Rhizoanalytic Possibilities for Exploring Early Childhood Teachers' Emotions

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In keeping with French philosophers Deleuze and Guattari's project of seeking life-affirming ways of becoming different, this article explores possible creative ruptures and lines of flight that might produce new ways to understand early childhood teaching, subjectivities and emotions in Aotearoa New Zealand. I am taking seriously Krejsler's (2016) call to: "Seize the opportunity to think differently!" (p. 1475). Analysis is presented of a focus group discussion excerpt involving three early childhood teachers, which is part of a larger doctoral research study exploring emotions in early childhood teaching. The study is working within a posthumanist theoretical framework that draws on theories of Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 1994). The data excerpt starts with a discussion about pleasure, involving spontaneous and sustained interactions between teachers and children, and includes a narrative about interactions in an early childhood setting between a teacher and some infants and toddlers in her care.

Finding opportunities to "do" and "think" differently can be difficult for early childhood teachers. Teachers may become embedded in taken-for-granted assumptions, where familiar subjectivities, surroundings, relationships and practices mask "the myriad impulses, cracks and fractures" (Krejsler, 2016, p. 1476) that open up possibilities for difference. Not all practices need to be done differently; the challenge is to become aware of (usually unnoticed) constraints and to question ways of being that are assumed to be normal and right.

Early childhood teachers in Aotearoa New Zealand negotiate diverse understandings of early childhood professionalism, such as traditional functionalist, technical, managerial, relational, and critically activist professionalism (Warren, 2014a). In tension with discourses of professionalism, persistent historical maternalist discourses also position early childhood teachers as gendered carers with innate nurturing skills. In early childhood education, teachers' responsibilities for children's education and care are entwined. The early childhood curriculum "Te Whāriki: He whāriki mātauranga mō ngā mokopuna o Aotearoa: Early Childhood Curriculum" (Ministry of Education, 2017), for instance, is largely concerned with teachers' responsibilities for children's learning and states that children "have a right to experience affection, warmth and consistent care" (p. 26). Yet, the Education Review Office (2013) evaluation guidelines "He Pou Tātaki: How ERO Reviews Early Childhood Services" indicate some ambivalence regarding caring relationships in early childhood teaching. Teachers' professional relationships with all children are described as "positive, sensitive and responsive" (Education Review Office, 2013, p. 37) and focused on children's learning. Education Review Office expectations for relationships with children up to two years of age have more focus on care; teachers must engage in responsive and consistent caregiving that meets children's attachment needs and is based on a pedagogy of care. Thus, early childhood teaching subjectivities are entangled within tensions between professionalism and maternalism, and between education and care. Taggart (2011) asserts that professionalism discourses position caring as a taken-for-granted foundation on which "higher skills of professionalism" are built (p. 87). I argue that these pairs of terms (professionalism and maternalism, education and care) echo binaries of male/female and rational/emotional, with the first of the terms privileged in each within Western perspectives of teaching typical of Aotearoa New Zealand, dominated by *Pākehā* (New Zealand European) culture.

Emotions are framed in early childhood teaching within conflicting perceptions of caring and relationships which are simultaneously valued as having moral purpose, and devalued as "vocational" rather than professional (Taggart, 2011). However, many early childhood teachers claim caring as part of professionalism (Dalli, 2008; Warren, 2014b) of the kind that is rooted in an ethic of care. The concept of "professional love" describes caring relationships that complement rather than compete with children's relationships with their parents (Page, 2011). In research with United Kingdom nursery workers, Osgood (2012) suggests that early childhood teachers are positioned as lacking in professionalism precisely because of an association with emotionality, and asserts that:

> Rather than conceptualising the women in this study as oppressed, docile bodies performing emotion through their work by virtue of a gendered professional script provided for them, a competing construction emerges whereby participants constantly negotiate and assess the role and interplay of emotions in their work. (p. 140)

