to girls than boys. Yes, I was seventeen and eighteen but beyond that I felt more comfortable hanging out with them, dealing with them and speaking to them and did for a while.
>
> Sarah: What made you feel more comfortable?
>
> Frank: They weren't trying to show me up or belittle me, but boys would.
>
> Sarah: Still in grade twelve?
>
> Frank: I avoided those that would ... but it wasn't so much oh pow anymore as it was people trying to engage you in witty repartee and sarcasm and put you down that way. 'But I don't get it; I don't get it' then a snicker... snicker... snicker...[Frank is holding his hand up to his mouth and covering it - mimicking actions of his peers] 'Frank doesn't get it' – there was an element of that. And these are people I quickly learned to avoid, and I would look at them like the guy who used to hit me every day... they are

> gonna hit me with their minds. 'Fuck them, I don't need them!' and the fact that I was in grade twelve when I learned to say, 'Fuck them, I don't need them' on the basis of that alone I would say grade twelve was my best of the high school years ... There were other elements like being attracted to high school girls and having some sense of where I wanted to go in the future and generally having more confidence than I did before...Yeah you can't help feel better about it as time goes on so I would say grade twelve was the best. It progressively got better. I am not saying I was Prom King or anything, but it definitely was better than before.

The historicity of Frank being called names and punched in the shoulder did something to him over time with his previous social histories influencing engagement with peers in high school. He moved more cautiously and at times with apprehension when territorialized by his peers' sarcastic remarks. Alternatively, he also found new social leverage when connecting to peers with similar interests, and this ignited Frank to make bolder social movements where he chose to no longer accept his peripheral position.

> Frank: In grade ten, eleven and twelve, I played on the football[51] team. In hindsight, any other school in the city I probably would have been cut from, but we needed all the help we could get so...
>
> Sarah: How did you feel about the atmosphere of being in football?
>
> Frank: Well it was still very macho. You know it is football, and testosterone was at an all-time high.
>
> Sarah: How were you treated by your teammates?
>
> Frank: In grade eleven, I was given the nickname thunderbolt ... it was not a term of endearment it was a term of insult but there was nothing I could do about it. Me running as fast as I can and still being comparatively slow... 'yeah thunderbolt scores [Frank then echoed ...rarely scored], 'thunderbolt catches' (rarely caught), 'thunderbolt blocks' (rarely blocked)... but it wasn't encouraging it was sarcasm at its finest, but if you don't want to be called thunderbolt or be made fun of or be belittled... than fucking play better is the message. I couldn't. Any other team I would have been cut from.
>
> Sarah: What made you want to sign up and play football?
>
> Frank: My dad made me [laugh]! I had an interest in football, and I really liked the sport, and I followed it and I had thrown the ball around with dad, and I was really motivated to do it but thing is ... just wanting to play ... wanting to be good isn't good enough ... you got to be able to do it, you gotta be that guy. You gotta be snarley and intimidating, and you gotta have God given talents.
>
> Sarah: Was there any other reason other than your Dad making you do it?

> Frank: I remember talking to people at the golf course like yeah I want to try out for football ... I want to do it ... I want to do it. When I got there I thought maybe I shouldn't do this at all but kind of wanted to prove it to myself and I remember going home that day and mom talking to me on the phone, and she said, 'So you are all set up for school?' 'Are you going back for football try outs later?' Frank: 'No I decided not to do it'Mom: 'Oh oh I thought you were going to do it? 'Oh well, ok then bye' [disappointment in her tone]. In mom's mind, she was thinking oh good something for him to do other than sitting around and reading books or playing drums from her perspective. It was not unreasonable for her to think that although I think the expectation was a little unreasonable... So out of guilt I guess I went to the tryout no one ever said you were cut so I just stuck around and played. I was a bench warmer in grade eleven during this thunderbolt year and in grade twelve I got some playing time and it got gradually more fun, and I was gradually more respected because I could do more things... [In Grade twelve] I joined the gym. I wasn't as fat as I was. I had some God given talents, but they didn't come from God, they came from me doing push ups seven weeks straight in the gym... but the point is I was more interested in playing drums and playing music. I mean the hell with football. Testosterone laden jocks that now would be into UFC[52] and nothing else maybe World Wrestling Federation, but that would be the extent of it. I had no time for people like that. Thanks for calling me thunderbolt in all of grade eleven. Fuck you! I am going to go over here and actually grow my brain see ya.

Frank's entry into football is filled with different intensities. Initially, Frank was reluctant to join and felt forced into the sport by his parents, but soon realized that football offered him an opportunity to reconfigure aspects of his social status. Upon entry, however, Frank's capacity to increase his social status was not actualized as he learned that he could not exert enough power to satisfy the dominant boys' expectations. Connell (2005) explains how sporting prowess is a test of masculinity even for boys who detest the locker room. Frank's failed physical movements on the field positioned him once again on the periphery. His marginalized status was further compounded when his teammates ostracized his lack of skill and called him, *'thunderbolt'*. The pressure to keep up and navigate "the 'demands' of the cock group" rattled Frank as did the unflattering undertones of being called 'thunderbolt' (Salisbury & Jackson, 1996, p.194).

Frank's experiences on the football team identify the power gender relations at work between bodies in school.

> Those boys who can't measure up against the traditional standards of the dominant body-culture begin to perceive themselves as inadequate, failed boys and, as a result, are often put down and marginalized. A great deal of personal unhappiness and psychological damage result from this marginalization (Salisbury & Jackson, 1996, p. 190).

Frank was cognizant of why he was not accepted by his football mates and in his final year of school took measures to change this by going to the gym. Having joined the gym Frank returned with bigger muscles and a faster body.

> The physical sense of maleness is not a simple thing. It involves size and shape, habits of posture and movement, particularly physical skills, and the lack of others, the image of one's own body, the way it is presented to other people and the ways they respond to it [and] the way it operates at work and in sexual relations (Connell, 1987, p. 84).

With heightened physique Frank inserted again and tried to gain entry, however his line of flight was halted; the new physique was not enough. Frustrated, Frank projected anger by swearing and denigrating his peers' interest in sports as something lacking even suggesting his high school teammates would be failed entities in their future. He then ruptured his association to the dominant boys by taking a line of flight and claiming he would have success in his future by playing music and performing well academically in school. Frank, however, having rejected his association with the team felt compelled to maintain his connection to the football team as evident when he later told me about wearing his varsity jacket.

> Frank: I was just happy to walk around in my purple jacket and purple jersey and 'woo... you won yesterday' (people saying things to him in the hallways) and at that point I felt part of the team.
>
> Sarah: Did you wear the jacket to fit in more?
>
> Frank: It was a leather football jacket from the varsity team and yeah I am on the team! I wouldn't wear it if I wasn't on the team so yeah I am gonna wear this, and I am proud of it!

While Frank produced a series of affects of hate and anger towards his dominant peers, he still worked to maintain his jock status in his final year of school. Frank secured his jock privileged status by wearing the jacket. His adornment of the purple jacket signals the dominant power others can have over a body and the risks a body will take to secure a space among the collective. His actions show how bodies are compelled to find membership and secure social relationships even if the relation does not fully satisfy.

5.5.1 Frank's: Social Manoeuvres

Frank's social connections revealed the situated potential he possessed to uproot the gender order and increase his social territory at junctures. Frank utilized physical force in the school

yard as a young boy to gain entry with the boys and then continued his social pursuit in junior high by actively making attempts to expel his marginal status. Frank demonstrated his active potential later in his schooling years by making attempts to refute events that placed him on a lower trajectory than his peers as evident when he tried to avoid award's night. He then took huge risks when calling his former bully and later joining the football team. The extended lines Frank was willing to take to secure more welcoming social experiences identifies what he was capable of when desiring something else.

The flux of intensities between his body and others fuelled his actions to cut across the social terrain; however, they also slowed his movements. The hateful affects projected onto Frank by his bully during the phone call reterritorialized Frank lower on the social grid. His movements were also seized when his teammates call him thunderbolt. Frank's social accounts reveal how daily situated social exchanges significantly impact a student's future actions, including one's confidence to build new social relations with others. The final rhizomatic story of this social assemblage explores Arthur's social experiences.

5.6 Arthur

Arthur was 22 years of age when we met at his parents' house. He had recently moved into his own apartment; however, at the time of our first interview it was under renovation so he asked if I would meet him at his parents' house. As we sat at his parents' kitchen table, Arthur was interested in the materials I had brought with me. Specifically, he was affectively drawn to the coloured markers and blank paper. I had explained to Arthur that he could use the markers and paper at any time and from the onset Arthur employed the materials when telling me his stories.

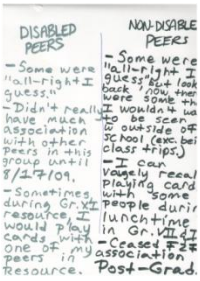


Figure 5.6 Arthur's Peer Distinctions

As we proceeded to chat he grabbed a grey marker and my blank notepad and started to produce two columns, labeling his identity, '*disabled'* and then created a second column in black which he labeled, *'nondisabled'* applying an able/disable set of classifications (see Figure 5.6). On paper, Arthur identified his *'nondisabled'* peers as '*being alright'*, however, indicated he would not want to be seen outside of school with them. He then explained how his '*nondisabled*' classmates '*made fun of him'*, but then remarked, *'it wasn't often'*. His '*disabled*' peers on the other hand were a group of students he occasionally played cards with and he aligned himself with this group.

Arthur's division of peers according to their level of functionality relative to normative understandings identifies how classificatory systems had been instilled in Arthur's thought process. He linearly categorized himself and others according to skill sets.

> Here in the West, the tree has implanted itself in our bodies, rigidifying and stratifying even the sexes. We have lost the rhizome, or the grass (Deleuze & Guattari,1987,p.18).

Arthur then revealed his social connections with a peer who Arthur classified as '*also disabled*'.

> Arthur: He introduced me to cards and so some [students] I played cards with and one [a boy at school] I shared a cab with for a while, and ...[pause] uh I guess as long as I didn't get in their way they wouldn't get in mine.

Arthur reflecting on his relations to his *'disabled'* peers made social connections based on his proximity to others. Sharing transportation to school with another student signified a form of friendship as did social associations where individuals left him alone. I surmise a friend for Arthur was a body which moved fluidly alongside his. Next I asked Arthur to describe further his experiences with other boys. Given he played cards with some *'disabled'* peers I was left curious to the relationships he might have had with others.

> Arthur: Well I didn't have too many, well most of them. I didn't have too many problems with...[pause]. Although some did make fun of me a little bit which kind of upset me but other than that no complaints. I was an introvert in middle school...I rarely hung out at any of the locations with people that would give me trouble. And well initially while I may have tried to go outside at recess I eventually just went in the library...[pause] I mostly used the computer, but sometimes I would read the newspaper in the library and exchange some jokes with the librarian. Or stuff along those lines.

Arthur had a peripheral relationship to other boys, and found displeasure when boys made fun of him. Arthur determined to rupture the unwelcoming connection, inserted himself into the library. Securing the library was a social release for Arthur, and he took pleasure in having conversations with the librarian. Arthur's intuitiveness to escape dominant peer relations and find solace in the library speaks to the agency he possessed at a young age to find more welcoming social experiences. Arthur then told me:

> Arthur: I guess I was kind of trying to stick up a bit more for myself. I mean since grade seven came and went and I got called a nerd way too many times because at the time I was wearing black-framed glasses - which kind of really hurt! [raises his voice] ... [pause] ... So eventually I stopped being a wuss as I had been in the six grades prior

to it and well all I can say is I haven't been a coward ever since those days.... I just wanted to not be made fun of that's all it was. I didn't want to be made fun of.

Sarah: What did you do to change that for yourself and make it better?

Arthur: Well, for starters I personally determined to myself not to be a little wuss. I had to do anything that I could as long as it was safe of course, but I had to do anything I could to make sure I was not a Barney Boy because well, Barney Boys and wusses are around the same level.

Sarah: What do you mean by a Barney Boy?

Arthur: Oh a ... well uh ... I guess what I mean by Barney Boy is that ... simply put somebody that likes Barney the purple dinosaur and their male. And although I individually like the colour purple I AM NO BARNEY BOY! [says in a loud voice]



Figure 5.7 Barney

[untitled photograph of Barney] (n.d.) Retrieved on October 13th, 2011 from http://www.doobybrain.com/2008/10/21/a-big-picture-of-barney-the-purple-dinosaur/ ©Lyons Partnership

Arthur intuitively figured wearing black framed glassed projected nerdy and wuss characterizations that perpetuated his distance from other boys. He then associated anything deemed 'Barney' lacked male prowess by hegemonic boy standards, and it was a form of status that he would not accept being identified under. Arthur having strongly declared, '*I am no Barney Boy*' produced an "intensification of [feelings]" (Ahmed, 2004, p.24) with painful affects circulating in his recollection. Ahmed (2004) identifies how pain traces on the surface of the skin where a body responds with an "ouch" and moves away. In Arthur's case, the surface of his skin was impressed with harmful words, "nerd", "Barney Boy". Having reflected back on his schooling Arthur figured popularity was something '*too high to attain'*. He then took a departure from our conversation and left the room. Arthur returned with his computer and asked if he could show me something. As his computer loaded, an image popped up on the screen.



Figure 5.8 Silver Viper Ninja

Arthur: that is Silver Viper Ninja[53] by the way... [turns the computer towards me] I drew him in Microsoft Paint back when I was a PC user, and Windows didn't drive me crazy.

Sarah: What does the character represent?

Arthur: Oh you mean this [points to Silver Viper Ninja] well the character represents ... well I guess since I got this computer on, I might as well type what I think [Arthur begins typing text in a box] ... Ok [talking while typing] he wasn't always Silver Viper Ninja ... actually I am gonna get the computer to read it to you [automated robot named Zarvox starts to speak].

The character Silver Viper Ninja represents the sort of identity I had in secret since I drew him back in grade eight. I had often referred to myself as ninja since I was the one that created this character through comics and adventures throughout my high school years finishing up his eighteen module series ending at 18 when he graduated from school. It was 10/08 that I turned eighteen, and I have continued the series since then

[robotic voice stops talking]

Arthur: Ok what Zarvox had just told you was basically a summary of Ninja's history... When creating ninja, he was particularly a speed demon as the expression goes.

Sarah: What made you decide to create this character and series?

Arthur: I wanted an imagination... for instance, he [Silver Viper Ninja] hates Mondays well the person you are having this interview with at this very moment also hates Mondays. I mean when I was a little kid and looking back at myself back then I considered myself a wuss ... I was a wuss when I was a little kid and all I can say was I was ashamed as a little kid and never wanted to be a little kid again, and I guess ninja he likes to be a bit of a tough guy you know ... you would never want to meet him in a dark alley.

Arthur referred to Silver Viper Ninja as the '*identity*' he had *'in secret*' back in school. In creating Silver Viper Ninja Arthur meshes man and machine. He then showed me an image of a Dodge Viper GTS on his computer.

> Arthur: This was the car Silver Viper transforms into and I race with it in Grand Tourismo [video game].

Silver Viper Ninja was Arthur's tough character, a marker of masculinity that he could enact through video games. Arthur's Silver Viper Ninja followed the same configuration as the popular cyborg Transformers. Transformers were constructed in the early 1980's as a Hasbro toy action figure converting from a masculine robot into a machine. Haraway's (1991) cyborg[54] figure is a useful metaphor for exploring Arthur's productive synchronization of machine and organism.

> [A cyborg is] cybernetic organism, a hybrid of machine and organism, a creature of social reality as well as a creature of fiction (Haraway, 1991, p.149).

Haraway (1991) suggests the cyborg is a possible "imaginative resource" for individuals with the capacity to reconfigure a person's connections to life experiences in more productive ways (p.150).The cyborg according to Haraway (1991) does not exist as a separate entity in nature or culture rather it is heterogeneous and not limited to physical boundaries or dualistic paradigms. Arthur by creating an animated cyborg added another dimension to his identity offering him the opportunity to reinvent his body by producing an idealized version, a hyper-masculine figure. "The hybrid figure of the cyborg blurs categorical distinctions such as human/machine, human/animal and nature/culture and moves beyond dualisms, which contribute to the domination of those marked as other" (Reeve, 2012, p.93). Silver Viper Ninja thus offered Arthur a mechanism to disrupt his former wuss persona and find a more satisfying social existence. Warranting Arthur's collective entity, I directed a question to Silver Viper Ninja.

> Sarah: What would Silver Viper Ninja think about masculinity?
>
> Arthur: Well I guess the fast car transforming thing that would really be the envy of a lot of automobile enthusiasts and a lot of them are male's, particularly masculine ones. And this person you are talking to now is also an automotive enthusiast.
>
> Sarah: Do you consider yourself a masculine male?

> Arthur: Yes, I take care of my manhood. I mean I wouldn't be caught dead playing with a Barbie doll or cooking in some plastic oven or even in Grand Tourismo driving a pink car that was really a putt putt.
>
> Sarah: Would you consider most boys at school masculine?
>
> Arthur: Well, yes of course.
>
> Sarah: When you were in school did you see yourself that way to?
>
> Arthur: Well mostly. Just I wasn't really masculine at the early part. I eventually grew to that point. I think it is a growing thing more than anything.
>
> Sarah: What made you think you weren't when you were younger?
>
> Arthur: Ok well I guess for one thing I was a wuss and a coward. The other man, boy probably got a little more masculinity then I possessed at the time. He hit me with the football, and of course I only had one other male friend, but he is out west now and on top of that at the time the only social contacts I had outside of school were all three of my older sisters.

