Fresh kills: the spectacle of (de)composing data

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Untitled, WR Pa 53 (Sally Mann/Gagosian Gallery, 2001)

Wax anatomical models in rosewood and venetian glass boxes, The Josephinum, Workshop of Clemente Susini of Florence circa 1780, © Joanna Ebenstein, Morbid Anatomy

Introduction

Nietzsche (1974) remarked that 'we Europeans confront a world of tremendous ruins. A few things are still towering, much looks decayed and uncanny, whilst most things lie on the ground'. This paper plays with the ideas of 'to decay' and 'to decompose', looking (in)to the (play)ground as provocation to rethink data analysis. Horne (1850), in *Household Words,* the weekly journal edited by Charles Dickens, vividly describes the disturbing, uncanny spectacle of fleshly decay in Marylebone, a dust-heap comprising of original heterogeneous contents from all the dustbins of the London locality. According to Tetens (2011), the underclass of Searchers and Sorters scaled the debris and painstakingly raked through the refuse, separating animal and vegetable matter from broken pottery, bones, rags, metal, glass, and other detritus. Everything was sold off and recycled, coarse cinders were sold to brickmakers, bones to soapmakers, threadbare linen rags to papermakers. Integral to the Searchers' and Sorters' organisation of the debris, is the mound's uncanny life as a recipient of the dead and procurer of new life, as movement sparks from the hodgepodge matter of lifeless carcasses, disintegrated bones fragments, breeze, cinders and dust. This paper leans to the process of searching and sorting through the data dust heap, but also to the unruly spectacle of fleshly decay and gruesome decomposition to trouble automatic assumptions about what constitutes data analysis in qualitative research. The paper analyses data collected as part of an original ESRC-funded project, '*Becoming a Problem: How Children Develop a Reputation as 'Naughty' in the Earliest Years at School*' (BAP) and subsequent project '*Addressing Problem Behaviour in the Early Years: An Innovative Film Resource*'. It focuses on data analysis as a visceral process of decay and (de)composition, entangling itself irreversibly in the theory that initially informed the study and considers what such analytical practices might contribute to

understandings of the young child's behaviour, qualitative inquiry and ways of engaging with empirical material(ity). Writing into the continual methodological (de)formation of ideas (Krissel 2004), I seek to quench my desire for a fantastic decomposition of the topological spaces of research/art/education (Mills, 2004). Amidst art, life and death, movement and dispersion, data analysis becomes a body encountering an idea, where the organic and the inorganic become folded into the other, one (de)composing the other, destroying the cohesion of its parts (Deleuze 1993),

> … The affective body is an event; it is implicated in the doubleness of the event. Whereas many readings of the body begin in qualification and ideological realms - in meaning - we must not neglect the body's total event… We cannot simply reduce the body to the plane of meaning. It is here that the challenge to cultural theory specifically lies: we must come to understand the body as an affective body, as a total event… (Edbauer, 2004: 18).

Deleuze talks of 'the eternal truth of the event … grasped only if the event is also inscribed in the flesh' (1969: 161, 188), it cannot be understood without its incarnation. So when contemplating the complexity of the socio-cultural nature of the factors identified in the original BAP project we realise how this necessitates the production of a complex mode of ongoing analysis that works at conjuring the multiplicity of incarnations, versions, layers, framing devices, conflicts and affects that incite wonder (MacLure, 2012), and a wondering of how an ethnographer might put flesh where the text is, so to speak, resisting '…Factuality [that] made their heart beat faster and deepened their breathing, but… also made their skin resistance fall… (Massumi, 2002: 24). This paper has in its flesh the question of what I, as a qualitative researcher do when I do something I might think of as 'data analysis'. I am interested to pursue pieces of everyday, mundane particles of data to think about what an analysis that carries theory with it might become.

Within qualitative inquiry, there are some who claim rigid classification is anathema to notions of postmodern data analysis, arguing that it is destructive of meaning (Fehr, 2000: 59). Others believe coding data retains positivist features (see St Pierre and Roulston, 2006), but recognize the proliferation of resistances and irony in such tendencies towards the orthodox in such analytical practices (see Coffey, Holbrook and Atkinson, 1996). There are others who conclude that the slow work of coding can offer more than a dry process of resemblance and representation with leanings to Deleuzian priorities of becoming, heterogeneity and movement (see MacLure, 2012). This paper documents my data analysis as a two-fold structure of the death-event, an accident, a moment of actualization, a present state of affairs that was carried into me as ethnographer, rendering both the data and myself changed and always incomplete. This data analysis was, and remains never securely legible in any (stable) present, but coexists as a repetition that finds ways to endlessly redistribute and reinvest itself (Dukic, 2009) in new and different forms of the data's flows and vibrations.

Going upstream: encounters with the event

The Deleuzian event is a complex idea that reaches far beyond what might ever be discussed in this paper, yet it seduces and entices me to think about data analysis as having a 'pure' or

virtual dimension as well as being actualized in particular states of affairs. I am also drawn to the event as I reflect on analysis as something I experience as a continuous and ongoing process of becoming-analyses, which lacks a final point of completion as well as an absolute presence or being. Péguy explains that there two ways to consider the event,

> '… one that consists in passing along the event, to gather its effectuation in history, its conditioning and its decay within history… the other consists in going upstream in the event, to settle in it as in a becoming…' (Péguy, 1995: 107, cited in Deleuze and Guattari, 1994).

