

teaching

in which the teachers' representations of teaching in rural schools are explored



map of this chapter

creative representations of teaching

the object collage

soundscapes of teaching

a theatrical skit

teaching —conversations and correspondences

affects, relations & body

time, affects & place

“tell me about teaching in this place”

*the experience [of rural teaching] is more than learning ...
important aspects of good rural teaching and good rural leadership belong in the realm of
the experience of place and cannot be contained or prescribed within the teacher learning
curriculum*

- Cathryn McConaghy (2006b:51)

We are in a mutual relation with place. We affect place by our being and our actions, and place affects us: our sensing of place affects how we think, feel and act. The teachers in this study were appointed to particular schools in particular rural places. I asked the teachers to tell me about the places of their teaching (see the chapter *place*). And I asked them to tell me about teaching in these places and spaces. These were places and spaces of becoming. About half way through the data collection year I became aware that there was a distinction between “place” as described by the teachers (that is, both the physical and lived experiences of place), and the “spaces” which they created for their becomings-teacher. I began asking myself, what *spaces* do graduate teachers create in these rural places for their becomings? And how are these related to the *places* which they inhabit? And to their bodies as places?

In Deleuzo-Guattarian philosophy (Deleuze & Guattari 1988:380) spaces of becoming are *smooth* spaces—spaces where points are subordinate to trajectories, as opposed to *striated* space where it is the points which matter. Smooth space is concerned with movements, and striated space is concerned with subjects/things. In becoming-teacher the points of lived experience are subordinate to the trajectories the teachers take; to the speeds and slownesses of the teacher assemblages. ‘Becoming is the movement by which the line frees itself from the point’ (Deleuze & Guattari 1988:294). However:

smooth space allows itself to be striated, and striated space reimparts a smooth space, with potentially very different values, scope, and signs. Perhaps we must say that all progress is made by and in striated space, but all becoming occurs in smooth space (Deleuze & Guattari 1988:486).

Smooth space and striated space are distinguishable yet intertwined with each other. It is the smooth spaces of becoming-teacher that this study explores, but these smooth spaces are implicated in the striated spaces of their schools and communities, just as these striated spaces are constituent of the spaces of becoming.

In this chapter the teachers' representations of teaching—their becomings in the smooth and striated spaces of the schools and communities in which they live and teach—are analysed. The representations were created through several different processes; some during the creative arts workshop, some from the teachers' journals and emails, and others during conversations and observations at the schools. This chapter begins with the teachers' representations of teaching created at the workshop: an object collage, soundscapes, and a theatrical skit. Following these are other representations of teaching the teachers gave to me through conversation and correspondence. These are representations of teacher assemblages functioning with other assemblages of teaching and place (human and nonhuman, animate and inanimate); of becoming-teacher in a rural place.

creative representations of teaching

the object collage

I had asked the teachers to bring objects (natural and manmade) from their place with them to the workshop and we began by sharing with each other the stories of these objects (see the chapter *place*). The teachers then created an object collage. To begin I placed a large piece of plain calico fabric on the floor of the workshop room and I asked the teachers to:

create a re-presentation of teaching

in a rural place

it won't represent any single person

it will be a collective representation

Along with their objects they were also supplied with various media which they could use to add to the collage. The media included:

pieces of fabric and wool

string

white and coloured paper

textas, colouring pencils, pastels

glue, sticky tape

The collage was to be created in silence (a recording of some light classical music was played). And as Stephanie Springgay (2003) had done in her arts-based research, the teachers were permitted to move their own and others' artefacts to produce the finished collage but they were to do so with respect for the person who had placed the object and the meaning they had described for it. I asked them to sit down on a chair when they felt the collage was done.

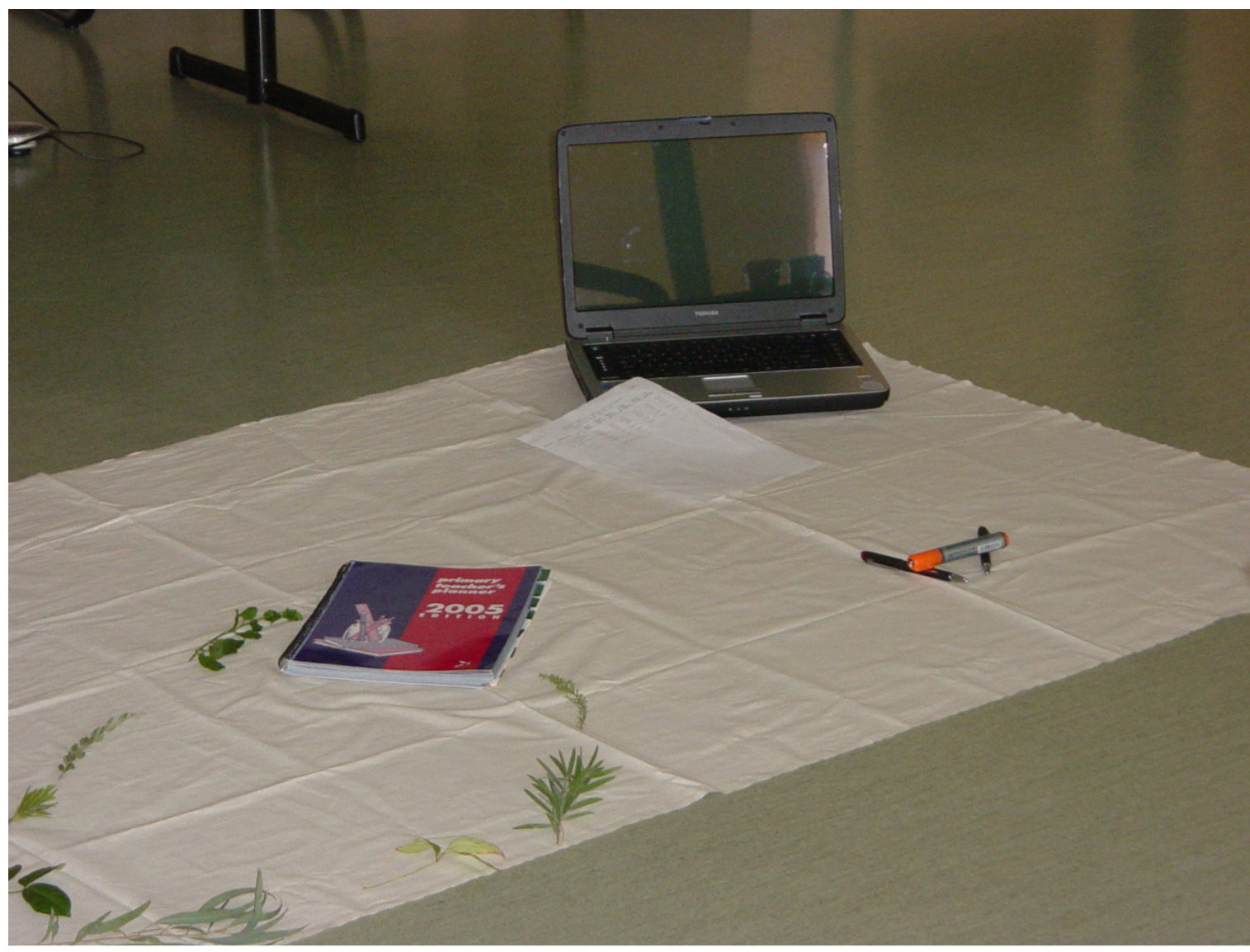
For a bit over 15 minutes the teachers were silently absorbed in the process of creating a collage of rural teaching. I took photographs, and one of the workshop co-facilitators videoed the action. When all of the four teachers were sitting down, viewing the collage, and no-one appeared to want to change or add anything I broke the silence, suggesting that we have lunch and come back after lunch and discuss the collage. But I said that if anyone really had something they needed to say now to please do so, and one of the teachers said:

Wow!

When we came back together to sit around the collage and talk about it, Lynn (a co-facilitator of the workshop) asked permission to say one thing before we started:

Beautiful!





the object collage

it's so beautiful
very beautiful

wow!

beautiful!

I found it really very powerful
the not speaking
and
just the
sense of respect there for each other's
placements
of objects
it just sort of flows
that's really powerful

I must say when you first mentioned that people would be moving
each others' objects I did feel a bit sort of
protective
a bit sort of
oh no you can't do that I'm going to place them
and then the idea of putting us all together
no this is such a personal thing
but it just worked
just blew me away ...

I tend to use the whiteboard pen much more
with my school work than the other pens
I use the laptop
for programming and everything else
and the whiteboard markers to put work up in front of the kids
and for any written work they hand in
I write on them with pen

cup of coffee

that represents the
late nights for studying to get there and then the late nights of planning and
programming
myself and my whole family are now the happiest
we've ever been because
I'm doing something that I've wanted to do for 20 odd years
I actually couldn't afford to take the time off to do it



... just the way it all worked together
a little bit of a metaphor in the sense that
it's so easy to go into a school and feel alone in a classroom
you're there with up to 30 pupils
but that you're alone as it were from other staff members

how easy it is to isolate and think
I'm the only one feeling this or experiencing this

when the principal went away for the first time and I was left
at the school with just my class and a few of his class by myself
it was the most lonely feeling
you're just there with
36 students
lots and lots of busy stuff to do but
I was the only adult there all day
it was a shock to the system

I've got that piece of bark near the ruler because I think bark is a real measurement of time of the tree

I love
this
movement
you feel like you're walking
with the movement of your objects it's like
you literally have that sense of walking on them
the path
the long and the short way
there's a real movement
in that
and the placement of those as well and those tiny little
tiny little
what was it you were scraping

they were tiny little seeds

I had to put the cotton [material] there because I thought this is the fabric of us being teachers

I can't tell you how healing it was putting that ruler down
a weight off your shoulders

I notice it's a whole one that's broken
a whole one



I thought you might have meant as teachers
there's always strings attached

isn't that what strings attached over there are

they are just
links
really
that's a photo of the library next to the computer and books
just teaching the students now
they sort of veer away from books and want to go to computers
bring back the books bring back the books
no but
these two educational tools linking us to
other cultures
and then our own magic
Aboriginal culture
that links then into art and then onto creative arts
just a link

they're the strings that are attached

that's supposed to represent the river
that's coming back towards the
trees so they're drawing water
from the river
stones from really close to the river
and the leaves are pointing towards the bark
attached to the bark
the bark of the tree

it's like a flow
ideally I'd love to have the photo of the
the books
of the library over there [indicating the far side of the
laptop] and then move into
computers
and then the books
just the flow from books and education to learning about
other cultures

those four photos up here
the first photo
is of an artwork
in the quadrangle at school
and then the next photo is the art hallway
and I just feel there's always a direct link between music and
all the arts really
so that hallway is looking down the art
hallway
and then the two pianos that are in the school so that's



I was asked why I put
the ball of wool there
it's actually a yarn
as teachers there's always yarns to tell
and yarns to listen to

yarn ... The phrase to
spin a yarn "to tell a
story" is first attested
1812, from a sailor's
expression, on notion of
telling stories while
engaged in sedentary
work like yarn-twisting
([www.etymonline.com/
index.php?term=](http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=))

I put the budget in because I thought
it all comes down to the dollar
my budget
spend up big

can I just ask about the glasses

playground duty
as bright and sunny as we have you don't go outside without your sunglasses
sport or excursions a must

I've just realised
the diagonals
we've got the macro there and the micro over here

a cross section

it works its way up into
outside in

and the other diagonal
from the glasses and the diary
over to the games in that corner

this is the staff room area

this is the business end



This was the first collaborative activity of the workshop and it appeared to be an emotional release for the teachers. Despite some initial reticence regarding making their personal objects available for public use and collaborative representation, the sense at the finish of this activity was simply “wow”. The expressions “beautiful” and “wow” were not so much expressions related to the aesthetics of the collage, rather, these expressions came out of the process of the collage creation—from the experience of the creative trajectories taken by the teachers in the act of creating the collage. Looking back now I believe that the silent sharing of their lived experiences of place and teaching was an extremely powerful means of creating an awareness that they were not alone in their becomings—becomings consisting of joys and challenges, as they began their careers in unfamiliar places. The silence was vital in this. It was not a silence of rest or doing nothing, but a silence of active, creative awareness of one’s own and others’ becomings.

The discussion of the collage tells of both deterritorialisations and reterritorialisations. The teachers spoke of movement (flow, drawing close) and blockages (weight, loneliness); of lines (diagonals) and points (cross-section); of trajectories (coming back, pointing towards) and impasses (strings attached, isolate). They spoke of rupture (shock) and rejoining (healing). They spoke of the difficulty of moving between the environment and teaching: place and teaching being divided by the cross-secting diagonal of fabric. The collage depicted the complexity of teaching—so many different elements of place and teaching to move with and in-between.

soundscapes of teaching

Sonorous or vocal components are very important ... A child hums to summon the strength for the schoolwork she has to hand in. A housewife sings to herself ... Radios and television sets are like sound walls around every household and mark territories (the neighbour complains when it gets too loud).

- Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari (1988:311)

A part of functioning with place is being receptive to the sounds of that place. The teachers were in unfamiliar places performing new and challenging roles and sounds were a part of their lived experiences. They were creating spaces for their becomings in these unfamiliar places; spaces in which sounds played an important role. Deleuze and Guattari (above) suggest that organising one’s space necessarily involves sounds.

At the workshop I asked the teachers to choose words from their place. Then in pairs, standing on opposite sides of the room, they *shouted* these words to each other.

As they walk towards each other they spoke the words softer and softer. Then as they crossed and begin to walk away from each other they began to speak louder and louder. They repeated this with several different words and sounds, and with different expressions—happily, angrily, with surprise.

turkey

quiet

book

caring

behave

attitude

click

uh-huh

CLICK

TURKEY

QUIET

CARING

UH-HUH

BOOK

BEHAVE

ATTITUDE

uh-huh
book
 quiet
 caring
 turkey
 attitude
 click
 behave

During the interview in the following term I asked one of the teachers about the words he had used in this activity.

quiet

behave

attitude

I don't tend to
yell too much

I mean
I do

I tell the kids
when they're lined up out the front of the room
they come in
they sit down at the desk
they take their hats off put their bags down and sit *quietly*

you have to repeat it every lesson because they forget
so
I do say *quiet* a lot

behave and *attitude*
are one's I *have* to use a lot because
of these things [picking up a pile of green discipline slips] that come to me when
they muck up in other people's classes

behave
is that the right attitude do you think

as the year 7
counsellor
adviser
mother superior
whatever you want to call me
I have to sort of try to make the kids realise that their *behaviour* and their *attitude*
is the problem
I've had some of them sit there and tell me they're stupid and I've gone

*no you're not
you're not stupid
but that behaviour is rather silly
isn't it*

Following this warm-up activity the teachers created a collaborative soundscape. They sat on the floor, back-to-back. One teacher spoke a word. The word was repeated, randomly (no order of speaker, and no order of tone, expression or volume), and after

a while, another teacher added another word—and both words continued to be spoken randomly. When several words had been introduced then an instrument was added, then another (tambour and clap sticks). I allowed the soundscapes to run their own course. The first two attempts lasted two to three minutes each. On the third attempt a synergy was created that carried the soundscape for almost twenty minutes. At that time it came to its own conclusion, slowly dying away. The words used in the soundscape, and their original form of expression, were:

behave (in a loud “teacher” voice)

whatever (in a “I-couldn’t-care-less” teenager voice)

sure (in a similar “I-don’t-give-a-damn” teenager voice)

These words were repeated at various volumes and in various expressions during the course of the soundscape and clapsticks and a tambour were added.



behave

WHATEVER

whatever

SURE

behave

[clapsticks]

[tambour]

sure

BEHAVE

whatever

WHATEVER

SURE

behave

BEHAVE

sure

WHATEVER

behave

SURE

behave

BEHAVE

[tambour]

[tambour]

whatever

WHATEVER

[clapsticks]

[tambour]

sure

[clapsticks]

WHATEVER

whatever

behave

BEHAVE

behave

sure

SURE

sure

whatever

BE-HAVE

whatever

sure

behave

whatever

[tambour]

sure

whatever

behave

[clapsticks]

[clapsticks]

WHATEVER

behave

BEHAVE

sure

sure

BEHAVE

whatever

[tambour]

behave

sure

whatever

whatever

behave

These two-dimensional, silent, representations of the soundscapes cannot capture and convey the colour and emotions of the performance. The energy and emotion and general sense of creative power that was released during the collaborative soundscape appeared to be quite uplifting for both the performers and myself. Although the activities of the workshop were designed to be enjoyable and to facilitate the teachers' awareness of their places and their becomings, the primary purpose of this exercise was for the teachers to create a representation of teaching in place. What, if anything, did these soundscapes tell about the nature of the relations between becoming-teacher and place?