Posthumanist perspectives offer possibilities to think differently about emotions and early childhood teaching, to escape the confines of thinking about these in terms of self-contained human individuals who are the source of thoughts, acts and emotions. Posthumanist theories challenge humanist perspectives by advocating for a flat ontology without hierarchies that privilege humanity. Braidotti (2016) describes posthumanism as containing threads of anti-humanism, which challenges the conflation of human into one version based on Western white Man and anti-anthropocentrism, which challenges primacy of human existence over other-than-human (living and non-living). Applying a posthumanist lens to matters of emotion and relationships in early childhood settings presents challenges and opportunities. Emotions are regarded in everyday language as human experiences, and subjectivities of children and teachers are shaped by regulations, policies, and discourses. Expanding a view of relationships to take human and other-than-human bodies in early childhood settings into account, and considering how these bodies affect each other, opens possibilities to think differently. For example, Mazzei's (2013b) concept of "Voice without Organs" (p. 732) proposes that voice, words, or expressions are productions that emerge from assemblages rather than being attributable to one human individual. In the focus group discussion data excerpt which I subject to analysis later, words are spoken by identifiable bodies but can be understood as productions of the assemblage. Words, actions, and emotions can be understood as emerging from affective flows in dynamic relations.

My perspective as researcher is composed immanently within the research, rather than as a transcendent dispassionate observer, and my task is "to collectively invent rather than discover at a distance" (Olsson, 2009, p. 97). I am being produced as teacher educator, early childhood teacher, and parent in relationships like those that the participants discuss. I frame the analysis within these questions: Where are the opportunities for early childhood teaching to become different? How do emotions work in early childhood teaching? What do they do?

This article proceeds by firstly outlining the theoretical framework underpinning the analysis. Concepts of emotion and affect are distinguished from each other and key concepts from Deleuze and Guattari of rhizomatic assemblage, affect, and desire are outlined. Rhizoanalysis using a tracing-and-mapping approach is discussed. The data excerpt is presented and an account is given of fine-grained micropolitical analysis. Finally, some possibilities are proposed for creative experimentation in early childhood teaching with consideration of the part that emotions play.

Theoretical framework: Key concepts

The concepts drawn on in this analysis are situated within Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy of dynamic interrelationships among bodies that affect each other through processes of constantly becoming different. Deleuze and Guattari (1994) describe the task of philosophy as creating concepts to think with. Concepts may be selected from their theoretical toolbox (Foucault, 1977) that are applicable to particular research situations and useful for researchers to think with. Olsson (2009) noticed in her research in Swedish pre-schools that certain concepts and research situations affect each other, change each other, make something new, sometimes with "an almost explosive force" (p. 99).

Emotions, affect and desire

Emotions are framed within this article as outcomes of affective flows that are registered in bodies and minds corporeally and incorporeally. In human experience, emotions may be understood as registrations in conscious thought of how a body's capacity to affect and be affected has been extended or restricted (Olsson, 2013). Emotions are not equivalent to nor do they account for all affect as there is always some affect that escapes awareness. Affects are implicated in and distinguished from feelings and emotions. Affect is understood as a force that produces changes in human and other-than-human bodies' capacities to affect and be affected (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). Affective forces are experienced and interpreted (including as emotions) in engagement in the world. Highmore (2010) proposes that "the sticky entanglements of substances and feelings, of matter and affect are central to our contact with the world" (p. 119).

As forces that influence capacities of human and other-than-human bodies in assemblages to influence each other, affects may be experienced intensively within bodies as sensations, outside of consciousness: "Affect is that which is felt before it is thought; it has a visceral impact on the body before it is given subjective or emotive meaning" (Hickey-Moody & Malins, 2007, p. 8). Deleuze and Guattari draw on theories of affect from seventeenth-century Dutch philosopher Spinoza (1677/2006). According to Deleuze, Spinoza uses the term *affectio* to describe what happens to a body being affected by other bodies, while *affectus* describes the capacity of a body for affecting or being affected: "the increase or decrease in its power of acting" (Deleuze, 1988, p. 49).

Desire is conceptualised by Deleuze and Guattari as a force that drives flows of affect in assemblages: "Assemblages are passional, they are compositions of desire" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 441). Desire produces reality: "a coming together of forces/drives/intensities that produce something" (Mazzei, 2013a, p. 99). Deleuze and Guattari use and build on Spinoza's conceptualisation of desire as a positive striving to persist, rather than desire for something that is lacking. Spinoza's (2006) concept of *conatus* denotes desire, a power, tendency or striving of each thing, animate or inanimate, to persist in being, "to maintain and maximise the ability to be affected" (Deleuze, 1988, p. 99).