This paper is interested in both considerations here but I begin by going upstream in the event. The data I will engage with is temporally located in its empirical form, but in other ways, it is not bound to a particular space and time, experienced wherever it is actualized anew, it retains an openness to it own reinventions. Williams writes, '… the event does not have a well-defined spatio-temporal location…. The event does not happen to things or to persons, but rather happens through them… and intersects with many other series that happen through others… (2009: 101-2). Going upstream, the Deleuzian event conjures becomings that render all the elements in the world connected to each other, there are no gaps, which evokes Deleuze's emphasis on the constant enfolding, unfolding and refolding of matter, time and space (Fraser, 2008: 131, cited in Bruun and Rödje, 2008). Semetsky (2003) suggests that the Deleuzian event takes place in close proximity to the figure of fold, '… The folding of thought in the process of individuation brings forth an element of novelty and presents 'life as a work of art' (Deleuze 1995: 94). In the spirit of the Deleuzian event, becomings and the fold, I understand data analysis as foreseeing no return to the subject, to the old researcher self, but the invention and creation of new possibilities of life and of death, by means of going beyond the play of forces.

Death (and decay) as event *par excellence*.

Deleuze discusses the two-fold structure of the (death-)event. Belonging to the time of *Chronos,* a 'linear' reading of physical, personal death is governed solely by mechanical laws of cause and effect. Dukic (2009) proposes that its actualization is the empirical death that appears as nothing more than a bad affect, an incompatible relation between vital systems. Smith (2010) writes that personal identity, rather than preexisting this Deleuzian death, is crucially fixed by it. According to Colombat (1996), Deleuze's counter-actualization, or a life after death belongs to *Aion*, or non-linear time, suggesting this second death never arrives, remaining unrealised, it expresses the power of life to create something continuously new. It casts its shadow on everything in every moment, inscribed in all changes, in the shape of the changes everything undergoes in moving towards death (Osaki, 2007: 90). Interestingly here, the unity of the 'I' is broken up, which is something I will pick up later in the paper.

I propose that data analysis could also have a similar two-fold structure. Belonging to a linear reading of time, coding as data analysis remains fascinated by the destruction of relations, forestalling and imprisoning something ordered and framed within a fixing logic of identity. Yet still at every moment, analysis might also display the lack of any such identity and embrace the ceaseless fluctuation of everything (Osaki, 2007) as it subsists and inheres in chaos, to

(de)compose. I am reminded here of data which fascinatingly escapes, resists, denies and undermines attempts at its analytical categorisation. Its identity remains a mystery, its representation remains a challenge. Writers such as Jackson and Mazzei (2010), St Pierre and Pillow (2000), MacLure (2011, 2012), Lather (1991), Eppley (2006), Gorard and Symonds (2010) and Saldaña (2003), amongst many others discuss (in)articulated moments where data defies representation, resists identity, including for example silences, insider/outsider researcher, sighs, snorts, stuck places, laughter and shrugs that, according to MacLure (2012) deviate and divide. This paper contemplates something of a moment that not only exceeds but seeps into and continues to ooze through the researcher's skin, setting into motion (in)corporeal ceaseless fluctuations of chaos, what Deleuze describes as a becoming of a field of intensities, where an opening is created in a playful moment, a rupture of the situation that has never yet exhausted itself. Analysis is conceptualised here as a verb in the infinitive relating both to the idea of death and to intensities – to (de)compose – of a playground observation. It exists in many places all at once because we (me as researcher, the children, the reader, co-researchers, teachers etc) each may grasp it at a different level of actualization within its indeterminable present (Deleuze, 1969: 100). The relation of composition to decomposition is of interest in the death-event. Deleuze (1988) refers to Blyenbergh suggesting that every time a body encounters another there are relations that combine and relations that decompose, what does not stop is the fact that all the time there are compositions and decompositions of relations, nothing but an immense chaos. Throughout this paper, I shall often refer to this immensity as (de)composition to signify this indeterminable relation, where the chaotic fluctuation of toing and froing movement in the playground observation I will later reflect on is a constant (de)composition of bodies, time, matter. My argument, amongst other things, will also (de)compose the fields of art, philosophy, education and science to consider how data analysis can be understood as a cascade of analyses over time but also simultaneously hovering over itself in rhythms of movement and rest, an unstable and always open condition that offers up new fields of sustained engagement with data. I will go on to discuss ways the use of the playground observation in the making of an experimental film as repetitious data analysis tries to create new ways to think about relations between (and with) my body and other (in)organic matter and associations with time, a complex redistribution of the data's energy and life, an (in)corporeal resistance to a lithosphere of fossil assemblages and more traditional coding offences (MacLure, 2012).

Empirical death: coding the corpus.

> …What is called death is, then, simply a type of encounter that acts on me
> in such a way that the extensive parts that realize my essence are forced into
> a configuration that no longer corresponds to my "characteristic" relation,
> defined as it is by a certain ratio of "motion and rest" (Smith, 2010: 76).

The process of accumulating qualitative data from sites of empirical interest attempts to 'capture', document, and later incarnate something of the subject of study. Often copious fieldnotes, photographs, video extracts and other research-related objects can contribute to this process of gathering qualitative data sets. In 1850, Horne catalogues the ingredients of a huge decomposing dust-heap in Marylebone. The dust-heap's searchers and sorters (similarly ethnographers) disembody and organise the debris to ensure the appropriation of

(re)useable materials. Such assemblages of objects become collections by the imposition of order and classification,

> …the dead cats are compromised… dealers come… they give sixpence for a
> white cat, fourpence for … a black one according to her quality…the bones
> are selected with care, and sold to the soap-boiler. He boils out the fat and
> marrow first, for special use, and the bones are then crushed and used for
> manure… (Horne, 1850: 380).