The words chosen for the soundscapes were, for the most part, representative of teacher-pupil communications, even though words for other sounds had been used in the warm up exercise (click, turkey, book). The result may have been different if I had, instead of asking the teachers to choose *words* from their places, to choose *sounds* from their place. However, I asked for *words* because, for those not used to mimicking sounds this can be quite a threatening request. The soundscapes did show that the teachers were very attuned to the tone of the students' voices—*sure, uh-huh*, as well as their own voices—*behave, quiet, attitude*.

In later interviews, and in their journal notes and emails, the teachers often referred to conversations with pupils, colleagues and parents. But rarely (if ever) was reference made to sounds other than voices. Perhaps for these graduate teachers their ability to be receptive to spoken words was far greater than their receptivity to other environmental sounds. Or perhaps the data collection methods simply did not facilitate the expression of their receptivity to environmental sounds. In either case it appears that the words heard in pupil-teacher communications were, for at least some of the teachers, prominent as the sounds of their places and important for them in organising their spaces of becoming-teacher.

a theatrical skit

the brilliance of theatre is that it represents experience and offers us the conventionalities by which the representation can be interpreted ... Even the most accurate replication is not representation. The energy expended in replication squeezes out everything else ... Experience represented in the theatre is dressed with the same particularities of everyday experience, has the larger-than-itself quality of everyday experience, but is transformed by being selected and shaped for interpretation. It does not replicate reality. It redresses reality

- Greg Denning (1993:89)

In asking the teachers to create a dramatic representation of teaching I was asking them to be selective; to choose to represent just one or several aspects of teaching, some form of functioning of the teacher assemblages in their rural schools. Despite having “warmed up” with activities requiring the representation of abstract concepts with their bodies (see Appendix I, task ten), the teachers chose to script and perform a role play of a classroom. This was not what I had anticipated, however it was the teachers’ decision. It was the last activity of the two day workshop and one of the teachers had made plans, prior to the workshop commencing, to leave early, so there were three teachers remaining. During the preparatory discussion for the drama one of the three remaining teachers chose to stand out—he was not comfortable with the way the script was evolving. The two remaining teachers had decided to represent the chaos of the classroom, and the script required two more bodies, so myself and one of the co-facilitators (Lynn) were co-opted (very reluctantly on my part) to play the roles of disruptive students. The other co-facilitator (Margaret) continued videoing the proceedings.

The teachers insisted on having a rehearsal of the skit without the video. So we (unfortunately) obliged. My journal notes from our facilitators’ debrief the following morning reads as follows:

task thirteen – creating a presentation

At our facilitators debrief Margaret commented that she wished she’d had the initial run through of the presentation on video as it contained an honesty lacking in the final performance. In the “rehearsal” she noted that one of the teachers actually became quite flustered in his attempts to “discipline” the disruptive students, his face turning red in attempting to control Lynn’s movement of blocks, and his body shrugging as he gave up an attempt to make contact with the silent disobedience of my own role. The other teacher also struggled, obviously bamboozled as to what she could do to “create order” as was required in the script.

This really was role play – not somewhere I wanted to take these participants, but a place that at least two of the teachers chose to go!

Role play usually draws on the personal thoughts and emotions of those involved and I had not intended asking the teachers to delve into personal emotions in this public sphere. The teacher who stood out did so because the ideas being expressed in the role play were not notions that he could comfortably explore at this time. However, for one

of the other two teachers it was something he wanted to explore very, very keenly. It was he, however, who became quite flustered during the rehearsal. Perhaps Lynn and I played our roles of disruptive students too well! And despite the rehearsal and “priming” of the actors, this teacher was still not satisfied that the skit really represented what he had intended.

something that didn't really come across quite so much was the chaos
when we first turn up to a class
that message
didn't really come across at the beginning and
it mainly came out like it was classroom management but it wasn't just that
that's only
a little part of it
I felt it was the *chaos-ness*
of walking in there and seeing everything messed up
that was how it was meant to be
we couldn't find anything
and certain things weren't the way we wanted them when we walked in there
that's what that image of everything
all over the place
was supposed to represent

and then we come in
and *then* it became a classroom management issue

For this one teacher in particular, the functioning of the teacher assemblage was often centred around creating order from chaos. He was desperate to show that classroom management issues come only *after* the chaos. Deleuze and Guattari (1988:311) recognise the role of chaos in organising space:

for organising a space ... the forces of chaos are kept outside as much as possible, and the interior space protects the germinal forces of a task to fulfill or a deed to do. This involves an activity of selection, elimination and extraction ... to take something from chaos across the filter or sieve of the space that has been drawn.

And this is what the teachers had attempted to represent in their skit; how as teachers, they needed to *select, eliminate and extract* from what they met in the places and spaces of the classroom, to organise the space for teaching and learning to occur.

teaching—conversations and correspondences

Each term, on my visits to the teachers in their schools, I asked them to *tell me about teaching in this place*. Their lived-experience descriptions describe a part of their becomings-teacher. Deleuze and Guattari (1988) describe becoming cartographically, proposing that there are two axes of becoming—longitude and latitude; longitude being *relations of movements*, and latitude being *capacities to affect* (where *affect*, rather

than being a personal feeling, is the capacity to affect other assemblages and to be affected by them). Becomings exist on this plane designated by longitude and latitude, and a body on this plane is defined by:

material elements belonging to it under given *relations* of movement and rest, speed and slowness (longitude); [and] the intensive *affects it is capable* of at a given power or degree of potential (latitude). (Deleuze & Guattari 1988:260, emphasis added)

The teachers' descriptions of teaching tell of their relations and capacities; of the speeds and slownesses of the movements of their becomings, and in relation with other assemblages (pupils, colleagues, syllabuses, practices, policies and rules and the relations between and among them); and of their capacities to affect and be affected by these assemblages. And while we can distinguish between relations (movements) and capacities (affects) they are intimately entwined. The lived-experience descriptions in the booklets overleaf focus on the teachers' teaching, including their planning and programming of the curriculum for their pupils. In the booklets the teachers describe ruptures that required adjustments on their part; blockages and impasses that hindered their teaching; and lines of flight they took to enable their becomings-teachers to be generative, rather than the alternative which would have been to allow their lines of flight to be obstructed or become lines of destruction (Deleuze & Guattari 1988:210), which may have led to a decision to leave the teaching profession.



teaching

volume I

“ruptures”

“lines of flight”

“impasses”

I've been so slack with paper work this year
I'm very good at doing programming in a retrospective way
this forecasting what you're going to do for the term is like ...
I don't even know what mood they are going to be in tomorrow
let alone ...

it's an
incredible skill
programming
it's extraordinary

it's an incredible balancing act
juggling
I've got this syllabus and these outcomes to tick off but ...

every teacher goes through this
I can think that I've got a great lesson planned
walk in there and
depending on where their hormones are at at that stage or
what sort of night they've had at home
that lesson can be
what I consider to be a ripper
that would have worked beautifully the week before
but just flops dead this day
she's a guessing game

I spoke before about integrating subjects
and I've probably given up on this
it's something I really want to do
but I just don't have the time
to do it

that would probably make me really busy next year but
ohhhh [exasperation]
where will it stop
it would be good to
do a lot more of that outdoor classroom stuff
that's the stuff I'm thinking of
for next year
integrating units
tidying up the paths I shouldn't have really gone
integrating to other subjects
getting outdoors more

I've got to get whole units
planned
what I want to do
is really map out
where I'm going
not down to the lesson level but at least
get all the units mapped out properly
I've got them in skeleton form at the moment but
I need to go quite a bit deeper with it and
figure out which topics are going to go where
and how I can integrate them

... it's not coming out as
fun as I'd like and that comes back to me because I don't have the
time
to do it
to use the arboretum and use the outdoor classroom
I'm so keen to get out there but
you need to think a little bit harder and think a lot more outside the
square and that takes a lot more time
to think
well how can I use these things
in a more constructive way

the syllabus
they say it's not prescriptive
but it is
you have to teach these topics
and to teach those topics you really have to cover the things that
they are talking about
you can't leave too many things out
so it doesn't give you a whole lot of scope
how do I jazz this up a little bit to make it interesting?

[first term]

there's lots of contradictions

take the syllabus for example

it's a real catch 22

in one sense it's a real killer of creativity and

the individual

I watch students coming into my Year 7 and 8 classes that

have a really clear sense of what they want to

learn about and the type of music they want to listen to

but the syllabus asks that I teach

certain units

over a certain time

there are choices around the units but

there's a lot of kids with a lot of different tastes so in there some kids are

going to miss out

but I need to somehow respect all those kids' needs

so in that sense the syllabus can be a real crusher and yet it's a saviour

because it gives us guidelines

a framework ...

I think at the moment

just getting the organisation

down pat that's always going to be a hard thing but

particularly things like exams coming up now

that

is really going

to take its toll

we've got to have our exams finished this week

so it's just something I know I have to do

and

it's due on Friday

I'm probably a

lot more relaxed than I would have been

(geography)

that's such an interesting subject and yet I've had lots of kids tell me it's

their worst subject

I take

a little bit of

responsibility for not making it enjoyable

I would have to say

if a student can't like geography

there's something wrong

because

there's everything in geography

so you have to like something about it

you might not like all of it

but it shouldn't be your worst subject...

being a first year I'm trying to build up this

barrage of

resources and ideas and things ready to go

I hope they make the job easier

okay

I need to do something on this

I'd then be able to just go and

pull out some resources I've already

pre-made

ready to go

I've got something to go with now I've got everything
pretty well planned
right down to lesson plans so I can walk in there (next year)
and just grab lessons

I don't stay
too far ahead
sometimes I'm up to two weeks in front but then some days I'm only
the next day
and I have to think about what I'm doing tomorrow
and I think back
why did I do that ...

(my goal is)
to get my individual education plans up to date
I think I'm starting to get my head around it all
the actual paper work
last time I think I had my head around the actual teaching side of
it
now I'm starting to get my head around
the paperwork side of it
which I think in the long term will benefit the teaching side too

... and
basically
project based work
like the kids were working on today
so I
sit there and
I run them all through the basics
when the majority of them are there
I teach them all the basics I need to teach them that that they need to know

and
all I'm going to
examine
is that they've picked up the basics
there will be a few questions
in their exams and their assessment work that
will look for
higher knowledge

[fourth term]
... I'm still trying to
find a healthy compromise with the syllabus
we're expected to teach so many different styles of music
but
the kids resist
anything that's not familiar

I make a deal with them these days
I have my lesson plan with music that I've chosen
but what I'll do is I leave a section of the lesson free
I'll have an outline of a lesson plan
and then
someone will always have a CD in the room
so I borrow their music
and quickly superimpose my lesson plan onto their music
so I do something with their music
and something with
music that they're not really into

it wasn't in anything I studied but
I'm more and more adamant now that outdoors is the way to go
finding the opportunities to
present things in a real
life context
and trying to find those things outside
if they can walk outside and say "ohh we did that in maths today" and they're
looking at a tree and
somebody goes "what do you mean you did a tree in maths did you?"
"yeah we did
we worked out the angles of the branches in trigonometry" and they go "wow"

at the end of the day if you can't bring things back to be
more contextual for them
then you are really going to struggle for them to
retain it ...

I've sort of gone away from
rushing to plan every single lesson
which is what I was doing for the first couple of terms
I've sort of sat back and looked at it
okay
this is how we're going to approach it
with the way things are around here
sport's a high priority
and the kids are in and out of class
the last week and a bit
we've had $\frac{3}{4}$ of the school away because of a musical concert
they had rehearsals and dress rehearsals and setting up and pulling down
a lot of my Year 9 and 10 kids
are missing for that

so what I did over the last
mid-year holidays I sat down and worked out
what I wanted to teach ...

... I might have learnt it
but it's just there in the short term
because I'm not seeing it
I'm not applying it
I'm not living it
it's not relevant
and often that is a struggle with some subjects

the Board of Studies says you've got to make this seem
interesting and relevant to them
well *you* try it
you try selling trade with Japan
they just can't see it
they can't get the abstract thinking of why Australia should
trade with Japan
you try to get that nexus
it's virtually impossible

... when I just plan one lesson ahead
I don't have the same level of planning it's just
not as effective as I'd like it
in the direction that I'm going
I sometimes have to pull it back and go *what was I doing*
I was going off on tangents so I really need to think about
getting those whole units down and getting the
structure planned out properly
which is probably what I'll be tidying up at the beginning of
next year
just fine tuning that
and bringing it all back into exactly where I want it to go

teaching

volume II

“impasses”

“ruptures”

“lines of flight”

having 25 of them in *every* day
and
catering for *every* possible need that you could
and
thinking about how am I going to do reading if I've got three of
them out going to learning support and I've got this one going to
there and I've got this one going to that
how am I going to cope with all of that

so that was always on your mind while you were trying to get things
ready

this year was extremely hard in finding
set routines for everything

I am kind of resigned to the fact that I'm
just going to have to keep the excursions
very very local
like in the school
which is very limiting
the river's pretty close
but the mountain
it's a bit more of a
walk

and the arboretum I haven't gone out there which was something I was
very keen on before
that's something I was really *really* keen on
and I never got there
mainly because it ended up being a nightmare trying to organise

... those sort of things I'm missing
I'm missing cues to get things done and
it is because the year 10 guy went away
and he didn't write up any procedures

I met with him for about
half a day and it was this cryptic crossword intermixed
with
four subjects intermixed with the school timetable and
and half of it wasn't there

I'm so not equipped for this! [from the teacher's journal]

that was one of the days when it was just all ...
the paper work
it would have been paper work
you have to write professional letters
I've written lots of letters over the years
but making it sound on the professional side from a teacher who's
actually supposed to know what she's talking about
what do you put in these things
you don't want to be too negative but you have to be
honest

it was like
I'm a teacher
why am I doing this
but I'm starting to see that
that's all me

I *know* they're all individuals and they learn the in different
ways but
sometimes
you can get a little bit sidetracked
with thinking *well if I just teach it*
they should all understand
even though
I know that
that's not necessarily the case
but being restricted in time
not being able to come up with four or five different activities
I have to rely upon that patience and being only able to deliver
maybe one
or sometimes two ways at best

busy
every morning or every time
that the Principal was not in the classroom
the child with asperger's was in with me
several of the Principal's class were in with me
sometimes I'd have to give them extra work
I had the release teacher here
who would just come in and
I'd be like *I don't have a book for them today*
and she's like
"okay they're doing that and that"
she'd have
an idea of what was happening so she'd help me out with booklets
and things ...

