Abstract: Growing numbers of educational researchers are using rhizoanalytic approaches based on the work of Deleuze and Guattari to think differently in their research practices. However, as those engaging in debates about post-qualitative research suggest, thinking differently is not without its challenges. This paper uses three complex challenges encountered in the author’s doctoral research concerned with the early childhood education workforce to reflexively explore some of the implications o ...
Challenges of ‘thinking differently’ with rhizoanalytic approaches: A reflexive account
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Rhizoanalytic approaches in educational research

Growing numbers of researchers working in the area of education are using rhizoanalytic approaches (drawn from Deleuze and Guattari’s [1987] concept rhizome) to ‘think differently’ in their research practices (see for example, Alvermann 2000; Honan 2004; Pearce and MacLure 2009; Mazzei 2010; Done and Knowler 2011; and Sellers 2009). In a Deleuzian sense, the rhizome is characterised by multiple, proliferating connections between diverse modes such as the ‘…linguistic…perceptive, mimetic, gestural, and cognitive’ (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 8). The rhizome has no pre-determined structure, and can be entered at any point. Accordingly, rhizomatic thinking challenges causal or linear views of relationships between acts or ideas that are often represented and stabilised through arborescent logic (tree-like, hierarchical models).

Putting rhizoanalytic approaches to work involves attending to connections and multiplicity, middles and ruptures, and ‘forces that make and unmake territories’ (Livesey 2010, 18). The movements of these forces are interrelated in a rhizome’s movements, as it ‘ceaselessly makes connections’ (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 8) whilst always rupturing these, and forming new connections. Deleuze and Guattari describe these as ‘...movements of deterritorialization… and processes of reterritorialization’ (8) that stabilise, define, de and re-stabilise spaces.

For research practices, this focus of rhizoanalytic approaches on movements, makes them well-suited to enquiry that seeks to generate new possibilities, change and transformation (Olsson 2009). Accordingly, researchers have noted that rhizoanalytic approaches can: ‘...offer ways to ‘see’ each moment of interaction as many things – both and neither bad nor good’ (Leafgren 2008, 331, emphasis in original); the opportunity to ‘...play with [ideas] to see what happens, what spaces of possibilities might open’ (Sellers 2009, 91); to ‘connect diverse fragments of data in ways that produced new linkages and revealed discontinuities’ (Alvermann 2000, 118), and, to ‘... help us think ... beyond ...already constituted and repeated forms’ (Mazzei 2010, 514).

In addition, researchers involved in debates about ‘post qualitative research’ (see in particular, St.Pierre [2011], and Jackson and Mazzei [2013]) have suggested that working with rhizoanalytic approaches offers opportunities to engage with, and disrupt the sometimes limiting strictures of qualitative research methodologies. They have done this by (for example) working with affect as a method in research (Hickey-Moody 2013), ‘working the limits’ (Jackson and Mazzei 2013, 262) of research practices (such as interviews) by
rethinking underpinning assumptions (such as ‘data, voice, and truth’), and by challenging
dichotomies separating the human and nonhuman (St.Pierre 2011). For these researchers,
rhizoanalytic approaches allow for a focus on what is produced in the interactions of parts
of assemblages, rather than centring on meanings produced by or for participants.

However, the opportunities highlighted above also suggest some of the methodological
challenges for researchers wanting to put these concepts to work. For example,
rhizoanalysis is characterised by attention to the ‘…changing state of things’ (Massumi 1987,
xiii), mapping ever-changing processes of becoming, rather than tracing (and therefore)
reproducing ‘…fixed and finished ‘being[s]” (Mac Naughton 2005, 121). These mappings of
how concepts work, and what they produce will always be circumstantial, and therefore
cannot be transposed into a model. As Biddle notes: ‘as a method, this allows for a great
deal of flexibility and possibility, but not much in terms of direction or certainty of results’
(2010, 21). Researchers have also shared affective challenges they have encountered in
putting rhizoanalytic approaches to work, including: ‘disconcertion’ when parts of data do
not seem to make sense (MacLure 2013, 172), struggling and grappling with messiness
(Giugni 2011), and ‘…uncomfortable affects that swarm among our supposedly rational
arguments’ (MacLure 2013, 172).

