



Infants in Family Day Care: stories of smooth and striated space

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ABSTRACT Family day care (FDC) is child care for a small group of children that occurs in the educator's home. Despite the important role it plays in the international early childhood education and care landscape, particularly for children under three years of age, FDC is currently under-researched. This article examines research about infants (under 19 months of age) in FDC from the past 20 years, using Deleuze and Guattari's concepts of smooth and striated space. These concepts open possibilities for moving beyond well-worn binaries such as qualitative/quantitative, researcher/researched, adult/infant and instead consider the methodological principles and theoretical perspectives that influence why particular methods are chosen, how they are used, and the research stories that result. The authors argue that the emerging FDC research space may be conceptualised as a smooth space, with greater powers of deterritorialisation than the striated, affording lines of flight towards new understandings about the lives of infants in FDC.

Introduction

Family day care (FDC) is child care for a small group of children that occurs in the educator's home, sometimes referred to as childminding or family child care. In many industrialised nations FDC is a core form of child care (OECD, 2006) for the increasing numbers of infants who are cared for outside the home (United Nations Children's Fund, 2008). In this article we will examine research about infants in FDC, with a particular focus on the Australian context.

Four Brief Stories about Infants in Australian Family Day Care

Each week in Australia around 115,000 children will spend, on average, 21 hours in FDC (Department of Education Employment and Workforce Relations, 2012). These children will eat, play and sleep in a family home that is not their home, inhabited by a family that is not their family. According to another story, FDC provides a unique kind of care that is particularly important for infants and appealing to families: small groups, consistent educator, sibling care and a home-like environment (Family Day Care Australia, 2008, 2009). Perhaps not surprisingly, then, around 20% of children in Australian FDC are aged under two years and there is evidence of increasing demand for infant places (Department of Education Employment and Workforce Relations, 2008; Family Day Care Australia, 2009). The Australian media report a story of ongoing public debate about the potential impacts of child care on very young children fuelled by well-known detractors such as children's author Mem Fox (Australian Associated Press, 2008) and psychologist Steve Biddulph (Totaro, 2006), who warn of the potential harm of infant child care. The policy story of Australian FDC is one of change ushered in by the National Quality Framework resulting in greater policy attention to and increasing professionalisation of FDC enacted through a new law, regulations, quality assessment and rating process and learning framework (Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority, 2011).

But what of the research stories? Attention to what research says about infants in FDC is important in light of the demand for, usage of and unique offerings of FDC, the public controversy surrounding infant child care, and the changing policy climate. Currently, however, there is a lack of research conducted in FDC both in Australia and internationally, despite the important role it plays in the early childhood education and care landscape (Statham & Mooney, 2003; Wong & Cumming, 2010; Davis et al, 2011; Ishimine & Tayler, 2012). In this article we use Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) concepts of smooth and striated space to discuss research stories about infants in FDC. Smooth and striated space offer the possibility of moving beyond well-worn binaries such as qualitative/quantitative, researcher/researched and adult/infant. Such binaries can result in one member of the pair being positioned as more normal, appropriate or powerful than the other (Mander et al, 2011) and work to constrain thought and action (Singh, 2011). We argue that smooth and striated space open opportunities to move beyond such dichotomous descriptors and instead discuss the methodological principles and theoretical perspectives that influence why particular research methods are chosen, how they are used, and the research stories they afford. Finally, we discuss possibilities for the new in research about infants in FDC.

Method

Academic databases were searched for peer-reviewed research reports from the previous twenty years containing the search terms *family day care*, *family child care*, *child care home*, *childminding* and *childminder* in the title and subject terms/key words. Additional articles were identified by following citation trails. Of the articles identified, only research with a specific focus on infants or conducted in FDC settings that included infants was used in this review, with infants defined as under 19 months of age. The term *educator* has recently been adopted in Australia to refer to 'early childhood practitioners who work directly with children in early childhood settings' (Department of Education Employment and Workforce Relations, 2009, p. 5). For the sake of consistency, the term *educator* will be used in this article regardless of the term used in the original literature.