Arthur territorialized his own body within hegemonic frameworks, '*I take care of my manhood'*. Arthur then turned to mass culture to legitimize his masculinity revealing how he would not '*be caught dead'* playing with a Barbie or driving a '*pink putt putt'*. The driving of a 'pink putt putt' was unthinkable and something Arthur or Silver Viper Ninja would not entertain.

> Masculinity is not just an idea in the head, or a personal identity. It is also extended in the world, merged in organized social relations (Connell, 2005, p.29).

Arthur striated his body to one of masculine, rejecting feminine qualities. He then reterritorialized his body back lower on the hegemonic grid when comparing himself briefly to a couple of boys in school. He acknowledged that he was not always masculine where he returned to calling himself a wuss and a coward. Arthur's rhizomatic stories reveal the constant pull back and forth that bodies experience when navigating social arenas. After showing me Silver Viper Ninja, Arthur took another line of flight and once again left the room.

He returned with a black, hard cased leather journal. Upon opening the journal, Arthur began flipping through the pages to show me an illustrated comic series he produced during his

schooling years. The pages were filled with pencilled stickmen images, heavily bolded words and a series of different numbers on the pages.

> Arthur: Let's see so basically what I did here was a cameo of some characters ... and sometimes I even incorporate a real world in my comic story like in this particular one that's me (Silver Viper Ninja), this is my sidekick ninja lady, whose secret identity is Ren and yes; she converts into a car ... she pretty much always transformed into [showing me his journal and then a photo of the car she converted into on his computer]. The car she converts into is hot pink. I am going to also mention I did incorporate some real-world people in this. There was a family that lived here a little while ago probably back in my high school days, and I made them all characters so these are the numbers. Seriously, that is number 12, 13 and little one is 15.
>
> Sarah: Why did you give them numbers?
>
> Arthur: Because I remember their names but decided not to use them.
>
> Sarah: So these are people you went to school with?
>
> Arthur: Just people I knew. And then this is a musical number with Ren and one sidekick from ninjas past.
>
> Sarah: So here where you have drawn number 14 in prison ... that's a real person?
>
> Arthur: Well I guess ... well I didn't always not like that person, how it started was before this person moved to a new location which at the time I kind of had a thing for which I really do not anymore ...I actually had a race with her on Grand Tourismo and this was GT4, and I guess I am not crying I just have bad allergies.

Arthur in this moment closed the journal and wiped his eyes with a Kleenex. He had a connection to number 14, a girl he used to play video games with. He revealed his relationship to her by confiding that he '*kind of had a thing*' for this individual. Arthur unleashed his complex desires through the scripting of a fictional story. Art became an escape from the built-up affects impressing on the surface of his body when his relationship ended with this particular person.

Arthur's construction of an eighteen module comic series on Silver Viper Ninja was the additional extension he needed to release the complex energies circulating between his body and the girl, including a space to reconfigure his social identity to something more to his liking. Arthur in his construction of Silver Viper Ninja cut peripheral lines and amplified his social trajectory by putting his cyborg to work in his comic series as lead, masculine heroic

character. Arthur through drawing could insert into a more confident social space and reclaim power and authority over his identity.

> [W]e know nothing of a body until we know what it can do, in other words, what its affects are, how they can or cannot enter into composition with other affects, with the affects of another body either to destroy that body or be destroyed by it, either to exchange actions and passions with it or to join with it in composing a more powerful body (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.284).

5.6.1 Arthur's: Social Manoeuvres

Arthur demonstrated the complexity he encountered when navigating social connections in school. He could temporarily gain social entry with others when playing cards with his 'disabled' peers and found momentary social solace when exchanging jokes with the librarian. However, the underlying harmful words projected towards him by his dominant peers also produced a series of painful affects including at moments anger. He objected to being cast a nerd and actively worked to rupture his 'wuss' status. Arthur's social manoeuvres came in the form of producing an alternative cyborg figure to expel his marginalized masculine persona. He liked that he could act out his desires via cyborg and put his cyborg to action in a series of comic stories. Each comic story revitalized his body to something more acceptable, something filled with possibility.

5.7 Summary

Public perceptions of an individual with ASD shaped by medical constructions can produce a particular reading as evident in chapter two. Most noticeably, an individual with ASD through the medical model is constructed as a socially impaired body or a body with persistent social deficits. Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) concept of de/reterritorialization applied in this assemblage, however, was a productive conceptual tool to disrupt stagnant medical configurations of ASD and to focus on what a young man with ASD can do, reconfiguring how an ASD body is known. Applying Deleuze and Guattari's concept of de/reterritorialization I demonstrated how the four young men could insert and cut across new social territory when wanting to uproot their static, peripheral social positioning. Thinking with Deleuze and Guatarri's concepts in ATP, therefore, supported the envisioning of the active, affective dimensions of the young men's lives. This contrasts with previous theorizations in education that have tended to focus on their social skill levels relative to social

normative understandings, mind/body dichotomy. Spinoza's affect with Ahmed's specificities on affect amplified a non-binary understanding of the ASD body. The ASD medicalized subject was replaced with an affective body, no longer known through predetermined configurations but rather through emergent relations. This is in line with Deleuze (1988b) who envisions bodies as multiple, filled with diverse connections; not a bounded subject. Across this social assemblage, the four young men showed their affective potential.

Leo demonstrated his capacity to act when he took aim at his peers with paper flickers to uproot the masculine hegemonic order. Wes similarly manipulated his one friend, performing pack tactics to gain acceptance from the dominant boys. Frank took risks by fighting back on the playground, confronting his bully and gaining membership on the football team. Each cut into new social territory provided Frank with a release from his peripheral existence. Arthur equally took a stand when constructing Silver Viper Ninja, an opportunity for Arthur to revitalize his social status. Across this social assemblage the young men also revealed the moments their bodies were held in tension when entering gender relations with dominant peers. The reterritorialization to the hegemonic grid reduced the young men's capacities to act and take a line of flight at moments. The application of masculinity theory in this assemblage was productive in showing the workings of masculinity in schools between boys and the effect dominant boys can have on others not meeting masculine ideals. The young men's experiences when territorialized to the masculine gender order reminds us of how the body is never full free from gender binaries (Butler, 1990, 2004).

This data assemblage continues to advance knowledge on the research question, how do twelve young men with ASD experience public school in Nova Scotia, Canada? Some young men in my study made apparent that they did not have strong affiliations to people at school, but did have connections to nonhuman elements. The next assemblage, *Trajectories of Smooth*, explores another dimension of the young men's schooling; specifically, it identifies the connections the young men with ASD made to school spaces. In the next assemblage, I employ Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) concepts of smooth and striated space to assist in the analysis of the experiences the young men with ASD in school spaces. Smooth is what Deleuze and Guattari call "space of affects" that show the movements bodies make beyond what they call striated lines, bodies tied to points (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.478). Employing additional concepts from ATP supports Deleuze and Guattari's vision of

experimenting and finding more open ways of thinking about bodies. I turn now to explore the young men's connections to nonhuman elements having experienced public school in Nova Scotia, Canada.

Chapter 6: Trajectories of Smooth

6.0 Introduction

Some students when travelling through school spaces move quickly while others might linger. The lingering might be a collective body[55]occupying a hallway space or a student meandering on the perimeter of the yard waiting for the school bell. Students also make calculated moves depending on where they enter and the composition of relations in the space. For example, students may avoid certain spaces or alternatively work to secure a space to suit their interests. The application of Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) concepts of smooth and striated in this assemblage helps to understand how the young men with ASD connected to school spaces. Deleuze and Guattari mobilize in ATP the analogy of the sea, the *Maritime Model,* to explain the workings of smooth and striated space.

Deleuze and Guattari (1987) explained how the sea before marine navigation was considered a smooth space that moved fluidly and in multiple directions. The sea, however, became more structured with the addition of compass points, grid lines and bearings and produced a striated formation. Their use of the sea to describe how spaces shift from fluid to more rigid configurations, "the line ... between two points" is useful as it can draw attention to the movements the young men make between smooth and striated spaces (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.480). Distinctly, Deleuze and Guattari (1987) concept of smooth can focus on travel experienced in "continuous variation" (p. 478) rather than only knowing bodies tied to striated spaces. This is important as education is one large striation with students predominantly known in relation to their timetables, schedules and classificatory placements. Deleuze and Guattari's concept of smooth, however, can rupture this line of thinking and re-imagines bodies beyond striated designations. In this assemblage, I am therefore, interested in the extension the young men with ASD made to find smooth spaces. When analyzing the young men's connections to school spaces Michel de Certeau's (1984) spatial theories are incorporated to assist in contextualizing the specificity of their actions when moving between smooth and striated.

6.1 Tactics

Michel de Certeau (1984) explained how individuals when entering spaces will make calculated moves as a means to create opportunities. The calculated moves a person makes are what de Certeau called, tactics.

> A calculated action by the absence of a proper locus ...The space of a tactic is the space of the other ... it is a maneuver ... It operates in isolated actions. It takes advantage of opportunities and depends on them...builds up its own position...a mobility that must accept the chance offerings of the moment (de Certeau, 1984, p.37).

de Certeau illustrated that a tactic depends on time and "must constantly manipulate events in order to turn them into opportunities" (1984, p. 480). Tactics in this data assemblage are applied to support an understanding of the calculated actions the young men with ASD made when acquiring smooth. I also mobilize in this assemblage Spinoza's affect theory and Ahmed's attentiveness to specific affects to inform alternative knowledge on the emergent nature of their actions having navigated Nova Scotia educational spaces. Specifically, Spinoza's idea of affection, the mixture of relations, is applied to support the process of knowing more about the young men's situated connections to educational spaces.

6.2 Spatial Flows

Spinoza's ideas of affection can help illustrate the spaces the young men were affectively drawn to including the spaces they worked to expel when experiencing the Nova Scotia educational terrain. I want to find out what situated connections incited the young men with ASD to acquire given spaces and what emergent moments ignited the young men to rupture given relations to particular spaces. I also carry across the assemblage the question, "what energies were flowing in this space?" The mobilization of this question is inspired by the works of Jessica Ringrose (2011) and Deborah Youdell (2011) who have utilized questions like, 'What are a body's affective capacities?' and 'What can a body do?' to draw attentiveness to the emergent intensities occurring between bodies.

This assemblage is concerned with advancing further understandings of how twelve young men with ASD experience public school in Nova Scotia, Canada with attentiveness to the young men's connections to school spaces. I open this data assemblage with a series titled, "*Welcoming Spaces"* that maps the movements Oliver, Liam and Leo made when extending

outside striated spaces. I then analyse what walking offered the young men with ASD in "*Wandering to Experience*". The final rhizomatic stories particularize Arthur's tactics in securing school spaces followed by Frank's affective connection to a given school space.

6.3 Welcoming Spaces

6.3.1 Oliver's: Smooth

Oliver was 21 years of age when we had a conversation. We met in the basement of the Provincial Autism Center where he had carved out a spot for himself on one of the soft couches. He leaned back and appeared comfortable as he waited for me to ask him questions. The following is an excerpt of my interview with Oliver that led to a discussion on his experiences in school spaces.

> Sarah: Can you remember some of the things you used to do in school?
>
> Oliver: Sometimes I would be on my own, sometimes playing with someone I knew...although I remember when I didn't want to do something I ran down the hallway to hide. My teacher would have to come and find me and then my mother would come in to talk.
>
> Sarah: Why did you hide?
>
> Oliver: I don't know all the classes wanted to do things and I guess I wanted to do something different. I guess some things bothered me then. Like there was this one time they were showing Harry Potter in our classroom and I didn't want to see it because I had seen it before and I did not enjoy it and so if there was something I didn't like I would go to the learning center, and that's how I done it.
>
> Sarah: So if you didn't like things you would go and sit in the learning center?
>
> Oliver: Yeah
>
> Sarah: Why the learning center?
>
> Oliver: It was quiet. It was kind of a sanctuary if you will.
>
> Sarah: What did you do in the learning center?
>
> Oliver: Go on the Internet. I always did that.
>
> Sarah: What kind of stuff did you like to look up?
>
> Oliver: Well I liked looking up Marvel comics ... ummm trailers for movies to see what movies were coming out.

Oliver connected to two different experiences in school spaces. One experience involved his fleeing a classroom to the hallway and the other revealed his movement to the learning center having refuted the watching of a school film. I begin by analyzing Oliver's accounts of exiting the classroom into the hallway.

Oliver ran. His heart raced as he moved to secure the smooth space of the hallway, but soon after his energy halted when his classroom teacher entered the space. What energies were flowing in this space? The mixture of his body and the teacher's, the affection, infiltrated a series of sad affects for Oliver thus altering his level of desire. His body upon mixture with the authority figure was striated back to the classroom; his energies once again lessened. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) express how bodies move in and out of smooth and striated spaces, "the passages from one to another; the principle of the mixture, which are not at all symmetrical, sometimes causing a passage from the smooth to the striated, sometimes from the striated to the smooth, according to entirely different movements" (p.475). Oliver's momentary experience in the smooth space informed the power of educational striated spaces to pull a body back to the rooted line. Oliver, however, not satisfied with his existence in striated spaces made another move to secure smooth by taking up the learning center.

Oliver felt invigorated in the learning center as it presented him with quiet space, his *'sanctuary'*. The learning center was also an active space where Oliver could carry out his interests as evident when he used the space to 'surf the Internet'. I then asked Oliver to expand on his use of school spaces, where he travelled to, what he liked to do.

> Sarah: When you entered school where did you go?
>
> Oliver: I would go into the entrance, go to my locker, go the learning center for a while, check my schedule, which class I am supposed to be and head to that class after the bell rang and that's the way I always done it. If there was a class on my schedule that I needed to be in then I would go there.

Oliver adhering to his schedule had specific patterns of movement. Deleuze and Guattari identify the striated functions of school spaces such as the following of timetables is "tree travel" (1987, p.482). Oliver citing '*that's the way I've always done'* subscribed to tree travel. Oliver following the rooted order signifies how students rarely question the workings of striated spaces. Students just follow schedules, move according to bells and adhere to their timetables; something expected of bodies upon entry. I asked Oliver if he would be interested

in drawing a map of his movements in school spaces. Oliver seemed pleased to construct a map during our time. As he drew we talked further about his time in the learning center.

> Sarah: Did you always go to the learning center in your free time?
>
> Oliver: I would have to go it was written down on my schedule that I had to go there.
>
> Sarah: Were you happy with that or did you want to go somewhere else?
>
> Oliver: I don't know ... I always felt like I should through my schooling...[pause]... my time at high school I felt like I should be ... [pause] ... I didn't realize it, but part of me felt like I should have been in class than the learning center but that was okay.
>
> Sarah: Would you have rather been in class?
>
> Oliver: Well I guess ... [pause] the learning center was to help me learn better and to get me the education.
>
> Sarah: Why do you think you wanted to be in the class more?
>
> Oliver: I don't know I mean everybody else goes to the class, and I was mostly in the learning center around other people with autism who were often loud or made a lot of noise and those students I have known for a while.
>
> Sarah: Did you feel you missed out on things?
>
> Oliver: I don't think it is that. I just I don't know if there is a way to explain it. I did start walking the halls, and I started going to the cafeteria.

Oliver's body was in flux when he recalled his time in the learning center. The variation of intensities he experienced was influenced by the connections he made to others in the space. The noise and loudness of his peers uprooted Oliver's affinity to the space where he affectively decided to decompose his relation to peers.

> These changes in direction may be due to the nature of the journey itself ... but it is more likely to be due to the variability of the goal or point to be attained (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.478-479).

Oliver continued to sketch. He took his time, using different colored markers, and I found myself compelled to make my own moves to see his school map and secured a chair adjacent to Oliver (Field Notes, November 18th, 2011). He welcomed my change in position and angled his map towards me. As we looked at his map, I asked Oliver about his movements outside the learning center.

Sarah: What did you do in the cafeteria?

Oliver: I would have my snack and then go to Subway[56] and walk around the school.

Sarah: Walk outside or?

Oliver: I would walk the halls... I would do laps... like walking in the hallways up and down. I would do that when I had a break or go on the computer in Mrs. Happie's room. Then I would go to my class, whether it was on this floor or the next floor. It is a three story building.

Oliver picked up a grey marker and drew the route he took when doing laps of the hall. Oliver explained (while pointing at his map) how he left the learning center and walked to one stairway where he would then walk across the top floor past numerous classrooms until he reached the second stairway (see Figure 6.1). At that point, Oliver explained how he would turn and walk back towards the first stairway[57].

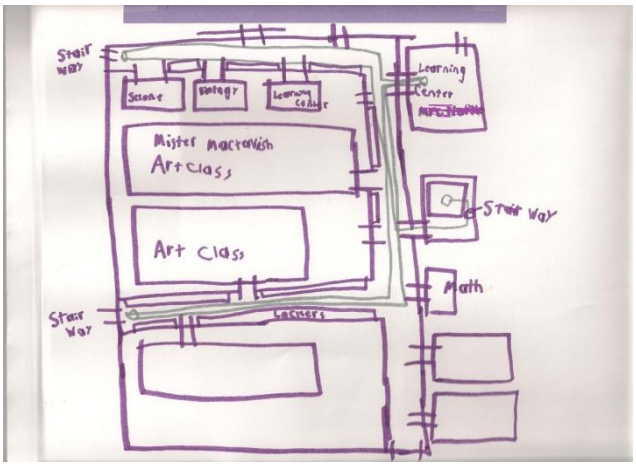


Figure 6.1 Oliver's Map

Sarah: Were you on your own when you walked the halls?