... that's a problem with a small school
where resources are limited
you can't afford to get someone else in or pay for somebody
else or
you haven't got somebody who could drive the bus
I organised it with the senior teacher
he's the one who's going to help me
he keeps on saying "when are you going to do it?" and I went
it's not as if I'm not busy enough all ready
he means well
I just go
you tell me when I'm available and I'll do it
it's just another one of those things that I know I've got to do

applying for a reader
for one of the girls in the school certificate class [Year 10]
I've only just done it
but it was due in April

it didn't even occur to me that
someone might need a reader
I didn't know this until
recently and then I went
oh my goodness
what have I got to do about getting a reader
then I found out there's all this paperwork that I've got to fill out
and they told me it was due in April
but they said "no worries we'll probably be able to do it" ...

what am I finding most challenging?
just catering for every child
equally
paying as much attention to each child
spending as much time one-on-one with each individual child
so
I can work with them at their level
but it doesn't
work
because you have children who
just cannot work by themselves

[frustrations:

about the inflexibility of colleagues who want her to be an aide in the classroom, whereas her role is to *resource* them as teachers ...]

I've got this preschool that is really good to go to
and treats you like an
adviser
not an assistant
but another fully qualified teacher who
is there to support your children and help them integrate
and then you've got another preschool who just wants you to be another
aide

the other thing that's precluding me from going on excursions is
I need to be able to drive the bus
all the other staff members are busy
and unless we can get a parent who can drive the bus which is
unlikely
I'm required to drive the bus and I haven't got my licence for it yet
it's going to have to happen
at the end of this year some time
after school
I can't see having any time really to practice
because it just slides down the bottom of my priorities
all the other things come above it
it's there but it just always gets
pushed down ...

... so then I have to try and figure out
some other thing that's going to
be beneficial but
keep them interested at the same time

that's probably been the frustrating bit about this term
that's a bit of a lesson that term 3 is a bad one
and try to get all the work done in term 1 and 2

I never realised how bad it was going to be
anyway
it's a learning experience

... I was exhausted
I don't know where it went
between
week 1
and
week 10
it just seemed to
fly

the most challenging thing has been
defining
what is to be taught and what doesn't have to be taught
I'm fine to
run by the seat of my pants
I can do that that's fine and I've had to do it
a few days
but knowing what to pick out
of the things that need to be done ...
today's been shortened
we've got
one hour to have them in the classroom
what do you do?
what do you have to get done today? ...

I really felt that
this term has really been a term of missing periods
people being taken away left right and centre so that's been probably
the frustrating bit about this term
students going on sports days and different eisteddfods we've got an
eisteddfod running
the last three weeks they're in the play
every time I turn around one of my lessons has got
half the class gone
what do you do
I mean you've got a whole lesson planned
you can't go ahead with that lesson because they all get left behind
because the stuff I'm doing is so foundational
that if they don't get it
there's no point in going on...

... on your internship your teacher would specify
"you get this activity and this activity done"
when you're sitting in front of
25 kids and you're going *right*
what are we going to do now
we've got half an hour ...

defining what needs to be done
and what doesn't
everything needs to be done but what can be left till
later and what has to be done right now

making the judgement call

[... and about parents who don't seem to take an interest in their child's
education ...]

some parents I don't see
some of the children come in taxis and you never see the parents
I had one come in the other day who other than at the reviews
I hadn't seen all year

[... and the ever changing groups of children]

thought I had it under control
I thought I did until I get these groups that are totally diverse
now I've got new children
I've been asked to take extra children on days I've got the deaf
and blind child
only one extra child but that makes a difference
there seems to be more with higher needs

teaching

volume III

“lines of flight”

“impasses”

“ruptures”

I spent
the first
two weeks just getting to know the kids
getting to know where they were at
running records
doing maths assessments
doing all those types of things so I knew where they were up to

the principal *made* me take that time out
both he and the release teacher sat down and said
“this is what you must do
don’t jump into your outcomes just yet
just get to know the kids” ...

what is the hardest thing about teaching here at the moment?
nothing
nothing really
nothing’s hard

there’s no real
major
problems
at any stage
the major problems
are that miniscule
even our major problem child
it’s not that big a problem

with
computer studies
self discovery usually goes a lot further
than
if I was to sit and teach a strict lesson on say
spreadsheets
then the kids would learn
exactly what I taught them
minus what they forgot

if I teach them or show them the basics
and then give them projects that I know will
take them past that but let them self-discover
they will remember a lot more ...

what would you say you are enjoying most about teaching here at the moment?

everything really
the kids
the staff

you really can't get any other place that's any better

everything just
goes together
there's not a day that goes by that anything's the same
but
in a small school you have a say
in everything

you do have that certain responsibility
but
you've got so many other people around you that support you

on my board right behind my desk I've got
"50 ways to ask a question"
and "30 ways to give praise"
or is it 30 ways to ask a question and 50 ways to give praise

so that's how I'm trying to work
I'm trying to increase the ways they look at a problem
from different angles

... the release teacher came in to give a hand with things like
getting to know the kids
she'd take them for an activity while I was doing running records
with Year 1s

for the next two weeks
I was on my own but
I had
a parent
who came in for pretty much that whole week
and spent time
in and out of the classroom
sort of helped out

that was fantastic
that should happen to every graduate teacher

you don't always have to deliver 100% and I'm slowly coming to the
realisation that
I don't have to do that every every time
when I first started
I had that
kind of expectation
I really don't think there is a lesson that could be 100%
but I believe you can get close
and that's what I had been aiming for
95% tightly integrated units
tightly integrated lessons where one naturally follows onto the other...

[at the start of the third term interview, before I have the chance
to begin the conversation, the teacher excitedly offers ...]

I'm taking bus loads of kids away now to do all sorts of IT stuff

now

I *know*

when pupils are going to be out of the classroom

today is a really good day and I get reading done
because the learning support teacher doesn't take any of them
out

... and I believe I'm getting more comfortable now without having to
plan
I can just walk into the lesson
I've got a greater memory for what's happened previously and I can
just relate that back
I don't have to plan as much
I'm getting better at being able to just walk in the classroom and
just go off on an idea
and not have to plan it to the nth degree

I had to look at in the longer

term

shorter term

you can wear yourself out and then you're no good in the long term

I'd rather look at it as a long term

commitment

... this is something
that I've learnt from my life
I've learnt by doing
rather than someone sitting there
preaching ...

... when I'm giving the lessons I give them a structured bit
telling them
what we want to achieve what we should achieve
then it's

you go and discover

The teachers' tales tell of challenges and successes, and joys and frustrations. There are no prescriptions for graduate teachers to follow in their becomings-teacher. Each individual is a unique assemblage of multiplicities, connecting with other unique assemblages (human and non-human, animate and inanimate) of and in their places of teaching. Their stories tell how they created their own individual lines of flight to manage the impasses they met:

how they chose to—

compromise,

get organised,

make a deal,

give up, and

not always deliver 100%;

and how they got—

more relaxed,

resigned,

a greater memory, and

comfortable.

It is common today in education circles to hear that teachers “survive” (or don’t “survive”) their first year of teaching. However, survival is not necessarily a positive movement. Survival in the context of this study would mean merely that the teachers returned to their schools the following year to continue teaching. And they all did. But who is to say that the lines of flight the teachers took to *survive* will not ultimately be destructive, or alternatively productive? In their first year of teaching the teachers adapted things to suit themselves, and adapted themselves to suit things. Their capacity to adapt to the places in which they found themselves is, according to David Abram (1996) directly related to their capacity to be receptive to place. Becomings are always in some place. The teachers created spaces in these places for their becomings-teacher, smooth spaces which enabled both the relations of movements, and the capacities to affect and be affected, that were necessary for a becoming-teacher.

affects, relations & body

... we avoided defining a body by its organs and functions, we will avoid defining it by Species or Genus characteristics; instead we will seek to count its affects

- Gilles Deleuze & Félix Guattari (1988:257)

A becoming-teacher is an act of approximating the relations of movements and capacities of a teacher, that is, developing the affects of a teacher. In notes on his translation of Deleuze and Guattari's work, Brian Massumi (1988:xvi) writes:

L'affect

is an ability to affect and be affected.

It is a prepersonal intensity

corresponding to the passage from one experiential state of the body to another

and implying an augmentation

or diminution

in that body's capacity to act.

At various times during the year the teachers' capacities to teach (their affects) were augmented and diminished by the speeds and slownesses of the movements of their becomings, and by the affects of other assemblages upon them. The teacher who was treated as an aide by a colleague, the teacher whose classes kept disappearing for sport and play rehearsals, the teacher who didn't know of requirements regarding his school certificate students, the teacher who had to take some of the principal's students in her classes, and the teacher who couldn't find the time to get his bus licence—in all these instances the capacities of these teachers to act (to teach) were diminished; however there were many instances where they were augmented—the teacher who was assisted to settle in by a colleague, the teacher who was able to take his pupils by bus to “do IT stuff”, the teacher who decided that it was not necessary to “always deliver 100%”, the teacher who had so many other people for support . Deleuze and Guattari (1988:257) write:

We know nothing about a body until we know what it can do,

in other words,

what its affects are,

how they can or cannot enter into composition with other affects,

with the affects of another body,

either to destroy that body or to be destroyed by it,

either to exchange actions and passions with it

or to join with it in composing a more powerful body.

In analysing the teachers' lived-experience descriptions the purpose is to discover what the affects of the teachers were: how they were affected and how they affected others. These can be perceived (if not necessarily named) in the representations here of their teaching, and they are further explored in other chapters of this thesis. But affects are not static: 'affects circulate and are transformed within the assemblage' (Deleuze and

Guattari 1988:257). Affects are themselves becomings. On each visit the teachers were able to tell me about both successes and challenges; frustrations and joys. At any one time it was difficult to say whether any of the teachers were taking lines of flight that would end in destruction; or if they were indeed soaring. At each interview they spoke of both descents and ascents. And what may diminish a body's capacity to act at one time, may augment it another time.

time, affects & place

Often the teachers talked about time, in particular their perceived lack of it, in relation to their capacities to teach as they would like. But also in relation to how a particular place can be experienced differently at different times. Lived-time is not a linear phenomenon: lived time is the perception of having too much or not enough; the perception that time flies, or stands still (van Manen 1997:104). And our perceptions of time change as we change: as we move from one place to another, as we create different spaces, as the capacities and relations of our becomings change the assemblages of our individuated bodies.

lived-time

I'd just like time to stop for a little while
so I can catch up
and then start again

term 4 has been so hectic
I haven't had time to come up for air
I haven't had time to breathe
and I have a feeling that it's not going to get any
better

you get to the end of the week and you just can't believe
that it's gone
quite that quickly
you set something up
to get done this week
turns around Friday
and you haven't even looked at it
you just don't have time

my day book is
full of plans
that don't work out
and I'm crossing and
taking this down there and
that one doesn't work but that happened and
that might happen and

swapping it all around

you just literally don't get to it

if I'm doing something
I want to get something done and I'll get distracted and I'll
go
what was I doing
and then I waste 5 or 10 minutes
just trying to figure where I was up to
that can be a hard bit because you don't get many
times available and
it's not really quality time in fact
it's virtually a waste of time
not getting any time
to sit down at school
apart from after school

[free periods?]
one here and one there
but they're just not enough
to get my teeth into it
by the end of forty minutes
I've just really got my head into
what I've got to do
and then I've got to go so
that's probably the hardest bit

the other bit
that's difficult
is all the extra curricula stuff
being the jump rope for heart co-ordinator chess co-ordinator
the cricket co-ordinator which I forgot about and
enrolling for different competitions
all those extra things
I even forgot to enrol my kids for a geography competition so
they missed out altogether

just those little things
I tend to focus so much that I forget about the other things

I'm trying to make a concerted effort
at the moment
we've got a chess competition coming up

we've got a first aid certificate we've got to do...

I've got to get my bus licence
so I can take my students on excursions
I can't go on excursions because we don't have the staff and resources
all the other guys are teaching at the same time so I can't get them

so that's just one more thing on my plate

I've got to have somebody with me
to sit next to me
I've got to find time for both of us
and then I've got to practice
it's one of those things at the moment
trying to focus on that and
how am I going to get around this fieldwork if I can't take them out there

I worked
most of the weekend but I don't normally
I normally try to do a very limited amount on
a weekend
but
this weekend
I worked and went to church and did nothing
else
and some of it's my fault because I've
tried to leave *all* the weekends clear and *all* the
holidays clear
and then you just get work to do

[*how is term 4 going?*]
quickly
too quickly

just had the year 10 exams
week 5 we've got the 7s and 8s
the last three days of week 10
I'm taking 20 kids down to the coast for three days
my little
rewards scheme

so it's all racing along merrily
the whole term

we went off camping the other weekend
we should have been at home finishing writing
exams and doing reports and whatnot but
we won a free weekend
with a camper trailer so we went
camping
took the kids for the whole weekend and the dogs

These descriptions from the teachers focus on their experiences of time as passing too quickly; of their never being enough time. Time conceived of as linear is a striation. It belongs to striated space, the space of programs and lesson preparation, of reports and extra curricula activities; all of which are *things* which needed to be "timetabled" into their lives. I get a sense that it was time (or lack of it) that robbed the teachers of

their opportunity to create the affects they would have liked to as teachers; affects that belong in smooth space, in the spaces of becoming. But while smooth and striated space are distinguishable, they are not separate. The deterritorialisations of becoming which occur in smooth spaces are reterritorialised as progressions in striated spaces. And while often the teachers perceived they were not making enough (linear) progress in striated space, their teacher assemblages were always changing, making new connections, enabling more and different affects at different times.

For some of the teachers time was something they were very conscious of needing to organise (to striate), and they struggled with this over the year. Following are tales from three of the teachers.

one teacher's tale

[in first term ...]

I'm over here probably most mornings by about 8
8:30

I try to get over here well before 8:30

most days I go home about 5 come back over about 7

do another hour and go home again

so I get dinner on and then

there's nothing to do while dinner's cooking so I come back over

weekends I'd spend

2 to 3 hours here most weekends

getting everything done

if not the whole weekend

[... by second term]

I'm

realising that

there has to be a shut off somewhere

I still work here till 7 o'clock at night

doing things

but other nights I'll just go home and say that's it

that's it

and just switch it all off

I actually leave everything in the classroom I don't take anything home
to do

which makes it a lot easier

another teacher's tale

[second term ...]

I've made a

bit of a thing with my family to be home by 4:00

well I leave here at 4:30 and then

try to do work at home

I think I've just
learned to
just back ped...
not back peddle but just
take the foot off the accelerator a little bit because I think
one of the dangers of being a first year teacher out is you just get so
involved
and so caught up with it that
you could go down hill very quickly and I'm very aware that that could
happen

I've made those timelines for myself to be with my family and I wanted
to use those times [free periods] wisely
it wasn't an issue so much before because I just stayed to 6 or 7 o'clock
and just got it done

now
I want to
be home by 4:30

[... then in third term]
around the beginning of term two it was not too bad I was
sort of
getting home by 4:30 or 5:00
and then somehow it's just sort of
blown out to 5:30 sometimes 6:00

I'm conscious of it
but it's just one of those things
I've just
got to put in the time when it's due

some days I leave
right on time but other days I don't
I'd like to leave at 4:30 every day
at the latest
sometimes even 4 but
I've not quite got it down pat yet
I'm hoping that by the end of this year that I will

[... by fourth term]
I'm on top of things now
it doesn't worry me that
I do so many hours
the main problem at the moment is balancing home
and
school with the new one [a new baby]
I'm still working on this getting home
at 4:30
sometimes I do it
and other times I don't

and another

[second term ...]
it's not a 9 to 5 job

I get up at 7 now and I
get to school at
8:30 usually
having had the morning running around getting the
kids ready at home

free period
I'm usually doing planning marking
welfare stuff relating to year 7s
fixing computer problems and whatnot around the
place

after school
most afternoons I'm here till about 4 doing prep for
the next day

go home
have a couple of hours break with the kids
do some more research more planning and see what
other ideas and whatnot I can find
and come up with
and plan out for further use down the track

most nights I'm in bed by about midnight

[... by third term]
there are times when I will jump in the car at 9
o'clock at night
and race down here to grab a file or a folder or
something
a resource here that I want to use
the next day when I'm
planning and programming

that might be
once every month or so

other than that
if it's not done here (at school)
it's not done

As the year progressed the teachers found that their best laid plans regarding how much time they would spend at the school and doing teaching related work had to change. They found it extremely difficult to create set routines. It is as if there was a tension between the movements and processes of smooth space, and the things and subjects of striated space, that was not easily resolved for these graduate teachers.