Sorting the Dust-heap, London, George Robert Sims, 1902   Fresh Kills Landfill, New York, Michael Falco, 2001

What is of particular interest is the heterogeneity of material(ity) found amidst the dust and cinders. Ukeles (2002) contemplates the cultural significance of such detritus, '… They would never mingle human remains in a place where they put garbage; that would collapse a taboo in our whole culture. That crosses a line. So I was wrong…' (2002: 1). Similarly in qualitative research, from the heterogeneity of the dust heap (data corpus), the dry bones and other debris are carefully distilled, coded, boxed and tagged,

> … The glass tops reveal the gruesome contents… Regardless of the size of
> the adult body in life, almost every skeleton can be neatly tucked into a box
> measuring 3 feet by 1 foot by 1 foot. The final resting place of farm residents
> is a small room in the Anthropology Department…Only the outside labels on
> the boxes hint at what is inside: white man, 45 years old, heart attack…
> (Moseley, 2000: 1).

For me my ethnographic work can seem rather like Horne's dust-heap, Ukeles' Fresh Kills landfill, Moseley's description of the boxed bones and Smith's encounter with empirical death described earlier. Scraps of heterogeneous data contents drawn from various research sites - schools, homes, museums, art galleries – that were once forced into particular recognizable configurations, are torn from their living contexts, no longer corresponding to their familiar characteristic relation or form. The classroom, the playground, the child and her family are observed and documented, not as the chaotic spaces they might be, but broken down into threads and traces of pre-existing themes, no longer resembling their once familiar forms. They are distanced from their observer, severed from their vibrant and intense life forces and embalmed in a textual eternity.

Tim Knox and Todd Long-Staffe-Gowan Collection,   The Secret Museum, © Joanna Ebenstein, Morbid Anatomy
   © Joanna Ebenstein, Morbid Anatomy

The images that constitute Ebenstein's 'Morbid Anatomy' above document different, yet related fragments of lives in the backrooms of museums where distilled historical moments lack those living, chaotic correspondences in pursuit of preservation - lifeless carcasses made of wax, clay and reconstructed dried bones, crucially fix representations of 18th and 19th century fascination with, and understandings of anatomy. The photographed corpses, skeletons and body parts sometimes suspended in jars of formaldehyde preserve something of the morbidity and finality of museum archives.

With thoughts of fresh kills, museums and empirical death flooding my mind, I find myself returning to data from our 'Becoming a Problem' (BAP) project[1]. As I re-engage with the data archives, I find them infused with the smell of must, momentarily I hear echoes and catch the scent of the vibrant lived experiences of the four researchers who went into reception classrooms, spending hours talking, observing and playing with young children, teachers, parents and other school staff, then bringing fieldnotes back to the university for discussion in what I remember to have been inspiring and energised team meetings. Four years later, the memories are preserved in a kind of analytic formaldehyde.

As I re-read fragments, I find repeated 'evidence' that would lead researchers to think about coding. Many behaviour-oriented research projects over the past fifty years and beyond have turned to coding (see Brown 1969, Jones 1972, McClellan and Kinsey 1999, Norris and Smith 2002, Hallam, Rogers and Shaw 2004). Similarly our research team discussed coding the data according to themes such as inclusion, environmental factors, family life, disability and Special Educational Needs, amongst others. Mindful of our processes to work through the data corpus, making coded selections based on our knowledge, assumptions and framings that have already inscribed the data, I am returned to MacLure, '…the 'grammar' always pre-exists the phenomena under investigation…' (2012: 8). Perhaps our representations had already been crucially fixed as we collected the data, as we read the data, as we inevitably coded the data. As I rummage through the project debris, I get a feeling of how much the data has been culled, searched, classified and incarnated to work (with) codes. Years later, many

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[1] MacLure, Jones, MacRae and Holmes were four researchers involved in 'Becoming a problem: how children develop a reputation as 'naughty' in the early years classroom' (Funded by the Economic and Social Research Council, 2006 – 2008)

data extracts and themes have been left behind, some occasionally recalled for the writing of new journal papers but nevertheless filed somehow, alongside photographs, clips of video, objects and fieldnotes from the same project, coded, catalogued and stored in this metaphorical dusty museum backroom. These disintegrated data fragments, bones, breeze and cinders await an interested postgraduate student to blow the dust from the covers, the boxes, the bundles of artefacts and begin re-reading life back into the dried corpus.
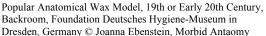
As I close the archives, breathing in the unworldly stench of the data's empirical death, I am aware that something of this data's odor has always lingered, clung to my clothing but more menacingly, been ingested into my blood stream and body's fibres. I momentarily rewind to think about both the nature of the data's death in the form of how it offered itself up for coding and analysis and how even after its death, there remains a will to life. On the surface, there seems to be a tension between data fragments succumbing to what might be considered as a 'natural' physical death (data that is already ordered, tamed by codes as it is accumulated) alongside the possibility of what I might think about as data's pre-emptive suicide, other ways data issues itself from the chaos of the school and crawled under my skin. Can this tension insist that the 'death' of data may or may not be at my disposal? Deleuze (1988: 34), after Spinoza, would argue that one cannot plan to kill onself, but instead, suicide comes from the Outside, as an extreme auto-immune disease. So, I am intrigued to think more about how some data does not end up buried in the Fresh Kills landfill, Marylebone dust-heap or shelved in the backroom but becomes a modified part of myself, behaving like a ruminating poison that disintegrates other parts of my body and at times, can turn against them. Perhaps it is not always already an indiscernable feat of engineering that I am left with the particular collection of data fragments on my page. Perhaps accidentally I am also left with data creeping under my skin. Whether the data falls comfortably into coding or refuses the process, the selection does not always seem to be at my disposal. Some curious fragments seep through my pores, in molecular ways becoming part of my flesh, (de)composing with my body, where the act of living with the data is necessarily opened to the outside, with new becomings and metamorphoses (Colombat, 1996). This ingested data lives with and in me, entering a new kind of fleshly decay and analysis that goes beyond coding. It is to these new becoming-analyses that I now want to turn.