Oliver: I think so or I would go back to the learning center and surf on the Internet which I enjoyed doing.

He marked Mrs.Happie's room, the learning center, with a grey circle offering how he would go there on occasion between laps. Oliver intuitively secured the hallways to find smooth and escape the constraints he felt in the learning center.

> [Smooth space] is a space of affects, more than one of properties … it is an intensive rather than an extensive space, one of distances, not of measures and properties" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 479).

Oliver finding smooth in the hallway exemplifies how significant access to certain school spaces can be for students. In Oliver's experiences walking the hallways was his form of social in school. He relied on the hallways to fulfil his interests during free time and the intuitively connected to the learning center when he desired quiet. Oliver's actions to find smooth spaces inform the agency he possessed to create opportunities for himself, more to his liking. Liam similarly accessed spaces to improve his schooling experiences.

6.3.2 Liam's: Smooth

Liam was 24 of age when we met at an office setting in his town. He had already attended a short college program and recently completed an undergraduate degree at a Canadian university. Liam identified at the time of our interview that he had a difficult time remembering his experiences in elementary and therefore, our conversations stemmed mostly around his experiences in high school and university. I pick our conversation where Liam revealed his movements in school spaces.

> Sarah: Where did you go during lunch?
>
> Liam: For the first few days, I sat in the lunchroom with the people I went to school with and realized this is a waste of my time and then spent the rest of the three years in the science room. I just wasn't too fond of them, by the time I got out to high school. I realized oh I can just hideaway in the science room here and play on the computers and read books.
>
> Sarah: What was it about the science room that you liked?
>
> Liam: Very quiet it wasn't like the lunch room where there are just way too many people, too close together, very loud. The science room was quiet. I could either read or just go on the computer.
>
> Sarah: What is it about the quiet that you like?
>
> Liam: Just not distracted by other people ...
>
> Sarah: What was it about the noise and the peers?
>
> Liam: I don't know ... I just don't like them.

What energies were flowing in this space? Liam liked what striated spaces had to offer. In this sense, Liam subscribed to school spatial practices[58]. He affectively felt the classroom space should be quiet and was annoyed when the spaces intended function was disrupted. Liam was particularly bothered by the loud noises that infiltrated the classroom from other bodies. Through movement, Liam unleashed his connection and found smooth in the science room. Liam then worked to maintain this space over the course of his three years in high school.

I then asked Liam if he might like to draw a map; however, he indicated that he was not good at drawing. Given he had spent the bulk of his free time in the science room during high school I wondered which university spaces he had an affinity for. In asking Liam about his university spaces, he told me that he was annoyed when students would enter a lecture hall and disrupt the atmosphere. Liam characterized his university peers as '*not focused'* and '*gossiping across the room'* and expressed how he '*didn't relate to them'* and *'had no reason to associate with them'*. Liam then pointed out how others disrupted his learning space.

> Liam: If you don't want to be there then why are you there and talking about just partying, getting drunk, things that they have done... like you really can hear people whispering on the other side of the classroom it is pretty annoying! I was like yes we can hear you... more than half the people aren't paying attention very annoying!"
>
> Sarah: When they bothered you what did you do?
>
> Liam: Come to class just as it is about to start. I found a corner of the lecture hall to sit in away from them.
>
> Sarah: So trying not to get there too early?
>
> Liam: Where I sat usually depended on the classroom in university, the angle to the board, but I would try to avoid being near them.

Liam annoyed by his peers devised a tactic to enter the lecture hall late. He figured if he entered just before class started it would minimize his relations with peers. Liam then made an additional extension by securing a space in the lecture hall at a distance from his classmates. The physical separation allowed Liam to maintain more closely the striated space that he was akin to. Liam then identified another university space he located to meet his interests.

> Liam: I would just sit upstairs on one of the end of the wings basically it has a lot of couches no one ever sits on... It was quiet, empty and vacant.

Grosz (1995) describes space as a relational concept. Liam built up a relation to space relative to his noisy peers. It was a relation that Liam wanted to decompose. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) explain how rhizome travel will cross over and intersect with tree travel, and that it can happen at any time. In Liam's experience he desired tree travel and therefore, took calculated actions to maintain his affective connections to quiet, striated spaces by taking alternative routes and securing tighter configurations in the lecture hall. Without the presence of others, I surmise Liam would not have needed to alter his positioning in school spaces. Liam's stories identify the constant variation that emerges in school spaces and how subtle alterations to striated spaces can impact what a body might do. School spaces are not docile root functions as evident with Liam and Oliver's accounts. The next part illuminates Leo's experiences particular school spaces.

6.3.3 Leo's: Smooth

Leo in earlier data assemblages identified his connections to peers, including how he felt about particular school arrangements. During our conversation, Leo spoke about his experiences between classes (i.e. at recess, noon hour).

> Leo: I used to hide in the boys' change room until the bell, and I got away with it! During the period when we are supposed to go outside I'd sneak into the boys' room and hide maybe take a notepad and then as soon as the bell rang I would go back to class.
>
> Sarah: Why did you hide?
>
> Leo: I will admit that there were hallway or lunchroom monitors who openly disliked me or the adolescent that I was, and they would always force us outside in the worst possible weather, while the hypocrites that they were got to sit in a comfortable lounge and didn't really know what it was like... Well you know I didn't really like this one lunch monitor. I didn't like her she used to force us outside on the coldest days of winter and they used to have this volleyball program in the gym for certain kids and I once asked to join in and they wouldn't let me, and so we were forced outside on the coldest days of winter while they get to stay inside ... and she made no bones about believing in her divine right that she gets to stay inside while she forces everybody else outside even though it is freezing cold, it is uncomfortable and she doesn't care so I basically came up with my own intervention and I used to hide in the boys changing room until the bell.
>
> Sarah: Did anyone ever find you in the change room?

Leo: Nope! [laugh]

Sarah: [laugh] that was lucky!

Leo: Well, it was dark in there, and so it was not nearly as bright and besides the hallway monitors don't go into the locker room.

Deleuze and Guattari identify how "smooth always possesses a greater power of deterritorialization than the striated" (1987, p.480). The circulating affects between his body, the lunch monitor and the cold air determined Leo's movements to secure the smooth space of the change room. Leo's quiet calculated manoeuvre to win over the space informed the capacity he possessed to fulfill his needs. Leo also understood the power relations circulating in school spaces and knew his time in the space was only temporary and therefore, intuitively took additional measures by hiding in the dark. Leo hunkering down with his notepad laughed at the failure of the lunch monitor to striate his body to the cold outdoors. Leo's laughter exemplifies how striated spaces are never free from resistance. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) explain how a body can escape the limits of its striation by the small deviations it makes.

> [A] line that delimits nothing, that describes no contour, that no longer goes from one point to another but instead passes between points, that is always declining from the horizontal and the vertical and deviating from the diagonal, that is constantly changing direction, a mutant line of this kind that is without outside or inside, form or background, beginning or end and that is as alive as a continuous variation – such a line is truly an abstract line, and describes a smooth space (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.497-498).

Leo's capacity to find smooth signifies the importance school spaces had for him where he worked to maintain connections to particular spaces to secure more welcoming school experiences. Other young men with ASD mobilized school spaces in different ways. The next series titled, "*Wandering to Experience*" discovers what walking offered many of my participants when experiencing school in Nova Scotia.

6.4 Wandering to Experience

In Michel de Certeau's (1984) book, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, he presents a chapter titled, "*Walking the City*". He begins by describing New York City from above.

> Seeing Manhattan from the 110th floor of the World Trade Center. Beneath the haze stirred up by the winds, the urban island, a sea in the middle of the sea, lifts up skyscrapers over Wall Street, sinks down at Greenwich, then rises again to the crests of Midtown, quietly passes over Central Park and finally undulates off into the distance

> beyond Harlem. A wave of verticals. Its agitation is momentarily arrested by vision. The gigantic mass is immobilized before the eyes (de Certeau, 1984, p.91).

de Certeau explained how a city when viewed from above appears as one unified whole, yet from ground level the body experiences active space. He illustrates this when describing pedestrians on the street-level and how they swerve, find new paths and in the process create space. de Certeau's, *"Walking the City"*, is useful as it demonstrates that spaces are not static or fully determined as a body can take shortcuts, make use of cracks, and travel off the grid to fulfill desires.

In this data assemblage, *"Wandering to Experience"* presents the young men's experiences when walking through school spaces and signals their findings of space, the search for smooth. Figure 6.2 identifies the young men's connections when walking in educational spaces.

Figure 6.2 **Wandering to Experience**

"I liked to wander and look at things" (Bobby)

"I walked around the playground with one friend" (Wes)

"A lot of time I remember walking around the school. I just wandered, did my own thing. If I wasn't watching people play Frisbee I could just be doing laps around the school" (Luke)

"walk around talking to no one in particular doing nothing particular just kind of wandering…I would poke around and go to places I didn't belong" (Frank)

"I would just wander around and stuff…if I saw people I knew I would stop and talk to them for a bit" (Henry)

"I just walked around" (Luke)

"I would wander through the halls seeing what I could see" (Leo)

"I would keep to myself when walking the halls" (Neil)

"I mean like walking the halls up and down I would do that at break" (Oliver)

Walking presented multiple opportunities for the young men with ASD to find new experiences in school. Henry, for example, wandered to secure social connections as evident when he stated, "*I would just wander around and stuff, and if I saw people I knew I would stop and talk to them for a bit"*. Henry's walking increased his potential to make exchanges with others that he may not have experienced otherwise. Leo also wandered to amplify his schooling experiences, '*I would wander through the halls seeing what I could see'*. Leo found pleasure when walking through the halls and explained how he liked to *'plunk down'* in a

corner and capture the action of his peers. Bobby similarly enjoyed wandering and looking at things. Bobby's favourite space was meandering outside where the smokers congregated to catch a glimpse of what '*the smokers'* were doing before returning to linger down a hallway where the day-care was located. The movement offered Bobby a productive extension at noon hour. Walking school spaces made liberation possible for many young men with ASD and to find "different fluxes and trajectories and the possibility of further deterritorialization" (St.Pierre, 2000, p.266).

When I asked Luke what it was that he liked about walking he responded. *'I don't know it kind of just gave me an opportunity to walk around and think'.* The physical act produced joyful affects for Luke as evident when he later identified walking was *'calm, peaceful and relaxing'.* Frank also used walking to foster new experiences. He explained how he would '*poke around'* in spaces, he '*didn't belong'* continually compelled even when uncertainty lurked. Neil's style of wandering was more calculated, '*I would keep to myself when walking the halls'.* Neil preferred solo travel and moved in straight lines like Liam.

de Certeau (1984) explained how walkers actualize the city through movement, the turns and movements they make across intertwined paths generate space and opportunity. He compared this analogy to Charlie Chaplin's cane.

> Thus Charlie Chaplin multiplies the possibilities of his cane: he does other things with the same thing and he goes beyond the limits that the determinants of the object set on its utilization (de Certeau, 1984, p.98).

Wanderings in school spaces produced new possibilities for many of the young men when navigating the Nova Scotia educational terrain. Their movements however also required tactical knowledge when acquiring smooth as evident when Neil took direct lines to avoid peers or when Leo tactically walked and then waited to secure a spot in a hallway to get closer to the action of his peers. Adam also exemplified the tactics he used to gain smooth space. I turn now to detail Adam's acquiring of school spaces.

6.4.1 Adam's: Search for Smooth

Adam applied the tactic of lurking in school spaces to find more welcoming experiences. When I think of a body lurking, I imagine an individual waiting for another friend outside a coffee shop. The individual lingers in a small radius, the body makes subtle shifts; casual

glances at his cell phone, a momentary lean against a brick wall in anticipation of his friend. Adam explained to me his lingering in school spaces as a young boy in school.

> Adam: I was always outside I would be around this little dirt thing out there digging up holes there playing with my Lego toys, I wasn't really into talking to people all that much there ... Well most of the time I would just be by myself, but sometimes I would be around other people if they asked me .... I would usually just be outside. I am not really sure if I was digging around in the hole areas, I might have talked to some of the people I am not sure for very long there. I would just usually wait in a corner for somebody to want to come and talk to me first.

Adam's movements were in relation to other bodies in the playground where he intuitively utilized slow, subtle movements to draw possible social connections. His lingering in a "small plot of land" was his social tactic (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.161). Adam figured if he created a social position in the playground it might incite new possibilities to speak to one of his peers and create a social connection. Adam then expressed further his movement with peers when entering the school building.

> Adam: They were always around in the hallways talking and everything there that is all I could basically see. I was always usually by myself just getting to classes, and mostly I would be at the library like on the computer... I never really socialized with people that much until after I got a computer in my house there and then when I did I decided to use that time during recess and lunch time to be around the people. I did have some good experiences there but I just kind of feel like I waited too long to be around people. I kind of feel I waited too long to actually want to be around them cause when I was around them in the cafeteria they seemed to be so wrapped up in each other's lives.

Adam affectively wanted to bring his subjectivity into existence, however Adam was held in tension, '*I just kind of feel like I waited too long to be around people'*. What energies were flowing in this space? Adam was held in flux as he desired something else.

> Adam: I tried to get as close as possible to them. I spent a great deal of time listening to their conversations as much as I could. I couldn't really tell people anything that I wanted to do because I didn't really know exactly and I still don't really know. I kind of felt like I should have just approached them a lot more sooner in the cafeteria.

Adam searched for connections. He figured to get in close physical proximity was the best tactic to gain social entry. His body, however, remained striated, unable to make a connection. "Striated spaces are those which are rigidly structured and organized, and produce particular,

limited movements and relations between bodies" (Hickey-Moody & Malins, 2007, p.11). Adam's distance from peers produced a series of intensities. He declared, '*I couldn't really tell people anything that I wanted to do because I didn't really know exactly and I still don't really know'*. Adam was immersed with affect.

> Adam: Sometimes I would try to follow people that stayed inside the school like during lunch time I would sometimes go outside like not outside of the school [to town] ... I would usually just see people sitting around on the wooden benches talking sometimes I would move closer and try to join them but I never really said all that much to them... I am not really sure if I would fit in with any of them at all you know but I still kinda felt like I wanted to be around them you know like to see what it would be like. I liked it better when I was very close with them you know not just emotionally but like in the physical sense.
>
> Sarah: What did you like about it?
>
> Adam: Well because I get to see people and what they are doing you know and I would like it better if I was actually invited to be around with them I don't think they really understood what it is I wanted from them. I just wanted to be around them and sometimes I think I could sort of tell that they could be talking about me behind my back but I don't think they were because I really I didn't really see myself as an important person for them to talk about me behind my back, but I don't know it was just very hard to be around them at times especially if they came to school in a bit of a mood which did happen at times there so I just backed off a little bit.

Adam shifted from cautiously lurking as a younger boy in the playground to bolder moves by occupying a space on a wooden bench beside his peers. Locating the wooden bench was his smooth space. "We recognize space as always under construction" ..."always in the process of being made" (Massey, 2005, p.9). Adam liked the possibilities the wooden bench presented. He was not content to be a docile body 'stuck' in the striated space of school. The affects emerging between bodies in spaces often determine which spaces students move towards and which spaces they actively reject. Adam's intuitive tactic to get closer to his peers by occupying the wooden bench exemplified his capacity to revitalize his body and rupture his peripheral position. Adam's wanderings across his schooling years exhibit the creative potential he had to improve his social experiences. Luke also mobilized walking to improve his access to alternative experiences during his free time at school.

6.4.2 Luke's: Search for Smooth

Luke was 24 years of age when we met. Luke during our time drew a map of his preferred walking route between classes (see Figure 6.3).

> Luke: There would be a pathway going to the front and basketball court here and an outside classroom here with a pond which we never used! We were not allowed to go near it...it had benches and a pathway, but we weren't allowed to use it. It had an outside courtyard here which we were never allowed to use I am not sure why they even built it!
>
> Sarah: So where did you go outside?
>
> Luke: If I wasn't out here in the back watching people play Frisbee I would just be doing laps around the school or inside the library. This was a school where you could stay inside.

Luke marked the spaces he occupied with an X and the paths he wandered with dots. His movements reveal the impact certain striated spaces had on his schooling experiences when he identified his denied entry to specific spaces (the courtyard, the pathways, certain benches, an amphitheatre and a pond).The relation between his body and the banned spaces produced a particular *affection*, an unfavourable one. He questioned why such spaces were erected if students were not free to roam within them. Frustrated, Luke worked to rejuvenate his body and find more welcoming spaces. Walking the school yard was the entry he needed to generate more welcoming affects. Specifically, doing laps and taking entry occasionally in the library were Luke's smooth spaces. Walking was a small win for Luke to uproot the striations that tied him to particular ordered landscapes. Smooth are the "acentered, rhizomatic multiplicities", the freeing of a body from the line (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.494). Luke's ability to extend his territory displays what a body can do to change their relation to striated spaces or what Luke expressed as banned spaces.