Research as Story

Some research uses story or narrative purposively as a research method. This article suggests that all research presents some kind of story. Frank (2004, p. 431) writes that 'after methods, there has to be a story', crafted in the process of writing a research report. A good scholarly article, according to Frank (2004), is like a detective story that captures the reader's attention, makes them care about the characters, and provides narrative tension through incongruity. Pugach (2001, p. 440) advises researchers to strive to tell 'disciplined stories' where the nature of the stories they choose to tell is disciplined by the research process and framework. To think of research reports as stories raises many questions. What kind of story is the research attempting to construct? Who are the characters (including the researcher) and how are they positioned? In what ways are the stories mediated by the methods or the theoretical frameworks of the research? And importantly for this article, how are the stories influenced by the (smooth or striated) research space? These issues will be woven through the discussion of research about infants in FDC.

Smooth and Striated Space

This section introduces the concepts of smooth and striated space. We draw a link between the technological and mathematical models of smooth and striated offered by Deleuze and Guattari (1987) to suggest what these concepts might offer for thinking about research. The technological model pertains to various types of fabrics. Deleuze and Guattari suggest that woven fabric presents many of the characteristics of striated space: the horizontal and vertical elements of the warp and weft are woven together, intersecting at right angles, the boundary of the fabric being constrained by the loom. The qualities of smooth spaces are conveyed by felt, which Deleuze and Guattari describe as an anti-fabric involving an entanglement of fibres which is non-homogeneous and unlimited in every direction. They suggest that crochet is another model of smooth space, as well

as patchwork, particularly crazy patchwork in which an ‘amorphous collection of juxtaposed pieces ... can be joined together in an infinite number of ways’ (p. 476).

Deleuze and Guattari (1987) describe patchwork as a Riemannian space. Riemann was a mathematician who developed an unorthodox concept of spatiality. One of Riemann’s starting points for theorising about space was non-Euclidean geometry, and this non-Euclideanism was an important influence upon Deleuze’s thinking (Plotnitsky, 2006, 2009). Euclidean geometry is sometimes known as plane geometry because it occurs on a flat plane described by Deleuze and Guattari (1987) as a striated space. Euclid developed a series of geometrical axioms – unproven assumptions which were supposed to be so simple and obvious that their validity was beyond doubt (Greenberg, 2008). One of Euclid’s axioms, the parallel postulate, was controversial because it seemed too complex to be accepted without proof. In simple terms, the parallel postulate states that given a straight, continuous line, and a point outside that line, there can only be one straight line drawn through the point that will not intersect with the original line. For the next 2000 years mathematicians tried to prove that the parallel postulate must be true (Greenberg, 2008). ‘The idea that this might not be true struck terror into their Euclidean hearts offending rational sensibilities and evoking a sense of moral outrage’ (Institute for Figuring, n.d.). Just as Deleuze and Guattari (1987, p. 474) describe a flow between smooth and striated – ‘striated space is constantly being reversed, returned to a smooth space’ – this extreme Euclidean striation eventually gave way to the smooth when, in the nineteenth century, mathematicians finally conceded that it was possible that there existed a different kind of space, a non-Euclidean space, in which the parallel postulate was false (Institute for Figuring, n.d.). The first non-Euclidean geometry discovered was hyperbolic geometry.

Even after the theoretical existence of hyperbolic geometry was accepted, what this space might look like baffled mathematicians. Finally, in 1997, Taimina discovered she could crochet a physical model of a hyperbolic plane on which many of the properties of this unique geometry could be explored in a tactile manner (Henderson & Taimina, 2001), including the violation of Euclid’s parallel postulate. Crochet, which to Deleuze and Guattari (1987) presents aspects of smooth space, was used to create a model of a smooth, non-Euclidean plane. Taimina’s models provided an embodied experience of non-Euclidean space and led to the recognition of the many examples of hyperbolic geometry that occur in nature – for example, in various types of leaves, coral and sea slugs (Wertheim, 2009). Wertheim (2009) suggests that the fact that these shapes exist in nature but had not been recognised by mathematicians

says a whole lot of things about what mathematicians thought mathematics was, what they thought it could and couldn’t do, what they thought it could and couldn’t represent. Even mathematicians, who in some sense are the freest of all thinkers, literally couldn’t see, not only the sea slugs around them, but the lettuce on their plate.

Because mathematicians were thinking only in terms of what they already knew, within a Euclidean, striated space, there were things that they were unable to see, things that were beyond their thinking. It took a model of smooth space, crochet, to make evident what was already around them. Thus, existing within smooth or striated space may influence what researchers think it is possible for research to do, the questions they might ask and the methods they might use to answer them, and ultimately, the research stories they tell.