And then there was one teacher's story about the interplay of time and place:

space and time

the
staff-
room

Time is distinguishable but not separable from space.

- Henri Lefebvre (1991:175)

at times
if I'm in a
good head
space I'm
comfy but
if I'm sort of
stressed or upset
or anything I'll
tend to hover here
in my classroom
and just
have this as my space

*space is exceedingly difficult to write about shorn of its relation to
time ... space without time is as improbable as time without space.*

- Mike Crang and Nigel Thrift (2000:1)

I suppose it depends
on time
on the time
and what part of the week I'm
talking about
I can come in here
into this place
into this music room
on a Tuesday and feel incredibly
uncomfortable
because I know what's ahead for that day
and yet I can come in here on a Friday
and it's just the most loveliest place of all

as soon as I walk in my front door at home
after school
it takes a good hour
to come back down to earth
walking in the door at home there's a lot of ...
I sort of feel quite conflicted at home
because home is such a gentle place and I've come from such a
revved up place
for that first hour when I get home
it's lovely to be home but
it takes a while for me to really melt back into home again

it just depends so much on what time of the week it is
what day of the week
that determines stress levels and
melting into the moment
or resisting

While space and time are distinguishable from
each other they exist simultaneously, and, as
suggested above, are difficult to separate.

In exploring the lived experience of
place, time must be considered an
important part of it. When asked
about the places in which one felt
most comfortable and most
not-at-ease, this teacher
replied that it depends on
the time.

In the representations of teaching in this chapter we can see the struggles of the teachers to create the places and spaces they desired for their becoming-teacher. The smooth spaces of their becomings—the spaces of movement and relations—were full of both challenges and successes. In the collage the striated spaces of programming and recording, of the planner, the budget, yard duty, and pens, were set alongside the movements of the river and bursting seeds and aging bark, the long walk and the short walk; and were mediated by the flow from books to music to arts. Their relationships with their pupils—the sounds of their conversations and their attempts to create order from chaos—were paramount in their concerns. (These relationships are explored further in the chapter *relationships*). The teachers took lines of flight that deterritorialised and reterritorialised them. The capacities of teacher assemblages' were diminished and augmented as they affected and were affected by other assemblages—by their pupils and colleagues; by school structures, rules, programs, policies, and the geography of place; and by their perceptions and relationships with time.

relationships

in which becoming-teacher and place are explored through the teachers' relationships with other bodies and the institutions of which they are a part

map of this chapter

the complexity of relationships

pupils

peers

institutions

relationships, becoming-teacher and place

“tell me about your relationships with...”

it's the first job I've ever had
where I've had this chance to
go deeper and deeper and deeper into
exploring who I am
and who I am in relation to others

- one of the teacher participants

It is difficult to exaggerate the role other people play in determining what each individual knows about his or her world. To an extent far greater than most of us commonly recognize, what we know about our physical environment, and ourselves, is determined, either directly or indirectly, within our relationships with other people.

- Ellen Berscheid (1985:60)

the mutual inscription of others in my experience, effects the interweaving of our individual phenomenal fields into a single, ever-shifting fabric ... This experienced solidity is precisely sustained by the continual encounter with others, with other embodied subjects, other centres of experience.

- David Abram (1996:39)

One of the aspects of lived experience identified by Max van Manen (1997:104-6) is that of the *lived other (relationality)*. He describes this lived relation as 'highly personal and charged with interpersonal significance.' Several studies into teacher retention (the reasons teachers stay and the reasons they leave particular schools) have highlighted the importance of these personal relationships for teachers. Neville Hatton and associates (1991) survey of over 1,300 teachers in difficult to staff locations in the State of New South Wales (NSW); Colin Boylan and associates' (1993) two year study of 1,100 teachers in rural areas of NSW; and Colin Boylan and David McSwan's (1998) survey of 427 long-staying rural teachers (at least 6 years in their current school) in NSW each found that teachers cited good relationships with pupils, colleagues and the community as main reasons for staying at a particular school, and poor relationships

with these people as main reasons for leaving. Also, when I had completed the final interview with four of the teachers in this study I then interviewed their principal (the fifth principal was unavailable). My purpose was two-fold: (i) to gain a broader understanding of the context of the school and the community of which it was a part; and (ii) to ascertain the principals' perceptions regarding the area in which most graduate teachers in their school require the greatest assistance. In regards to the latter my question was: What type of support do you consider is most needed by graduate teachers in rural schools? Each principal's response concerned the *development of appropriate relationships with others*. However, each principal referred to different relationships: relationships with parents and the school community; relationships with pupils (appropriate expectations in relation to the children's life experiences); relationships with colleagues; and relationships with other individuals outside of the school. The homogeneity of the responses surprised me. There was not one mention of planning and programming—an issue many graduate teachers, including those involved in this study, identify as an area in which they require much assistance (see *teaching* booklets in the chapter *teaching*). Both the studies of teacher retention and the principals' responses suggest that the lived human relations of teachers in rural schools is an important element of their becoming-teacher.

This chapter focusses on the teachers' relationships with people and the institutions of the education system. The lived-experience descriptions of these relationships were gathered in conversations where I asked the teachers to "tell me about your relationships with..."—your pupils, other staff members, the principal, the parents and the community. I also asked the teachers about their engagement with different parts of the education system, which included conversations about the Education Department and the teachers' union, as well as the structures of their own schools. In the teachers' lived-experience descriptions of their relationships we can perceive the movements (speeds and slownesses) of becoming-teacher and see how their relationships influenced their understandings of, and their relations with place.

the complexity of relationships

The teachers' relationships with other people and the institutions and organisations of the education system were very complex. Any one person could be a colleague and a parent. Another could be a pupil and a daughter's friend:

the ones (parents) who we see a lot of
I've given a demarcation to their kids
at their house or even at my house on
weekends or evenings if they're visiting
I have a name
and it's my first name
or Mr R
at school it's Mr R or sir
whichever they prefer

they see me as a parent of my children at home
and a teacher of all students at school

(the principal and I)
we knew each other
from years ago
through cricket

my son's teacher
she saw me up the street and said "I've been meaning to invite you over to
my house"
having my son's teacher
as a friend
as well as a colleague
there's actually three different
areas there
and it works okay
so I think it does depend on the person

I wouldn't say I socialise with them (parents)
it would depend on the parent
you have to have
lines
you would have to have lines for
what you talk about

a new school counsellor has come in
she's actually
friends with the mother of one of my pupil's
and I think that's helped

I had a little issue at the beginning
when she said that a certain child would be going to school
and I said
no he's not ready
she came in one day
and that sort of cleared it up
it was a hard situation for her because
the mother and her are best friends

the mum of one of my pupil's
she's lovely
really friendly

and I talk to her because she goes to church
but she's a mother you'd have to be careful
with having a strong friendship outside of school
it really depends on the mother
this mum
she lives not far from me
so
it's harder in that respect because you see them regularly
so it is hard in that respect

you can't really separate it [work and home life] all the time
you see the parents
and you can't change that
in a town like this I think it's going to happen

The teachers' relationships with others were amorphous: a relationship with one individual as parent connected and at times merged with the relationship with this same individual as colleague or neighbour. At one moment it was the teacher conversing with a parent, then in the next it was two neighbours chatting over a cup of tea. The amorphous nature of the teachers' relationships increased the number of lines of connection in their multiplicities.

In analysing the lived-experience descriptions of the teachers' relationships with other people and the institutions of teaching I have divided them into three collections: teacher-pupil relationships; teacher-peer (parents, colleagues, partners, principals) relationships - Parts A & B; and teacher-institution relationships. David Abram (1996:39) suggests that 'the mutual inscription of others in my experience, effects the interweaving of our individual phenomenal fields into a single, ever-shifting fabric.' It is this "ever-shifting fabric" composed of multiple assemblages that the lived-experience descriptions of the teachers describe.

pupil-teacher relationships #1

I wanted to respect them
that's important
that they know you respect them

probably respect was the biggest
thing
because if they don't have that with
you
and you don't have that with them
respect and trust
then you've got nothing
and you've got no legs to stand on

liking children
respecting children
I think that's probably the biggest
thing
respect
they are people
I think people forget that

I think a lot of it is respect
respect's a big thing
I don't think I go around saying I'm
going to respect this child
but I just think it is something like
who they are
they are individuals
they are people
they have their own minds
and you can't look down on them

I think I'm doing really well
we're getting there
most of the kids
show me respect
if they get out of line it's very
quickly
pointed out
sorry that's not appropriate
the minute I point it out to them
I'd say 99% of time I get a
head down and
I'm sorry sir

getting more relaxed with the kids
now
there's just more respect
I'm not the new guy to them any
more
which is good

I've particularly noticed that with
the guys
that they know who I am now and
it's not the same situation that it
was the last time (you visited)
I'm still going through the same
things but there's this definite
shift in
how they're thinking of me
I think you noticed that today
there was maybe a bit more respect
in there

I show them that I'm
interested in what they're interested
in
I'm interested in them
as a person learning and developing

I show them
that up front and
respect has come back

I want them to have respect for me
I'm not one of those people who can
stand out the front and demand it
I respect them
some teachers stand out the front
demanding respect and they
never get it
because they don't give any in
return

I've got kids coming and talking to
me
they talk to me
with
respect
friendly open relationship

pupil-teacher relationships

pupil-teacher relationships #1

teachers always stand in certain relations to the students they teach. The very term "pedagogy" already brings out the relational quality between teacher and student, in a manner unlike any other educational concepts such as curriculum, instruction, or teaching

- Max van Manen (1994:140-1)

The most common word the graduates used to describe their relationships with their pupils was *respect*. They talked about respect as a two-way process—"if you want respect, you first have to give it." Respect is presented almost as a trade between two entities. Andrew Metcalfe and Ann Game (2006:95), however, propose a different understanding of *respect* in the pupil-teacher relationship; an understanding based on the work of the philosopher Martin Buber. Buber (2000:21) suggests that there are two ways of being, two intertwined ways of relating with the world—*I-It* and *I-Thou*:

As experience, the world belongs to the primary word *I-It*. The primary word *I-Thou* establishes the world of relation.

I-It is the experience of things (I perceive, I imagine, I feel, I think ...) while *I-Thou* is the relation. *I-It* always has some thing as object, and it is always bounded, whereas *I-Thou* has no objects (no thing) and no bounds. Buber (2000:23) notes that, in being in relation with a tree, one does not give up any of the *I-It* (the species, type, number, laws) but that all this is included in the *I-Thou*: the relation with the tree includes both the physical and the

metaphysical; the concrete and the abstract. And so it is that the *I-Thou* of the teacher-pupil relation does not require the teacher, nor the pupil to give up considerations of any of the *things* of the other, rather, these are included in the *I-Thou* relation between them. Buber further explicates this notion of the *I-Thou* relation as mutual explaining that just as he experiences the tree so too does the tree experience him. The *I-Thou* of the pupil-teacher relation is a mutual relation as recognised by the teachers in their talk of the give and take of respect.

It is in this context, of an *I-Thou* relation which both moves beyond the forms of the entities and is a mutual relation, that the notion of respect in the pupil-teacher relation is reframed by Metcalfe and Game (2006:95). They make the following notes regarding a classroom observation:

Vicky's classroom is based on a mutual respect for the vulnerability, openness and innocence of all participants. Clearly too this respect is not people simply affirming each other's identity. The respect of the *I-Thou* relation is, instead, awareness of Thou's unidentifiable essence. Thou's difference even to the way they identify themselves. Respect is always respect for this mystery. This is why it is not earned or forfeited.

While the teachers' descriptions of their relationships with their pupils at times suggested that they considered that they had to "earn" the respect of their pupils, there are suggestions by some of the teachers that they recognise that respect is indeed a mutual awareness of the unknowable:

*they are people
they have their own minds
there's a definite shift in how they're thinking of me
I'm interested in them as a person learning and developing*

It is the unknowableness of the other, represented in the *I-Thou* relationship, that can make teaching so difficult, and which can be the source of ruptures in the rhizomatic becomings of the teachers. Despite the best laid plans, sometimes lessons simply don't work, and some pupils don't learn. However it is in accepting this that teaching, and becoming-teacher, become do-able. By acknowledging the unknowable—the constantly and mutually changing relations and capacities of other multiplicities—teachers can begin to accept the messy, unpredictable nature of their work; work to which the unpredictable, often difficult to navigate, pupil-teacher relationships are central. It is in this sense that mutual respect, as respect for the mystery of the other, is a vital part of the teaching-learning relationship, and a necessary element to be navigated in a becoming-teacher.

pupil-teacher relationships #2

generally the kids have been very
very good compared to
other schools in terms of behaviour
the kids have got to know me really
well
I felt like it was a bit of a tug-of-war
between me and them at times
I have to give them a bit of rope and
pull it back
and
in the 5th week
I was actually feeling
I guess a little bit depressed if that's
the right word
just to think that
I should have worked things out by
now
that I shouldn't have to be playing
these games still
that 5th week I was really feeling like
what's going on here?
surely by the 5th week we should have
worked out a routine
and yet I was having to resort back
to the things I was doing the first
and second weeks
that was
baffling me a little bit and
almost depressed me a little bit
to think that I have to go back and
do it all over again

I'm still in that phase of
giving and taking
I'm not sure how much longer
that's going to
when I've spoken to the other
teachers they've said
that's just what it's like
you're forever in this
constant
tug-of-war battle and
you just have to learn to
know when to give and when to
take
at the moment I'm kind of resigned
to that
to the fact that I'm just going to
have to accept that for the minute
and not try to get too worked up
about having this constant tug-of-
war with them

pupil-teacher relationships #2

The descriptions here, of the give-and-take nature of both classroom behaviour and teaching, are from the one teacher. In attempting to understand the give and take of the pupil-teacher relationship Deborah Britzman (2003:8) looks to Anna Freud who suggests that:

the problem begins in the very relation—both possible and given—between teacher and student and parent and child. These relations are qualified by the push and pull of dependency and autonomy, immaturity and maturity, and mutual interference and influence ... individuals must interfere with one another because having to learn and having to teach is felt as interference, as a battle of wills, and as confluence of influence.