Death: becoming-analyses

> The problem of philosophy is always one of a life… for Deleuze, death has
> the double structure of the event … it forces a counter-actualization that
> engenders a new proliferation of life forces… (Dukic, 2009: 1).

Amongst many instances of coding offences, MacLure (2012) discusses the way coding tends '…to take you 'away' from the data – from their detail, complexity and singularity…' (2012 : ??). Coding seems to abstract, extract, stabilise and leave the data as a kind of open cadaver in the museum backroom, having undergone primary and often subsequent autopsies, evidence and entrails have been severed from fibres, organs excavated and some removed for closer inspection, skin has slipped, left hanging.

Popular Anatomical Wax Model, 19th or Early 20th Century, Backroom, Foundation Deutsches Hygiene-Museum in Dresden, Germany © Joanna Ebenstein, Morbid Antaomy

"Anatomical Venuses," Wax Models with human hair in rosewood and Venetian glass cases,The Josephinum, Workshop of Clemente Susini of Florence circa 1780s, Austria © Joanna Ebenstein, Morbid Antaomy

In strange juxtaposition to Ebenstein's images above of abandoned, open cadavers, Sally Mann's photographic collection of what remains after death (see below), documents donated and still intact carcasses that have been positioned to recreate murder and suicide scenes, often lying on the cold, hard earth, found wrapped in bags, submersed in stagnant water, tied with frayed ropes to trees[2]. Their (de)composition is carefully studied by forensic anthropologists and although scientific decomposition is empirically, '…associated with expectation, which depends on consciously positioning oneself in a line of narrative continuity…' (Massumi, 2002: 25), these corpses seem to begin to evoke a Deleuzian counter-actualization that engenders the proliferation of other life forces. Although, according to Mann, Bass and Meadows (1990), the body moves in a linear way through stages of (de)composition: flesh (rigor mortis); bloat (accumulation of gases in the bodily cavity); active decay (voracious feeding of maggots and purging of decomposition fluids into the surrounding environment); advanced decay (death of surrounding vegetation) before arriving at dry remains (dry skin, cartilage and bones) and eventually disappearing into the earth, there are also complex life forces that flourish. Rather than just being focused on dried bone fragments or wax sculptures depicting abandoned carcasses, the forensic anthropologists are committed to recording the competing biological, taphonomic, ostelogical, entomological and other proliferations influenced by the ground itself and other environmental factors that affect the body's (de)composition process. Temperature, soil conditions, microorganism, entomological and scavenging activities, burial type and depth, trauma to the body and clothing are all closely observed (Mann, Bass and Meadows, 1990: 103). Undertaken as a scientific endeavour, the close surveillance of still intact carcasses at the Tennesse Forensic Anthropology Center often manifest unexpected observations, challenges to assumed knowledges and new forensic discoveries that defy and exceed something of the 'usual' (de)composition process.

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2 Photographed at The Forensic Anthropology Center, the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. This Center was established for the study of bodily decomposition to enhance forensic understandings in cases of murder and suicide.

What Remains © Sally Mann, 2004

Here, I am taken back to a different kind of qualitative analysis that involves a slower reading of the data, perhaps infusing this closer attention to the detail with theoretical ideas, which allows, invokes, encourages different kinds of understandings to emerge. I imagine the more complex work we wrote about after the BAP project. Re-reading academic papers and conference symposia reveals that the initial coding process pushed us to challenge any tendencies to make straightforward readings of data and engage in more complex categorisations. Indeed, a number of papers[3] that came out of this project analysed more problematic classroom moments that seemed much more difficult to categorise or code - isolation and abandonment; children as objects of curiosity; voyeurism; mimicry, performance and protest / resistance. Just as the Tennesse Forensic Anthropology Center documents the complex proliferation of death, giving rise to new life, amongst scientifically calculated half lives, some of our data analyses incited wonder (Maclure, 2011a) and abundant flickers of new life. So, coexisting with Sally Mann's photographs of unexpected life forces that emerge from (de)composing carcasses and a closer interest in what had been disregarded in relation to its previous form or meaning, is the promise of uncanny life. Movement sparks from the heterogeneous matter of lifeless matter where, as MacLure also suggests in data (following Deleuze, 2004: 4), there might be '…examples of the entanglement, or unholy mixture, of language and materiality…'rebel becomings'…' (2012: ??). Given this backdrop of becomings amidst a plethora of life and empirical death, movement and dispersion, I want to move from the death that has exstinguished life from the dust-heap's black cats, chairs, discarded tables and old clothes and the coded data fragments, to develop further the idea of the second death that never arrives (Osaki, 2007: 89), remaining unrealised, expressing the power of life to create something continuously new. This second death relates to Deleuze's particular notion of time that cannot be stated in linear sense - *Aion* - his 'meanwhile' or 'deadtime', superimposed on all the other meanwhiles (The Logic of Sense, : 150).

> …we never cease and we never finish to die… death or 'to die', as a pure
> Event, as an incorporeal, is essential to the creation and proliferation of life
> and thought… (Blanchot, quoted by Deleuze, 1994: 149).