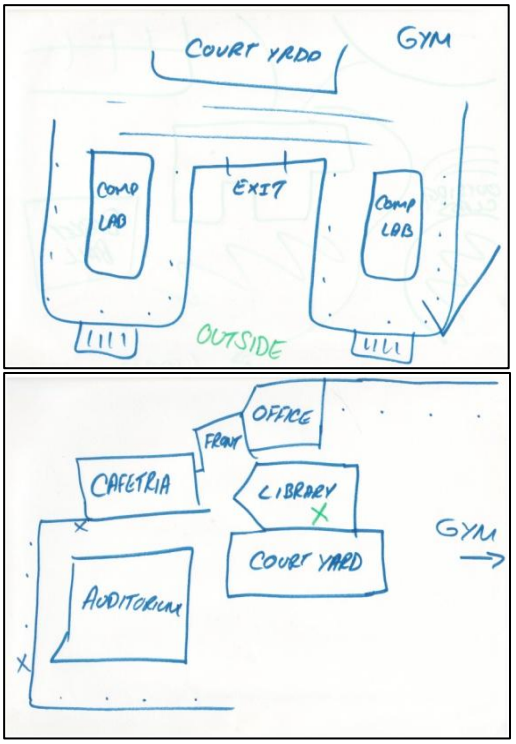


Figure 6.3 Luke's Map

Stephanie Springgay (2011) in her study, '*The Chinatown Foray' as Sensational Pedagogy* uses art and walking as a form of methodology to enhance understandings of bodily knowledge.

> Walking as a research creation methodology involves the integration of mind and body with place, or what critical ethnographers call emplacement. Theories of emplacement understand place not as a pre-existing physical location but a performance and process of dwelling that is accomplished through wandering. In the foray, the audience and the artist "make place" or are emplaced, through the processes of encountering and sensing different objects and bodies as they walk (Springgay, 2011, p.647).

Springgay's mobilization of walking is useful for my work as it signals attentiveness to the affective dimensions emerging for bodies in spaces. Distinctly, her use of walking draws connections to the ongoing emergent intersections that happen for bodies in spaces; the infusion with smells, objects, including other bodies that incite a body to take action or not. Springgay contends:

> the act of one body interacting with another body —are affective. Affective configurations of experience are important for educators to consider. Our daily encounters are imbued with sensations and movement and it is crucial for critical educators to understand that the senses are not pre-given, neutral, or fixed (Springgay, 2011, p.640).

Springgay actualizing the importance of affect, including the relevance of paying attention to the sentient connections students make through movement invites opportunity to think about students in more open ways.

> Sensational pedagogies challenge educators to recognize the importance of corporeality, emplacement, and sensation in learning — of the body's encounter with other bodies (human and non-human), of its location in space and time as enmeshed and intertwined, and that sensation is not simply a matter of an awakening to non-ocular ways of knowing, but recognizes the politics of knowing sensationally (Springgay, 2011, p.651).

The young men's wanderings informed the intimate connection the young men had to particular spaces and how they utilized wanderings in spaces to revitalize the body and carry out their interests. Some of the young men wandered to reconfigure their affective relations to peers while others found spaces to relinquish their bodies from the striated domain of school. The next rhizomatic story examines one young man's tactics to secure more welcoming spaces.

6.5 Arthur's Tactics

Arthur asked if I would meet him at his '*new digs*' for the second interview rather than at his parents' home. Upon entry to his place, Arthur invited me to sit at his kitchen table next to a small wood stove. The wood stove crackled in the background pumping out a tremendous amount of heat into the small space. As I sat down Arthur slid into the chair directly beside me (Field Notes, October 13th, 2011). Arthur seemed eager to talk and he was once again drawn to the blank notepad and markers that I had pulled out of my bag and placed on the table. Arthur in a previous assemblage explained some of the connections he had with peers, and he returned at the start of this conversation to tell me more about the students he attended school with. I open this story with Arthur's explanation of his peer groups as he later incorporated these groups when expressing his use of school spaces.

The first peer group Arthur identified were *'the Nerdy Group'*. He affectively moved to pick up a blank sheet of paper and a green marker then recorded his response [Arthur was talking out loud while he wrote, see Figure 6.4].

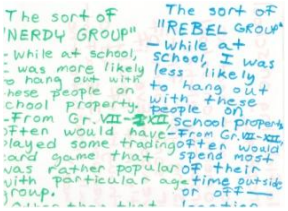


Figure 6.4 Nerdy & Rebels

> Arthur: The Nerdy Group I was more likely to hang out with these people and I would incorporate myself individually with the group I have written in green (see Figure 6.4).

Arthur then described the Nerdy Group's attire stating they wore, '*nothing too inappropriate too horribly often*'. At this point, he set aside the green, picked up a blue marker and identified in a separate column another peer group he labelled, *'the Rebels'*.

> Arthur: While at school I was less likely to hang out with these people. I rarely hung out with ... I rarely stayed at any of the locations with any of the people that would give me trouble.

Arthur then indicated *'the Rebels'* wore clothes that were '*more revealing and extremely flashy*'. He produced clear distinctions between the two peer groups equally acknowledging his own position in *'the Nerdy Group'*. In contrast, *'the Rebels'* were a group he did not associate with as they potentially stirred *'trouble'* for him. He then identified a third peer group, *'the Populars'* (see Figure 6.5).

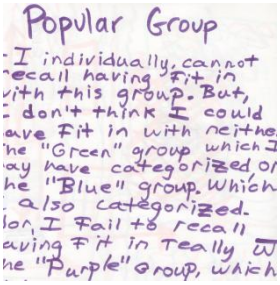


Figure 6.5 Popular Group

Using a purple marker, he defined *'the Populars'* as a set of adolescents he '*avoided as they called him a dork'* and imparted he '*failed to fit in with this group'*. Arthur was uncertain as to what *'the Populars'* wore, but he felt they likely '*wore clothes like the rebels*'. Arthur hesitated when identifying their movements between classes indicating that he was unaware of their actions.

I then asked Arthur if he would like to draw a school map and he obliged. He liked the markers and seemed enthusiastic to create a map. Arthur without direction intuitively decided to incorporate the three peer groups on his map and actualized their positioning in school by using coloured markers. He later added himself to the map[59] (see Figure 6.6).

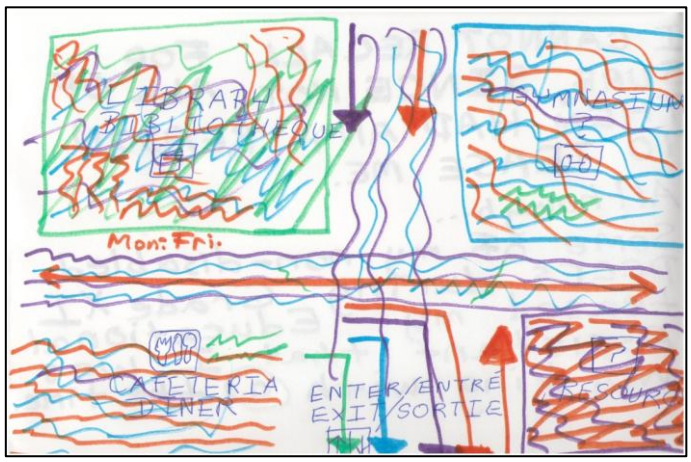


Figure 6.6 Arthur's Map

> Arthur: I guess I will need to use this to draw a general outline of the school.

Arthur reached to pick up my blue ball point pen.

> Arthur: Ok here's the exit and the entrance and yes I am writing it bilingual probably because I still remember some French although it is not as good as it used to be.

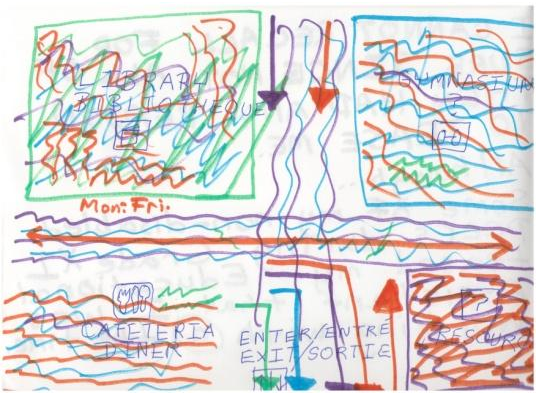
Arthur labelled the main locations on the map – the library, gymnasium, cafeteria and entrance. After labelling the principal rooms Arthur picked up a green marker and identified where *'the Nerdy Group'* spent their free time.

> Arthur: Ok most of the nerdy group would come to the library. That's usually because they are doing research on a project. Some would come to the gymnasium for extra-curricular activities no less.

He affectively shared how *'the Nerdy Group'* dominantly occupied the library as evident with the level of green colour however Arthur also stated the peer group occasionally visited the gymnasium. He then worked down to the left corner and added a few squiggles of green to the cafeteria, '*those are particularly slow eaters'*. Arthur afterwards picked up a blue marker and pointed out *'the Rebels'* use of spaces. Arthur made no hesitations.

> Arthur: Ok and the blue group same goes for some of them if they have a project they are working on and want to work at school. They may be using the Internet that the school has which is rather slow.

Arthur scribbled a little blue in the library and then drew a large blue square around the gymnasium. He figured they would be *'training more than anything, weight training'* but that this was *'his perception'* and *'it was not universal'*. Afterwards, he returned to the bottom left corner and sketched how *'the Rebels'* took up the cafeteria.



> Arthur: The rebels would be hanging out around the cafeteria maybe not because they are slow eaters, but you know just hanging around. Some would sometimes leave school property.

At this point, he scribbled blue throughout the cafeteria including a blue arrow heading outdoors. The large blue square around the gymnasium signalled *'the Rebels'* were more athletic with the blue arrow identifying their shift to the outdoors. The active presence of *'the Rebels'* inside the cafeteria was evident based on the multiple blue squiggles Arthur added across the space. At this juncture, Arthur affectively realized he had yet to account for *'the Populars'* but he was held in flux as he was uncertain as to where they positioned themselves in school.

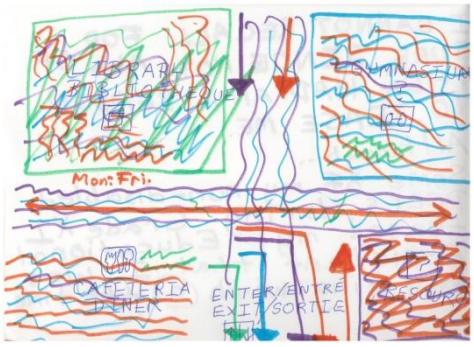
> Arthur: They may be just if ok ... let me make another room here they may be hmmm...

Arthur started to draw a new room on the right bottom corner, the resource room, which he labelled with the blue ball point pen.

> Arthur: The popular group may have some trouble getting their homework done on time as they may have the attitude 'we are popular we are too good for homework'

(Arthur says this in a whiny tone of voice) and they may not really say that but that's my perception so they could be spending time here.

Arthur drew a large purple square around the resource room then filled it with purple squiggles. I was intrigued to see him generating a resource room, a remedial space. Arthur expressing uncertainty relied on stereotypical understandings of 'popular kids' and assumed since they 'fool around' the group might need academic support to get caught up on school work. After drawing the resource room he added purple to the library, gymnasium and cafeteria. His reluctance to know exactly where they spent their time perhaps informed that Arthur maintained a distance from this peer group. I was amazed with Arthur's intuitive and accurate recording of his peers' use of school spaces. I particularly liked how he used colour and shapes to draw emphasis to certain groups' movements in the spaces.



Glancing at his map, I wondered how the students occupied the hallways, including his own positioning in this map. We pick up the dialogue where I asked Arthur, "What about the hallways?"

Arthur: Oh the hallways uh you will find both purple and blue here. When I was making up both the nerdy groups and the rebellious groups I failed to factor in the popular group so I guess sometimes you will see someone who looks rebellious in a hallway and some that look popular also in a hallway.

At this point, Arthur added long squiggly purple and blue lines to represent the hallways.

Arthur: And some of the nerdy group may also be in the hallways [scribbles a small scratch of green in hallways] and well some may go outside but there could be a variety of reasons for going outside [draws a green arrow going outside] maybe because it is a nice day or perhaps they have to go home because they may have gotten a virus or they may have gotten sick while at school and or probably because they had to go a doctor's appointment that can't wait till after school or the appointment is after school, but the location of the appointment is 30 minutes or so away from the school.

Arthur provided a longer explanation for *'the Nerdy Groups'* exit to the outdoors revealing his closer social connection to this group. After outlining students' use of hallways I asked Arthur about his positioning on the map. Before acknowledging his use of spaces, Arthur took a rhizomatic departure and proceeded to explain what he called his tactics when actualizing

school spaces. He described how he secured particular school spaces as a mechanism to rupture his wuss status and escape the unwelcoming connections he had with dominant peers.

> Arthur: Ok well initially my tactic wasn't really a tactic of violence as you know. Violence on school property is against the rules so I chose to avoid. I mean for a while for pretty much through all of grade ten it started when me and this other person I am not mentioning names here which is why I said other person were always fighting to get to this one computer. Looking back at it now and the laptop with it was a piece of junk, garbage not worth fighting over. The desktop that I had through my school years wasn't horribly much better, which has now been donated and I haven't seen it since and I don't really care. I then like I say initially this guy kept giving me these weird stares and I tried my best to ignore him and then eventually this room became available through recess and lunch time.

At this point, Arthur grabbed a new sheet of paper and drew a vacant room in blue pen, the vacant room representative of Arthur's tactic to avoid peers.

> Arthur: In that year of grade ten, I was usually spending all of my time that I had and I will use orange to represent me individually. For one, it is my favourite colour ... right here [scribbles in the vacant room in orange]. So as far as grade 10 goes if I had a blank space on my schedule I would stay in this exact same room ...probably doing a lot of double tasking which may not have been the greatest idea but made the day seem to go faster, but if I didn't have a class in that area I would leave from there [drawing arrow on map in orange] and return the key to this room to the office [draws office in pen] and then from the office be on my way to my next class [draws arrows in orange indicating his destination] (see Figure 6.7).

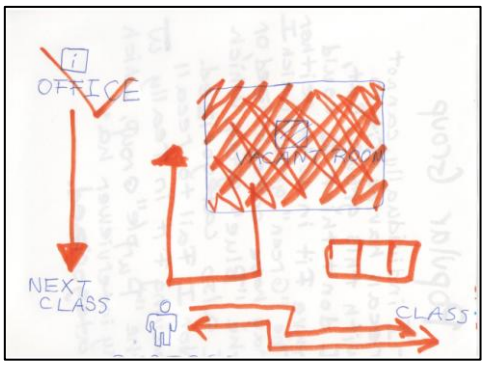


Figure 6.7 Vacant Room

The vacant room was a smooth space for Arthur. Arthur's movements to secure the unoccupied room demonstrated his determination to maintain the smooth space as evident where he actively sought the key in advance. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) explain this as "the freeing of a line that does not pass between two points" (p.488). Nevertheless, Arthur's time in the smooth space is short-lived as once the bell goes, he is called back to the striated spaces of school. Arthur returning the key to the vacant room marked his re-inscription to the striated spaces where he once again was subjugated to the rigidified arboreal system. Arthur's return is a reminder of how bodies never remain in the space of smooth as smooth and striated spaces are never separate and always in mixture (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987).

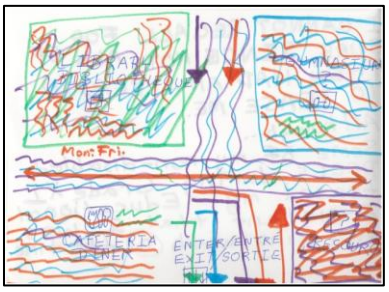
After mapping his time in the vacant room I wondered about Arthur's use of the other main spaces; library, gymnasium, cafeteria and resource room, including the hallway. We returned to his original map where he identified his use of spaces in orange.

> Arthur: Well I usually came here when I arrived at school in the morning.
>
> Sarah: to the library?
>
> Arthur: Well yes but this was pretty much high school that I was doing this. I usually would read the comics on the computer screen or read the funny papers on the newspaper and I usually like to do this for Monday to Friday.

Arthur wrote Mon. Fri. on the map and scribbled orange across the library.

> Arthur: I also did work for courses in the library as well and uh ... and um for the most of grade eleven and twelve I spent a fair amount of time in this classroom and I suppose even during transitional year I spent most of my time in this area.
>
> Sarah: In the resource room?
>
> Arthur: Yeah.

Arthur marked orange throughout the resource room. I thought this was incredibly interesting that he had placed his body in the same space as his popular peers, yet indicated earlier he was unsure of their occupation of school spaces. The mapping illustrated that Arthur allocated spaces to suit his emerging interests where his peers circulating in and around perhaps often went unnoticed. Arthur continued to move freely through the map indicating with orange his use of the cafeteria.



> Arthur: Well, since the cafeteria was open shortly before the school was renovated and finished I often would eat my lunch here, but sometimes I ate it here.

Arthur marked the cafeteria and then added even more orange squiggles to the resource room.

> Arthur: I ate it more here [the resource room] than the cafeteria as the cafeteria was rather noisy! I mean seriously! Recess and lunch time which probably were the two biggest times in that whole room the place was packed and you couldn't hear there was so much conversation going on that you couldn't even hear yourself think!... but when class is in session which you could in high school if you had a spare it was a totally different story it was quiet. I guess I also went to the gymnasium too, but that was because I usually had gym class [Arthur quickly marked the gymnasium with orange].

The noise of the cafeteria affectively triggered Arthur to move to the resource room and decompose the relation to his noisy peers. His desire to flee the unbearable noise was akin to Liam's experiences in occupying the science classroom. Arthur moving to the resource room was a space to advance his own particular interests at the time. The finding of smooth spaces frees bodies from "judgement, attack, abuse" often outside "the cool kid's line of vision" (Kenway, Kraack, & Hickey-Moody, 2009, p.168). I turn now to identify Arthur's taking up of the hallway.