Using these opportunities and challenges of rhizoanalytic approaches as entryways, the
purpose of this paper is to map some of the challenges that I myself encountered when
thinking differently with rhizoanalytic approaches. In particular, I draw on what Deleuze and
Guattari (1987, 23) describe as ‘mental correctives’—ways of moving through structures such
as ‘…dualisms [they] had no wish to construct but through which [they] pass’. Correctives
are practices of a logic of ‘and’ (St.Pierre 2011, 613) – ways of disrupting familiar dualisms
that can disconnect and stabilise assemblages, by defining and organising according to what
is judged to be good or bad, right or wrong, part of or not part of. The purpose of the
correctives I discuss in this paper is not then, to prescribe a ‘right’ to counter a ‘wrong’, but
to share some of the ways that making mental correctives assisted me in continuing to
disrupt, rather than accede to, the pull of familiar research methodologies and procedures,
and to make and further connections.

In the following sections, I give a brief account of the doctoral research in which I put
rhizoanalytic approaches to work, then, give a reflexive account of three of the challenges I
encountered – thinking differently without measures of sameness, ways that subjects are
produced as-and-in-assemblages, and immanent ethics. Throughout the paper, as well as in
concluding comments, I suggest implications of these challenges for research practices, and
for debates about post qualitative research (St.Pierre 2011; Jackson and Mazzei 2013).

**Beginning to put rhizoanalytic approaches to work in a doctoral project**

My doctoral research is concerned with the question: how do early childhood educators (i.e.
those working directly with children in prior-to-school settings in Australia negotiate discourses and subjectivities informing early childhood practice? It involves ten educators with experience in long day care, in-home care and mobile children’s services (such as playgroups). Educators participated in an initial and follow-up focus group, and between these group discussions, undertook individual arts-informed enquiry and an interview with me, that drew upon the visual materials they had produced.

My interest in ways that educators negotiated discourses and subjectivities was initially framed by a Foucauldian-derived concern for the operation of relations of power (see Cumming, Sumsion and Wong 2013). However, I moved to use a rhizoanalytic approach in my project to help me ask different questions of data (Jackson and Mazzei 2013), and open space for different possibilities (Sellers 2009) than those already pursued by researchers concerned with the early childhood workforce. I first approached rhizoanalysis by trying to figure out how to ‘do’ it from other researchers’ accounts (such as Honan 2004, 2010). Working with transcripts of recordings of my engagement with participants, I generated a map of ways that educators were negotiating discourses and subjectivities (movements such as: 'holding on’, ‘letting go’, ‘playing it safe’, ‘bending’ and ‘balancing’) that resonated (MacLure 2010) with my research question. Yet, my attempts to write about these movements stalled — I seemed limited to saying that the movements were examples of educators’ experiences of negotiating, and nothing more.

Although I understood that each rhizoanalysis would be unique, I had the sense that there was some key principle that I had missed. I reconsidered my approach and realised that, in setting out to produce something ‘Deleuzian’ (Honan 2004, 268), I had inadvertently fallen back on my social scientific research methods training and had transposed methodological and analytic procedures that were familiar to me. Notably, looking for themes throughout and across a data set (Braun and Clarke 2006), and trying to render everything in the data set ‘explicable’ (MacLure 2013, 169). In identifying examples of ways of negotiating, and ordering them according to types of movements, I had simplified the ‘...proliferated surface of life’ by: ‘...cutting its flows into ‘limited and measured things’, and ‘hanging them in bunches under their ruling ideas’ (169). When one of my supervisors asked me: ‘lots of qualitative research paradigms would say that they are about thinking differently from conventional ways of doing research. What claim does rhizoanalysis have for saying it is about thinking differently?’ I began to see that putting rhizoanalysis to work in my research practices would require more than learning to do differently. It would also require me to consider my conceptualisations of ‘thinking’ and ‘differently’. Therefore, the first challenge that I discuss below is concerned with conceptualisations of difference, and implications of the concept of difference-in-itself for assessing the quality of rhizoanalytic approaches.
Challenges in thinking differently with rhizoanalysis