Here, I am focusing on aspects of data that refuse to disintegrate as the dust-heap's searchers and sorters, classify, categorise and code, but continue to (de)compose, to decay, to insist.

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[3] See for example, Holmes 2010, Jones, Holmes, MacRae and MacLure 2010, MacLure, Holmes, Jones and MacRae, 2010

As a researcher in the school, I am conscious that some data seeps into my body, and refuses to die on a museum backroom shelf. I am suggesting here that once inside me, it becomes molecular, a becoming-analyses that inheres in and populates the remnants, or dry bones of the documented empirical data, endlessly redistributing itself, returning with no rational experience and no longer tied to the same form (of life).

The flesh of the pack

I want to move here to think about the lingering odor of an ingested playground moment and how it came to (pre)occupy me, (de)composing inside of me and becoming more than a corpus left behind. As a researcher on the BAP project, there were few memorable moments in school, but one particular moment did not seem to attain a clear, recognisable form for me. It was unclear as to whether this observation was actually part of a convoluted memory, a difficult dream, was it entangled in affect, did it include me? I am not even sure how long it lasted, as it has never really ended, it still replays in my body and mind over and over. This was a playground game between five children. They were playing 'Catch a girl kiss a girl', where one young female was caught by a sole male, she struggled to get free so he called over three of his male friends to help 'tame' her before he was able to kiss her. When I captured this instance on camera, the visual document rendered it preserved, able to be coded in some form, but the camera itself also became (de)composed in the instance, whilst stabilising, framing something out of the chaos. When I watch it back, I am alerted to a cascade of analyses of this playground game that have happened over time but also somehow simultaneously in this, that and all other moments, a becoming-analyses hovering over itself in rhythms and vibrations. For example, this playground data allows me to read what might be composed as boisterous play that leans to children's peer cultures emerging in and through play (Evaldsson & Corsaro 1998; Aydt & Corsaro 2003; Evaldsson 2003 and Goodwin). Alternatively, I might analyse this data according to the type and frequency of this game being played (Pellegrini et al. 2004), alongside the development of gendered behaviours and interactions (Goodwin 2001; Evaldsson 2003). The data also takes me to linear and often overlapping historical accounts of play, where in the Enlightenment, play was understood as contributing to learning, children's knowledge awaiting activation through play, in which case I wonder what kind of knowledge is being activated in this game? I might turn to von Schiller, Rousseau and Froebel, where, '…'The … aim of these plays [games] … is to exercise and develop the child's power of independent movement. They are journeys of discovery. They are plays which enrich the child with perceptions and experiences..' (Froebel, 1895[1985]: 244). The scientific era offers me thoughts about surplus energy and Karl Groos who applied Darwinian theory to animal and human play. A host of educationalists guide me towards this data as inquiry-based, child-centred, experimental learning, play and imitation, play and self-regulation, play and multiple intelligences. Psychoanalysis might provoke the Freudian pleasure principle, children's unconscious motivations, creativity and liberation, the realization of feelings and rehearsal, '…playing happens in that space where our imagination is able to shape the external world without the experience of compliance, climax, or too much anxiety…' (Winnicott, 1971: 70). Postmodern versions of data analysis here might allude to the children's behaviours coded in bodies as crucial sites of gender constitution and relations (Irigaray 1985, Grosz 1995, Gatens 1996, Butler 1995, Braidotti 1994). In returning to Péguy as I momentarily pass along this playground instance as an event, to gather its conditioning

and its decay within history (cited in Deleuze and Guattari, 1994), I am struck by the historical legacies that have constructed, designated and inscribed the physical, cultural, psychoanalytical grammar with which to read, identify and understand these (in)corporeal bodies and behaviours. The boys and girl, the play(ground) could be subjected to certain images of (the researcher's) thought, recruited as examples of moralistic, ethical, diagnostic, scientific, sociocultural discourses embodying cultural manifestations of gender, physical development and unconscious motivations. These images of thought could be riddled with expressions of observer phallocentrism alongside what might be read as children's playful misogynistic and/or heteronormative development, where for example Grosz (1994) argues we struggle to find '… new forms of representational practice outside of the patriarchal frameworks which have thus far ensured the impossibility of women's autonomous self-representations…' (1994: 188).

Given the possibilities within and across these (and other non-educational) cascading analyses, I have a persistent concern here. Can each participant in this game (ever) be understood as severed, bounded, isolated objects for analysis? I want to rethink this encounter of physical bodies (the boys, the girl, my own as researcher along with other incorporeal matter) in terms of our flesh, our decay, our becomings, connections and activities, as an event connected to other events. Reaching beyond the world of education into more abstract fields, these other events that connect to this playground event may include the histories and practices of observation, genetics, figured worlds, serology, architecture, entropy, imagined bodies, astronomy, enculturation, technologies, calculus, myology, all articulations of a machinic assemblage, a series of intensities, flows and speeds (Deleuze, 1987: 90, 111). Vibrating with these intensities are my own bodily responses to this game. Amongst this chaos I became aware of tiny beads of sweat oozing from my skin and my heart was beating faster. Something in this framed moment moved beyond the frame, as my self was nothing more than the connections and effects I/we became. The unity of the 'I' was broken up in this data. In the playground on that day, watching this group of excited children, I recall a frisson caused by uncomfortable feelings in the pit of my stomach, tingling and numbness in my arms, sweating, a heavy sensation in my legs. This playground encounter has never been far from my mind ever since.