> Sarah: What about the hallways did you spend time in the hallways?
>
> Arthur: Well most of the time I spent in the hallways was going to and from classes to and from the rest room if nature called which it sometimes did during my school days and other than that leaving the school after the day was over or for another reason and entering the school in the morning which other students did.

Arthur drew a straight, thick solid orange line and then added an orange arrow at the top and bottom of the map to indicate his entrance and exit to the building. He later added a purple arrow to sketch that his exit was the same as *'the Populars'*. Arthur moved in a straight line in the hallway from point to point. His mapping illuminated that Arthur used tree travel in the hallways. Alternatively, the purple and blue squiggles demonstrated how his peers, *'the Rebels'* and *'the Populars'* took a rhizomatic route through the halls.

Arthur's tree travel was largely triggered by his relation to the space. Spinoza, Deleuze and Guattari describe how affects circulate between bodies where affects get traced on the body. "All of the tree of logic is a logic of tracing" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.12). The image of the hallway with dominant peers, *'the Rebels'* and *'the Populars'* leave a trace on Arthur's body that he worked to expel and accomplished this by moving straight through the halls to find smooth in the vacant room. Being called a wuss and a coward fuelled much of his desires to decompose his relation with other students. Ahmed (2004) uses the example of the child and the bear to explain how our bodies produce images of past encounters igniting a body to flee and rupture a relation.

> The child sees the bear and is afraid. Now, the Dumb View, would be that the bear makes the child afraid, and that the bodily symptoms of fear are automatic (pulse rate, sweating, and so on). Functionalist models of emotion, which draw on evolutionary theory, might say that the fear has a function: to protect the child from danger, to allow survival...But the story, even in its 'bear bones' is not so simple. Why is the child afraid of the bear? The child must 'already know' the bear is fearsome. The decision is

> not made necessarily by her, and it might not even be dependent on past experiences. This could be a first time 'encounter', and the child still runs for it. But what is she running from? What does she see when she sees the bear? We have an image of the bear as an animal *to be feared,* as an image that is shaped by cultural histories and memories. When we encounter the bear we already have an impression of the risks of the encounter, as an impression that is felt on the surface of the skin (Ahmed, 2004, p.7 emphasis in original).

Ahmed's analogy of the bear and child is helpful when actualizing Arthur's experiences with peers in school spaces. The fear of mixing with dominant bodies in congested hallways I surmise was enough for Arthur to move elsewhere and take entry into the vacant room or resource space.

Arthur's experiences reveal how a body can be made and constrained in the material conditions of a school but can also resist and "attempt to imagine outside them" (Youdell, 2011, p. 27). Arthur's production of a school map signals the tremendous knowledge he has in regard to how bodies flow through school spaces and what he is capable of to suit his own interests in school. He took rhizomatic departures and cut across striated boundaries to find smooth. Space was an important element of Arthur's daily schooling experiences. His use of space reminds educators to consider what space has to offer students in free time and how education might be re-imagined when students can access space more to their liking. The last analysis in this data assemblage is Frank's use of space.

6.6 Frank's Music Space

Frank's social experiences were fashioned in the previous assemblage. Frank throughout our conversation was candid about his struggles when navigating peer relationships. In this rhizomatic series, I analyze Frank's movements to the music room as this space was an integral part of his daily schooling experiences.

> Frank: One thing I did and probably falls right in line with your study here I used to sing along with the tape quite a lot some more than others depending on the song, but I would sing and I would be the entertainment and this happened as late as grade 5.
>
> Sarah: You would do this in the classroom?
>
> Frank: Right in the classroom.
>
> Sarah: And they would put the music on and?
>
> Frank: I would start singing...

Sarah: What was the reaction with the students?

Frank: Uh well everything from 'yeah great song' to 'shut up' to 'ah let him do it'.

Frank explained the joyful affects music produced. His singing also stirred mixed reactions from peers with some akin to his actions and others annoyed by his voice.

> Frank: Occasionally, if I may I would pick up a pen and a pencil and do that in time with a song or a song in my head right [demonstrating the drumming motion with hands] and 'hey look what I can do', 'I am drummer right'. It was good at the beginning, but it started to wear on people and I didn't really pick up on that.

Frank released through drumming on his desk, he found the movements welcoming where he later worked to advance the connection by locating the music room. His entanglement with the drums in the music space offered Frank new school experiences.

> Sarah: What did you like about the drums in school?
>
> Frank: What I liked about them was the ability to hammer away and just have fun doing it. Sometimes it was a bit of a stress release. Sometimes there was nothing better than smashing drums into submission. Some say that's all I did.... what I liked were elements you could move around and play with and shape in different ways. And you could have all four going at once and from that aspect control over everything and from a performance standpoint control of everybody you were with, the song doesn't really work if the drummer is off. Of all the things you would consider favourable from a peer standpoint to make me one of the cool kids drumming was pretty much it for me. I couldn't play hockey that well, I couldn't play football that well, I couldn't play basketball that well, I couldn't dance to save my life, I wasn't good athletically, I was not known for being a leader of any kind and I certainly was an odd boy. So drums was it. When I realized people were honestly, legitimately blown away by what I was doing as early as grade five. I remember a talent show when I played and I brought the house down if I do say so myself it made me say yeah this is something I should explore because the other stuff isn't working [opens up his yearbook he brought to our time together] ... there are some illusions to drums here [reading from his yearbook from what his peers wrote] 'you are a fantastic drummer', 'resident sex symbol', 'Frank, have a great summer, don't rock the house down with those drums'.

Frank carved out a smooth space for himself in the music room. The hammering of the drums produced warm and happy intensities for Frank. He intuitively realized he could also use the space to gain leverage with his peers, and this was satisfying for Frank as evident when he read me some messages students left him in his year book, '*you are a fantastic drummer'*, *'resident sex symbol'*, and *'Frank, have a great summer, don't rock the house down with those drums'*. He liked being called a '*resident sex symbol*'. Frank then detailed his relation to others in the music room.

> Frank: I had some friends through music like you were an athlete or a 'mathlete' and I was into music. And I had no choice but to take door number three so I had friends there... it was only at that point that I started to meet other people who had also been outcasts and it is fair to call me that now. My friend Wally and I we were in the high school band and I kept going with it and I took the grade twelve theory test, Wally not so much but we would play in the band and we would say listen to this and play the Sex Pistols and he would play the bass and I would play the drums and we would just go to town. And that was fun and that was really really fun!

Frank recognized the music space was filled with social possibility as evident when he talked about his friend Wally. "Space makes possible different kinds of relations but in turn is transformed according to the subject's affective and instrumental relations with it" (Grosz, 1995, p.92). Frank then took another rhizomatic departure and identified another reason for allocating the music space.

> Frank: I would play on the drums for a little bit and I broke the rules and got spoken to quite a number of times and um after a while it was to avoid getting beaten up by this character that smashed me in the shoulder all the time.

"One of the most important characteristics of a rhizome is that it always has multiple entryways" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.12). Frank utilized the multiplicities the music space offered and tactically recognized he could use it to avoid the bully who smashed him in the shoulder daily. Frank's body in mixture with the bully, the hurtful and painful affects circulating, increased his actions to take entry regardless of the consequences. Frank then elaborated on his time in the music space during noon hour and recess.

> Frank: You could play during free time but again you were in a school atmosphere if you are doing it during lunch time a teacher would come in and say why are you doing this why aren't you doing that. It would be one of those times where your freedom is superseded by you making nuisance noise. I am sure I didn't make any friends pretending I was the drummer from Santana at Woodstock when someone is trying to play a clarinet for a music recital ... I am pretty certain I didn't make any friends doing that, but I didn't give a shit because I was having fun! ... I was perpetually being told to play lower, to quiet down. 'No I want to play!' But I guess I took it too far I guess I had too much fun and I got labelled as the guy that can't play drums with anyone 'cause he is just too loud and he won't turn it down. I got selected for all city jazz for the high school community and I got to play with a lot of people who have gone on to do huge things who would come to our rehearsals every now and then. I would not have been able to do this if I was not a drummer and frankly as good of a drummer as I was. I played xylophone and other percussion instruments, but I still had a reputation of wanting to play drums for the fun of it and learning to back off and play drums with others. It never really went away and then I started getting defensive and I couldn't really respond to constructive criticism and then I never actually said to a teacher, 'go

> fuck yourself' ... I definitely gave a lot of sass back to people which I considered a personal attack when all they were saying was play more quietly. I just didn't see it that way and was like, 'fuck you're wrong'. That never truly went away.

What energies were flowing in this space? Frank broke from acceptable music room etiquette, playing with abandonment. In this moment, he did not account for 'what is expected of'[60] his body in the music space – play in time, unified and at an audible level. Frank unleashed from the music collective to find smooth. His smooth space was interrupted however by authority figures entering and restratifying the space. The teacher produced her own series of intensities and affectively decided to shut down Frank's drumming. The teacher reterritorialized his body back to what was expected within the music room, reminding Frank that he was not following the intended functions of the space.

Frank taking flight and playing drums too loudly rendered him a disruptive student through the teacher's lens. He was a body that does not listen; a body impeding the ordered functioning of the space. A good student would play his drums quietly, in unison with other bodies, listening attentively while the other students rehearsed for the clarinet recital. The noise of his drums loosened the striated space for the teacher monitoring the area. The watchful gaze of authority became a watchful ear. 'You can play your music but only to my liking not to yours'. Spaces generate varied affectivities for bodies and are largely dependent on the mixture of connections emerging in the space between bodies (Springgay, 2011). Frank created a smooth space in music room while his drumming, the noise he generated, produced a different set of affectivities for his teacher. It can be a subtle sound or a shift in bodies that rupture a school space and create new intensities to emerge.

Frank's rhizomatic stories in the music room demonstrate how access to specific school spaces can often determine the kinds of daily experiences a person has in school. Spaces in schools as evident in Frank's accounts are always changing.

6.7 Summary

The spatial turn explored in this assemblage locates the transformative nature of educational spaces, including the individual capacities the young men possessed to create space. Primarily, a focus on smooth recognized space as an active dimension in the young men's schooling lives. The visual method of drawing, the young men actively mapping their use of spaces, was a productive methodological tool to assist in showing how the young men made "connections

between fields" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 12). Following the young men's variations in paths, I informed new understandings on how the young men connected to school spaces. The young men's rhizomatic stories and drawings demonstrated how they did not view space in passive ways rather they utilized spatial relations to make their experiences in school more habitable.

Applying Spinoza's affect theory with Ahmed's attentiveness to specific affects further assisted in actualizing the young men's securing of smooth. It is the intensities emerging in spaces between bodies that ignite an individual to pursue space. In "*Welcoming Spaces*" Oliver, Liam and Leo detailed their abilities to carve out smooth space. Oliver exhibited this when doing laps in the hallway, through movement Oliver could expel his connection to peers and make school more livable. Liam similarly took entry in the science room to subvert his relation to peers and secure a more welcoming social space. Leo actively seeking the change room demonstrated his capacity to find alternative spaces to meet his interests and in the process fractured his relation to his lunch monitor.

The act of walking in school spaces also offered opportunities for the young men with ASD to exist in school beyond striated formations. de Certeau's (1984) tactics assisted in illustrating the young men's calculated moves to destabilize peripheral positionings and find new entries. In *Wandering to Experience*, Adam revealed his abilities to lurk, follow, and wander across school spaces to transform his social status in school. His boldest movements involved carving out a small space on a wooden bench close to his peers to reconfigure his social positioning. Luke also took up walking to revitalize his body and expand his plane of trajectory as did Arthur when making tactical moves to access the vacant room. Frank's movements to the music room and securing of drums equally identified his agentic actions to locate smooth spaces between classes.

This data assemblage contributed to thinking about young men with ASD in school spaces as active agents rather than unified subjects preconfigured to given positions. Spaces in schools engender different affectivities for individuals often influenced by human and nonhuman elements in the spaces as evident with the young men's stories. Thinking about the active dimensions of the young men with ASD experiences in school spaces can unsettle striated formations and produce new possibilities for how students with ASD are known.

The remainder of this dissertation summarizes the findings for this study, including how theorizations from Deleuze, Guattari and Spinoza applied across the three data assemblages contributed to knowing young men with ASD outside contemporary thought. The chapter then adds a further dimension by considering what the findings in this project might offer education to support the process of thinking about students with ASD in alternative ways.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

7.0 Introduction

My dissertation explored the schooling experiences of twelve young men with ASD having attended public school in Nova Scotia, Canada. The study was a response to contemporary theorizations predominantly derived from medical knowledges that have produced narrow understandings on the lives of individuals with ASD. I identified in chapter one how students with ASD are known in particular ways within Nova Scotia educational contexts. Specifically, how the use of distinct special education policy, including a separate ASD guideline in Nova Scotia schools can position others to think about students with ASD predominantly in relation to their medical signifiers. In chapter two, I informed how the increase in ASD diagnosis has led to a proliferation of medical research on ASD that has also infiltrated popular cultural mediums shaping public understandings on ASD. The dominant view emerging from medical constructs on ASD, including popular cultural depictions is the construction of a certain kind of subject, a socially impaired body. Building on my critique of medical theorizations on ASD, I then identified how a focus on the mental functionality of the ASD mind in medical research construct what is deemed normal situating bodies that fail to meet normate standards on the outside. Deficit driven views in medicine that create binary notions of thinking on the lives of individuals with ASD supported my contention to produce a body of research that accounted for the affective capacities of young men with ASD. In chapter two, I made the shift to theorize in a manner that could turn attention away from structural ways of knowing persons with ASD and focus on the situated, multiple dimensions of individual experience. The concepts of movement and affect constituted this space, to make an extension and think of the ASD body outside medical constructions and dualistic understandings. As such movement and affect conceptualized through the creative works of Deleuze, Guattari and Spinoza offered the theoretical trajectory to make a move from the defining of an ASD body to what a body with ASD can do.

By developing my own creative methodological framework, I disrupted medical constructions, binary configurations and attended to the actualities of twelve young men with ASD schooling experiences. Through the mobilization of a rhizomatic framework, I addressed the complex issues that surround the body and moved to think about the young men's lives through an open system. Diffraction supported the rhizomatic framework as it reassessed how we divide bodies

into categories and the implications of these formulations. It was thinking through differences when doing a diffractive reading that fractured the medically constructed body and presented opportunity to think about the young men in more productive ways. Writing as a method of inquiry furthered my movement to think outside the preconfigured subject as it increased my awareness across the dissertation on the transformative nature of the young men's experiences.

Through the construction of an original research method, I produced three data assemblages. Across the assemblages, I built on the conceptual framework of chapters one and two by applying multiple creative concepts from Deleuze and Guattari's work in ATP. Thinking through rhizomes, lines of flight, deterritorializations, smooth spaces, movement, intensities and affects I questioned the stable, predetermined ASD subject and configured a space to uproot previous medical constructions on individuals with ASD. Explicitly, a focus on movement and affect advanced thinking through possibilities and what young men with ASD can do. As such, movement and affect fashioned alternative understandings on the young men with ASD schooling experiences. This was actualized by responding to my main research questions.

1. How do twelve young men with ASD experience public school in Nova Scotia, Canada?
2. How do the theorizations of Spinoza, Deleuze and Guattari contribute to more productive ways of knowing young men with ASD in educational contexts?

When seeking answers to these research questions, I maintained the argument to think through multiplicities and situatedness with a focus on the young men's movements. The next section provides the findings of the first main research question followed with the findings for the second research question. The remainder of the chapter then offers considerations for future studies and the implications this work has for education.

7.1 Findings from Young Men with ASD Rhizomatic Stories

Within each data assemblage, I provided summaries at the end to draw attention to the specific connections the young men had to school arrangements, others and school spaces; however, there were key findings that emerged across the entire analysis on the twelve young men with

ASD schooling experiences. They include: a) conventional arrangements produce limits; b) the body has multiple entries; and c) the potential for the body is infinite.

7.1.1 Conventional Arrangements Produce Limits

School relations are shaped through discourses, politics, legislation, cultures, social contexts, and curriculum, including: sex, gender and race. The unspoken molar lines of school provide an additional "hold on the body" such as: bells, the processional lining up of bodies and assigning classroom seats (Foucault, 1977, p. 172). This is consistent with Ball (2005) who explained how surveillance works silently on a body. The silent entry is instilled as students take in the molar atmosphere and then experience school based on how they get positioned within the hierarchical "plane of organization" (Deleuze & Parnet, 1987). Megan Boler (1999) identified how "education is an environment governed by rules and authority" making it difficult for individuals to disrupt the ordered system (p.4). Youdell (2011) similarly explained how "economic, political and social issues are played out through organizational structures and systems" in schools where "educators and students are managed, monitored, compared and held accountable; and where normative understandings of schooling and its subjects are sedimented" (p.7).