Rhizome and assemblage

The rhizome is used by Deleuze and Guattari (1987) as an "imaginary" (Sellers, 2013, p. 9) to think the concept of dynamic assemblages of affective flows driven by desire. A rhizome is a plant that expands laterally in multiple directions through a network of shallow roots. A rhizomatic assemblage consists of multiple connections in all directions. When exploring a rhizome, a researcher can start at any point and make unexpected connections, "proceeding

from the middle, through the middle, coming and going rather than starting and finishing" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, pp. 27-28).

Deleuze and Guattari theorise dynamic assemblages as rhizomatic, complex and impermanent arrangements that contain bodies, practices, and territories coalescing together and relating to each other (Albrecht-Crane, 2005; Wise, 2005), rather than understanding bodies as static and bounded individuals. A body may be "an animal, a body of sounds, a mind or an idea; it can be a linguistic corpus, a social body, a collectivity" (Deleuze, 1988, p. 127). An assemblage is formed by the relations among its components, similar to the way a constellation is characterised by relationships among its stars rather than by the stars themselves (Nail, 2017). Like machines, assemblages are what they do. Bodies such as teachers, children, and emotions are formed and re-formed within assemblages in constant processes of becoming different, through flows of affect driven by forces of desire.

Affect and desire flow within rhizomatic assemblages but they do not flow freely. Molar and molecular lines limit possibilities at macro and micro political levels while lines of flight offer possibilities for escape from constraints. These lines influence how affect and desire flow within assemblages (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). Early childhood education is closely regulated and monitored, shaping teachers' subjectivities at molar and molecular levels. Molar stratifications such as those of gender, age, ethnicity, and culture act to categorise in early childhood assemblages. Government funding is conditional on teachers and managers meeting and maintaining standards and reporting requirements. Molecular striations work at micropolitical levels on individuals and productions within assemblages. Teachers and children in early childhood settings have many restrictions on their ways of becoming and are under constant surveillance. The physical layout of the settings is designed to maximise supervision of children and surveillance of teachers (Duncan, 1999). Forces of desire can enable new ways to become different by escaping constraints through lines of flight.

Rhizoanalysis

As a tool for data analysis, rhizoanalysis employs concepts of rhizomatic assemblages, flows of affect and desire, and lines that constrain and enable these flows. A rhizoanalytic tracing-and-mapping process doubles critique with innovative creation (Lenz Taguchi, 2016). Mapping works affect as methodology by following affective flows and noticing what they do: how bodies affect and are affected in entangled relationships. To map a rhizomatic "branching, reversing, coalescing and rupturing flow" (Fox & Alldred, 2015, p. 401) through an assemblage, a researcher can enter the rhizome at any point and follow interconnections in any direction.

Data are regarded as dynamic components of assemblages rather than inert and passive. Research processes, events under study, data, and theory are understood as assemblages that interact with and constitute each other (Fox & Alldred, 2015). The researcher's job is to assemble already happening data, to become researcher assembled with data, to mediate from within the data assemblage, and to experiment with data (Nordstrom, 2015, p. 180). MacLure (2010) suggests that a glow of affective intensity invites researcher attention: "The shifting speeds and intensities of engagement with the example do not just prompt thought, but also generate sensations resonating in the body as well as the brain – frissons of excitement, energy, laughter, silliness" (p. 282).

In contrast with mapping, tracing records how teachers are categorised by molar stratifications, and how their subjectivities are shaped by molecular striations within discourses that produce expectations of "good" teachers. Honan and Sellers (2008) suggest that discourses operate within rhizomes, as each discourse interweaves and interconnects with

each other forming a discursive web" (p. 115). Official documents that regulate and guide teachers produce tracings of expectations of teachers who provide and manage environments that are conducive to children's emotional well-being (Ministry of Education, 2017). In Aotearoa New Zealand, early childhood teaching is controlled by regulations, recordkeeping, guidance, assessment, internal evaluation, appraisal, programme planning, teacher education, ongoing professional learning and development, policy development and review.