1. Difference without ‘measures of sameness’

In a Deleuzian sense, difference is not ‘difference from the same’ or ‘difference of the same over time’; rather, it is ‘difference-in-itself’ – the ‘uniqueness implicit in the particularity of things and the moments of their conception and perception’ (Stagoll 2010b, 74-75). Rather than being distinguished by a ‘...relative measure of sameness’ (Stagoll 2010b, 74) —i.e. according to similarities-and-differences—from other methodologies — each rhizoanalytic approach is a unique ‘articulation’ (Dimitriadis and Kamberelis 1997, 150) of Deleuze and Guattari’s characteristics of the rhizome, expressed within particular circumstances.

Although this conceptualisation of difference (in-itself) explains why each rhizoanalysis is unique, I wondered how (without reference to some ‘measure of sameness’ [Stagoll 2010b, 74]) the quality or rigor of rhizoanalyses might be judged as a research practice? Especially as standards of research quality such as transferability, credibility or dependability (Mertens 2005) are irrelevant to rhizoanalytic mappings of how things work, and what they produce.

St.Pierre (2011, 620) proposes an idea of rigor, in which at first, I read possibilities for assessing the quality of my own rhizoanalytic approaches. She suggests that rigor is: ‘...the demanding work of freeing oneself from the constraints of existing structures...so that one can think the unthought'. Rigor is the work of différance, not repetition...’ Perhaps then, the more ‘freedom’ from ‘constraints of existing structures’ (instructions and codified ways to do things) that I could demonstrate in my rhizoanalyses, the more quality they would have? However, St.Pierre’s comments about the importance of resisting the stultifying, yet ‘almost insurmountable... urge to create new structures of comfort ...’ (2011, 622) suggest that appropriating her idea of rigor as a definition to be followed, might well create a ‘new structure of comfort’. This comfort might come at the cost of the transformative possibilities of the unthought, offered by rhizoanalytic approaches. Yet, with some discomfort, I recognised that I found ‘existing structures’ (such as familiar research methodologies and procedures) seductive. The apparent ‘constraints’ seemed a safe haven of models and methods to trace (repetition), in the face of the unknown, disconcerting and disruptive spaces (the différance) of rhizoanalytic approaches.

As Stagoll (2010b, 75) notes, ‘destabilising our thinking [and] disrupting our faculties’ and to ‘do so routinely, is not easy’. As I negotiated these discursive pull-backs towards the familiar, I recognised that I could not bracket-out the circumstances with which I had come to rhizoanalytic approaches. Nor would ‘freeing [my]self from the constraints of existing structures’ (St.Pierre 2011, 620) be a single movement with which I would suddenly be able to master the doing of rhizoanalysis. Freeing myself would be an ongoing process of movements of (what I refer to as) becoming-free, as I negotiated forces such as discourses of established methodologies, that threatened to stabilise rhizoanalytic approaches into a methodology, or some other ‘structure of comfort’.
In the following sections, I discuss some of the ways that I used correctives as practices of the logic of ‘and’, (St.Pierre 2011, 613) to disrupt territorialisating effects of dualisms and familiar ways of doing and being. In particular, I will focus on the concept of reading research assemblages, and replacing questions with which I seek to know or understand what something ‘is’, with enquiry into how something works, and what it produces. I begin by reorienting my concern for ‘how do I do rhizoanalysis?’ to consider ‘how does rhizoanalysis work?’