A focus on the young men's movements across the three data assemblages informed how their capacities to find alternative extensions were limited by conventional school arrangements. One significant structure that produced a level of restriction was experiencing school with special education support. Special education support in Nova Scotia schools grounded in medical discourse reduced many of the young men's capacities to take lines of flight and explore alternative dimensions. Foucault and Deleuze's readings of power were productive in exposing the effects circulating power forces had on the young men's experiences with special education support. The power relations between their bodies and teacher assistants, authority figures, including dominant peers centered the young men to certain positions signalling the contention they experienced when their bodies could not fully escape distinct arboreal arrangements. One prominent power force when experiencing various school arrangements such as separate forms of support was the subjection to a normalizing judgement. In chapter two, I employed Butler's (2004) work on norms to show how a person's capacity to exist within public spheres is directly impacted by how well one can adhere and meet normative

dimensions. In the young men's stories, their movements outside the regular classroom for separate support or their bodies existing at a distance from others when experiencing school with a teacher assistant produced a level of separation. The differentiation from the norm was something the young men were intuitively cognizant of, acknowledging the normal/abnormal binaries filtering through the school space.

What emerged from the young men's stories when tied to conventional arrangements, frequently existing on a separate dimension than their normal peers, was the affective labour that went into trying to revitalize the self. The young men showed how hard they had to work to decompose relations that situated them to a marginalized position in school. The hierarchical gender order was one significant relation that impeded the young men's capacities to make extensions. To escape the confines of the hegemonic masculine gender order required the young men to take huge risks to unsettle the territorialized gender space such as applying manipulation tactics and violent acts towards their peers to fit in. While the young men in moments could move and expel uncomfortable power relations with dominant peers, it was often temporary illustrating how normative understandings in schools placed limits on the kinds of experiences they had in school. The young men, however, also showed their continual tenacity to not fully accept fixed positions. The conceptual tool of movement provided the means to show the young men's affective capacities. This leads to the second key finding when exploring the twelve young men with ASD schooling experiences that 'the body has multiple entries'.

7.1.2 The Body has Multiple Entries

The young men identified the multiple entries they were capable of, revealing how they were not fully defined by their gender, race, disability or functional levels. The young men's competencies to find multiple entries and change their stagnant positionings advances a space in education to consider what young men with ASD can do, rather than fixed notions of who they are. Their active becomings to find new entries destabilized medical constructs that had previously constituted them as a homogeneous entity. This was made vivid when mapping their specific tactics as the young men showed how they could fracture preconfigured designations and find affective connections to both human and nonhuman elements. The young men in the process of extending their territory revealed the confidence they possessed

to accept levels of uncertainty to secure alternative trajectories. This is witnessed when the young men frequently slowed their movements, hid in spaces or chose direct routes to fabricate new modes of being. Through following the young men's movements across the three assemblages, I illustrated that young men with ASD could exist outside medical structural forms of thought. The young men's multiple entries put forth a scholarship that fosters alterity and variation with attendance to individual experience. This is consistent with recent work in education that situates attendance to students' 'lives in moments'.

Leander and Boldt (2012) have focused on movement when offering a nonrepresentational reading of two young boys' experiences with literacy. Their analysis of the boys' experiences with text focuses on an assemblage of movement:

> At one point they [the two boys] carried their books, costume accessories, and weapons outdoors and sat reading in a porch swing. With no spoken planning, Lee stood up, grabbed a sword, and began swinging it at Hunter. Hunter dropped his book and picked up a sword, and for the next several minutes the battle moved between the porch and the front yard, with the porch steps offering a vantage point from which to make leaping lunges at one another" (Leander & Boldt, 2012, p.27).

Leander and Boldt's attentiveness to the boys' movements, "[lives] in the ongoing present" addresses how students can be thought of differently outside static forms of representation (2012, p.22).

> Our goal with the nonrepresentational rereading is to reassert the sensations and movements of the body in the moment-by moment unfolding or emergence of activity... This nonrepresentational approach describes literacy activity as not projected toward some textual end point, but as living its life in the ongoing present, forming relations and connections across signs, objects, and bodies in often unexpected ways. Such activity is saturated with affect and emotion; it creates and is fed by an ongoing series of affective intensities that are different from the rational control of meanings and forms (Leander & Boldt, 2012, p.25, 26).

They argue that if we begin with the body rather than with texts our attention turns elsewhere (Leander & Boldt, 2012). In this study, I argued that attendance to the young men's movements actualized alternative knowledge on their schooling experiences outside contemporary understandings. Knowing in this project that young men with ASD can and do pursue a multiplicity of entries when navigating various school relations signals the potential to look beyond conventional approaches in education. This leads to the third key finding when

answering the first research question, how do twelve young men with ASD experience public school in Nova Scotia, Canada?

7.1.2 Potential for the Body is Infinite

In contrast to medical theorizations on ASD, the young men showed their infinite potential to disrupt the unitary subject revealing their agentic abilities to reconfigure school relations to meet their needs. The mobilization of diffraction was productive in seeing the infinite extensions the young men embarked on as it allowed me to focus on the alterity of each young man's experiences. Distinctly, taking up diffraction revealed a different view of the young men's lives, revealing their infinite capacities to manoeuvre spaces, manipulate peers, and take lines of flight to make school more livable. The young men's affectual potential to transform aspects of their schooling experiences changed the meaning of how students with ASD can be thought about and imagined in school contexts.

O'Donnell (2013) recently supported positioning an educational context that turns attention to the transformative aspects of individual experience. She identified how problematic it has been for students when educators predominantly focus on "performance indicators for behaviour change" and use a "skills-based" approach to measure and assess social competence (p.265). O'Donnell (2013) argued that when teachers think through outcomes and skills it lessens an educator's connection to individual experiences. She encourages educators to consider strongly the subtle pedagogical relations emerging in school. O'Donnell explained, "some of the most significant moments in education can arise from chance occurrences" (p. 266).

> [The] simple act of noticing and seeing a sense of possibility in those unpredictable moments (*kairos*) that arise in classrooms, such as a gleam of insight or a frown crossing a student's face, better positions the teacher to help students to work through a genuine pedagogical encounter with a subject (O'Donnell, 2013, p.267 emphasis in original).

O'Donnell (2013) cultivates an inviting atmosphere with attendance to students' potential arguing that we do not know what students will form connections to, and therefore, we must remain open to the situational elements within pedagogical encounters.

> Education requires a heterogeneous milieu, but what will create this heterogeneity cannot be prescribed in advance. The atmosphere of education supports (or destroys) the capacity to receive the unpredictable and to invite surprise, allowing us as teachers and students to undergo the event of a pedagogical encounter. Cultivating the disposition to welcome and take care of the *singularity* of the other helps to conserve such an atmosphere. As educational practitioners, part of our role is to prepare this invisible terrain in order to facilitate the possibility of an event or an encounter that will lead to transformation (O'Donnell, 2013, p.281 emphasis in original).

My study showed the infinite potential the young men with ASD possessed to transform aspects of their educational experiences to fulfill their needs and wants. Their rhizomatic stories pursue a line of thought in schools that looks to extend and secure educational approaches that prioritize attendance to students' infinite potential. I turn now to address the findings for the second research question, how do the theorizations of Spinoza, Deleuze and Guattari contribute to more productive ways of knowing young men with ASD in educational contexts? I take a theoretical line and present how thinking through rhizomes and affect in this dissertation produced alternative knowledge on the schooling experiences of young men with ASD where their lives were thought about in more productive ways.

7.2 Theoretical Findings

Deleuze and Guattari (1994) challenge researchers and theorists to experiment, to extend and transverse boundaries.

> To think is to experiment, but experimentation is always that which is in the process of coming about – the new, remarkable, and interesting that replace the appearance of truth (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994, p.111).

In this dissertation, I was inspired to invent and think outside medical constructions and dualistic understandings on the schooling experiences of young men with ASD. The onset of chapter two identified how constraining it is when individuals with ASD are predominantly known in relation to their medical signifiers. The practices of classifying students with ASD based on their level of mental functionality, for example, produces a narrow conception of their lives. Poststructural theorizing with attendance to bodily capacities, however, invited an entry to unsettle contemporary forms of thought where movement is set forth and the body is envisioned as emergent and ongoing; a plurality. Deleuze and Guattari's rhizomes combined with Spinoza's philosophies on affect offered this extension. Across this dissertation, I argued

that rhizome theory coupled with affect theory invites a space to question what we already know about bodies with ASD. Specifically, Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) concepts in ATP presented the tools I needed to unsettle medical notions of understanding and envision the young men in more productive ways. The first theoretical entry involved applying Deleuze and Guattari's theory of rhizomes to put forward a space to think about the young men's lives outside conventional paradigms.

7.2.1 Rhizome Theory

A significant contribution to fracturing medicalized notions on the lives of young men with ASD in this study was the application of rhizomes both theoretically and methodologically. Through rhizomes, I could explore the possibility of formulating meaning outside closed conventional models on ASD with an increased understanding of bodily capacities. Distinctly, rhizomes presented opportunity to focus on movement, what a body with ASD can do. In doing so, I critiqued previous medical theorisations on ASD and offered a space to ignite broader understandings and generated a more open way of knowing young men with ASD. Deleuze and Parnet (1987) frame an open system that follows bodily potential as thinking through "ands" where we look to explore the numerous intersections bodies make.

> One must go further: one must make the encounter with relations penetrate and corrupt everything, undermine being, make it topple over. Substitute the AND for IS. A and B. The AND is not even a specific relation or conjunction, it is that which subtends all relations, the path of all relations, which makes relations shoot outside the set of their terms, and outside everything which could be determined as Being, One, or Whole. The AND as extra-being, inter-being. Relations might still establish themselves between their terms, or between two sets, from one to the other, but the AND gives relations another direction, and puts to flight terms and sets, the former and the latter on the line of flight which it actively creates. Thinking with AND, instead of thinking with IS (Deleuze & Parnet, 1987, p.57).

Across the study when applying rhizome theory, the "ands" of the young men's connections were illuminated allowing me to weld a pursuit of knowledge that was a continuous extension. Spinoza's philosophies on affect in this study also contributed to knowing about the emergent aspects of the young men's schooling experiences. I mobilised affect theory as an additional theoretical tool to disrupt thinking about individuals with ASD in stagnant ways. Affect in this study projected a research space to focus on the situated and emergent dimensions of each young man's individual experiences.

7.2.2 Affect Theory

Spinoza's affect, the capacity to affect or to be affected, advanced the production of alternative knowledge on the young men with ASD schooling experiences. Deleuze (1988b) explained how the body not only consists of "an infinite number of particles" and defined by "relations of rest and movement, of swiftness and slowness" but a body is also defined by affect (p. 123). "It is the power of affecting and being affected which also defines a body in its individuality" (p.123). In this project, the affectual energies circulating between bodies determined the young men's future actions. Affect theory supported the seeing of the young men's emergent capacities to take lines of flight and find alternative entries in school more to their liking. The schooling experiences of young men with ASD when viewed through Spinoza's affect demonstrated that the connections they had in school were not fully predetermined rather they were situational and transformative in nature.

Until recently, affect has not been a part of education with "affect generally used as a synonym for emotion" (Watkins, 2006, p. 269). Instead, the affective actions of students through conventional models of thought have been viewed as 'emotional' responses through an educational psychology perspective (Kenway & Youdell, 2011). The assessment of a student's emotional response usually involves a diagnosis of normal or abnormal (Youdell, 2006; Kenway & Youdell, 2011). The coding of students' 'emotional' actions as either correct or incorrect based on normal behavioural readings restricts how students are known and thought about particularly if their actions are viewed as something that requires remediation, a body 'out of control', 'impulsive'. Spinoza's affect, however, offers new ways to think about the affective actions of students in school. Spinoza's monist ontology not only ruptures dualistic notions of how a body should affectively function, normal/abnormal, but understands the body as ongoing, emergent and always situated. Affective flows applied in this study were therefore, productive as they created opportunity to envision the young men's capacities in open ways. Applying movement and affect in educational settings, however, requires more study. Specifically, to ask: what movement and affect might offer when wanting to know more about what students with ASD can do? What might a focus on students' movements and affect inform about the kinds of pedagogical relationships students with ASD have in a school setting? The third extension of this chapter posits future orientations for how movement and

affect might inform a type of pedagogy that attends more strongly to the actualities of individual experience.

7.3 Future Studies in Education

An approach to education which attends to movement and affect considers students with ASD as situated rather than predetermined or viewed as certain kinds of subjects. A focus on movement and affect, therefore, pursues the transient nature of pedagogical relationships signalling a reworking of the limits placed on students with ASD. I define transformative pedagogical relationships to mean the situated connections students have in school with attendance to thinking through bodily capacities. Distinctly, it invites individuals in the field of education to consider what other possibilities might exist for students with ASD when attention is given to their lives in moments.

Deleuze and Guattari in ATP encourage an open and emergent system. It is thinking through middles rather than "looking down" on students where everything changes (Deleuze & Guattari,1987,p.23).The next section considers what movement and affect might incite for education and invites professionals in the field to attend to pedagogical approaches that focus on the transformative aspects of students' lives.

7.3.1 Application of Movement and Affect

Educators, administrators, and other specialized professionals in the field (i.e. autism consultants, guidance counsellors, speech language pathologists) in Nova Scotia schools are familiar with the special education policy and connecting to students with ASD through their medical signifiers. This is evident after reviewing special education support for students in chapter one where their level of functionality across the DSM-V is a major area of consideration before administering educational programming and support to students with ASD. This framework of identification has the effect of positioning students with ASD to be known relative to their functionality on the spectrum. Movement and affect as an educational approach, however, connects to the active dimensions of students with ASD lives imparting alternative knowledge. With this, I encourage administrators, educators and specialized support professionals to foster the production of emergent classroom spaces and to follow rhizomes; "[m]ake rhizomes, not roots, never plant! Don't sow, grow offshoots! Don't be one

or multiple, be multiplicities! Run lines, never plot! Speed turns the point into a line! Be quick, even when standing still!" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.24)

Inciting an educational space that is open to thinking about students with ASD individual, situated experiences might include: a) increased attentiveness to students' movements; b) focus on emergent connections; and c) thinking through bodily capacities. Below I present questions, including activity applications for professionals in the field to think about when providing educational support and programming to students with ASD. The following suggestions require administrators, support service professionals (i.e. resource teachers, autism consultants, speech language) and classroom teachers to work collaboratively in this process when focusing on students with ASD emergent capacities in school contexts.

7.3.1.1 Increase Attentiveness to Students' Movements

Students with ASD emerging experiences can be supported by mapping their movements across the educational terrain. Applying the concept of movement presents administrators and educators with the opportunity to increasingly consider the effect school arrangements and power relations have on students with ASD experiences. Specifically, a focus on movement might evoke further knowledge on which school arrangements foster students with ASD affective connections and alternatively those that can impede. With this, I invite educators, administrators and support service professionals to map students with ASD movements across the educational terrain and to see what they affectively are drawn to and what school relations they work to expel. This might include: having students with ASD map their preferred spaces of travel, including the spaces they like to avoid. Other elements might involve mapping the students with ASD positioning relative to peers. To consider: Where do students with ASD go? What is at stake for students with ASD when moving across the educational terrain? How can administrators, teachers and other education professionals support students with ASD in having more welcoming experiences? This leads to the second consideration which involves professionals in the field of education exploring further the situated connections students with ASD have in school.

7.3.1.2 Focus on Situated Connections

Historically in education there has been a tendency to think humanistically and focus on the relations between humans, however, students also make connections to nonhuman things (i.e. certain seats, school spaces, objects) (Peters & Burbules, 2004). Educators and administrators (i.e. principals, vice-principals) knowledge on what students with ASD connect to can be advanced by paying attention to students with ASD situated intersections with both human and nonhuman elements. To ask: Is there a certain object the student with ASD enjoys? What energies flow between the student with ASD and others in the classroom? Are they welcoming? Do students with ASD work to maintain certain connections to others, to things? As my analysis has shown, there are deterritorializations all over the educational system where the emergent and affectual potentialities are possible. How might thinking through situated connections be amplified in a school setting? While the molar lines continue to pull bodies back to the rooted order, what might the development of more creative conceptual templates offer the educational system to foster students' affective connections? I suggest the addition of conceptual tools such as: the use of digital photographs, students' personal artefacts, including drawings might increase understandings of what students with ASD situatedly connect to. This follows Deleuze and Guattari (1987) where bodies are thought about through movement, corporeality where individuals' rhizomatic travel is mapped and prioritized.

7.3.1.3 Think through Bodily Capacities

Schools have a "long history of representational logic" yet a framework in education that can attend to bodily capacities invites an educational space to rupture linear forms of knowing students (Olsson, 2009, p. xvi). The concept of movement supports the process of thinking through bodily capacities where a more active, ontological space is prioritized. The need to critically consider an increased focus on the bodily capacities of students with ASD has been identified across this dissertation when analyzing medical theorizations on ASD. Professionals in the field of education working outside the structural knowing of a body enriches ideas of thinking openly and in the process can inform new understandings on how students with ASD experience school.

7.4 Contributions to Knowledge

My research method advanced an understanding on the multiple and affective dimensions of the twelve young men's experiences having attended public school in Nova Scotia, Canada. In the process, I critiqued medical constructs on ASD and produced an open system of thinking about the lives of young men with ASD in educational contexts. An inquiry of this kind supports the work in the field of critical autism studies as it prioritizes knowledge from individuals with ASD. Having moved beyond dualistic understandings on young men with ASD in this project, the next contribution of knowledge would be to present inquiries that continue to focus on thinking about individuals with ASD in open ways. One study of interest is to explore the sensory body. Distinctly, to find out what affective connections individuals with ASD have to tactile relations, smells, and touches. To ask, in what ways could Spinoza's theories and Deleuze and Guattari's assist in knowing the sensory body and how might this inform further understandings on individuals with ASD? I am also interested in examining how affect as a form of methodology might ignite increased knowledge on the sensory body, an affective mapping of the everyday aesthetic happenings of what people with ASD do and what they connect to. To explore how affect as a method can incite knowledge on how the ASD body responds to sounds, lights, touches, smells and the atmospheres of public spaces and others. My hope from this dissertation and future orientations is to maintain the shift of thinking through bodily capacities and to focus on what is possible. The young men showed me what is possible, and my hope is that others will make the same extension and advance towards a space where individuals with ASD are thought through difference, alterity and variation.