Researchers must attend to both tracing and mapping to critique the forces that constrain and enable ways of being for teachers and children in early childhood settings as well as noticing how desire drives affective flows and opens possibilities of lines of flight to new ways to become different. Deleuze and Guattari (1980/1987) remind us to "[p]lug the tracings back into the map, connect the root or trees up with the rhizome" (p. 15). Rhizoanalysis provides opportunities to explore new ways of becoming through "the enactment of creative ruptures and following the 'lines of flight' to new connections, or to something omitted, left out or silenced" (Lenz Taguchi, 2016, p. 45, emphasis in original)

Data excerpt and analysis: "It's a really special moment to share…"

Excitement, joy, wonder, and emotional freedom are experiences that three early childhood teachers associate with sharing spontaneous sustained conversations with children. Luke, Penny and Ava (all pseudonyms) are three Pākehā (New Zealand European) early childhood teachers participating in a focus group discussion with me as researcher. Ava teaches infants and toddlers, and Luke and Penny teach young children (two to five years of age). A conversation between Luke and Penny is occurring with Ava and myself listening.

Luke describes a spontaneous sustained conversation with a child as "a real treasure moment, sitting down and you just end up having a chat." He sees these occasions with their unplanned openness to whatever arises in engagement between teacher and child as allowing "emotional freedom" to "express your feelings, express what you think about some things, express your opinions and all those thoughts and feelings." Penny responds by linking teachers' joy and wonderment in these shared experiences with children's freedom and spontaneity. She describes children as role models for teachers in expressing emotions, including being more open with intense emotions than many adults: "intense with their emotion whether it's happiness, sadness, anger, whatever … excitement, wonder, curiosity."

In the narrative that follows Penny and Luke's conversation, Ava shares her excitement and enjoyment in shared experiences with children. Emotions are expressed in participants' words, tone of voice and non-verbal communication such as laughter or hesitation. The transcript excerpt is edited for ease of reading here, by removing some fillers ('yeah', 'you know') and repeated phrases.

> **Luke:** (thoughtfully) But yeah, those moments I think as teachers, they're the cream really. I really enjoy those. And I suppose with the younger children too, you know, with the nonverbal [infants] or just lying down on the floor, on the grass and just experiencing what they're looking at. That's really cool, isn't it?

> **Ava:** Yeah, I try to do that quite a few times during the day. I grab a blanket and I just lie it on the deck and I'll lie down, whatever the children could be doing – one in the sandpit, one on the bikes, one cooking in the kitchen – and I'll just take myself away and lie down and look up and then eventually they just all come over. And we're just talking about the things we can see in the sky and the trees and on the lamp post and (Alison: Oh, wow, yeah) I think I feel free and it's really, it's relaxing. I feel I could almost doze off after the conversation because it is, it's quite, I just love it. I think it's a really special moment to share.

> **Alison:** The words that come into my mind when I hear you talk about that are nourishing and nurturing. (Penny: Yeah yeah) They're kind of, they're related but not exactly the same thing, but you are giving them something that's really good for their wellbeing.

> **Ava:** (a little hesitantly at start of sentence) I guess I get excited when, you know, we're talking with like a child who doesn't have much language yet, on one side for example and then a child who does. And we're talking about aeroplanes and the child with not much language is trying to say [plane], and you're just like, 'Oh, that's just so cool.' You know if that child was inside they wouldn't have had that conversation, they wouldn't know how to say 'plane' for another couple of conversations. I think that's really neat, this learning.

In these data it is possible to conceptualise the teachers' voices as "voices without organs" (Mazzei, 2013b, p. 732), as expressions coming from the entangled rhizomatic assemblage of relations where affect and desire flow. Ava's narrative is assembled with memories, thoughts, and emotions, and with the words and memories, thoughts, and emotions of participants Luke and Penny, and myself as researcher. The assemblage of the narrative includes many relationships:

- among Ava and her emotions, thoughts, intentions, memories and experiences as teacher;
- the children in her care and their emotions, interests and communication;
- the other adults and children in the setting;
- the physical environment of indoor and outdoor spaces and materials;
- the framework of early childhood regulations, policies and procedures;
- discourses of early childhood teaching and learning.

The assemblage of the research connects to the narrative through the data excerpt assembled with the focus group discussion, the audio recording, the edited transcript and thoughts, emotions and memories that attract attention. These assemblages are further connected to theoretical tools of rhizoanalysis.