Rather than “interference” rhizomatic thought suggests that the pupil-teacher relationship of push and pull is a mutual making of connections: both pupil and teacher are deterritorialised—taking lines of flight, and connecting with other multiplicities including each other. Both teacher and pupils are navigating becomings—multiple becomings. Some lines of flight will end in destruction; some will create more connections. This teacher’s colleagues suggest that this give and take is never over (much to his dismay), and he suggests that for the moment he is “resigned” to it. Rather than resignation, which can be a negative, draining emotion, the give and take of becomings is perhaps a situation that should be accepted and even celebrated as an essential element in a becoming-teacher.

pupil-teacher relationships #3

I'm feeling a little bit down trodden

you're just literally running on the
next cup of coffee
you're thinking
surely the day's got to end

it's definitely tiring
the first couple of weeks I was
incredibly tired
I didn't think that would occur
because
being four weeks on prac¹ I never
felt
any tiredness at all in fact I was
rather relaxed on all my pracs but
in the first couple of weeks here I
was just physically and mentally
exhausted
I'm thinking back
what's so different

I think the difference is that I'm just
having to do so much more
planning and forethought of
where this is all going
whereas on prac I could just focus
on a particular unit and not have
to think about how what it
blended in with
the whole of the year and the whole
of the program and also the cross
curriculum behind it
all the excursions that I'm planning
I'm always thinking about how I
can integrate it with science and
maths and art
it's been very tiring
I think it's the
mental processes that are going
that must be making me physically
tired as well because I was
physically tired
and it was kind of strange that I
should feel like that because I
hadn't been doing a lot of physical
stuff but yet I felt very lethargic
by the end of the third week
and I started to pick up around the
4th and 5th week

¹ "prac" refers to the professional experience program—the blocks of time pre-service teachers spend in schools during their pre-service education

I think I've gotten over the
exhaustion now
although it probably comes in
waves
sometimes
I get home and I'm absolutely
exhausted and
I think they are the days where
I've got all the periods during the
day
those particularly have
a pretty
tiring effect

and because I have to plan
for that whole day
because I know I can't do any on
the day I've just got to run with
what I've got and those days
particularly
I know I haven't got any time up
my sleeves
Friday's the worst day because I've
just got to have everything
packed down as far as what I'm
going to do and have all the
resources ready
I don't have any time
to try and
organise it

first term I missed my last day of
term
through exhaustion
I actually got to the point
where I was sick
that was quite disappointing not
seeing the whole term through
I think there's this stigma of being
there for the last day of term and I
don't know what it is but
just to make it through that term
that was quite important for me and
I didn't get there but I got there in
second term
that was really good just being there
for the last day
seeing it through
I think there's just some sense of
achievement

I've adjusted to the level of physical
activity at the school
I don't think you realise how much
you run with the kids
just going out on playground duty

you find yourself running
that's been built into me now
it doesn't wear me out and I think it
was wearing me out
walking inbetween classes it doesn't
sound like much but
that all added up
I was playing with the kids during
the day at recess and at
lunchtimes
when they play PE I get in there
and
play too
that must have been the main
reason
because there wasn't anything else I
was doing

I just have to be careful with my
tiredness
that I still
maintain my vigilance and
my enthusiasm
some times I just get so mentally
tired
that I
can go to school a little bit under-
prepared
I still know what I'm going to be
doing when I walk in the class
but I haven't gotten right down to
the super nitty gritty
of that lesson

I think towards the end of term 2
I
just hit a wall
and then got through term 3
fine

but then
I had Monday and Tuesday off
Monday night
I just cried and cried and cried and
cried
which was actually really good

I think I'm going to have to bring
out my clown a little bit
this morning I said to my partner
I can't see how I'm going to get to
the end of this term
but I think there's a lot of tired
teachers at the moment
the end of the term is very close but
it's still far enough away to feel

like a slog
so it's like
I can do it
I can do it

I haven't even had a day off
I think I'm pretty good actually
I keep thinking I can't
my kids need me too much
but I was exhausted at the end of
term

[your level of energy at the moment?]

Very low actually
very low
exhausted would be the word I'd
use at the moment
I don't know whether that's just
because
I'm not healthy or fit or because
I'm tired
I haven't stopped
I'm hoping Christmas holidays
that I'll get to stop
but I don't like my chances
my sister's already planned the
whole holidays
and it's not good

I sometimes find it hard to get here
but once I'm here
once I'm with the kids ...

sometimes I think I should just have
the day off
I'll be honest
but then once you're here with the
kids ...

it is full-on
I struggled to get out of bed this
morning
and I thought *how am I going to get*
through the day?
honestly
and I've been doing that all week
and all last week
but once I get here
not a problem
it's just a matter of getting out of
bed and getting here

I just think *I'm tired*
I don't want to be here
but the kids wake you up
you've got no choice in that matter

pupil-teacher relationships #3

Previously (in pupil-teacher relationships #2) the teacher spoke of depression and tug-of-war, and here several of the teachers speak of their tiredness. When I invited the teachers to participate, explaining the processes I intended to employ for the data collection, I acknowledged that they would probably be quite exhausted by the end of their first term and perhaps even more exhausted by mid year (as I myself have very vivid memories of this from my own graduate year). In each instance, the teacher I was speaking to looked at me a little blankly—and on reflection I see that it is very difficult to imagine something one has never experienced. While this predictable but not necessarily imaginable experience of “graduate teacher exhaustion” seemed incomprehensible to the then final year students, it became very real for most of them.

While the teachers themselves proposed various reasons for their weariness, such as the volume of planning and the physicality of teaching, Andrew Metcalfe and Anne Game (2006:93-94) explain teacher weariness in terms of energy in the pupil-teacher relationship. They argue that good teaching is about relations between teachers and students, not about individual teachers' inputs. They speak instead about 'the relational nature of classroom energy.' In their study teachers spoke about their feelings of being overwhelmed—feelings

that Metcalfe and Game (2006:97) describe as 'exhaustion masked by adrenalin'; and they suggest that 'this feeling of inadequacy is common throughout the educational system.' They suggest that this exhaustion comes from teachers' attempts to inspire their students by supplying them with energy, and by their 'taking personal responsibility for getting the students to measure up.' Further to this they suggest that instead, teachers need to develop a 'lively relationship' of give-and-take that invigorates both students and teacher: 'Once this lively relationship exists, students are able to receive what is being given to them, and giving is no longer a drain on the teacher's energy' (Metcalfe & Game 2006:100). Deleuze and Guattari (1988) in their notion of rhizomatic becomings, do not explicitly address "energy", however they write about speeds and slownesses which have their own implicit energy levels. In rhizomatic becoming speed and slowness are not themselves quantities, but rather qualities of movement. In extrapolating these I suggest that there are different speeds with varying energy levels, just as there are different slownesses, with varying energy levels. Lines of flight, connections and ruptures each have their own energy, which in the pupil-teacher relationship can be exhausting or invigorating depending on the quality of the movement. As one teacher noted, while some days the thought of teaching was itself exhausting that once she was "with the kids" that all as fine. This suggests, perhaps, that her pupil-teacher relationships were able at least to energise themselves, and perhaps were even capable of creating surplus energy.

pupil-teacher relationships #4

part (a)

I don't feel it's always a teacher-
child relationship in here
like as strong as it is in a
classroom of 25
it's more like at times yes I'm the
teacher but I'm also a friend
to them
I think I expected more to be full
on teacher teacher teacher

It's really funny like they walk up
to you and
"ohh Ms A I did this on the
weekend"
I have one who will run up and
probably give me a hug
half way through the day or
something and she'll say
"you know I missed you over
the weekend"
ooh I missed you too

We've got the secondary camp
coming up so I'm really hoping
that
the kids will see me in a different
light because I've probably
come across as mister ogre
in a number of ways like just
having to be very strict
specially just coming in as the
new guy I know they're going
to try and
pounce on me
so I've had to really set those
rules up detentions I've done
many lunch time detentions
just setting those rules hard and
fast and sticking to them
they've probably seen me as
mister ogre
I'd like to just sort of shed that
onion layer (if I may borrow a
line from Shrek)
and show them that I've got other
layers

I think as we get to appreciate
each other I'd like to be able to
have a few more jokes with
them and
know when
okay it's time to stop

then we can have a little bit of fun
that's what I really enjoy
when I can open it up
open the classroom up and see
 where it goes
that's where I'll get a lot of
 reward
just seeing the kids actually
 driving the lesson rather than
 me

the year 9s and the year 11
they're almost more like
friends
we've struck a lovely balance
 between
some good good hard work
but lots of laughs
it's an absolute pleasure
to spend time with them

I like my kids to be able to come
 up and approach me
in class or out of class or any time
 if they've got problems or
need help with anything

I've had
students coming in disclosing
lots of abuse stuff and
stuff from home
I had a yack to a counsellor
last Tuesday
when I had the day off because I
 just thought
gees what's going on here
I feel burnt out
I was just crying on Monday
 night
shit
these kids
what they go through
and feeling so powerless in a way
in that sense this is where I love
 this job because
it gives me a chance
to help

part (b)

tricky one to put into words
boundaries what do I mean by
 that

that I can be amongst
these students
that we can we can learn a lot
 together that we can
have some fun
but that

I stop here you and you start
there and in this case
I am the teacher

I want my students
to feel as though they're never
being judged
whoever they are
and that they feel that there is an
adult around
that will let them just be
themselves
but the boundary in there is that
I
maintain my own sense of self
respect
even when I'm around
teenagers that might ...

this is the button pushing stuff
you know when I get teenagers
who look across at me and can
see through that
teacher mask and
you can just tell when a student
can see who you are it's like ...

which is fine
but
they can use that in a way against
you

it's just crucial that I
maintain some boundaries of
this is who I am
and that's who I am

when I go into that classroom and
I see these students absolutely
picking on each other and
bullying and
hurting each other
and then
turning that potentially around to
the teacher
which happens to be me
that stings
that really stings

I love that classic analogy of the
old back fence
that if there's a back fence in place
then neighbours have this sense
of
this is my patch and that's your
patch
we know our own territory so
therefore we can relate
over that back fence
there's clear

markings of territory and I
operate within this area
you're within that area
so I can sort of see roughly now
who you are and how you
operate so
I can come in now and
relate or
discuss

(term IV)

I make a deal with the students
these days
I have my lesson plan with music
that I've
chosen
but what I'll do is I leave a
section of the lesson free
I'll have an outline of a lesson
plan
and then
someone will always have a CD
in the room
so
I borrow their music
and quickly superimpose my
lesson plan onto their music
so I
do something with their music
and something with
music that they're not really into
so I make I strike a bit of a
bargain with them
and that seems to work

I've worked hard on that
not only *I* get to
to say
what I need from the students but
I make sure
if I see that intense frustration
rising in a student
I make sure that I
get them to stay back at recess or
lunch
and that we talk
so that they get to
have their say
I still think that's crucial

if I make that time
especially for the fringe dwellers
if I make that time for them
it's lovely
it's lovely
you build on a relationship
then you've got something to
work with

pupil-teacher relationships #4

All the teachers spoke about their relations with their pupils in terms of personal connections (data extracts part (a)). The pupil-teacher relationship was viewed as a personal relationship encouraging the well-being of the pupils. However, one teacher (data extracts part (b)) talked about boundaries. She struggled with what she meant by boundaries and what they should be. Boundaries seem contrary to Buber's (2000) notion of the *I-Thou* where the pupil and teacher would be in a mutual relation, where there would be no objects or bounds, only relation. However, this teacher saw boundaries as helpful in building good relations, just like a good 'back fence'—and it appears they were. As the extracts show, the notion of boundaries enabled this teacher to move from teacher "with boundaries between", to teacher "in-relation with" her pupils. While this teacher struggled for three school terms with delineating boundaries between teacher and pupil, by the fourth term she had managed to create a learning context that "seems to work". The idea of keeping teacher and pupil separate and thus able to be in relation with in other is what Andrew Metcalfe and Ann Game (2002:58) refer to as non-attachment:

When we are attached to anything, it becomes the same as us, and we cannot be in-relation with it. In identifying with your pain, for example, it becomes my pain, and I protectively close in on myself, closing the creative zone between us. I will grasp at solutions and try to fix things; and ... I'm too busy

looking for causes and cures to listen to you or feel what you need. If ... I can remain non-attached, then I can allow the you in me—patient, student, child—to be called up. I can be there for you, hear you, hold you and hold the situation ... Think of the experience of holding hands: the mutuality and reversibility in this everyday experience; the ambiguity of which hand holds and which is held.

The teacher in these extracts struggles with remaining non-attached to the students, instead “feeling” how the students pick on and bully each other. This non-attachment is something that I, personally, struggled with as a teacher. And, during this study, the following offering from one of the other teachers made me feel quite uneasy:

I've made a few cry
in the first week I had such and such cry had such and such cry had such and such
cry
I think you just need to have a thicker skin
with some of them because
I have some that will
cry
3 or 4 times a day
“I've lost my pencil” [imitating crying student]
and they'll be standing there with their pencil
“oh, no I haven't”
and they'll go off and do their work
“I've lost my book” [imitating crying student]
no I have your book

The story was related in quite a jovial way, and I “felt” for the pupils. However, what this teacher was saying when she spoke about needing to have a *thick skin* was akin to Metcalfe and Game's notion of non-attachment which they propose is essential for the creation of relations. By remaining non-attached to the pupils, that is, by seeking to address their needs rather than identifying with their emotions, this teacher was able to be in relation with the pupils.

Non-attachment, however, is not the same as creating the other as an object, that is, relating only as *I-It*. Jodi MacQuarrie (2006:49) argues that the current emphases on observation, interpretation and analysis of students creates the student as a 'known entity', an *other*, and in so doing actually hinders the student's ability to engage in the processes of transformation and change. Instead she suggests that it is through 'being in relation with our students'—through being present with them in dialogue, that we can best facilitate these processes. MacQuarrie uses the work of both psychoanalysts and philosophers, including Winnicot, Foucault, Nietzsche, Buber and Friere, in arguing for less interpretation in the classroom, and instead, more relations. In interpolating Winnicot's work to the classroom she suggests that to move to “being in relation” requires the teacher to *survive* 'the student's attempts at destruction' (p.41),

the *button pushing stuff ... hurting each other and then turning that potentially around to the teacher*. Survival is the abstaining from the impulse to retaliate. And once the teacher has survived the student can then *use* the teacher 'to transform self and behaviour' (p.40). MacQuarrie (2006:46-47) develops this notion of the teacher-student relation further through an analysis of her own relationship with one particular student. She notes that while she had had many conversations with this student, conversations aimed at obtaining information about him, she had never actually entered into a dialogue with him. The development of relations requires true dialogue and so, it came about that, in not retaliating after a particularly 'explosive encounter', and instead opening up channels for true dialogue, Jodi was able 'to enter into a relationship of a reciprocal nature' with her student. Similarly, the teacher in these extracts also chose to dialogue, outside of class time, rather than retaliate during class. The ability to develop such a reciprocal relation however, requires the willingness to 'employ a *variety* of perspectives and affective interpretations in the service of knowledge' (Nietzsche 1967:119 quoted in MacQuarrie 2006:46). The teacher in this study said:

I want my students
to feel as though they're never being judged
whoever they are
and that they feel that there is an adult around
that will let them just be themselves

I need to stand up in front of those students and say this is who I am
and that's fantastic
that's one way of being in this world
and your way is another way

I neither judge others nor judge myself

I am not sure from how far this teacher moved from conversation to dialogue, but the way she spoke suggested that it was of utmost importance for her to allow differing perspectives and that, perhaps at least with some students, she had moved toward true dialogue and in so doing had begun to facilitate their abilities for self transformation and change; that is, towards helping create space for the pupils' own becomings.

pupil, teachers, becoming & place

Overwhelmingly the teachers' representations of their relationships with their pupils are of two-way relations—mutual relations: giving and receiving respect; giving and taking when negotiating acceptable behaviour and lesson content; and giving and taking when teaching and learning. McConaghy and associates (2006:26) argue that:

while all teachers have to recontextualise their practice at least to some extent in different rural settings, they also have to enable their students to recontextualise their worldview ... a rural teacher's journey involves his or her students both implicitly and explicitly ... [the teacher's journey is bound] with the journey of the teacher's students.

Both teacher and pupils are becoming; both teacher and pupils experience deterritorialisations whose lines of flights intersect and interpenetrate their own and others' multiplicities. The teachers' and their pupils' becomings are entwined in each other.

The other aspect the teachers' lived-experience descriptions highlighted about the development of mutual relations with pupils was the importance of non-attachment. One teacher achieved this through the delineation of "boundaries". This setting of boundaries of the self, the enacting of non-attachment, is necessary for being in relation, because it realises the uniqueness and difference of each individual. But these relations according to Metcalfe and Game (2006:94), take on two forms:

[there are] two ways in which students can be seen, either as entities with definable talents, or as unique beings for whom no definition is adequate ... These two ways of seeing arise from two ethical forms, which the philosopher Martin Buber spoke of as I-It and I-Thou.