The data enters my body. It seeps in through my skin, my pores, my mouth, my lungs, my muscles, my stomach, my nose and my fingertips. A solitary boy entraps a girl. Her arms are immobilised behind her. The boy is laughing and calls over a group of boys, who immediately respond to his call and surround the girl. The speed of this siege, this frantic furore of gripping and shaking, as spit flies around a boy shouts, "Get her!", faces are frenzied, eyes are bulging with spinning, seizing, my senses are exacerbated. With the pack soon devouring the girl, I'm drawn to her clothes being stretched taut around her neck and only imagine the lunging of the girl's flesh - the pulling, tugging, grasping for help, shrieking seemed to work straight on my affective nervous system that had sensors everywhere in my flesh. I am girl, being pulled apart, my flesh ripping. I am the wild boys, holding her tight, fighting against her waning strength. My eyes, through the camera lens observe the playground scene, yet the intensity rushing around my body disrupts any seduction towards a linear narrative. My body and flesh are out of joint with the sedated coding that I already anticipate through the lens and know will frame this playful encounter.

In this moment, thought relates to my flesh and not my brain.

Beaulieu (2011: 76) writes, '…Because becomings obey no predefinitive rule, they happen like an event: "We can be thrown into a becoming by anything at all, by the most unexpected, most insignificant of things" (Deleuze and Guattari, 2005: 292)…'. On this basis, I wonder what other becomings found their way into this playground encounter. My body felt as though it was being swept up with an account of data becoming in my flesh, into relations of movement and rest as the encounter surged, lapsed, went dormant, only to surge once again. At the intensity level, the experience was registering all over my skin, '… outside expectation and adaptation… narratively delocalized, spreading over the generalized body surface like a lateral backwash from the function-meaning interloops that travel the vertical path between head and heart…' (Massumi, 2002: 25). My body was composing with the act I saw before me, my fleshly response seemed to be entering my body into composition with the scene, with what I experienced as meat, flesh, disgust, torment. This composition did not seem like a passive, but an aggressive force and following Duncan (1999) who discusses data that holds onto you as an ethnographer, it was as if its tenacious grip surged towards my heels as I walked across the playground, I sank into the mud-flow as if some malignant hand were tugging me down into the obscene depths of this becoming. There were moments of indiscernibility, indifferentiation, ferocious assemblages where I could no longer be distinguished from the boys, the girl, their clothes, the playground, the camera, the air, the wind. I was simultaneously above myself, inside myself, not recognising myself, without form, next to the girl, under her feet, I became the clasping hand of the boy, the girl's pumping heart, blood racing through her veins. Returning to my earlier deliberations about death and suicide, as Deleuze would postulate, this becoming was not the effect of an intentional choice, of free will or of a voluntary act, since it was happening like an event. My body seemed to (de)compose into a formless porous membrane, folding into itself, the child and the landscape, where its molecular character was such that I sensed the subtle affects that shimmered through every nerve in my body. This moment seemed to be what Deleuze describes as,

> … produced … in a chaotic multiplicity, but only under the condition that a sort of screen intervenes… Like a formless elastic membrane… the screen makes something issue from chaos, and even if this something differs only slightly…. chaos would be a universal giddiness, the sum of all possible perceptions … but the screen would extract differentials that could be integrated in ordered perceptions…. The event is a vibration with an infinity

of harmonics or submultiples… (Deleuze, The Fold, Leibniz and the Baroque, 1992).

The vibrations and chaos were everywhere. I became the chaos, but what differed slightly was the camera. It grabbed a moment, an ordered perception from the universal giddiness. The camera's images tell a story but not the story I remember in that moment. They offer up the dry skin, cartilage and bones, the girl, the boys, the game, they may even gesture towards gendered bodies and relations. But they offer nothing of the 'other' data, the vibrations that tenuously suspend this event where it is, nothing of the intensities that issued this game from the chaos, the threads that reverberate historical shifts and possibilities for the future as everything changes with the flows in the playground. They do not conjure my bodily reactions to the spit, the pulsating, the formlessness of affective chaos that I became. Nevertheless, I came away from the playground, the school, the project, with this 'other' data (de)composing my body, I had already become a species mutation, what Deleuze might clarify as '… a zone of the indiscernable, of the undecidable…' (Deleuze on Francis Bacon : 21) between my self and the architecture, the play(ground), the girl, the camera, the spit. Heymans suggests '… a reciprocal process of desubjectification and designification that explodes the … dualism and configures an extremely volatile and protean concept of identity out of its debris…' (2011: 6). It is a recurrence of becoming, passing through me, living in my breath, I eat with it, it infests my thoughts, it becomes in my own children, it characterizes my inability to write, it floods my dreams, and never has an absolute presence. I feel a creative, experimental energy returning from it, perhaps similarly to what Colombat writes as, '… What returns, eternally, are the intensive forces and the becomings of what Rimbaud called "Life itself"…' (1995: 235). My mutated self goes into other research projects, moving amongst other mundane events that in turn (de)compose, mutate and change everything once again. However, I am curious to think more about the continual becoming of how this play(ground) event lives through all of these mutations, vibrations, new intensities, contemplating it as a, '… vertiginous movement endowed with a force: not one which causes the return of the Same in general, but one which selects, one which expels as well as creates, destroys as well as produces...' (Deleuze, 1994: 12).

Film: the eternal return of becoming-analyses.