Research Stories of Infants in FDC

The discussion now turns to research about infants in FDC. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) suggest that one of the differences between smooth and striated space is an inverse relationship between the point and the line. In striated space, points are emphasised – ‘lines or trajectories tend to be subordinated to the points: one goes from one point to another’ (p. 478). The points in striated space are fixed, providing constant points of orientation and reference. Smooth space emphasises the lines or trajectories between points. These lines often involve ‘changes in direction ... 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, pp. 478-479). The points of orientation in smooth space are in constant variation, having become subordinated to the line.

Much of the research conducted in FDC exists in space that is best described as striated. A major focus is measuring aspects of quality, particularly those that can be regulated through policy, and the conditions in which they occur. Dahlberg et al (2007) identify three groups of criteria that have influenced research into quality in early childhood education: structural (e.g. educator qualifications, staff-child ratios); process (e.g. adult-child interactions, stimulating programmes); and outcomes (e.g. children's development). These criteria often form the predetermined points of research in striated space. The aim of the research is to measure and connect up these points, to find the relationships between the criteria, and anything outside these points cannot be considered or discovered, potentially leading to what Fenech (2011) calls blind spots in research on quality. Indeed, the limited way in which quality has been constructed and measured in much early childhood research has been critiqued (Layzer & Goodson, 2006; Dahlberg et al, 2007; Fenech, 2011).

Structural aspects of quality feature in many FDC studies involving infants. Level of educators' general education and specialised training have been identified as important influences on observed quality of care (Burchinal et al, 2002; Clarke-Stewart et al, 2002), levels of positive caregiving and children's cognitive development (Clarke-Stewart et al., 2002). In contrast, specialised training only has been linked to quality, particularly increased educator knowledge of health practices and increased involvement and responsiveness with children (Bordin et al, 2000). Conversely, a lack of association between educators' specialised training and child and educator behaviours has raised questions about the quality of training received by some FDC educators (Kryzer et al, 2007). The discrepancy in findings regarding specialised training may result from variation in the training undertaken and measured – for example, in terms of level of specialised training in child development, child care or early childhood education (Clarke-Stewart et al, 2002), whether there has been attendance at a training workshop, which may include first aid or business management (Bordin et al, 2000; Burchinal et al, 2002), and whether early childhood education studies were undertaken at college level (Kryzer et al, 2007). Such variations make it difficult to ascertain what the true effect of specialised training might be and what types of training may be most beneficial; for example, it seems unlikely that attendance at a business management workshop would increase caregiver responsiveness with children. Thus, although the use of descriptors such as educator training may appear to reflect fixed points in research, there is potential for variation in the way that these points are conceptualised within individual studies, making the research into quality less striated than it may appear.

Predetermined points are also found in research into group sizes and ratios. Burchinal et al (2002) and Clarke-Stewart et al (2002) investigated the influence of group size, ratios and age range of children in care by utilising a point system designed by the National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC) in the United States. This system recommends ratios based upon the allocation of points per child, with younger children attracting more points. There has been little empirical examination of the effectiveness of the NAFCC recommendations, however, which were generalised for FDC from ratio recommendations for centre-based child care (Burchinal et al, 2002). Educators who were in compliance with recommendations were found to provide more positive caregiving, although child cognitive development outcomes were not significantly related to compliance (Clarke-Stewart et al, 2002). No association was found between compliance with recommendations and observed child care quality, although lower-quality FDC homes tended to have higher numbers of babies present (Burchinal et al, 2002). Burchinal et al (2002), however, utilised data from two studies that used age categories different from those of the NAFCC point system, necessitating variation of the point allocation system in their study and the allocation of children into 2 rather than 3 groups (infants and younger toddlers, older toddlers and pre-schoolers), potentially impacting on the effectiveness of the system and influencing their results. Thus, although the two studies utilising the NAFCC point system appear to be using the same predetermined criteria, there were differences in the way they were defined and measured in each study. In another study, group size, not age composition of the group, impacted on educator sensitive and supportive care, social integration and child mood, although toddlers often receive less sensitive and supportive care than older children in mixed-age settings (Kryzer et al, 2007). Kryzer et al (2007), however, did not include any infants below 16 months of age, which may have influenced their lack of findings with regard to the age composition of the group.