The two forms, however, are not separate—they are distinguishable, but they co-exist. At any one time the pupil can be seen as an individuated subject with certain talents, and at the same moment, encompassing this view, the teacher can be in relation with the pupil as a unique being 'for whom no definition is adequate.' The teachers in this study suggest that it takes time to develop both of these perspectives and that non-attachment is important in the process.

Mutual relations do not simply develop and exist because we desire to create them. The teacher's lived-experience descriptions note the importance of *time* in the development of these relations. One teacher expressed his utter frustration that after five whole weeks, the game of tug-of-war still continued. Another teacher "assumed" that, having an attitude of acceptance of her students, and a love of her subject, would mean instant great teacher-pupil relations:

I would see other teachers with their students
and they would have jokes
and they'd be
relaxed
I saw that and I thought
okay
you can go into the classroom and have fun
with the students but
I hadn't seen the bigger picture
these teachers had also spent time
building boundaries and
parameters and
guidelines
and had negotiated with the students over time
they'd built a relationship

I thought fun loving me could just walk in there and
teach them and that they'd be so inspired by what I'd teach them
they'd just have that instant
love for the subject
that they'd sit there with their mouths open
all wanting to be musicians

it didn't quite happen like that

Teachers and their pupils are bodies in place and time, and the development of human-relations is a dynamic processes of which the teacher is only one aspect. Speaking with colleagues, some who are still teaching and some who have retired from teaching, I found that their experience, like mine, was that any new class was "hard work"; some more than others. No matter how experienced we were, the creation of appropriate pupil-teacher relations always took time. As we grew more experienced, however, we were better at managing that period when the pupils and teacher were deterritorialising on each other; when the lines of flight of the pupils' becomings and the teacher's becomings crossed and warred, creating more ruptures and more impasses. It was never an easy time, but we learnt to manage the energy demands, or we left teaching. The teachers' descriptions of their pupil-teacher relations describe this complex process of negotiating appropriate relationships for their becomings-teacher.

teacher-peer relationships #1

I am talking
to a few more
now I also make an effort even
to say hello and then they start a
conversation

I see them all at morning teas and
what not
they know where to find me if they
want me

I usually have morning tea and
afternoon tea with them
they get there and
quite regularly the talk in the lunch
room is just purely shop

I don't know if it's reality or if it's
just my perception but
I think as I go through life I see
people that
don't seem to talk a lot about what
they are going through
and I can't relate to that I need to
talk and talk and talk
and talk
I need to feel as though I could
go to the staff
certain staff members
and tell them I'm having a shit of a
day or I've got no idea how to do
this
I guess I need the staff to have
a good sense of humour
pretty well what's there now is ideal
the staff generally have
good perspectives
very motivated
very directed
very concerned about the kids'
welfare
and very real about having
yucky days
I've got two or three
staff I can talk to

*[speaking about a sketch of self as
teacher ...]*

this is me isolated here
this would be most of the teachers
way over here
and then just a small support group
which would be the assistant

principal
they'd be closer to me

it is starting to change
slowly
that's how I was thinking
I was very isolated
as I said it is starting to change

one of the kindergarten teachers two
doors up
I sat down near her in the staffroom
the other day to do some work
and she just started to talk
so I think it goes both ways in that
they see me as this isolated little
thing and I am isolated
because I *don't* get over there [to the
staff room] much
when they are around
so
it's hard for them too because I
don't do half the stuff that they do

the teacher who's just taken over in
the other special education class
I've talked to
but
not a great lot and she's only there
for this term
it's such a full-on job special ed
within school you don't have a lot
of time to sit down
and talk
so I see them at staff meetings

I've been pretty up front with them
(parents who I meet outside
school)
I've had one or two who have
wanted to bring up
school things about their kids and
I've said *listen*
to save problems between you and I
make an appointment
phone the school Monday morning and
make an appointment
then I'm happy to talk to you
I'll even talk to you *after* school so
long as there has been an
appointment made
Sunday after church I'm not going
to tell you anything about your
kid
or Saturday night after a beer or two
I'm not going to tell you anything
about your kid
setting the boundaries

Some parents I see every morning
every afternoon
because they drop their kids off
they pick them up
so some parents I can meet down
there and have a chat at the gate
about how someone is doing that
day

I've sort of deliberately
kept a fairly low profile
I would assume that
as I get to know the students more
I'll get to know the parents more
I've deliberately
been laying low in terms of
contact with parents this year
I just want to get my head around
teaching at the moment

I'd hoped
I'd have a good relationship
I think I have
where you could talk to them
[parents]
they tell me if they're concerned
about anything
also tell me what the child's doing at
home
so that I can work with that
and if I have had a concern I can say
it to them without
feeling like I'm being judgemental
or them thinking that I'm being
judgemental
I think I've got an advantage there
because I've had a child
I've been a parent

the parents
they will walk in and say
"how are you going this week"
just for a chat

teacher-peer relationships (part A)

teacher-peer relationships #1

deterritorialisation is always double
- Gilles Deleuze & Felix Guattari (1988:306)

When asked about their relationships with people other than the pupils whom they taught in the classroom (that is, with their colleagues, principal, parents, & the wider community), the teachers' lived-experience descriptions described all manner of deterritorialisations and reterritorialisations.

The teachers talked about talking—talking a lot, talking a little, not wanting to talk. Mary Beattie (2000:4) suggests that:

The idea that learning takes place in relationships, and that the self is formed, given meaning and understood in the context of its relations with others, is central to the process of becoming a teacher and of learning to teach. Through respectful dialogue and conversations with multiple others, individuals come to know themselves and others, to know what they know and to construct professional identities ... Within collegial relationships, beginning teachers can learn about themselves, about others and about teaching and learning.

While this study moves away from notions of self and identity, to rhizomatic notions of becoming-teacher, the teachers' lived-experience descriptions support this suggestions that dialogue and conversations with *multiple* others is important in becoming-teacher. To talk to a colleague, particularly a new colleague, or a parent, can be to take a line of flight—to affect and be affected by other multiplicities. Talking was the predominant way in which the graduate teachers spoke about

making connections with others at their schools and in their communities. However, the teachers also employed the strategies of avoiding talking ('laying low') and 'setting the boundaries' to control the speeds and slownesses of deterritorialisations.

It is not just the new teacher who is deterritorialised. Every teacher and parent and community member whose territory (acts) are affected by the new teacher, is deterritorialised: 'One never deterritorialises alone ... and each of the two terms reterritorialises on the other' (Deleuze & Guattari 1988:174). The graduate teachers, their colleagues, and the school community were all involved in becomings. They were all deterritorialising and reterritorialising as they adjusted to a new staff composition. A new teacher at a school changes that school. The place is now a different place to the place it was before and everyone has to adjust. It is not simply about the graduate teacher fitting in. For all the staff and pupils the school is now a different place to what it was.

teacher-peer relationships #2

the staff are very supportive
I know I've just got to ask and
sometimes they just ask me when
they can
see that I'm too busy even to ask
they literally pop their head around
and say "*you alright?*"
I feel
very supported

I'm probably just feeling that
I've got to give some of the other
guys a bit of a break
I've got to
take some face-to-face relief
I think that's the main reason
I'm keen on taking up the full-time
load
other staff members
they need a break too

I still think of myself as the new guy
coming in with new ideas
I get the same feeling from them

I program a certain way
and they don't want to do it that
way
they say
"leave your university stuff behind
and do it this way"
I get quite
annoyed because now they're telling
me how to work
I don't feel
that's
as good as it could be
I'm actually a little bit disappointed
with colleagues in that way
I do feel that they think I'm the new
guy trying to push
new stuff onto them
but
I believe this is the professional way
to do it
I don't think
there's been enough
recognition that teachers teach
different ways
that's a bit of a challenge I'm having
at the moment

I'm a little bit disappointed that
they're not making
use of the knowledge that I'm
bringing in
I just feel that they're stuck with
what *they* had
I've got all these new ideas and
they're not saying
"okay
what have you learnt?
surely you've got some ideas"
of course I have
but I don't get asked what those
ideas are
that is a little bit
demoralising in a way
disappointing
I understand that universities don't
do everything right but they've
got ideas
it's about selecting ideas that are
going to work
those ideas are not being fleshed out
and that's
disappointing
for me

I've had a few run-ins with a few
parents but
I stand my ground and say *no*
that's not the way it's going to happen
and they've gone "ohh"
"okay"
"fair enough"
I justify why it needs to be done that
way
why I've made that choice
and they come to terms with it

I don't have any problem apart
from one
parent who at the start of the year
just didn't like me
still doesn't like me but
the reasons for that have been
explained to me
as cultural differences
which make it a lot easier
it's not me
it is me
but it's because of my age
there's no way she would take
orders off me
me asking her to take a group
is like insulting her

that's been explained to me so I've
sort of gone *ahh well*
okay
I can deal with that
just realising their different
cultural expectations
it's not that she doesn't like my
teaching or doesn't like me
personally
it's because I'm young enough to be
her daughter
and I'm asking her to do things in
the classroom
telling her to do things

teacher-peer relationships #2

non-symmetrical double deterritorialisation

In the first two extracts here this teacher expresses notions of wanting to both give and take in relations with other staff. These extracts were from our first term conversation. The third extract is taken from the fourth term interview with the same teacher. By then this teacher was feeling that the collegial relationships had become very one-sided. Deterritorialisations are movements of energy—giving and taking, but Deleuze and Guattari (1988:306-7) note that double deterritorialisation is not always symmetrical. The giving and taking is not always shared. So while a new member of staff may affect the becomings of others, the degree of deterritorialising will not necessarily be the same for all staff.

At times the parents were seen as difficult (and even too difficult) to connect with, and at other times the connections were much easier for the teachers to make. The extract where the parent has difficulty connecting with the teacher due to the age of the teacher suggests that, in this instance, the deterritorialisations of the parent on the teacher were just as great if not more intense than the teacher's deterritorialisations on the parent. In the teacher-peer relationships created by the teachers' becomings it was not always the graduate teacher that experienced the most intense deterritorialisations.

teacher-peer relationships #3

right at the moment I'm working on
letting go of trying to impress
people
we're just on different levels
we're just in different places now
so that's nice to be letting go of all
that
not investing so much time and
concern

the new guy
new ideas
different way of thoughts in some
areas
don't think they are quite with me
on the outdoors yet
I tried to see who's interested in the
arboretum
there's a little bit of interest but
probably not as much as I would
like
I'm just so keen to get out there and
utilise nature and what it has to
offer
I know the kids will respond to
what's out in nature
that's just a powerful
learning experience
so I guess I feel kind of
a little bit
on a
different road
not a different road but a different
way of thought than where they're
at

I've had some teachers look in on
my classes and frown
because my kids
are not sitting there perfectly still
perfectly quiet
perfectly
frightened of me

that's how I do it
get frowned on by my some and
reproached by others

Yesterday
we're having this meeting about
transition for the child
I'm thinking
my goodness

you want the supervisor to observe
you as being a professional
and knowing what you're talking
about
you want to give your ideas but
when someone else is giving the
same ideas you're thinking
why bother
you're thinking *I need to impress*
oh well ...
just go with the flow

now
there's a fellow in my staffroom
and it's quite confusing in a way
you were really chatty
for the first term and a half
why are you now so
grumpy

it took me a while to not take it
personally
and just to watch him
that's his manner generally with
people
maybe he sort of
felt more comfortable working with
a
a brand new teacher

I've now been here long enough
to not go out of my way and be
super friendly to everybody
I'm now starting to feel like I've
got my own little patch here

teacher-peer relationships #3

reterritorialising

For several of the teachers there came a time during the year when the need for taking a rest from working at their relations with their peers seemed to become of a priority. In these extracts the teachers are expressing their reterritorisations—their reluctance to continue down a line of flight; their preference, despite their perceptions of their colleagues views, to simply dwell for the moment in their territory; territory that had been much deterritorialised and reterritorialised since they first took up their teaching positions in these schools earlier in the year.

teacher-peer relationships #4

socialising

I've started going out occasionally
with one of the other teachers
a fun teacher
on a Saturday
I've only done it twice but I'm not
into going out a lot

most Friday afternoons there's a
gathering somewhere
we usually go to those

We got invited to a few (social
gatherings)
at the end of last year and very early
in the year
we've been sussed out by the clique
we haven't been to one of those for a
long time
haven't been invited

my son's teacher
she saw me up the street and said
"I've been meaning to invite you
over to my house"
we ran into each other at the show
one day
that's when we first started talking
and since then we've become
friends

"help!"

I'm pretty much really left to my
own devices
unless I say *help*
but there is one time when I had to
call the school counsellor
that was only because I needed
someone here now and she was
two doors
down

I'm still pretty swift and sly
I still
don't ask for a lot of help
I think that's just going to come with
time

I think I just have to
flog myself into the ground to
realise that it doesn't work
well that's not true
the staff that I feel comfy asking for
help
I will
and there's probably
four staff members that I could
lay it on the line with and say
help [plaintively]
he-e-e-e-lp

they just assume
that you know everything and that
you can ask
they just assume
they just forget
that you're new
no matter what you tell them
they say
"oh that's okay
you'll be right"

there's some people that I've asked
for help from and
I'm still waiting for it to come
there's others that
are tripping over themselves to
make sure I've
got everything I need

there's an amazing system
in place
just incredible support and if I go to
talk to the head teacher
I definitely feel like I'm heard
and there's action taken straight
away
to put to put certain things into
place to sort of
try and get things back on track

the other teacher walked in the
other day and I was trying to do
division
with my class
she walked in and she went
"ohh
I know what you need"
she walked into the store room and
said
"have a look at this"
and plonked it on the floor
ohh it's all done here

I noticed that I was going to school
in tears on Tuesdays
just in dread
and about three weeks ago
I just bypassed the staffroom and
went straight to the music room
they knew that there was something
happening so the head teacher
came into
the music room
I just had tears rolling down my
cheeks
just dreading the day
she just stood with me
it was magic actually
she didn't advise unless I asked
directly for that
but what she did was just told
stories
of her own experiences around that
stuff
and it just went in
just the power of story telling
she just told stories of her own
experiences

I'm probably not the person to let
others
in as much as I
could
probably because I think I'm
handling things
I'd rather
ask for help rather than have people
come up and just say
"right
you need some help don't you?"
generally I've handled things pretty
well apart from
getting some timing things wrong
I would have appreciated a lot more
support in
managing year 10
trouble is we lost our year 10
supervisor last year so
there wasn't really anyone to help
me
that's the area I felt probably
let down most in support

I asked for support in a round-
about way
by saying
look I need procedures to deal with this

it felt like there was a bit of beating
around the bush about it
*how do we deal with somebody who's
going like this to the keyboard
give me some steps to deal with it*
obviously I'm telling them to stop it
it's not the appropriate way
but what do you do if they keep
doing it
there's got to be some
appropriate consequences behind
that
and that's my way of asking for help
by saying
I can't deal with it
there needs to be some series of
steps that I can follow

teacher-peer relationships (part B)

teacher-peer relationships #4

According to Deleuzo-Guattarian rhizomatic logic, becomings require alliances. These alliances occur at the borderline, by the affects of the phenomenon they call 'The anomalous':

The anomalous is neither an individual nor a species; it has only affects ...
it is a phenomenon ...
phenomenon of bordering ...
all that counts is the borderline - the anomalous.

The Anomalous, the Outsider ... borders each multiplicity ...
is the precondition for the alliance necessary to becoming ...
carries the transformations of becoming or crossings of multiplicities ...
further down the line of flight
(Deleuze & Guattari 1988:245,249)

I found myself wondering *what alliances have the teachers made, and what are the anomalous (the phenomena) that have enabled these alliances?*

The teachers had spoken about their socialising (or not) with both the staff and parents. In another study of rural teaching (McConaghy *et al.* 2006:25) one teacher referred to friend(ship)s with colleagues fifteen times in a forty-five minute interview. In this study, one of the teachers spoke happily about being invited and spending time socialising with colleagues, while another spoke about not being invited by colleagues to socialise them. For some of the teachers socialising with colleagues and parents was part of their becomings-teacher; for others it wasn't. For some, this socialising provided the anomalous the teachers

needed for their becomings in the unfamiliar places to which they had moved.