*How do rhizoanalytic approaches work?*

According to Deleuze and Guattari, ‘the only question is how anything works, with its intensities, flows, processes, partial objects – none of which *mean* anything’ (1995, 21, emphasis in original). This statement draws attention to the intent of rhizoanalytic approaches to give *readings* of experiences in assemblages, not to analyse meanings that ostensibly reside within texts. In a Deleuzian sense, *assemblages* are ‘…processes of arranging, organising, and fitting together’ (Livesey 2010, 18) in which: ‘there is no longer a tri-partite division between a field of reality (the world) and a field of representation (the book) and a field of subjectivity (the author)’ (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 25). Further, assemblages constantly shift, through movements that stabilise, de and re-stabilise spaces. Accordingly, it would be inappropriate to explain, understand or interpret what an assemblage is or what it means as if it were static and know-able (Jackson and Mazzei 2013). How then, do readings work?

Masny (2012a) suggests that:

Reading is an event that involves a relationship between bodies (a text, a child, a brain, a time of day, etc.) within an assemblage of life. The machinic assemblage of life produces sense, that is, not what a text is or means, but how it might become (83)…. [it] extends the power to read differently and to think differently, to go beyond what is to what could be (78).

In this figuration of reading as an event within an assemblage of life, data is always and within assemblages, including research assemblages, that work as a machine ‘…mak[ing]…connections between different elements within a particular grouping’ (Coleman and Ringrose 2013, 17). Further, research assemblages include words, gestures, tones of voice, choices, images, theories of reality and knowledge that inform all these things, life circumstances, myself, the participants, and…and…. All of these elements are open then, to readings that are ‘…affective and multiple…as opposed to correct’ (Done and Knowler 2011, 843). Masny also discusses ‘…reading in interested ways (foregrounding certain thoughts and experiences that disrupt)’ (2012a, 78), and this reminds me of Deleuze’s proposition that in reading ‘…intensive[ly] …something comes through or it doesn’t. There’s nothing to explain, nothing to understand, nothing to interpret. It’s like plugging in to an electric circuit...’ (Deleuze 1995, 8). However, how will I know when
something is coming through? What type of somethings might these be? What do these somethings produce?

*Coming through*

The concept of something coming through reading intensively, recalls experiences (that my supervisors and myself had shared), of things ‘jumping out at’, or ‘grabbing’ us. MacLure (2010, 282) describes these events as ‘resonating in the body as well as the brain’. These ‘visceral prompts’ (Hickey-Moody 2013, 79) are moments of *affect*: ‘…additive processes, forces, powers, and expressions of change…that produce a modification or transformation in the affected body’ (Colman 2005, 11). As a corrective, I began to consciously tune-in to affective intensities in my readings with(in) assemblages - turning up the volume of resonances that came through, and turning down the volume of interpretative analyses, and familiar research procedures. For example, after reading MacLure’s (2010, 282) comments about the place of ‘silliness’ in rhizoanalytic approaches, I stopped discounting somethings like a transcriber’s note of ‘all laughing’, or ‘talking over each other’ or ‘more than one conversation at once’. Instead, I read what(ever) ‘came through’ —moments of connection and change (Coleman and Ringrose 2013, 17) for participants —to get a sense of what might be produced through these connections. In this way, putting to work a rhizoanalytic approach allowed me to disrupt constraints on how, or what, to ‘read’ in a transcript, and to focus on the unique moments of difference-in-itself.

*What did the somethings produce?*

The following fragment from one of the four focus groups I conducted, works as an example of reading intensively. In this part of the focus group discussion, we were discussing two of the participants’ experiences of ‘getting into trouble’ and receiving formal ‘warnings’ in their workplaces (As in all fragments throughout the paper, P is a participant, and R is myself. In the following case only, R1 is another facilitator and I am R2):

* R1: *SO what are these things called warnings, what are-? / R2: What messages...*

* P1:  What are they?

* R1:  *Yeah, what's a warning?*

* P2:  It's a threat really.