Other research has focused upon process criteria of quality, particularly educator–child interactions in FDC. For example, sensitive responsive caregiving and interactive involvement have been linked with positive integration into the peer group (Kryzer et al, 2007) and found to be a direct predictor of infant attachment security (Elicker et al, 1999), which has a direct link with more socially competent behaviours with peers (Howes, 1997). Taken together, the studies of quality suggest the importance of the size and age composition of the group; the education and training of educators; and the types of interactions between educators and infants in FDC. However, there does not always appear to be consensus in the literature about the effects of structural aspects.

Not only were the points or criteria of much research into quality predetermined, they were often also constant and fixed. Many FDC quality studies have relied on measures such as the *Family Day Care Environment Rating Scale* (Harms & Clifford, 1989), the *Observational Record of the Caregiving Environment* (Vandell, 1996), and the *Caregiver Interaction Scale* (Arnett, 1989). The common use of such measures indicates agreement not only on the points of the research, or on what constitutes quality, but also on how it can be measured. As Siraj-Blatchford et al (2006) note:

Of course there is always a danger when applying any research instrument that it may become ‘reified’ in the process, and in selecting a particular set of instruments, we do inevitably limit the possibilities for explanation that are open to us. Even more fundamentally, the research questions that we ask and any hypotheses that were tested are drawn from established paradigms and thus may be seen as value loaded in favour of particular explanations. (p. 74)

Even within such striations there is potential for patches of smooth space – for example, when measures are modified to better suit individual research situations. The stories that result from research in striated space are shaped by the emphasis on predetermined, constant points of reference. The lines of the research can only travel between the existing points, resulting in clear boundaries: what can be told and what cannot. The stories can tell of the possible relationships between the various criteria measured. Such stories may be influential on the creation of standards and good practice guidelines (Dahlberg et al, 2007), which in turn become striations within the early childhood setting itself. They cannot, however, tell of multiple perspectives and constructions of quality (Dahlberg et al, 2007) or how the criteria measured interact with the specific situations of educators and families to produce the individual, everyday experiences of children in FDC (Owen, 2000).

The boundaries of research in striated space are further reinforced by the question of whose perspectives are represented. This methodological issue influences the methods chosen and how they are used (Bessell, 2009). Consistent with Fenech’s (2011) findings, the quality studies conducted in FDC predominantly represent researchers’ perspectives. Frequently, opportunities for parents or educators to participate are constrained to the provision of basic demographic information or responses such as ‘agree’ or ‘disagree’ to fixed statements. Such research produces stories in which researchers are experts and assumes that ‘all there is to know about quality can be captured by researchers’ perspectives’, at the same time diminishing the perspectives of children, parents and educators (Fenech, 2011, p. 112). The position of young children may be further diminished by studies that rate FDC quality, potentially producing stories in which infants are passive recipients, or victims, of either high- or low-quality care and feeding into larger stories of mother blaming or the ‘super mum’.

In contrast with striated research, the aims of research in smooth space are usually broad and the points, or what is considered important, not predetermined. The investigations are able to follow their own lines. The *Infants’ Lives in Childcare* study (Press et al, 2011; Sumsion et al, 2011), for example, investigated what everyday life is like for infants in Australian FDC and centre-based care. The aim of the research was not predetermined; instead, attempts were made at ‘looking and listening in’ to infants’ lives (Sumsion & Goodfellow, 2012), to try to ascertain what may be important to the infants themselves. The participation rights of very young children under the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 1989) were a key motivation of the study, which aspired to a participatory research model (Sumsion et al, 2011) in which infants, educators and parents were positioned as collaborators and could influence the trajectory of the research. As noted in the discussion of striated research, such methodological decisions influence the methods chosen and the way they are used (Bessell, 2009). The study employed mosaic methodology, piecing together diverse data

(including video observations and sharing data with parents and educators), disciplines and theoretical perspectives in an attempt to provide an image of the complex lives of infants in FDC. The study's use of 'babycam', a small head-mounted camera that records video from the infants' physical perspective (Sumsion et al, 2011; Sumsion et al, in press), is an example of how the participatory methodology influenced choice of methods and how they were used.

In accordance with mosaic methodology, the research reports resulting from the *Infants' Lives in Childcare* study (Press et al, 2011; Sumsion et al, 2011) are diverse, reflecting the broad boundaries of research in smooth spaces. One of the stories told by this research focuses on the daily activity of mealtime for four young toddlers in FDC. The Deleuzian concept of assemblage was deployed, with a particular focus on the role played by the animate and inanimate as the mealtime event is negotiated between high-chairs, food sources, regulations, children, researchers and educator (Bradley et al, 2012). Sumsion and Goodfellow (2012) and Goodfellow (2012) offer descriptions of two young toddlers in FDC and their interactions around toys. Still frames were captured from video footage to construct visual narratives illuminating the intentional and purposeful 'looking and listening-in' behaviour of one of the toddlers.