In an attempt to reconcile some of this 'other' data, including my own unease with the playground game, the sickening feelings, its mutations and vibrations that reverberate in me, we (the project researchers) began experimenting with the idea of using film, consciously looking to ways cinematic challenges to anaestheticised versions of childhood might offer the data analysis some provocative flesh. With an aim of unsettling well-rehearsed responses to the reels of classroom and playground video footage we had accumulated over the project, the research team made a film[4] inspired by our Deleuzian readings at that time[5]. Beginning with Grosz's suggestion that according to Deleuze, art '… does not produce concepts, though it does address problems and provocation. It produces sensations, affects, intensities, as its mode of addressing problems…' (2008: 15), we hoped our film might upset both our

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[4] The film can be found at http://www.esri.mmu.ac.uk/resprojects/project_outline.php?project_id=133

[5] Cinema 1: The Movement Image, 1983 and Cinema 2: The Time Image, 1985

own and the audience's attempts to classify and organize. Following Deleuze and Guattari, we wanted to take '… a bit of chaos in a frame in order to form a composed chaos that becomes sensory, or from which it extracts a chaoid sensation as variety…' (1994: 206). In the making of this film, I knew I had to include the clip of the girl and boys in the playground as it continued to eat away at my flesh. I had two major concerns here: firstly the team wanted the film to interfere with the coding and 'grammar' that pre-exists the phenomena under investigation (Maclure, 2012: ??) so that rather than the audience immediately linking together two distinct points, for example, our footage of the playground tussle and the audience's internalised coded reference points that may pertain to gender and play for example, the film would work at the '… *disappearance* of these two discernable points, the freeing from fixed form…' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987: 238). So in editing the film sequences, I was conscious that the film needed to prompt the audience to abandon something of their usual reading frames, as well as their anchoring sense of linear time. Secondly, I was concerned to find a way to represent something of how the playground act had thrown me into a becoming-analyses that continues to erode/erase my body. I wanted to find a way to slow down, decompose, harness and develop the affects that still ravage my flesh at the thought of this playground act. I needed something that would viscerally represent how my body continues to (de)compose this data. How could I use the film to '…[throw] the self into upheaval…' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987: 240) once again, take me (and its audiences) to an affectability that was not tied to subjects, but a '… composition of speeds and affects …' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987: 258). I began by trying to submerse myself in what I could grasp at, hold on to in the playground becoming-analyses. It seems to be about a strange participation in a multiple of (in)organic, (in)corporeal relationships, my becoming-something-other, losing any sense of myself as an individual, structured form, with an uncompromising bodily composition to decompose amongst formless molecular meanderings. The unity of 'I' lost, the individual becoming a pack. I am amidst my body (and the body of data) no longer being straightforwardly prediscursive matter, but feeling a strange dis-unity that I can only describe as formless primeval flesh, shapeless, featureless and vulnerable. This idea of flesh affects me. My (de)composition into the flesh of the camera, the play(ground), the girl, the boys draws me back to the complex and unexpected fleshly decompositions in Tennessee amongst flesh-eating bacteria, reading the Deleuzian autological concept of becoming-molecular and the designification of my once recognisable body. I focused on the words 'decomposing flesh' and spent hours looking around open access internet sites until I found some footage that somehow took my body to a different, yet challenging place. The video footage featured wild dogs attacking an injured member of their own pack. I desired to watch the clip but only with my eyes wide shut - the thought of the film clip disgusted me, it felt unseeable. Eventually I summoned the gist of the dogs devouring their captive by glancing intermittently at it sideways, through squinted eyes. It was blood-thirsty, frenzied, visceral, unforgiving tormented, relentless and savage.

Pack of Wild Dogs kill rival Wild Dog

I glanced again to witness the struggling injured wild dog, now gripped by three other dogs around its neck, torso and front leg, have its lower jaw ruthlessly torn from its head by the brutal savagery of one of its own pack. The feeling left by the torn meat of the fleshly wound lingered in my body. It invoked feelings in my stomach that I could only described as nausea, anger, disgust. As MacCormack suggests, '… The desire to watch images of violence and viscerality on film brings with it a fascination of disgust, a wish to disrupt the self through affect by these images…' (2000, www.cinestatic.com). This level of disgust was the composition of intensities, speeds and affects that conjured something of the becoming-analyses of the playground. It evoked what I believed was a strange coupling, '… the coming together of two orders, one chaotic, the other ordered, one folding and the other unfolding… (Grosz, 2008: 18) and so edited a short clip and juxtaposed it next to the playground video extract.

Despite how I came to connect to or find this clip, it was a selection and when juxtaposed with the playground game, the film's subsequent audiences articulated a range of fascinating responses (and in many cases were silenced). It seems for professionals who work with young children, it expels some of the liberal humanist discourses about young children's kindness and empathy, '… *Children should be friends... only adult animals fight…*'[6], as well as creating connections with Freudian notions of animalistic play in young children, '… *The dogs are hunting in a pack. Are you saying children are like wild dogs? They were just playing…*'. It destroys audiences' tendencies to code the children's playground game in familiar ways, and challenges them to question assumed relationships, '… *this was a dark horror film… scary…*', '… *There are some unrelated scenes with dogs. I don't see the connections with children in classrooms…*', as well as producing uncomfortable affects, impulses and intensities that infected the playground, '… *It made me grimace…*', '… *Disturbing images…*', '… *I am nearly in tears…*', '… *a deeply affecting film...*', '… *Watching the film was like a psychotic experience…*'.