The rhizoanalytic tracing-and-mapping process combines tracing lines of constraint with mapping of affective flows in assemblages. Tracing performs critique by noticing molar and molecular lines that constrain and enable enactments and understandings of early childhood teaching, and shape teachers' emotions and subjectivities. Within early childhood settings, regulations and policies form molar stratifications as teachers are positioned as providers and managers of early childhood environments and are responsible for children's wellbeing, including their emotional wellbeing (Ministry of Education, 2017). Tracing discourses of relational professionalism indicate how Penny, Luke and Ava's emotions of excitement and pleasure may be understood as responses to children's learning. Relationally professional teachers express pleasure of teaching through warm interactions within relationships of trust. Enacting teacher subjectivities within discourses that focus on children's learning, Ava expresses excitement about children's learning, for example when a child is trying to say "plane" in a shared experience. Plugging the tracing into the map of affective flows among Luke, Penny and Ava draws attention to possibilities for escape from these discursive constraints.

These teachers express excitement, wonder, and joy associated with freedom to enjoy relationships unhindered by concerns for teachers' responsibilities to inculcate measurable learning outcomes in children.

As researcher, I am assembled with theories, methodologies, analytic questions, and with memories of interacting with very young children as a parent and early childhood teacher. The affective flows of joy and wonder of shared experiences and perspectives with children is familiar to me, and my subjectivities are also constrained by long exposure to assumptions and expectations of early childhood education. My response to Ava's account of joy, love, and appreciation of a "special moment to share" frames the experience within "order words." (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987). Deleuze and Guattari (1987) describe order words as "implicit presuppositions" (p. 87) that express generally held beliefs. By using the phrases "nourishing and nurturing" and "you are giving them something that's really good for their wellbeing," I restrict affective flows to produce Ava in a particular way, as a "good" teacher. Ava's hesitation registers this affect, and she goes on to link her excitement to children's learning, shutting down some possibilities for excitement, joy, and wonder.

When thinking about lying down and looking up, another line to trace comes to mind, that of the restricted physical space in early childhood settings, enclosed by high fences. Minimum standards specify 2.5m$_2$ indoor space and 5m$_2$ outdoor space per child (New Zealand Government, 2008). The materiality of the fence performs molar segmentation of the physical space into "permitted inside" and "forbidden outside." To look out, Ava and the children must look up.

In contrast with tracing, mapping explores possibilities for innovation and creativity by attending to affective flows driven by desire to produce "capacities for action, interaction, feeling and desire" in bodies or groups of bodies (Fox & Alldred, 2015, p. 402). Desire for pleasurable emotions and emotional freedom as Luke described, "just lying down on the floor, on the grass and just experiencing what they're looking at" drives Ava to take a blanket and lie down on the deck. Affective flows among the blanket and deck, and Ava and the children, offer space and opportunity to expand capacities to be affected as they look and talk together. The children's desiring forces may be expressed as curiosity ("What is she doing? What is she looking at?") attracting them towards Ava. Affect flows among Ava and the children as they talk about what they can see, enjoying the experience together. Ava's emotions register effects of the affective flows, she feels free and relaxed: "It's a really special moment to share,"she said.

Ava's desire as teacher to facilitate children's learning drives her interactions with children, focused on children's communication. Her capacity to be affected is expressed in her emotions as she is affected by how children act, respond and communicate, commenting, "I wonder what you really are trying to say. I think that's really neat too. That fills me with all kinds of emotions." Desire works as a driving force towards learning for the children and towards teaching for Ava. She feels affirmed as a teacher.

When the tracing is plugged into the map, flows of affect and desire can be seen to be channelled within molar and molecular constraints. What possibilities might there be for lines of flight where desire might escape the territory of a regulated and monitored early childhood setting? Lines of flight where teachers enact their desire to escape discursive webs of early childhood professionalism pose the danger of being regarded as unprofessional. Excitement, joy, wonder, and emotional freedom are channelled into expectations that govern early childhood teaching and learning. Ava follows a line of flight to temporarily escape expectations that teachers remain alert to and follow children's interests while maintaining supervision. She goes and lies down on the deck, waiting for children to join her. The line of flight is reterritorialised to include a conceptualisation of teaching and learning as sharing an experience of looking and communicating together. This teaching and learning experience is reterritorialised safely within regulations and expectations of early childhood education.