[1] For more information on current approaches used in North American schools when working with students with ASD see Dawson and Osterling (1997). The research of Gresham, Beebe-Frankenberge and MacMillan (1999) also offers insights into the types of intervention programming used when working with children with ASD in schools. Similarly, Lynch and Irvine's (2009) research provides detailed information on the approaches that have been taken in North American schools when creating inclusive practices for children with ASD.

[2] Numerous studies have examined the social skills of children with ASD. See Bellini (2006); Matson, Matson, & Rivet (2007); Meadan & Monda-Amaya (2008); More (2008); Owen-DeSchryver, Carr, Cale & Blakeley-Smith (2008); Rao, Beidel & Murray (2008). Reichow & Volkmar (2010); Rust & Smith (2006); Spencer, Simpson, & Lynch (2008); Tse, Strulovitch, Tagalakis, Meng & Fombonne (2007);Weiss & Harris (2001); and Williams White, Koenig, Scahill (2007) .The focus of these studies has been to apply social skill techniques to remediate children with ASD social impairments. Some methods of intervention include: the use of social stories, social role playing, and other rote social skill instruction designed to teach students with ASD how to connect with others based on normative social readings.

[3] Another focus in schools has been to teach students with ASD friendship building skills. See Bauminger, Solomon, & Rogers (2010); Buotot (2007); Bauminger & Kasari (2000); Chamberlain, Kasari, & Rotherham-Fuller (2007); and Humphrey & Symes (2011).

[4] Perspective taking requires individuals to have the capacity to think of others (Winner, 2005, 2007). Previous medical theories on ASD indicate children with ASD have an inability to apply mental states to others (Baron-Cohen, Frith & Leslie, 1985). In the past three decades, numerous clinical studies have been conducted, centralized around measuring children with ASD mental functional capacities relative to neurotypical minds. I explore medical theorizations on the functioning of the autistic mind in chapter two.

[5] For detailed information on the Nova Scotia special education policy please see the following two Nova Scotia special education policy documents. The first document is the original *Nova Scotia Special Education Policy Manual (SEPM).* (Nova Scotia Department of Education and Culture, SEPM, 1996). Retrieved on November 1st, 2011 from ftp://ftp.ednet.ns.ca/pub/educ/studentsvcs/specialed/speceng.pdf .The second policy document is the revised version, see *Nova Scotia Department of Education Special Education Policy.* (Nova Scotia Department of Education, Special Education Policy, 2008). Retrieved on November 1st, 2011 from http://studentservices.ednet.ns.ca/sites/default/files/speceng.pdf.

[6] *International Year of the Disabled Person (IYDP)* was declared by the United Nations and initiated much of the social movement and acknowledgement that disability is more than a medical condition. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities at the United Nations Headquarters later in 2006 signed by 82 signatories advanced even further the rights of individuals with disabilities.

[7] *The Americans with Disability Act (ADA)* prohibited discrimination against people with disabilities in the work force, in public facilities, in local and state governments, and with transportation. It fought against the discrimination and segregation of children and advocated for their rights to participate fully in regular schools. See Snyder (1991) *The Americans with Disability Act.*

[8] *The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)* of 1997 ensured all children in America had access to free public education.

[9] The passing of the *1982 Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and 1986 changes to legislation in the *Education Act* led to school boards, teachers and individual schools moving towards more inclusive practices. "Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability" (Section 15 (1)). "Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of the person and the right not to be deprived thereof except in accordance with the principles of fundamental justice" (Section 7).

[10] The phrasing "students with special needs" is employed in the 1996 Nova Scotia SEPM document when outlining programming for students with disabilities.

[11] A teacher assistant is defined by the Nova Scotia Department of Education as a paraprofessional, who is not licensed to teach, but who performs duties both individually with students and within the classroom, as determined by the teacher through the program planning process (Nova Scotia Department of Education, Teacher Assistant Guidelines, 2009, p. vi).

[12] The learning center and resource room are two remedial settings outside the regular classroom designed to support students with 'special needs'. Teachers in a learning center or resource room are specialized in delivering education to students with disabilities. A student with ASD may go to the learning center or resource room for academic and social support.

[13] See Nova Scotia Department of Education (2012). *Developing and Implementing Programming for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder*. Retrieved on November 4th, 2011 from http://studentservices.ednet.ns.ca/sites/default/files/Developing%20and%20Implementing%20Programming%20for%20Students%20with%20ASD.pdf

[14] See Alberta's (2003) *Teaching Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder*; British Columbia's (2005) *Teaching Students with Autism: A Resource Guide for Schools*; Manitoba's (2005) Supporting Inclusive schools: *A Handbook for Developing and Implementing Programming for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder*; New Brunswick (2005) *Teaching Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder*; Newfoundland and Labrador's (2003) *Teaching Students with Autistic Spectrum Disorders*; Ontario Ministry of Education (2007) *Effective educational practices for students with autism spectrum disorders;* Prince Edward Island's (2001-2005) *Educating Children About Autism in an Inclusive Classroom;* and Saskatchewan's (1999) *Teaching Students with Autism: A Guide for Educators*.

[15] In the past two decades educators have witnessed a continual surge of social skill instructional support employed in Nova Scotia public schools including strategies to regulate students with ASD emotions and anxiety. Some of the most popular programs the Nova Scotia school board uses cited in the 2012 Department of Education ASD guideline are: Arick, Loos, Falco, Krug & Gill (2004) *STAR*; Aspy & Grossman (2007) *Ziggurat Model* ; Atwood (2004) *Exploring Feelings*; Bellini (2006) *Building Social Relationships*; Buron & Curtis (2003) *The Incredible 5 Point Scale*; Gray (2010) *Social Stories*; Henry & Myles (2007) *The Comprehensive Autism Planning System;* Kuypers (2011) *Zones of Regulation*; and Winner (2005) *Think Social*.

[16] Former separate diagnoses in the DSM-IV included: autistic disorder, Asperger's disorder, childhood disintegrated disorder, and pervasive development not otherwise specified PDD-NOS (American Psychiatric Association, 1994).

[17] See Deleuze (1978) *Les Cours de Gilles Deleuze.* Retrieved on January 18th, 2013 from http://www.webdeleuze.com/php/sommaire.html

[18] The concept of "assemblage" is taken from Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) work in ATP. Deleuze and Guattari describe a single assemblage as a multiplicity; "[t]here are only multiplicities of multiplicities forming a

single assemblage" (1987, p.34). I apply the concept of assemblage as a bringing together of the young men's multiple experiences having attended school in Nova Scotia. I detail in chapter three my approach and use of the concept "assemblage" when producing rhizomatic stories on the young men with ASD schooling experiences.

[19] Aspergers 1944 paper was translated by Uta Frith in 1991. See page 37-92 of Frith (1991) *Autism and Asperger Syndrome* for full translation of article.

[20] The criteria in the DSM-III included: onset before 30 months of age, pervasive lack of responsiveness to other people (autism), gross deficits in language development, if speech is present, peculiar speech patterns such as immediate and delayed echolalia, metaphorical language, pronominal reversal, bizarre responses to various aspects of the environment (e.g., resistance to change, peculiar interest in or attachments to animate or inanimate objects and absence of delusions, hallucinations, loosening of associations, and incoherence as in Schizophrenia) (American Psychiatric Association, 1980).

[21] Examining the capacity for individuals with ASD to attribute mental states to others has been studied extensively. For further studies see Baron-Cohen, Tager-Flusberg & Cohen (2000); Beaumont & Newcombe (2006); Crooke, Hendrix, Rachman (2008); Frith & Frith (2003); Hale & Tager-Flusberg (2005); Happe & Frith (2006); Leslie & Frith (1988); Oberman & Ramachandran (2007); Ozonoff & Miller (1995); Ruffman, Garnham, & Rideout, (2001); and Tager-Flusberg (2007).

[22] Some of the most recent work on theory of mind include: Golan, O., Baron-Cohen, S., Hill, J.J., & Golan, Y. (2008) *The 'Reading the Mind in Films' Task (Child Version): complex emotion and mental state recognition in children with and without autism spectrum conditions*; Lombardo, M., Chakrabarti, B., Bullmore, E., & Wheelwright, S., Sadek, S., Suckling, J., MRC AIMS Consortium & Baron-Cohen, S. (2010) *Shared neural circuits for mentalizing about the self and others*; and Lombardo, M., & Baron-Cohen, S. (2011) *The role of the self in mindblindness in autism*.

[23] See Cohen (2008) *Inside Out Girl*; Grandin & Scariano (1986) *Emergence: Labeled Autistic*; Haddon (2003) *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*; Notbohm (2007) *The Autism Trail Guide*; and Prince-Hughes (2004) *Songs of the Gorilla Nation*.

[24] Some of the most popular autism stories applying metaphors include: Barron & Barron (1992) *There's a Boy in Here*; Bettelheim (1967) *The Empty Fortress*; Claiborne Park (1967) *The Siege*; O'Neil (1999) *Through the Eyes of Aliens*; Shore (2001) *Beyond the Wall*; and Siegel (1996) *The World of the Autistic Child*.

[25] Critical Autism Seminar Day (2011). Retrieved on December 11, 2012 from http://disabilityresearchforum.wordpress.com/2010/12/13/programme-for-critical-autism/

[26] Nova Scotia Public School Branch. Retrieved on February 11th, 2013 from https://www.ednet.ns.ca/publicschools.shtml

[27] For further studies on scholars that have applied rhizome theory in educational research see Dae Joong (2007); Fernandez (2011); Gough (2006); Gould (2011); MacNaughton (2004); Munday (2012); Smitka (2012); and Usher (2010).

[28] See Deleuze (1981, para. 21).

[29] For studies applying affect theory in education see Addison (2011); Alsop (2005); Cole (2011); Davies & Gannon (2009); Means (2011); Olsson (2009); Semetsky (2009); Sobe (2012); Springgay (2011); Watkins (2006, 2011); Youdell & Armstrong (2011) and; Zembylas (2007).

[30] See Barad (2003, 2007); Haraway (1992); Lather & St.Pierre (2013); Lenz Taguchi (2013) and; MacLure, (2013).

[31] Entanglement of Matter and Meaning is in the title of Barad's (2008) book entitled: *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*.

[32] Lather in the 1997 explained the 'working the ruins' of feminist ethnography and critical pedagogy with St.Pierre and Pillow (2000) later applying 'working the ruins' to the title of their book.

[33] Rhizoanalysis can be seen in the works of: Alvermann (2000); Hagood (2004); Honan & Sellers (2008); Leafgren (2008); Leander & Rowe (2006); Johnson (2004) and St.Pierre (2000, 2004).

[34] For full conversation see http://www.lynnrandolph.com/essays/haraway-2.html

[35] Photo of diffraction including description of painting was retrieved on February 5th, 2012 from http://www.lynnrandolph.com/ModestWitness.html

[36] See Barad (2007, 2008); Hultman & Lenz Taguchi (2010); Lenz Taguchi (2012); Jackson & Mazzei (2012); Palmer (2011); and van der Tuin (2011) for studies using methods of diffraction.

[37] Scholars Beresford, Tozer, Rabiee & Sloper (2004), Brewster (2004), Humphrey & Lewis (2008) and Lewis (2002) have employed visual methods when conducting research on children with ASD. Some of the methods and techniques used included: symbolic images, visual cards, "Talking Mats", concept maps, life mapping, written form and drawings to complement the face to face discussions when generating data. Kelly (2007) and Lewis (2002) acknowledge that there is no single methodological approach that is most appropriate when hearing the stories of individuals with disabilities or in marginalized positions rather they recognize diversity and the need for methodological approaches to be flexible at the time of data collection.

[38] Photo elicitation can be seen in the works of Banks (2001, 2007); Capello (2005); Clark-Ibanez (2004); Close (2007); Collier (1957); Dempsey & Tucker (1994); Harper (2002, 2007); Oliffe & Bottorff (2007); and Pink (2001).

[39] Photovoice as a visual method uses video and/or photo images to capture aspects of research elements (environments, experiences) where the videos and photos can then be applied with or without captions as a form of data. See Harper (2012)

[40] See Deleuze's book, *Foucault* (1988a), Chapter titled, *A New Cartographer, p. 24-44*.

[41] See Appendix H for a full view of photographs used across the three data assemblages.

[42] The learning center in Nova Scotia schools is form of support designed to assist students with special needs. The learning center is comparable to a support room or resource room designed to help students with their educational programming. The amount of time spent in a learning center environment is determined in relation to a student's individual programming needs.

[43] The phrase "EA" is an informal term for educational assistant. Prior to 2009, the term educational assistant was used in Nova Scotia Department of Education documentation and therefore both students and teachers continue to apply this phrasing, using the abbreviated EA when addressing a paraprofessional in school.

[44] Phrasing, centralizing force, points of arborescence, axis of rotation and order-words are used in the works of Deleuze and Parnet (1987) when explaining the functionings of Western systems.

[45] Leo had taken the time during our meeting to show me a picture of Shy Violet on the computer and Figure 5.1 represents the exact image he showed me.

[46] Rainbow Brite is an animated television series introduced in 1983 and produced by Hallmark Cards. In the 1980's Matel produced Rainbow Brite merchandise such as doll figures depicting the main characters.

[47] The Nutty Professor was a movie produced in 1963 and remade in 1996 by director Tom Shadyac. The plot of this comedic movie was an overweight professor named, Julius Kelp, (acted by Jerry Lewis), who was desperate to lose weight and decides to take a special chemical that turns him into the slim but obnoxious Buddy Love. As Buddy Love, the chemistry professor becomes successful in love acting in hegemonic masculine ways.

[48] Vanilla Ice is a rap artist from the 1990's known for his bleached, spiked blonde hair.

[49] Martino and Pallotta-Chiarolli (2003) use the term, 'homophobic labelling' to describe another mechanism dominant boys use to marginalize bodies not meeting their normative expectations.

[50] The Simpsons is an animated television program produced in North America. The show is a satirical comedy of families growing up in middle class America.

[51] Football in Canada is played following the structure and rules of "The National American Football League".

[52] UFC is an acronym for the Ultimate Fighting Championship association.

[53] Figure 5.8 is the picture of Silver Viper Ninja Arthur had drawn and displayed on his computer. He later emailed me the image.

[54] Cyborg in the field of disability studies can be seen in the works of: Allison (2001); Balsamo (1996); Biro (1994); Campbell (2009); Cherney (1999, 2001); Cheu (2002); Cromby and Standen (1999); Goodley and Runswick-Cole (2011); Gough (2004); Iwakuma (2002); Luke (1999); Quinlan & Bates (2009); Reeve (2012); Swartz and Watermeyer (2008); and Zylinska (2002). The bulk of research connecting cyborg and disability however have tended to focus on the *physical* aspects of impairment and the intersections between the actual mechanical parts (canes, prosthetics, cochlear implants etc) with the disabled body. The examination of the body with mechanical amplifications has led to disability scholars critiquing such blending of man and machine arguing how wheelchairs, cochlear implants and prosthetics have hindered the disabled body as technology becomes read as a mechanism to repair and restore individuals closer to normality (Cherney, 1999; Reeve, 2012).

[55] Collective bodies is a term I have taken from Youdell & Armstrong's (2011), "A politics beyond subjects: The affective choreographies and smooth spaces of schooling" *Emotion, Space and Society*. Collectivities accounts for bodies moving together in spaces. It suggests a body seen as a whole, unified following the striated lines of a space.

[56] Subway is a sandwich franchise in North America. Subway franchises often set up kiosks inside high schools where students can buy lunch items.

[57] The grey lines indicate the path Oliver took and the grey circles on Figure 6.1 identify Oliver's turning points when doing laps.

[58] Spatial practices are derived from Lefebvre's theories whereby social practices are connected with particular places. The spatial practices of certain sites become regimented into our ways of knowing such that we achieve a certain spatial competence including particular spatial performances in inscribed spaces. For instance, we enact spatial performances in certain spaces (classrooms, restaurants). "In terms of social space, and of each member of a given society's relationship to that space, this cohesion implies a guaranteed level of competence and a specific level of performance" (Lefebvre, 1991, p.33).

[59] Arthur's drawing is repeated throughout the dialogue to assist in following Arthur's use of school spaces, Figure 6.6. I was mindful not to disrupt Arthur when constructing his map, however, it would have been ideal to have taken a photograph after he completed each section and this is one limitation in this study. Although stopping him to take photos or perhaps videotaping might have disrupted his thought process.

[60] I borrow this phrase from Youdell (2011) in *School Trouble* and from Armstrong & Youdell (2011) who challenge in education to think through rhizomes and consider what a body can do, to notice the affective choreographies emerging in moments for bodies.

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Appendix A: Summary the Individual Program Planning (IPP) Process

8 Stages of the Individual Program Planning Process

Stage 1 "*Screening and identification"* is the process where an individual is assessed. He is assessed on site or evaluated under his previous school cumulative files with the student's history or school services reviewed by the classroom teacher.