In order to explore further the notions of the anomalous and alliances I asked the teachers about the support they received from their colleagues and others. In response to my enquiries each of the teachers talked about asking for *help*. While some talked about being open about needing help right from term one, others admitted that they were more reluctant to seek the assistance they needed.

teacher-peer relationships #5

seeking the anomalous

my wife

she usually doesn't know what I'm
talking about

"okay I'm listening but I really don't
know what the problem is"

sometimes you just need an ear to
say

where you're at with things and

there are frustrations along the way

because I'm not used to doing

things the way they do it

another colleague

the maths teacher is quite good I

I actually relate very well to her

being able to

just talk about things

it's different to talking to the senior
teacher

just able to

talk about things in a really open
manner

and not worry about dotting the Is

and crossing the Ts so much

I have spoken to her quite a bit

about just different things and

airing frustrations

it would have to be the release
teacher

the Principal as well but no so
much

at the start of the year I was going to
him to ask certain things

but more over the time

it's been

the release teacher because we're

teaching about the same age group

she's had these children before

setting up

different things in the classroom

I came to her with an art program

last term and I said

I've developed this

*and I can't quite fit in what I want it to
fit in*

she said

"ohh look no do this and do that
and ..."

it's more

supporting of

your

teaching

my partner who's just been
solid as
I'd walk in the door in the afternoon
right that's it I'm giving up
"okay darl"
next day
I love this job
"good"

my sister
especially with
at one stage I was just getting so
down on myself
everything that I'd try in the class
seemed to be failing and
there was one student in there in
particular who just
made it
extremely difficult to get
group work done
no matter how much you set up
different boundaries it just didn't
work

I was able to go to her and say
what am I doing wrong?
and she said "you're doing all these
things but it's now confusing
them"
she actually had more
concrete things to use
she has plans and
procedures for dealing with that
she taught for four years
in a primary school

at the school
definitely the principal
definitely
the acting head teacher
was fantastic
she was brilliant
she was just quietly in the
background and
she could read where I was at before
I could
she's one of those people who was
just quietly
a very solid figure in the
background

outside school
yourself
just quietly there
just knowing
even though I pulled back for
months and months I would go

back and read your emails
there was never any
judgementalism coming from you
no pressure
I would read and there was
this reminder to be gentle with
myself
and basically you are where you're
at
and exactly what you said before
which is
no need for should —
could
just that gentle stuff
and knowing that somebody cared
enough to do their PhD around it
is
wow
so that was phenomenal
and that's just been quietly there

god
that's the easiest way to answer that
one

the assistant principal
she came over that first morning
and said "hi
how are you going"
and then she showed me
what we were doing
and she's been there when I've
needed her since

I get on the phone
to my mother
and most of that wouldn't actually
be with school
I guess it does stem from school
but the exhaustion
the work
and the tiredness
it all gets on top of you
but I don't think I've had any major
times
there's been a couple of times when
I've had to ring up and go
"rrrrrrrrrr"
but
not major
I mean it's been pretty
touch wood
calm

and my sister probably
she probably cops it a bit too

I'm just one of these people who
likes to talk about things
just talk about it
even if there seems to be no
resolution at the end of it
just to talk about it
get ideas out
and I have been able to do that with
the senior teacher so that's been
good
in a lot of ways he's been a good
sounding board because then he
throws it back at me
"why do you think this"
that's got me to think
why do I think certain things and
got me questioning
what are my expectations and
beliefs

"You're not the only one who's
been through this"
although the other teachers who
have been there for 10 years will
tell you that
it's a little bit hard to believe
when they seem so in control
but I think you need those guys as
well
they've got invaluable advice

"the leader of the pack"

Open
honest
if I've got something I need to talk
to him about
I don't have any qualms or worries
about just going up and knocking
on his door and going in
and he will always talk with me

he shows a lot of respect
he comes down to my classroom but
he usually lets me know when he's
coming and if he
comes down
for some other reason that he hasn't
foreseen
then he will actually wait at the
door and knock

there's a lot of
mutual respect

he's just a person we all look up to
in the school
he's just a great model
just the way he holds himself
generally it's great to see a
principal who's like that
I guess there's others out there but
it's good to come to a school and
have a principal that leads by
example and
does the right things

fairly close given that
he's my boss I guess I'm closer than
any other boss
I've had
he is my boss and I have to respect
him for that
but
it doesn't come out
all the time that
that's the way things are
we talk
it's not like how's the weather type
thing
we get down to like 4th and 5th level
communication
down to emotions and trust
we share
things about ourselves that we
would only tell
trusted friends

the principal will say to me
some afternoons
"well
I did this today
and it didn't quite work as I planned
have you got any other ideas?"
or I'll come into him and say *oh look
I did this today and I don't know if it
quite worked*
and talk it over like that and he'll
say "oh yeah I think that will
work"
"sounds great"

the principal
I don't have much to do with
he always talks to me
one day my room wasn't cleaned
I went up and saw him and he
jumped onto it straight away
he always says hello
and he always goes up to my kids
and makes sure they're okay
he cares

it's a good relationship
we knew each other
from years ago
through cricket
so there's that lovely understanding
there

it's good too because when I'm
having tough times he will often
use
sporting metaphors and analogies
he's speaking my language and it
just cuts through all that insecurity
and hoo haa

it's quite lovely because
we seem to be able to
both be
very professional
it's a lovely combination of being
principal and teacher
professional
but also there's a
friendship there as well
it's a good fusion

but I'm also very aware
that
he's the boss

he's one of these people that
leads
very quietly but you can tell there's
a lot of
oomph just under the surface

there's lot of jokes lots of humour
I think he respects what I do too
because
he knows that Tuesday is a shocker
so he'll often drop into the
classroom
just to say g'day and to let the kids
know
he's around
I actually asked him to do that
a few months ago
it's good
I think he's seen me working with
the kids and
I think he respects what I do

teacher-peer relationships #5

In the fourth term interviews I asked each teacher to who or what did they turn to when they needed support, hoping that their answers to this question might tell me about their alliances. The data extracts here show that the people who the teachers chose to make alliances with were varied and not always directly associated with the school or their teaching. They included colleagues, a senior teacher, the principal and assistant principal, as well as partner, mother, sister, God and even myself. I had expected that the teachers would name other teachers—this, of course, was a little simplistic. The data extracts here suggest that the teachers just needed someone to talk to; not necessarily another teacher. In their report to the NSW DET on rural and remote education, Will Letts and associates (2005:222) note that ‘new teachers gain their professional support eclectically.’ The teachers in this study sought support from a very eclectic mix of people, making rhizomatic connections with whomever and whatever they perceived as being able to provide the assistance needed at any given time.

Deleuze and Guattari (1988:243-252), writing about *becomings-animal*, suggest that the alliance is always made with the leader of the pack. For some of the teachers it was the principal, assistant principal or senior teacher who was an important alliance in their *becoming-teacher*. While it was not the only

alliance they made to assist their becoming-teacher it was an important one for most of them. However, it is not the individuated assemblage (the person) that is important, but rather the 'phenomenon of bordering' that that person enables. The anomalous is the phenomenon of the outsider which enables a line of flight, and the creation of connections between multiplicities, which constitute a becoming. For these teachers sometimes the anomalous was found at the school, but also in family, in the spiritual, and in a university researcher: it was found in something or someone who enabled them to continue to take creative lines of flight in their becomings-teacher.

teacher-peer relationships #6

parent teacher interviews

I thought
parents would be a lot more
inquisitive as to
what we were doing in class but
they didn't want to know about
that
some parents just wanted to come in
and talk about how good their
child is and I thought
*isn't it me supposed to be telling you
what I think of your child*
sometimes you'd have to redirect
them
get them back onto the topic at hand
*yes well Johnny is not doing his
assignments
did you know that*
"but he's really good at soccer"

that's to be expected that they
would share something
I just didn't expect it to be 50/50
I was probably expecting more
15/85
I wouldn't mind a bit of feedback
from home
but they would also
want to know
more about
how he's going in class and maybe
how that could
be used at home

in the first one I was kind of
wondering what was the point
they got to know me a bit and I got
to know them a bit
but that's about all that transpired
between us
apart from them telling me how
good their son or daughter was
not all of them were like that

the second one
they got a bit more serious
"why is Johnny not doing as well as
I thought?"
it was early third term straight after
reports
once they'd had time to look at
those
they really wanted to know what
they were behind in and
what I think
they might need to improve on
they didn't really care so much
about what we're teaching which

I find really odd
I would like to know what my child
is being taught

I was kind of hoping that
we would establish a
more co-operative
set of things that we could get
Johnny
to work on together
at the end of the day that's what I
really want to achieve
if we're both working
towards the same goal
then we're making the most of
Johnny's opportunity at
at school

that doesn't leave much for
the relationship side of things
that is important too
there's got to be a building of
bridges there but
I would have liked
to have covered that ground early
on rather than later
later on in the year it's a bit harder
to build those bridges
*if I send Johnny home with homework
can you make sure he gets on top of it
and if there's any trouble call me and
we can work out something
what are his interests at home and how
can we merge those with what we're
doing*

that's the stuff I want to talk about
and we never quite
get there
at the end of the day there's got to
be
something *tangible* coming out it
there were some *intangible* ones but
I want some *tangible* ones as well
*okay this is going to happen and I'm
going to make sure this happens
and this is the best way we can
help your child to
get across
this year*

it's quite intriguing
there aren't a lot of parents who are
interested in how their kids are
going
I'm quite surprised

the parent-teacher interviews
the beginning of term three
they were good
we had four or five
there wasn't many at all
the parents were really good parents
their focus was the social aspect
not so much the work
"are they getting along with
everyone?"
"are they placing nicely in the
playground?"

the first week or two of second term
we had the
parent-teacher interviews
I had no problem with them simply
because
the kids that have problems
don't take the note home to let the
parents know there's interviews
on
and don't book a time or place to
come and talk to you
so you're only talking to the parents
of the good kids who don't
need any help anyway
I don't know how many times I said
*your child is doing
really well in class
they're sitting third (or second or first)
in class at the moment*

teacher-peer relationships #6

During the year, as I dwelt in the descriptions that the teachers had given me regarding their relationships with others, I became aware that not one teacher had mentioned parent-teacher interviews. When I had asked the teachers about their relationships with parents they had not volunteered lived-experience descriptions of parent-teacher interviews. Perhaps it was because of the formality of these occasions that they did not immediately think of them as part of their “relationships” with parents. And so it was that I found myself asking *have you had parent-teacher interviews yet?*

The first extract here tells how one teacher spoke about the desire of parents simply to chat with her, and in particular to speak about their children’s talents. She was quite frustrated by this: she wanted the precious parent-teacher interview time to be spent discussing how best to help the child reach his/her potential, in particular to discuss “tangible” ideas for supporting the child’s learning. There was a frustration, almost desperation, in her voice as she expressed this desire she had to involve the parents in their children’s learning. It seemed that she and the parents were not connecting. Perhaps the parents this teacher spoke with were searching for a way to connect with her: they as parent-teacher of their children, and she as the school-teacher of their children, by sharing a little of their own views and beliefs.

Writing about adult-adult relationships in a teaching situation, Denise Proud wrote, 'trust will only develop after self disclosure' (à Beckett & Proud 2004:154). Perhaps the creation of this *intangible* connection was an important precondition for enabling the parents to co-operate with the teacher in the process of coming to some *tangible* outcomes for supporting their child's learning. However, this teacher did not see this. The parents, too, have their own becomings; their own collections of multiplicities and assemblages that they are engaged in and which influence the teacher-parent relationships and the becomings-teacher.

teacher-peer relationships #7

significant others

I feel
very supported
not just at the school
outside the school as well
if there's anything my family needs
the school
has many friends
and they've just made us feel so
welcome as a family which has
made me feel even
more welcome
just to know that my family is also
looked after

most nights I'm in bed by about
midnight but
I have a couple hours break in the
afternoon where I look after my
kids and the family
weekends are pretty much
mine
I try to organise it that way because
of the family
there are times when we have to do
work
but my wife [also a teacher] and I
try to do that on nights
after we've had the day with the
kids

I'm still able to spend time with my
fiancé
most weekends
[he] doesn't get home till
8 o'clock some nights
I try not to work after then

*[this teacher's partner is expecting their
third child]*

I want to take some time off but it's
just a case of whether there's
resources there to do it
unfortunately the school's been
dealt a hand so we've got to learn
to play with that hand
I'd ideally like a week so I can
at least while my wife's in hospital
go down there
and be with her and be with the
baby

[my children]
they like it here
they're healthy
they're learning
getting cheekier by the minute
getting more lively
they are growing up

the youngest one
his best mate at school lives 20 ks
out of town on a farm
holidays and weekends they get
together
he can't wait for tomato picking
time so he can go out there on
weekends and
actually stay overnight out there at
the farm
and pick tomatoes

I've noticed
especially with my son
how much people are willing
to take him into their fold and
hopefully help him grow up
just help him
I've really noticed it

this time
the kids' father rang me (to arrange
to have the kids in the holidays)
if I get them there (to my parents)
I'm going to stay for a few days so
my kids get to see my parents
then I'm coming back
and someone has to get them back
up here
just so I get that
little time where I can
sleep
and do stuff for school
and do stuff for me

and my kids
when I suggested
jokingly
that we should move back to my
home town
threw little tantrums
so they must think this is home

taking some things home
that's just made it a whole lot more
easier for me to concentrate on the
job at hand here
but doing it late at night
just going home which is the plan
just to go home and be with the
family and when the kids go to
sleep then I'll
crank out the books again

I have the evenings
after [my partner] and the kids have
all gone to bed
I sit with [my partner] until she goes
to sleep and then I turn the lights
off and
go work in the study until midnight
or one o'clock whenever I feel
tired

teacher-peer relationships #7

While I was reviewing the second term interviews I was struck by how often the teachers referred to their significant others (spouses, children and parents) when answering a question about themselves or their teaching. In particular, in discussing their relations with their colleagues and the support that they may or may not have sought and/or accepted (see earlier in this chapter), the teachers chose, in several instances, to tell me about the role their significant others played in supporting them. None of the teachers were “solo”: four were in long term relationships with a partner (two were married with children; two were committed to a long term relationship); and the other teacher had two young children who lived with her. Only graduate teachers with significant others living with them volunteered for the study, and the lived-experience descriptions of these teachers suggests that their relations with their significant others were important in their becomings-teacher. In the third and fourth term interviews, I encouraged the teachers to tell me about their families. The data extracts here show how the teachers talked about their families; sometimes in direct relation to their work as teachers, and sometimes simply sharing with me their becomings-parent and becomings-partner. The three teachers who had children each talked about juggling time with the family and time for themselves, both for

work and for leisure. And this juggling of work, family and self was a challenge at times. The teachers' multiple becomings were dynamically intersecting with and affecting their becomings-teacher.

peers, becoming-teacher and place

The teacher-peer relationships that were a part of the teachers' becomings were characterised by non-symmetrical double-deterritorialisations—lines of flight from the known to the unknown, making all manner of connections, and which always involved another multiplicity or assemblage, but not always equally (symmetrically). The relationships were also characterised by the formation of alliances. In Deleuzo-Guattarian thought alliances are necessary for becomings because they provide the anomalous (the affect of bordering) which carries the transformations of the teachers' becomings. The teachers made various alliances, with both the human and non-human in their places. Some found the alliances necessary for their becoming-teacher in colleagues, some in family. In the chapter *tell me about this place* data extracts suggest that for one teacher it was the outdoors that provided the anomalous: a connection between himself as teacher and the real, "natural" world. For another it was the gum tree and galahs which provided a peacefulness that is often lost in the midst of class time. Each teacher made the alliances necessary for providing the anomalous (the affects, the supports) that were vital for their becoming-teacher. The teachers' descriptions suggest that the anomalous (the bordering effect) was enabled through the presence of others—at times just being there and at other times talking, and at others simply listening. For one teacher it was the humour of her principal which created the anomalous—that which enabled her lines of flight to be creative. The alliances varied from teacher to teacher, but each teacher actively participated in creating alliances.