* P3:  Yeah, it's a threat that if you don't pull your head in-

* R1:  *A threat to what?*

* P3/P2: Do as you're told/To your job/Your professionalism/Yep, do as you're told.*

As I have tried to convey in the last line of this exchange, participants’ rapid-fire responses to the question ‘a threat to what?’ tumbled over each other, and were laden with palpable tension and fear. Resonant with Deleuze’s observation (1995, 24) that ‘speed is to be caught
in a becoming’, I read the assemblage of tension/fear/intensity as an ‘embodied connection [with] other people, things and thoughts’ (MacLure 2013, 172) via the concepts warnings and threats. It seemed that within this research assemblage, warnings and threats had produced an affective ‘continuous present’ in which two participants connected with a past that was at once ‘…forever changing and… influenc[ing] future events’ (Done and Knowler 2011, 850). This example also prompts thoughts about an area that I only have space here to gesture towards - the machinic potential of focus groups. I wondered, what other new thoughts and questions might be produced through reading focus groups as assemblages, rather than interpreting the utterances of individual participants?

**Asking different questions**

Looking back at this exchange about ‘getting into trouble’, I also wondered what would have been produced if we had asked participants ‘what does a threat do?’ rather than ‘what is a warning?’ or ‘what is it a threat to?’ How could I ask questions that were not ‘… already worked out on the basis of the answers assumed to be probable according to the dominant meanings’ (Deleuze 2002, 15)? Drawing on Deleuze and Guattari’s concern with how something works, I reoriented questions (such as in the following fragment from an interview with a participant) to seek movement, rather than an answer:

R: I remember you saying that you had the people who work with you in the mobile service, you had them doing reflective journals?
P: Yes [at this point, I considered asking ‘why do you think reflection is important?’
but held this back and asked instead…]  
R: What do you think reflection does?
P: I think – one of my workers I don’t think it does absolutely anything to…no matter how many ways I put it around I can’t seem to get her to think that sometimes you do something different, especially if things aren’t working. The reflection helps with that way, and sometimes it helps with knowing what’s right. What worked – let’s try that somewhere else.

Asking the question ‘why do you think reflection is important?’ might have given the participant the opportunity to share a range of reasons with me. By asking ‘what do you think reflection does?’ however, my sense is that the participant plugged into her experiences of reflection and how it worked in her own becomings. I also felt that asking about what reflection does, disrupted the potential for a question that implied there was a body of knowledge (about reflection in this case) to be known, and that the participant’s answer should draw upon.

2. **The assemblage and ‘I’**

St.Pierre (2011, 619) argues that working with post structuralist paradigms requires that we think of ourselves ‘…entangled with everyone, everything else — as assemblage…’, rather than thinking of ourselves as ‘I’. Yet, as she herself concedes ‘it is indeed difficult to escape
the ‘I’ (619). This observation resonated for me (constituting another challenge to thinking differently), as I considered how ‘I’, and the participants, were produced in the research assemblages of my project. For example, when (as in the fragment above) I asked ‘what do you think reflection does?’ rather than ‘why do you think reflection is important?’ I experienced a decentring of ‘me’ within the assemblage. ‘I’ faded into the background, and it became the ‘machinic assemblage of [the participant’s] life [that] produced sense...of becomings’ (Masny 2012a, 83), not my interpretations of what the participant thought was important about reflection. What then, was I doing in the assemblage?

Masny’s explanation of the subject in assemblage provided further illumination:

The subject is an assemblage and part of an assemblage, a multiplicity, the convergence of social, cultural and educational environments, for instance, at a particular moment in time and space...the subject is part of an assemblage. He or she does not act in isolation. The subject acts in relation to environments, human and non-human (2012b, 99).

Individuals are not then erased within assemblages, rather they are decentred as subjects, their individuality momentary and always in relation to other elements of assemblages. Therefore, neither I, nor participants in my project, were something that is, we were, and are, becomings.