Ava and the children must look up to look outside fenced boundaries around the small space specified in regulations as minimum standard for an early childhood centre. Views of the world outside the centre boundaries are restricted to sky, trees, lamp post, and the occasional aeroplane. The desire among Ava and the children to share what they can see provides a possible line of flight to advocacy for changes to minimum standards in early childhood centres in Aotearoa New Zealand. Horizons of experience for children in early childhood education setting could be expanded by increasing the regulated space for children, and by other means such as using architecture and materials (such as reflective glass) that allows children and teachers a better view of what is outside the fences of the setting. Many early childhood settings, including Ava's, take children out on regular excursions that allow unhurried exploration of natural environments such as parks, bush, or beach settings. Such lines of flight might allow reterritorialization in conceptualisations of teaching and learning that is part of and in touch with the world outside the physical confines of the early childhood setting. Such possibilities for early childhood education are being realised in several countries including Aotearoa New Zealand, in the "bush kindergarten" movement, where children and teachers make regular excursions to bush and forest settings (see for example Schwalger, 2016). Such lines of flight become reterritorialised in more expansive understandings of what, where and how early childhood settings can become different from confined physical spaces that meet minimum requirements.

Understanding early childhood settings as assemblages of human and other-than-human relationships where affect and desire flows provides opportunities to understand teachers, children, and emotions differently. Luke, Penny and Ava speak of excitement, joy, wonder, and emotional freedom in interactions with children. Desire for such positive and energising emotions may escape expectations expressed in official documents that focus on children's learning and overlook emotional experiences of teachers as significant in early childhood settings. When teachers, children, and their emotions are understood as produced in assemblages and expressed by "Voices without Organs" (Mazzei, 2013b, p. 732), boundaries between assumptions about who teaches and who learns, and what is teaching and learning, can be less distinct. Relationships in early childhood assemblages are complex and messy, and emotions, as registrations of affective flows are an important part of the complexity and messiness.

Conclusion

The questions I posed in this article were: Where are the opportunities for early childhood teaching to become different? How do emotions work in early childhood teaching? What do they do? A tracing-and-mapping analytic approach to an excerpt from a focus group discussion has provided a view of teachers and children enhancing each other's capacity to act, interact, feel, and desire through shared experiences of excitement, joy, wonder, and emotional freedom. Molar regulations and minimum standards and molecular discursive webs constrain flows of affect and produce particular ways of teaching and learning. In a doubled tracing-and-mapping analysis, Ava's emotions are registrations of affective flows as she is assembled in relations with children, the materialities of a blanket and deck, shared experiences of seeing and talking about what's "in the sky and the trees and on the lamp post." Tracings of discourses of relational professionalism and of teaching and learning produce Ava as an effective early childhood teacher as affective flows are channelled among the children and herself.

In this article, an excerpt of discussion among Luke, Penny and Ava is assembled with Ava's narrative of the event, which is also assembled with the relationships and interactions among Ava and the children lying on the blanket and talking. The data are further entangled with my researcher/teacher educator subjectivities and selected concepts from Deleuze and Guattari's theoretical toolbox. Rather than "discovering at a distance" (Olsson, 2009, p. 97) as dispassionate researcher, I embed myself into the data through memory and imagination, and

feel affected by the confined space and the high fences which restrict teachers' and children's lives. I suggest some possible lines of flight to reduce the effect of restrictive physical space in the setting and expand experiences and horizons of children and teachers. However, to "collectively invent" (Olsson, 2009, p. 97), my task as researcher is surely to return to Ava and discuss this tracing-and-mapping exercise. There are no doubt other cracks and fractures that open up new possibilities for early childhood teaching and learning. The children and teachers who belong in the setting would be well placed to seek creative ruptures that would "be creative of new potential ways of knowing and producing a multiplicities of realities in ways that might entail more flourishing aspects of being and becoming, whether this concerns humans or the more-than-human" (Lenz Taguchi, 2016, p. 52).

Using the concepts of Deleuze and Guattari to analyse a data excerpt where human individuals apparently produce words, allows early childhood teachers, children, their settings, and understandings of teaching and learning to be reconceptualised in terms of relationships in assemblages. Emotions play a significant role in rethinking how interconnected relationships in rhizomatic assemblages register and respond to flows of affect and desire that produce human individuals who we understand as teachers and children. Opportunities to explore intense emotions and consider what emotional freedom means in early childhood teaching are constrained by molar and molecular constraints on teaching subjectivities. Expanding theoretical frames to encompass posthumanist perspectives and using the theoretical tools of Deleuze and Guattari provides a line of flight that may reterritorialise understandings of early childhood professionalism in exciting and innovative ways.

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