Stage 2 "*Exploration of instructional strategies"* involves the classroom teacher developing a 'wide variety of behavioural and/or curriculum strategies to meet students needs' (p.37). If the student's needs are not met through adaptations to instructional strategies then a program planning team meeting is generated to construct suitable educational planning for the student.

Stage 3 "*Referral to program planning team*" occurs when a student requires further support after previous strategies in stages 1 or 2 were not successful in meeting his educational needs. Information required for a referral to a program planning meeting may include "observation records", "informal assessments", "anecdotal information", "student records" (p.37).

Stage 4 "*Program planning team meeting*" is the gathering of individuals to discuss a student's 'strengths and needs' (p.38). Individuals included in this meeting may include: classroom teachers, administration, resource teacher, school board service specialists (speech language pathologist, counsellor etc), and parents/guardians. The team meets to review the student's 'strengths and needs' and decide on 'future actions to be taken' (p.38). The team decides whether an individual program plan is appropriate. If so, stages 5 to 8 are followed. If no individual program plan is required the student will continue to work towards provincial outcomes with support.

Stage 5 "*Program plan developed*" involves the program planning team using the information they have collected to write an individual program plan. The plan includes: the student's strengths and needs, annual individualized goals, specific outcomes and recommended services.

Stage 6 "*Implementation of program plan*" involves all team members are assigned responsibility areas and implementing the student's individual program plan.

Stage 7 "*Monitoring*" is when the individual program plan is monitored for concerns, successes, changes by teachers, resource and outside service providers as needed.

Stage 8 "*Review of program plan*" involves the review of individual program plan by the program planning team (minimum of twice a year).

(Summarized from SEPM, 1996, p.36-40)

Appendix B: History of ASD Diagnostic Criteria in the DSM

(DSM-III (1980) to DSM-IV-TR (2000)

DSM III (1980)

Diagnostic criteria for **Infantile Autism**

A. Onset before 30 months of age

B. Pervasive lack of responsiveness to other people (autism)

C. Gross deficits in language development

D. If speech is present, peculiar speech patterns such as immediate and delayed echolalia, metaphorical language, pronominal reversal.

E. Bizarre responses to various aspects of the environment, e.g., resistance to change, peculiar interest in or attachments to animate or inanimate objects.

F. Absence of delusions, hallucinations, loosening of associations, and incoherence as in Schizophrenia.

DSM III-R (1987)

Diagnostic Criteria for **Autistic Disorder**

At least eight of the following sixteen items are present, these to include at least two items from A, one from B, and one from C.

A. Qualitative impairment in reciprocal social interaction (the examples within parentheses are arranged so that those first listed are more likely to apply to younger or more disabled, and the later ones, to older or less disabled) as manifested by the following:

1.Marked lack of awareness of the existence or feelings of others (for example, treats a person as if that person were a piece of furniture; does not notice another person's distress; apparently has no concept of the need of others for privacy);

2. No or abnormal seeking of comfort at times of distress (for example, does not come for comfort even when ill, hurt, or tired; seeks comfort in a stereotyped way, for example, says "cheese, cheese, cheese" whenever hurt;

3. No or impaired imitation (for example, does not wave bye-bye; does not copy parent's domestic activities; mechanical imitation of others' actions out of context);

4. No or abnormal social play (for example, does not actively participate in simple games; refers solitary play activities; involves other children in play only as mechanical aids); and

5. Gross impairment in ability to make peer friendships (for example, no interest in making peer friendships despite interest in making fiends, demonstrates lack of understanding of conventions of social interaction, for example, reads phone book to uninterested peer.

B. *Qualitative impairment in verbal and nonverbal communication and in imaginative activity, (the numbered items are arranged so that those first listed are more likely to apply to younger or more disabled, and the later ones, to older or less disabled) as manifested by the following:*

1. No mode of communication, such as: communicative babbling, facial expression, gesture, mime, or spoken language;

2. Markedly abnormal nonverbal communication, as in the use of eye-to-eye gaze, facial expression, body posture, or gestures to initiate or modulate social interaction (for example, does not anticipate being held, stiffens when held, does not look at the person or smile when making a social approach, does not greet parents or visitors, has a fixed stare in social situations);

3. Absence of imaginative activity, such as play-acting of adult roles, fantasy character or animals; lack of interest in stories about imaginary events;

4. Marked abnormalities in the production of speech, including volume, pitch, stress, rate, rhythm, and intonation (for example, monotonous tone, question-like melody, or high pitch);

5. Marked abnormalities in the form or content of speech, including stereotyped and repetitive use of speech (for example, immediate echolalia or mechanical repetition of a television commercial); use of "you" when "I" is meant (for example, using "You want cookie?" to mean "I want a cookie"); idiosyncratic use of words or phrases (for example, "Go on green riding" to mean "I want to go to the swing"); or frequent irrelevant remarks (for example, starts talking about train schedules during a conversation about ports); and

6. Marked impairment in the ability to initiate or sustain a conversation with others, despite adequate speech (for example, indulging in lengthy monologues on one subject regardless of interjections from others);

C. Markedly restricted repertoire of activities and interests as manifested by the following:

1. Stereotyped body movements (for example, hand flicking or twisting, spinning, head-banging, complex whole-body movements);

2. Persistent preoccupation with parts of objects (for example, sniffing or smelling objects, repetitive feeling of texture of materials, spinning wheels of toy cars) or attachment to unusual objects (for example, insists on carrying around a piece of string);

3. Marked distress over changes in trivial aspects of environment (for example, when a vase is moved from usual position);

4. Unreasonable insistence on following routines in precise detail (for example, insisting that exactly the same route always be followed when shopping);

5. Markedly restricted range of interests and a preoccupation with one narrow interest, e.g., interested only in lining up objects, in amassing facts about meteorology, or in pretending to be a fantasy character.

D. Onset during infancy or early childhood

Specify if childhood onset (after 36 months of age)

DSM-IV (1994) and DSM-IVR (2000)

299.00 Autistic Disorder

1. *A total of six (or more) items from (1), (2), and (3), with at least two from (1), and one each from (2) and (3):*

    1. Qualitative impairment in social interaction, as manifested by at least two of the following:
        1. marked impairment in the use of multiple nonverbal behaviors such as eye-to-eye gaze, facial expression, body postures, and gestures to regulate social interaction.
        2. failure to develop peer relationships appropriate to developmental level
        3. a lack of spontaneous seeking to share enjoyment, interests, or achievements with other people (e.g., by a lack of showing, bringing, or pointing out objects of interest)
        4. lack of social Or emotional reciprocity
    2. Qualitative impairments in communication as manifested by at least one of the following:
        1. delay in, or total lack of, the development of spoken language (not accompanied by an attempt to compensate through alternative modes of communication such as gesture or mime)
        2. in individuals With adequate speech, marked impairment in the ability to initiate or sustain a conversation with others
        3. stereotyped and repetitive use of language or idiosyncratic language
        4. lack of varied Spontaneous make-believe play or social imitative play appropriate to developmental level
    3. Restricted, repetitive, and stereotyped patterns of behavior, interests, and activities, as manifested by at least of one of the following:
        1. encompassing preoccupation with one or more stereotyped and restricted patterns of interest that is abnormal either in intensity or focus
        2. apparently inflexible adherence to specific, non-functional routines or rituals
        3. stereotyped and repetitive motor mannerisms (e.g. hand or finger flapping or twisting, or complex whole body movements)

4. persistent preoccupation with parts of objects

2. *Delays or abnormal functioning in at least one of the following areas, with onset prior to age 3 years: (1) social interaction, (2) language as used in social communication, or (3) symbolic or imaginative play.*

The disturbance is not better accounted for by Rett's disorder or Childhood disintegrative disorder.

See American Psychiatric Association (1980, 1987, 1994, 2000).

Appendix C: General Interview Guide

Questions for the first semi-structured interview

- **Personal Interests (open conversation)**

  How is your day going so far?
  Do you have a busy day ahead of you?
  What is your favourite thing to do this time of year?
  Tell me about yourself...

- **School Practices (establish context ... structure of school)**

  Where did you attend school?
  What was the size of your school? How many students?
  What type of school programming were you in? Elementary/ Secondary
  Describe what a class was like ...
  Did you like your teachers? What were they like?
  What was school like during free time? recess? noon hour?
  Describe the social scene at school...in classroom...during free time
  Do you remember any school rules you had to follow?
  How were students treated at your school? By teachers? By principal?

- **School Interests (personal stories about schooling)**

  Describe a typical day at school for you
  What school was like for you...liked...disliked...
  Tell me some stories about school or experiences you remember ...
  What did you do during free time?
  Did you enjoy school?
  What activities did you do at school?
  What was your favourite class? Least favourite?
  What were your favourite things about school? least favourite?

Questions for the second semi-structured interview

- **Relationships at School**

  Describe your relationships with others ... friends, teachers
  Did you feel comfortable around your peers? Boys? Girls?
  Did you share your feelings with friends, peers?
  Was there a safe place or someone to speak about things?

- **Being a student at a Canadian School ('boy practices')**

  Describe the boys you went to school with ...
  What activities did you and other boys do?
  Describe your relationship with other boys ...

What did you and other boys talk about at school?
What kinds of things in school did boys do?

Did you feel you needed to act or behave in certain ways as a boy at school?
Describe in what ways...
Did you feel you fit in at school? with other boys?
What were the experiences of boys with disabilities in your school?
Did your autism influence your schooling? In what ways ...
Did your autism influence your interactions with other boys? Describe..stories
If you could return to school, what would you like school to be like?
What would you say to young boys with autism now attending school? What advice would you give them?
Did your schooling influence your current life as a young man?
Is there any other part of school you would like to talk about?

Closing Questions

Do you have questions or comments you would like to add?
Ask participant to reflect on the research experience, how did it feel?

[Use of stock photographs in second semi-structured interview]

Appendix D: Information Sheet

University Of South Australia
Division of Education, Arts and Social Sciences
Researcher: Sarah Reddington, MEd (Inclusive Ed.) xxx-xxx-xxxx
Email: #

Supervisor Contact:
Dr. Deborah Price
School of Education
University of South Australia
+xx x xxx xxxxx
Email : #

Young Men with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD): Schooling Experiences in Canada

My name is Sarah Reddington and I am doing research at the University of South Australia under the supervision of Dr. Deborah Price, towards a PhD in Education. The goal of this research is to better understand the schooling experiences and identities of young men with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in Canada between the ages of 18 to 40. I hope that this will lead to better knowledge and understanding of what school is like for boys with ASD and how they come to understand identity as men with ASD.

I would like to interview young men with ASD who have gone to school in Canada and want to share their experiences about being a boy in a Canadian school. I am asking you to take part in a two short confidential conversations with myself, to discuss your thoughts and feelings about school and the experiences you had in regards to being a boy in school and how boy practices in school shape how you now identify as a man with ASD. Each conversation will be 45 minutes in length, audio taped and fully transcribed. Your participation is voluntary and you may choose not to answer all questions that are asked or you may choose to respond to some questions in written form or on a laptop that will be provided. I will use photos during our time and you too will be invited to bring in photos, images or artefacts you may like to show me about your time in school (class photos, team pictures), but this is optional and you do not have to bring in any pictures. You would receive a copy of the summary of our time together. The tapes and transcripts will be stored in a locked cabinet in the researcher's office in Seminary Building at Acadia University in Canada for five years from the time of completion of the project in accordance with the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research. The data will also be stored securely for five years from the time of completion of the project in the Office of School of Education at University of South Australia in meeting with the UniSA requirements.

Maintaining confidentiality is important. An assumed name will be used in the written notes and all transcribed copies of your conversations. I will take every care to remove responses from any identifying material as early as possible. No information which may lead to the

identification of participants will be released. All responses will be kept confidential by me and will not be identified in the reporting of the research however the researcher cannot guarantee the confidentiality or anonymity of material transferred by email or the internet in accordance with the Human Research Ethics Committee at the University of South Australia.

I would be asking very general and open questions about school and being a boy such as:

Describe what a class was like ...
Did you like your teachers? What were they like?
What was school like during free time? recess? noon hour?
Describe the boys you went to school with ...
What activities did you and other boys do?

At any time during the conversations you can stop or choose not to answer a question as well if you would like you can provide written responses, draw or use a computer that will be provided to you to type your answers. One option presented to you later in the study will be to bring in any artefacts you may like to share about your schooling but this is optional and you do not have to. If you choose to bring in photos, drawings to help share your stories the artefacts will be altered to remove any identifiable material (blurring of faces, removal of identifiable objects or places) to protect your anonymity. When the second interview is finished you will sign an artefact consent form indicating which anonymised artefacts you wish to authorize for use in my dissertation and in future publications and presentations. The artefact consent form allows you to decide what artefacts you give permission for me to use or you may choose not to allow any of your artefacts this will be your decision and explained fully to you when we meet. All identifiable material on any drawings, artefacts you provide will be removed to protect your anonymity. Participation in this study is voluntary and you will be free to withdraw at any stage without being questioned. At any point in the research process, you may discontinue your involvement by notifying me by phone or in writing. No reason will be required. The research itself contains nothing that is surprising in nature as we are talking about schooling however if you would like to chat with someone afterwards there is free counselling services available to you through the Nova Scotia Government Community Health Children, Youth and Families "Helpzone".

YOU WILL RECEIVE A $10.00 GIFT CARD AT THE END OF THE INTERVIEWS AS A THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME.

If you would like to participate, please contact me at xxx-xxx-xxx or email me at # to set up a time and place that is convenient for you. If you leave a message on my voice mail, please leave your first name and phone number, and I will return your call.

Thank you.

I look forward to chatting with you.

Sarah

Sarah Reddington, MEd (Inclusive Ed.)
Candidate, Canadian Offshore PhD Program
University of South Australia

This project has been granted ethics approval by the University of South Australia's Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have any ethical concerns about the project or questions about your rights as a participant please contact.

Executive Officer, University of South Australia, Human Research Ethics Committee:

Ms. Vicki Allen
Executive Officer,
UniSA Human Research Ethics Committee
University of South Australia Research and Innovation Services

Appendix E: Participant Consent Form

Young Men with ASD: Schooling Experiences in Canada

Researcher: Sarah Reddington, M.Ed. (Inclusive Ed)
Supervisor: Dr. Deborah Price, PhD
Supervisor Contact:
Dr. Deborah Price
School of Education
University of South Australia
+xx x xxx xxxx

Research Consent Form

I have read the information sheet, and the nature and the purpose of the research project have been explained to me. I understand and agree to take part.

I confirm that I am between the ages of 18 and 40 years of age.

I confirm I have self identified as a man with autism spectrum disorder.

I understand that I may not directly benefit from taking part in the project.

I understand that participation is voluntary and I can withdraw from the study at any stage.

I understand that at any time in the conversations I can choose not to answer any questions or answer with a written response. I understand that the researcher cannot guarantee the confidentiality or anonymity of material transferred by email or the internet.

I understand that bringing in school artefacts is voluntary and my choice and that all artefacts will be blurred to protect my anonymity.

I understand that I will be audio taped during the study.

I understand that the tapes and transcripts will be stored in a locked cabinet in the researcher's office for five years. The data will also be stored securely for five years in the Office of School of Education at University of South Australia in meeting with the UniSA requirements. Access to this material will be restricted to the researcher, her supervisors, and the University's ethics committee.

Participant's Name _____

Participant's Signature _____

Appendix F: Sample of Stock Photographs



Photographs retrieved from Corbis Photo database http://www.corbisimages.com/

Appendix G: Participant Artefact Consent Form:

This form refers to artefacts that you supplied to Sarah Reddington as part of sharing your experiences about schooling in Canada. All artefacts you have supplied with have all identifiable features removed and the artefacts will be securely stored in a locked cabinet in the researcher's office in Seminary Building at Acadia University in Wolfville, Nova Scotia for the duration of five years from the time of completion of the project and in the School of Education at the University of South Australia in a locked, secured cabinet in accordance with the University of South Australia's Human Research Ethics Committee. As discussed with you, your school artefacts may be shared with my PhD supervisors to help them in their supervision of my data analysis. I would also like to use some artefacts (in electronic or print form), in my dissertation, presentations, publications arising from the project with the understanding that all identifiable features in the artefacts will be anonymised to protect your identity.

Please could you sign one of the boxes below to indicate whether or not you are happy for me to do this. I have attached your anonymised artefacts to assist you, and for your records. I won't use any artefacts without your permission.

Please sign either 1, 2, or 3 below:

1. I give my consent for these artefacts/drawings to be reproduced for educational purposes, presentations, and publications connected to the project. I understand that real names, personal identifiers will NOT be used with the artefacts anonymised to protect my identity.

signed.....

date.....

OR

If you would like to give permission for me to publish some, but not all, of the artefacts please list the numbers of the artefacts you will allow me to use:

2. I give my consent for artefact

.....

.....(please

specify) to be reproduced (in electronic or print form), for educational purposes, presentations and publications connected to Sarah Reddington's UniSA research project. I understand that real names will NOT be used with the artefacts are anonymised to protect my identity.

signed.....

date .....

3. I do not wish any of these artefacts to be reproduced in connection with Sarah Reddington's PhD (UniSA) project.

signed.....

date.....

Thank you for participating in my project. If you have any queries about this form or about the project or your participation in it, please do not hesitate to contact Sarah Reddington (xxx) xxx-xxx or email # or my Principal Supervisor Dr. Deborah Price at xx x xxx xxxxx, email #

Appendix H: Stock Photographs Used in Dissertation Text

















Photographs retrieved from Corbis Photo database http://www.corbisimages.com/