3. Immanent ethics

Thinking about my own, and participants’ becomings as-and-in-assemblages brought on questions relating to ethics and rhizoanalytic approaches. Deleuze distinguishes ethics (‘assess[ing] what we do, [and] what we say, in relation to the ways of existing involved’), from morality (a set of constraining rules...that judge actions and intentions in relation to transcendent values...[such as] good and bad’) (1995, 100). Ethics are ‘immanent’ to particular relations, and to the ways ‘relations with other bodies diminish or enhance’ a body’s capacity (Coleman and Ringrose 2013, 11). In relation to my own project, I wondered then, that if, as St.Pierre (2001, 142) contends ‘...different theories of the subject make possible different lives’, what were the ethics of choosing theories that conceptualise participants as always in assemblage (not as individuated participants), when these might differ to those that participants might use to conceptualise themselves? Would I be ‘diminishing’ their capacity by imposing my reading of subjectification? Making a corrective with the logic of ‘and’, I saw that as a decentred subject (-as-and-in-assemblage) – I was reading subjectification in a particular way, and my reading of subjectification was not more or less plausible (Honan 2004) than participants’ own theories of themselves. By making this corrective, multiple theories of the subject could circulate in the research assemblages of my project, potentially ‘enhancing’ (Coleman and Ringrose 2013) the capacities of bodies in the assemblage, as well as the productive capacity of the assemblage itself.
These concerns with immanent ethics also had particular resonance for research relations with three of the ten participants in my study. As I had ongoing relationships through my children’s early childhood centre with these participants, I recognised that our belonging and becoming in multiple assemblages would likely be affected. Yet I was unsure what effects these relations would produce, and was unprepared for some of the effects that ensued. During a discussion about the positioning of parents as clients of early childhood services one participant noted, for example:

I am, I feel for [my child's name] that I'm like the great aunt... and you're part of my extended family – you're not quite young enough to be my daughter, but you know, you're an extension of my family, so when I think of my own family I think of the [early childhood centre’s] clientele as like being part of my extended family as such. You're important, like, you as a person are important to me.

These movements between assemblages of the early childhood centre, its’ ‘clientele’, the concept of ‘clients’ of early childhood centres, concepts of ‘family’, and the participants’ subjectification of me as ‘extended family’ in her schema, took me by surprise. They disrupted a carefully-wrought researcher subjectivity and authority that I barely realised that I had created. I felt very moved by these comments, yet unsettled and a little embarrassed as well. As the group discussion progressed and I had time to ‘collect myself’, I saw these (and other) de-territorialising movements as reminders to decentre myself, and as invitations from participants to connect as an element in the assemblage, rather than holding the research assemblage at a distance.

I experimented with this idea in an interview with another participant, practising becoming-with her in the research assemblage by showing, rather than hiding, my uncertainty:

R: Yes, so I’ll be in touch again, about getting together again. For our follow up.

P: ‘Follow up’, so what’s that to look at? Where you’ve gone with the-

R: Yeah I think so. Part of this, the thingy for me is, sometimes I feel like I don’t really know what I’m doing. I’ve kind of got the structure of the research design, but in terms of – because of the theoretical stuff I’m using, yeah it makes it tricky. It makes it uncomfortable for me.

An unexpected consequence of making this admission was that I wondered about what my ‘uncomfortability’ might be producing. As I read the transcript of the interview later, I realised that it was in the space between my research design and the ‘theoretical stuff’ (i.e. Deleuze) that I was uncomfortable. This affect prompted me to consider what potential for change the discomfort might be gesturing to, in relation to my research design and theoretical orientation. I considered whether the ‘concepts fit together or not’ Coleman and Ringrose (2013, 13), how to reconcile the emphasis on movement in rhizoanalytic approaches, with a research design and research questions conceptualised in more limited
(and limiting) ways. I thought about the machinic nature of assemblages – their productiveness – and this connected to my interest in movements and lines that underpins my research question: ‘How do early childhood educators in Australia negotiate discourses and subjectivities informing early childhood practice?’

Although I could not redesign my research project at this point, I considered how I might rethink the research question itself, in light of the theory of the subject that I was working with. When originally asking the research question above, I see that I had individuated educators, and individuated strategies (i.e. movements) in mind. However, by working from the concept of assemblages and de-centred subjects, and attention to Deleuze’s concerns with how things work and what they produce, I saw that rather than (only) looking for strategies conceived of and implemented by individuals, I could look at ways that parts of assemblages relate. As Jackson and Mazzei (2013, 269) note: ‘...what matters more than certainty, accuracy, and authenticity are the relations, affects, and machinic potential to interrupt and transform other machines’. Perhaps I could re-pose the question as: ‘How do early childhood educators in Australia produce practice assemblages?’ and/or ‘how do early childhood practice assemblages produce early childhood educators in Australia?’ Rethinking my question along these lines could shift the focus from individuated educators, to the complexity of early childhood practice assemblages, and also open possibilities for considering how non-human as well as human elements of assemblages might be productive.