Deleuze and Guattari (1987) associate striated space with a long-distance or global vision and smooth space with a close or tactile perspective. They describe perfect homogeneity, 'the extreme result of striation', as the ideal of the striated space, whereas smooth space is characterised by a fundamental heterogeneity and continuous variation, 'the freeing of a line that does not pass between two points' (p. 488). Research in striated space often attempts to describe patterns or associations across large cohorts. Participant numbers in the research on quality ranged from 31 (Bordin et al, 2000) to 326 FDC homes (Burchinal et al, 2002). Consequently a long-distance view is taken, the stories of individual people or FDC homes becoming lost to the bigger picture, resulting in research stories implying homogeneity. Such stories could be interpreted as being representative of all FDC homes, educators' or children's experiences, or indeed that quality means the same thing in all situations. Research in striated space, therefore, may provide a sense of children's experiences on average, but not a sense of children's individual experiences, which may vary widely (Layzer & Goodson, 2006).

Each of the studies on quality discussed above was conducted in the United States, leading to questions about their generalisability to other contexts. For example, each state in the United States varies as to whether it licenses FDC operators, and what it requires of licensees (Clarke-Stewart et al., 2002) leading to a 'myriad of licensing schemes across the United States [that] confuses both practitioners and researchers alike' (Bordin et al, 2000, p. 323). The FDC situation is even more varied internationally. For example, the Australian context is highly regulated and increasingly professionalised. In the past, FDC in Australia was seen as an extension of the mothering role (Saggers et al, 1994; Saggers & Grant, 1999), not requiring specialised training or education (Statham & Mooney, 2003). Recent research found, however, that 45% of Australian FDC educators reported having a specialised early childhood qualification and 28% were currently studying for one (Davis et al, 2011). The majority of FDC educators received 3 or more days of professional development in the previous year (Davis et al, 2011). Moreover, FDC educators in Australia operate under the supervision of a coordination unit that provides resources, support and monitoring. Thus, the striations of the US FDC space are different from those of the international FDC space. Although the research stories about quality may appear to be about homogeneity, their relevance in different contexts is questionable.

In contrast, researchers in smooth space often spend considerable time in a small number of settings gathering detailed information in order to tell in-depth stories about daily practices, lives and interactions in particular contexts. O'Connell (2010), for example, reports on an ethnographic study of mealtimes in London FDC homes. The bulk of the data was collected through participant observation and involved considerable time spent in the field with a core group of key participants, resulting in close vision. The research story told is a heterogeneous one describing a range of experiences for children, from incorporation into the educator's family and home, to segregation. The consumption of family food, sitting together at the table and talking during mealtimes, food refusal or requests on the part of children, and the (in)flexibility of parental expectations around what and how children would eat played a role in this incorporation or segregation. O'Connell (2010) suggests that some parents' strict parental rules concerning mealtimes could be seen as mediating 'attachment', maintaining boundaries and designating the child as a member of their

own family and class. Such research stories recognise that experiences are not homogeneous, but that individual experiences will differ and are important.

One way that heterogeneity and close-up engagement may be expressed in research stories is through the use of participants' voices. Mazzei and Jackson (2012) warn against the uncritical use of participant voices – for example, devoid of context or as a representation of participants' true or real experiences. The use of participants' voices, however, represents an acknowledgement that what participants have to say is equally important as what researchers have to say and that participants may be afforded the opportunity to express themselves in their own words. For example, Freeman and Vakil (2007) and Freeman (2011) focused upon educators' own stories and reflections in their research on four FDC educators' practice. Informal, open-ended interviews and journals were used to gather participants' stories in their own words. Member checking was used to ascertain participants' agreement before extensive participant quotes were used in research stories. Participants described the transformation of everyday events into authentic, meaningful learning opportunities for children; children's desire to learn through observation and hands-on, open-ended investigation; and the importance of play and child-directed activities. The educators worked to encourage children's social competence, self-concept and wellbeing, and used informal observation and photographic documentation to track children's development and plan future activities.