teacher-institution relationships #1

the Department of Education

I'd like to see more of an input from
the consultants
if
the consultants were given days just
to go around in their area to the
graduates
and see
the graduates
in their environments to say
"yes you have this and this and this
but this is how you can use them"

[about the early intervention program]

I don't think anyone
including
the Department
fully understands
how it should be working
and I know that
they'd like to revamp
and hey look
I'm a new teacher out
give me time

*[talking about the Education
Department induction day]*

We don't want to know about
policies we just want to know
what's out there that can help us
right now
get our programs up
get
literacy and maths
down pat
that's our basic need
we need to know these resources
and we need to know these people
really well

my hectic morning
because of numbers
all my days are nearly full
today I can actually accept another
child
if someone else came in
and that's the thing
the Department staff don't come in
and have a look at your class
and see what you have got

the Board of Studies

With the school being registered
we'll get audited
next year
they've got obvious formats for
things and we have to comply
with those so
there's a few things that I have to
iron out

the Board of Studies seems to be
cracking down more
I haven't been through the process
before but from what I can gather
they seem to be cracking down
more on
accountability
professionalism
they're the two
key words that they're focussing on

I think there has been that gradual
progression from what I can see of
accountability
in getting teachers more accountable
due to political pressure and stuff
like that

*the New South Wales Institute of
Teachers*

I just got another note
on Friday
from them saying
we're waiting for your fees
I thought *what fees*
who are you
why do you want my money...
ohh!
I had a look on the website today so
I sort of know what you're talking
about
but it was quite funny on Friday it
was like:
will you stop sending me letters!
then
oh I better take notice of these

they've sent the paperwork out
for checking that I'm doing my job
it's different and all that now
the assistant principal has to observe
which she has done once
the assistant principal and I
we actually put aside some time to
sit down and go through it

the NSW Teachers' Federation (the union)

have you joined the Teachers 'Federation?

no

I'm too busy

I'm doing a lot of Federation training at the moment

I went down

the weekend before last

to Sydney

and did the *Teachers and the Law Conference*

I was able to bend the ear of

a couple of people from the

Department's IT department who set the blocking of websites ...

I get on fairly well with all the

Federation reps and I've

been to a couple of Federation dos

I've put in to go to another

two day thing next month

Only being new to the industry I like to try to

understand what's going on and

what's happening

to get a better indication of what's going on

it's the first union I've ever been

involved in that actually cares for people

so I'm interested in finding out as much as I can about it

it does things for it's members

the meetings I've been to

it's all about what they can do for the members

how they're looking after the members

how they are trying to make things better for the members at the

school with the students

as well as afterwards

I have joined

they've had a few meetings but they often have them

in recess or lunch when I'm at a preschool

I've been to the two
Sky [live video telecast]
meetings
in the bottom pub
that's been interesting

one was
a couple of weeks ago
with regards to the
12% pay rise
one of the staff members
an allegation had been made about
her in another school she taught at
I got to see
an example of how the union would
move in very quickly to back her
up
from my understanding of it
it might be a good back up
to have

teacher-institution relationships

teacher-institution relationships #1

From the perspective of Deleuzo-Guattarian rhizomatics the institutional organisations of the education system—education departments and ministries, teaching authorities, unions, schools and the positions within them, along with the individuals (teachers, pupils, parents) are all ‘different types of multiplicities that co-exist, interpenetrate, and change places’ (Deleuze & Guattari 1988:36). Changes in one multiplicity affects changes in others. They are in mutual relation and each has its own becomings. While it was not common for the graduate teachers to meet representatives of these bodies, the policies, regulations, procedures, and systems etcetera, of these bodies had a significant impact of their becomings-teacher.

There are two bodies which administer schooling in the state of New South Wales (NSW)—the NSW Department of Education and Training, and the Office of the Board of Studies. As graduates most of the teachers had very little to do directly with either of these bodies, however, the teachers were certainly able to identify the influence of these organisations on themselves as teachers. The other legal bodies which play a role in formal schooling in NSW include the teachers’ union (NSW Teachers’ Federation) which has optional membership, and the NSW Institute of

Teachers, a body in its first year of operation at the time the data was collected for this study, and which administers the registration and accreditation of all teachers in the state of New South Wales.

The bureaucracy of the NSW schooling system is very large and complex and it was not uncommon in my interviews with the teachers for me to ask for clarification about particular matters the teachers were talking about. Despite having been a teacher (albeit in another state of Australia), having completed prior research in a rural NSW school, and having visited many, many NSW schools during my 18 months as academic support for teaching placements, there was so much of the organisation and bureaucratic minutia that I was unaware of, and that affected the graduate teachers' lives.

Some of the teachers spoke much more about the institutions they and their schools were part of than others. For some the institution of their own school (head teachers, assistant principals, deputy principal, principal) required quite a bit of navigating, while others were more concerned with the wider institutions. In the data extracts here I explore the teachers' relations with the organisational bodies that regulate teachers and teaching in the state of New South Wales. In a recent study of rural teaching in New South Wales, Cathryn McConaghy and associates (2006:19) found that 'teachers found particularly troubling the imposition into their local context of Departmental requirements', and the lived-experience descriptions of the teachers in this study show that they too found navigating institutional relations very challenging.

The spaces created by the institutional bodies and organisations of teaching are, in Deleuzo-Guattarian thought, *striated* spaces. Whereas spaces of becoming are *smooth* spaces, the spaces of subjects and forms are *striated*. The institutional bodies of the education system create striated spaces over which the State rules:

One of the fundamental tasks of the State is to striate the space over which it reigns, or to utilise smooth spaces as a means of communication in the service of striated space (Deleuze & Guattari:1988:385).

Not only does the State striate space—creating all manner of subjects and forms, these striated spaces are occupied by teachers and many other assemblages whose becomings are constitutive of smooth spaces:

the two spaces in fact exist only in mixture: smooth space is constantly being translated, transversed into a striated space; striated space is constantly being reversed, returned to a smooth space (Deleuze & Guattari 1988:474).

The data extracts suggest that the teachers experienced the striated spaces of the institutions of teaching as intrusions into the smooth spaces of their becoming teacher, however there would be no becomings-teacher without the striations of the school system and its various organisational bodies. Becomings must necessarily navigate both smooth spaces of becoming and striated spaces of forms and subjects.

teacher-institution relationships #2

I'm just surprised at how many
procedural things are in school
when you're not used to working
like that it's ...
private enterprise doesn't have all
these checks and balances and
in some things you go
why is it there?
in the end I appreciate what it is but
at the time it's very frustrating
especially if you want to get
something out
I've got to go and somebody's got to
read it and they're not available
right now
that's the trouble with a little school
everyone is so pushed for time
if I give them something they can't
get onto it for a day or two
and then I get it back and then
I can't get back onto that for a day or
two and
the something that I had to have out
today is now four days late

*[a professional development day
invitation]*

it was actually sent from district
office addressed to me
then I had to go through all the
school rigmarole
I got told from someone from
district office
"you're going"
but the school hadn't confirmed
I had to go and say to the deputy
principal *am I going?*
you have to put an application into
your supervisor
then she puts it into
the deputy principal or someone up
there
then they okay it
and then they're meant to get back
to you
but somehow that got lost

I got approval
I was put into do digital portfolio
training
there's four blocks of two days
and I found out about the first two
days a week after they'd already
finished

so I went to the second lot
and
got looked at really funny because I
was the only teacher there with no
kids
well I wasn't told I was supposed to
take students and computers for
them to play with

the legal stuff these days is ...
anything to do with a child
if you just want to go for a walk
down by the river there's all these
forms
parents need to be notified
*gee I just want to go for a walk down
the river*
I just can't afford the time to
organise it all
though I'm hoping next year I'll be
able to

Last year's computing studies
budget was
700 odd dollars this year I've got 4 ½
grand to spend
but when I went out and bought
\$200 worth of optical mice
my head teacher
flew off the handle
I didn't know I had to get
written approval from 25 different
companies to do something like
that

the technology funding
it's been granted but we haven't got
it yet
we're waiting
so your application was successful?
yes
it was lots of money too
apparently
I've done really well

[the family support meeting]
that day was really good
we had issues
the assistant principal said "I'm
coming with you"
to give me support which she
doesn't have to do
she made me do all the positives
and she did
all the negatives

it was really good
I wouldn't have been able to go in
there
and be as blunt as she was

I have only just recently got the
notes from that meeting
and they've left a lot out
they've put in what they wanted to
things have changed to a degree
they were happy with what I was
doing which was good
at times there's still issues there
I just feel that there are too many
people involved
too many chiefs and not enough
Indians

I have computer club at lunch time
three days one week
and four days the other

I can't do lunch duties
I can't go to band or choir practices
at lunch or anything like that

I think I get more support as a
single parent than I do as a
first year teacher
I mean
my daughter was in
district athletics last Monday
I asked for the day off
so that I could go watch
in the end
I went down as a teacher
because
the deputy wanted me to see
my daughter

it's all politics
when we sat down
to work it out ...
they didn't let children in who
should have got in
and other children I've got in who I
suggested should probably go
they don't want to get rid of
even though
on testing
they probably don't qualify

One of the other things I want to do
is
increase
the time we have in the classroom
it should be a minimum 40 minutes
whereas at the moment
by the time the kids get there and by
the time I get them in and the time
they leave and pack up its only 30
there's not much you can do in 30
minutes

I've got year 7 to 12 next year
they are just starting to do the
timetables now so
I just gave my head teacher a little
written request that it all be
condensed into three days again
so that I can keep this day at the
other primary school

this term
I've added two more classes on
I'm the careers guy as well
if you really look at careers it's
much more than
any other subject because of the
organisation that goes behind it
going out to work experience
checking on those which we did for
Year 9
it takes up a lot more time than just
preparing a normal subject of
work
there's a lot more correspondence
going home and a lot more
administration behind the scenes
which I find takes up a lot of time

I was asked if I'd do it and I
quite innocently
went *yes*
it's probably the stupidest thing I've
ever done

I know some of the other teachers
also felt
the pressure of the syllabus
especially the English one
apparently there's 200 outcomes
and they're like
"how am I going to cover these?"
thankfully for geography and
history
we've only got
ten outcomes
we can cover them

I was asked 4th term last year would
I be the Year 7 adviser because
they couldn't get anyone else
they had all this orientation stuff
coming up that needed to be
organised
so I thought *mmm okay*
I may as well be doing that now as
well as doing my programming
and planning for next year

I thought there was going to be
more involvement with the [school]
board
but there's not
on an individual basis I know each
member of the board
but we don't talk about
things
there's not a discussion about
what do you think about this and that
we're not actually consulted
I want to know what's going on
if it affects me I want to know about
it

the registration stuff
I'm not really enjoying
some of the processes that we're
going through
the fact that I have to document
things that's not the problem
it's just the process that we're going
through internally
we worked a few things out
there were some
misunderstandings
we had to go through a little bit of
pushing and shoving to basically
get the point across
at the end of the day I just really
wanted to say
look
if I work better this way let me work
that way
I don't want anyone else to
I had to make these points and I was
coming up against opposition
I just got into a bit of a
futile argument about that
that was a bit of a backslide for me
that
we'd have to argue about something
like that

I don't think anyone likes being told
you have to work this way
I don't
especially as teachers
we have our own nuances and own
ways and quiriness about how
we deliver something
I'm not a robot

teacher-institution relationships #2

On a more intimate level, in their day to day activities, the teachers quickly discovered that teaching involved much more than simply teaching. There were forms to fill in and letters to write, professional development processes to work out, budgets to work with, grants to apply for and meetings to present at. Each of the teachers struggled at some time or other with the bureaucracy of the education systems of which they were a part. Everything, from class timetables, extra-curricula activities, being a Year level adviser, and needing time off for family matters, to documenting teaching for formal reviews and relations with the school board, required thought and energy above and beyond that of the daily teaching of their pupils. These extracts highlight the mixture of smooth and striated space: where the smooth spaces of the teachers' becomings were affecting and being affected by the striated spaces of the schooling systems. The reactions of the teachers to the striations of their spaces of teaching ranged from frustration and anger ("I'm not a robot") to, occasionally, joy ("I've done really well"). Negotiating the furrows of the striated spaces of the institutional organisations while navigating the flows of the smooth spaces of their becomings was often a challenge for these teachers.

navigating and negotiating institutional spaces

social relations, which are concrete abstractions, have no real existence save in and through space. Their underpinning is spatialised. In each particular case, the connection between this underpinning and the relations its supports calls for analysis. Such an analysis must imply and explain a genesis and constitute a critique of those institutions ... that have transformed the space under consideration

- Henri Lefebvre(1991:404)

Like most of us, the graduate teachers were a part of and subject to many of the institutions (collective practices, organisations, laws, policies) of the places and spaces of the society in which they lived. Edward Casey (1996:46) notes that place is 'permeated with culturally constituted institutions and practices ... [which] pervade the bodies of sensing subjects in a given place.' As teachers in the state of New South Wales the teachers were a part of and/or subject to educational institutions including the schools in which they taught, the education departments/systems those schools belonged to, other state statutory bodies, and the teachers' union. The lived-experience descriptions of the teachers provide, in the words of Henri Lefebvre (above), a critique of these institutions, telling how they transform the places and spaces of the school and affect the becomings-teacher. Relationships between the various multiplicities and assemblages of the education system are essential for the functioning of education department and its schools. The smooth spaces of becomings—of lines of flights, ruptures and connections, where relationships are expressed, are entwined with the striated spaces of the educational institutions—the spaces where structures and points (of order) have to be navigated.

relationships, becoming-teacher and place

Lived-other (relationality) is just one aspect of lived experience but as the teachers' lived-experience descriptions in this chapter suggest, it is a very potent one. How I experience a particular place is often closely related to my relationships with others in that place. "It's the people that make a place" is a phrase often voiced in the circles in which I move. Not only do we encounter others in place, who in turn encounter us, but others also encounter the other phenomena we also encounter. Their relations with place influence our own perceptions of and relations with place. Just as the new teacher "experiences" her new pupils, her colleagues, parents and community members, so too do they experience the new teacher. I am part of others' experience of

place, just as others are part of my experience. My response to place, creates place, both for me and for others.

However our experience of others is not simply the experience of the individual; we also experience the collective. We inhabit places as individuals and also as members of the collective—of communities with certain practices and beliefs:

[place is] permeated with culturally constituted institutions and practices. As the basis of collective as well as individual habitus, these institutions and practices pervade the bodies of sensing subjects in a given place (Casey 1996:46).

The teachers in their schools not only experienced individuated others and their multiple becomings, they also experienced the collective practices of those individuals; practices of the institutions. Part of what we sense in place are the collective meanings that have been created over time: meanings that have evolved from relations with place. Our creativity in responding to place is influenced by our sense of the institutions and practices of that place. The graduate teachers developed relationships with others in their schools, and they also navigated relationships with the institutions of their schools. Their becomings-teacher affected and were affected by both the individual and collective in place.

a personal awareness

I have being, and my being is in relation to other beings (human and non-human; land, sea and air).

I have being in relation to all that exists and is in the world.

I am of the world and in the world.

As a teacher in rural communities I existed in those communities.

I was in mutual relation with my students, their parents and guardians, my colleagues, and the community,

with the natural and built environments.

Those relations played a vital role in my sense of who I was as a teacher.

They were vital in my becoming-teacher.