There were expressions of curiosity, frustration and anger about my decision to place the clip of the pack of dogs alongside the playground extract, as if some found the suggested '…

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[6] All italicized extracts here are taken from audience responses to different showings of the film. Audiences included academics; a Director of Children's Services; a former head of Policy Development at the General Teaching Council; an educational psychologist/consultant on behaviour and emotional issues; members of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services; social workers; parents attending a mother and toddlers group; teachers who took part in the original BAP research project; early childhood teacher educators; students aged between 8 and 16 years from a comprehensive school and from a progressive independent school; and trainee teachers.

indiscernibility between the human and the animal to be "vulgar"…' (Beaulieu, 2011: 85). The film seemed to leave the audience with uncomfortable feelings that were '… entering into composition with a body that does not agree with [their] own, and which as a result initiates a process of decomposition of the specific configuration of [their] extensive parts…' (Smith, 2010: 82). It was as though some of the audience had a flesh reaction and could not stomach aspects of the film, as though their moral and ethical codes were pitched against a morbid fascination. References to the film being a psychotic horror film, scary, freaky, with disturbing and sinister message also interests me. MacCormack discusses the fascination with horror films, writing, '… Pleasure taken in watching that which traumatizes or discomforts the subject comes from two different sources: the horror which is unexpected (shock or fear) and that which is expected (yet still dislodges the subject)…' (2000, www.cinestatic.com). Perhaps some of the images did manage to dislocate the audience from what they were expecting in relation to a more predictable and straightforward film coded with legible representations and fixed identities of children and their behaviour. The film did provoke response like '… *disgusting can't justify it, sick cruel…*' which for me returns me to an inability to stomach some of the images, causing a reflux action and thoughts of being sick. Unlike my own ingested becoming-analyses that inspired (but without determining) the visual juxtapositioning, some of the audience refused the images, resisting what they interpreted to be a more straightforward conceptual relationship between the savagery of the dogs and the playful children in the playground.

Conclusion

I find myself trying to conclude a paper about what I, as a qualitative researcher do when I do something I think is 'analysis', yet remain tormented by a version of analysis that still relies on incapable language. The symposium itself has played with the customary notion of ruins in terms of damage or decline, with various papers arguing that 'ruins' have generative possibilities. Within this paper, the death and decomposition of data has been reconsidered as traces or remains of things that were once much more substantial. The dust, cinders, breeze, bones and fleshly decay map out particular, yet less discernable sites, no longer protected or closed off, but open to the earth, to the outside that departs from the usual territories of data analysis. I began the paper wondering how an ethnographer might become mindful of this by putting flesh where the text is, yet I conclude (because I have to) in words, where flesh has also somehow failed me. My struggle here is not about my choice of flesh over language, but the relation between formlessness and order. Despite my frustrations, listening to ESRI colleagues (MacLure, Jones, Torrance, Solomon, Brown) discussing the idea of the event and in particular extracts from a paper by Williams (2009), I remain comforted by the question, '… what if the point is to topple language into the event rather than the event into language?...' (2009: 100). I realize I cannot render the data (as event) tamed, according to Fraser (????) it always exceeds the bodies in which it is actualized, it exceeds the page, even the idea of itself but this paper has attempted to topple language into a moment in the playground to watch the grammar and codes tumble, scamper, scrat around, flourish, scavenge and (de)compose. This unruly language seemed to cling to the (im)possibilities of becomings, visceral ideas, incomprehensible affects, intangible intensities and my hope is that this process has movement and life, that the disorderly language did disperse and collect, pulsate and sedate, spit, sweat and swallow.

Dukic (2009) intimates that after death there is an imminent flow of life where reinvestment of intensities become dispersed elsewhere. Considering Deleuze's two-fold structure of the death-event and more particularly the empirical death of coding, I have tried to breath into and sweat out the redistribution of vital intensities in data, the creative and experimental possibilities in new becoming-analyses. This attempt at breathing and sweating has not constituted a Deleuzian (death-)event in its entirety. The change in intensities in, after and before the playground, in other dimensions of the playground and more abstract forms and configurations of it, might intimate it was a site of an event, but I regard it as an already pre- and post-event event. Along with the film and the ongoing becoming-analyses, they constitute an event's connectivities in time and with other events. In the process of becoming-analyses, I have tried to write about how

> '… every organ functions as an eye, the very entrails see and look … every organ and pore of the body functions as an ear attuned to rhythm …the body is, for a moment at least, directly touched by the forces of chaos from which it so carefully shields itself in habit, cliché and doxa…' (Grosz, 2011: 24).

By seeing and hearing differently (and using the film to encourage others to do this), my organs and entrails help to defy '…easy conceptualisation and thereby calls into question our rational grip on the empirical world… (Heymans, 2011: 8). The child, the researcher, the playground's concrete, the fibres in my body, the kiss, the foreign particles lodged in my eyelashes slip out of the grasp of my usual classificatory structures and the ways I more typically delineate their attributes and abilities. To (de)compose into chaos, to disrupt linearity, well-rehearsed grammar and codes and to listen inside my body without my ears, enables the data to surprise me in its cascading becoming-analyses and, according to Brown (2007), I was able to become curious about what those surprises reveal to me about the data, myself and the plane on which we exist.

My attempts to write and think through the Deleuzian fold and event, work with the idea 'to (de)compose' data and the making and showing of the film all tried to find different ways to contemplate and touch the chaos momentarily, yet I am conscious that these analyses soon become molar once again. The bodies in Tennessee, despite the deviations, detours and unexpected wonders of their biological, taphonomic, ostelogical and entomological proliferations, eventually become dry skin, cartilage and bones and their final resting place is a box on a shelf in a small room in the anthropology department. My becoming-analyses that still tries to topple something of the primeval flesh and mud-flow into the event has to reconcile itself with, '… all muck eventually becomes rock and all molecular systems sooner or later coagulate into stable molar ones: "no flow, no becoming-molecular," they write, "escapes from a molar formation without molar components accompanying it" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987: 334)... (Heymans, 2011: 9). However, something of this chaotic (de)composition along the way has helped me come to new intensities, new molar components and urged me to analyse data as being-in-progress.

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