Continuous Manifold

At the beginning of this article we claimed that the concepts of smooth and striated space offer an opportunity to move beyond well-worn research binaries. Mander et al (2011, p. 6) suggest that key elements to moving beyond binaries include:

refusing to accept the power-laden and hierarchical logic of the binary category, seeing the boundary between the halves of the binary as fluid and permeable, and reconstructing the relations between those halves in more positive and sustainable ways than the binary construction has previously allowed.

Although smooth and striated may be contrasted, to represent them as separate and opposing forces is misleading. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) wrote that although complex differences between smooth and striated space exist, they in fact exist together in an often asymmetrical mixture. There is no suggestion that either kind of space is in some way better or more desirable than the other: the struggles and obstacles of each are different.

Earlier we also discussed the mathematical model of smooth and striated with reference to Riemannian space as a model of the smooth. Riemannian space also serves to illustrate how smooth and striated exist together. Riemann's concept of space was of a continuous manifold (multiplicity), a patchwork of local spaces which allowed him to encompass both Euclidean and non-Euclidean geometry under a single overarching concept (Plotnitsky, 2006, 2009). Riemannian spaces, therefore, may be 'both smooth and (locally) striated' (Plotnitsky, 2009, p. 201). Massumi (2010) describes how Riemann's concept of continuous manifold facilitates a move beyond dualistic thinking:

Riemann's geometry invents a formalisation of space as a patchwork of regions *all* of which connect at the edges of *each*. Space for Riemann is the continuity *of* the multiple, unreduced to a unity, unsplit, and needing no salvation through triangulation. The *continuity* of this infinite connectivity of the multiple makes the preoccupation with the One [or the Two of duality] simply unnecessary. (p. 6, original emphasis)

Smooth and striated, therefore, are not about binaries, but are about multiplicity. Although smooth and striated aspects of the research discussed in this article have been highlighted, none of the studies is purely smooth or striated: '[N]othing completely coincides, and everything intermingles, or crosses over' (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 482).

It was the combinations of smooth and striated and passages from smooth to striated, striated to smooth, that Deleuze and Guattari found most interesting. The *Childcare in Cultural Context* study (Wise, 2002) conducted by the Australian Institute of Family Studies provides an example of how striated quality research can open possibilities for smooth space. The study addressed the

reasons why culturally diverse families might choose FDC for their children (Wise & Sanson, 2003). The research was based on the idea that families may look for different criteria in child care than 'experts' and that concepts of quality may differ for diverse cultural and social groups. Forty-six children aged 1-3 years from Anglo-Australian, Vietnamese and Somali backgrounds attending FDC were the focus, with parents and educators participating by completing questionnaires. Preliminary findings suggest a pattern in which families using FDC value care that is like the child's experience at home, potentially positioning FDC as an important option for families who want care for their children that reflects their family culture.

The *Childcare in Cultural Context* study (Wise, 2002) exists in a predominantly striated space, providing a distant vision. The large scale of the research and the way in which it was conducted mean that the voice and experiences of individual participants are not to be found in the research story. Also, the measures used were closed ones that meant parents' and educators' perspectives on what was important were constrained by the questions and statements on the predetermined questionnaires. The research was, however, based upon the premise of shifting points of reference found in smooth spaces. There was recognition that quality is not a known phenomenon that could be easily observed and measured. Instead, the study acknowledged that quality is a social and cultural construct and attempted to gather more information about what quality might mean for diverse cultural groups. The striated opened opportunities for the smooth just as the surety of Euclidean geometry paved the way for the non-Euclidean. Deleuze and Guattari (1987, p. 488) suggest that 'when the striated attains its ideal of perfect homogeneity, it is apt to reimpart smooth space'.

Possibilities for the New

This article has highlighted how little research on infants in FDC currently exists, particularly research that can tell us about infants' everyday lives. Hence, the emerging FDC research space can be conceptualised as a smooth space not yet overcoded with striations. Deleuze and Guattari (1987, p. 480) explain that smooth spaces 'always possess a greater power of deterritorialization than the striated'. This deterritorialization is the 'operation of the line of flight' (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 508). The smooth FDC research space, therefore, affords the potential of the new, not just in the way research is conceptualised and enacted (close vision, shifting points of reference that follow the lines of the research), but also in the stories about infants in FDC that it is possible to tell (close vision, heterogeneous). Such research has the potential for lines of flight toward new understandings of what it means for infants to spend time in FDC.

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