**Concluding comments - implications for research practices and debates about ‘post qualitative research’ debate**

Rhizomatic movements disrupt territories that demarcate what is known and familiar, making connections that themselves rupture and move to establish new and productive pathways. This process carries on in a ‘relay of intensities’ (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 11), pushing to open new spaces, and enclosing others. In the same way, making correctives (such as discussed in this paper) as practices of a logic of ‘and’, helped me to disrupt the familiar, to open new spaces, new questions, new knowledges and new ways of producing knowledges (St.Pierre 2011). As I have also suggested, correctives reminded me that the doing of rhizoanalysis is an ongoing negotiation of becoming-free, not a singular movement in which (for example) the compelling and paralysing pull of established qualitative research methodologies, and my history with them, can be overcome.

This reflexive account of some of the challenges I have encountered in putting rhizoanalytic approaches to work raises a number of other questions that connect to current discussions about post qualitative research. For example, discussions about affect as method (Hickey-Moody 2013) and the inclusion as data of elements of assemblages such as ‘affect, feeling and sensation’ (Done and Knowler 2011, 848) that researchers and participants experience, yet can find it hard to account for in established research approaches. As the brief
rhizoanalytic forays included in this paper gesture towards, putting rhizoanalytic approaches to work allows for recognition of bodily sensations (affects) as ways of ‘knowing and relating’ (Coleman and Ringrose 2013, 4) between elements of assemblages. This brings on questions of how the physicality of rhizoanalytic approaches works, and what it produces for participants, as well as researchers. As my example relating to warnings and threats also suggests, a challenge remains in conveying readings of affect in writing, when these are based upon embodied experiences.

Even while I acknowledge the ways that correctives (such as those I have discussed in this paper) are part of rhizoanalytic ‘rigor’, the ongoing relays of becoming-free from ‘constraints of existing structures’ (St.Pierre 2011, 620), I struggle with how, or indeed, whether, the quality of rhizoanalytic approaches can be judged. I consider my own disconcertions as I struggle to think differently with rhizoanalytic approaches. Rather than squashing disconcertion, or dismissing it as not part of research practices, I consider: what might disconcertion be doing? What might it produce? Tuning-in to disconcertion keeps me with(in) the research assemblage and disrupts any ‘interpretive mastery’ (MacLure 2013, 168) that I might begin to entertain. It also reminds me that I have chosen research practices in which ‘uncertainty, ambivalence and messiness’ (Done and Knowler 2011, 844) can be productive of something as yet unthought, if I can embrace its possibilities rather than taking refuge in the comforts of ‘measures of sameness’ (Stagoll 2010, 74).
References


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**Endnotes**
I have used the term *rhizoanalytic approaches* to take account of diverse ways that researchers describe their particular rhizoanalyses – Honan (2004) for example describes *rhizo-textual* analyses, and Sellers (2009) *rhizopoiesis*.

II Jackson and Mazzei (2013, 264) describe ‘becoming’ as a ‘threshold’ state - the space between where we have been, and where we may go. While becoming is ‘between’, there is no pre-determined point towards which it progresses, it is defined by its dynamism (Stagoll 2010a, 26).

III Reflective practices have been criticised for preferencing an ‘intensive introspective personalism’ over an acknowledgment of the ways that experience is mutually affecting (see Done and Knowler 2011, 842). In this paper, I have attempted to use reflexivity as a means to continue becoming-decentred as a subject in assemblages, by considering how things (including myself) work, and what we produce.

IV ‘A theme captures something important about the data in relation to the research question, and represents some level of *patterned* response or meaning within the data set’ (Braun and Clarke 2006, 82).