

# **A Study of the Geelong Local Learning and Employment Network**

by

Annelies Kamp

B.A., B.Soc.Sc. (Hons), M.P.E.T.

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

Deakin University

August, 2006

**DEAKIN UNIVERSITY**  
**CANDIDATE DECLARATION**



I certify that the thesis entitled

**A STUDY OF THE GEELONG LOCAL LEARNING AND EMPLOYMENT  
NETWORK**

submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy is the result of my own work and that where reference is made to the work of others, due acknowledgment is given.

I also certify that any material in the thesis which has been accepted for a degree or diploma by any university or institution is identified in the text.

Full Name: .....

Signed: .....

Date: .....

## ***Acknowledgements***

This thesis would not exist if not for the commitment of my research subjects: the Committee of Management, Executive Officer and staff of the Smart Geelong Region Local Learning and Employment Network. Throughout my candidature I have enjoyed their trust and hospitality; they have willingly committed themselves to my project from its inception and I am indebted to them. Most particularly, I must acknowledge the sustained input of Anne-Marie Ryan, Executive Officer.

Acknowledgment is due also to the Australian Research Council Linkage Project team at the Faculty of Education, Deakin University. In particular, Professor Jill Blackmore as my Principal Supervisor has been a perceptive and concise guide, her sharp critique always framed with a rich vein of good humour and conveying confidence in my ability and judgment. Dr Jennifer Angwin, my Associate Supervisor, has kept close to me throughout these three years, a continuous source of encouragement as she has carefully nurtured my development and watched out for my wellbeing. Alongside my supervisors I have had the good fortune to work closely with Dr Lyn Harrison and Associate Professor Geoff Shacklock who have provided thoughtful feedback when I have sought advice and have contributed their expertise and experience to my becoming-academic. Finally, Phillip Hodder, our Research Assistant, has been my friend, co-worker and coffee-buddy. Many of the ideas expressed in this thesis were initially tested in discussion with this team; it has been a rich and privileged context for which I am grateful.

My candidature would not have been possible without financial support in the form of an Australian Postgraduate Award Industry scholarship; I thank the Australian Research Council for that scholarship and acknowledge the expertise and effort of Deakin's Research Services Division staff in guiding me through the application process and in administering my scholarship. Similarly, the Faculty of Education's Research and Doctoral Studies team provided sound advice and encouragement at all stages of the research process. I gratefully acknowledge the collegial support provided by the academics in the Faculty of Education who gave me a sense of being valued and cared for in their community. They generously shared their thoughts and interests, humour and knowledge about academic life; they provided me with multiple opportunities to involve myself within that community. Within that broader community two special acknowledgements must be made. Firstly, to

Associate Professor Julie McLeod for creating the powerful opportunity for me to be a part of the doctoral exchange to the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Secondly, to the community of PhD candidates within the Faculty of Education who never failed to inspire and astound me with their passion for and commitment to their research. In particular I wish to acknowledge the women who shared the doctoral exchange with me: Kirsten Hutchison, Sarah Culican and Sue Snelgrove.

Finally I wish to acknowledge the on-going importance of the personal support provided by the good friends whom I met along the way and who by their presence forced me to balance my life. I thank you.

### ***Dedication***

This thesis is dedicated to my family. First and most importantly, to my children, Paula and Berend who willingly, and often courageously, shared the life journey that finds its current form in this thesis. To my sisters, Leigh and Tina, and their families who provided financial support and intellectual encouragement both before and during the years of my candidature. To my mother and father, Val and John Kamp, for being constant parents to my children as much as to me; whose love and emotional support has always been unconditionally mine. To Nick, for the shelter and care that softened the completion of this research project. And, finally, to Roger who would have been so proud.

## ***Table of Contents***

<b>Acknowledgements .....</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>Summary .....</b>	<b>vii</b>
<b>A viewer's guide.....</b>	<b>ix</b>
<b>THE FIRST PANEL .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>May 2003: Bringing the Weaver to the Loom.....</b>	<b>1</b>
Sub-text: the loom.....	2
Con-text: the weaver.....	3
Sub-text: the design .....	6
Sunday 13 March 2005 Reflection .....	28
<b>Pause .....</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>THE SECOND PANEL .....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Weaving The Policy Context.....</b>	<b>30</b>
The Colour of my Woven Network .....	30
The Recent Education and Training Policy Context .....	31
Public Education - The Next Generation: the Connors Report.....	42
Post Compulsory Education and Training Pathways: the Kirby Report.....	44
<b>Geelong .....</b>	<b>51</b>
City of Greater Geelong.....	51
Lifelong Learning and Learning Societies.....	54
Smart Geelong - Learning City.....	57
<b>SGR LLEN Formation: Networking the Networks.....</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>SGR LLEN Operation: Partnerships, Pathways, Pedagogy and Promotions.....</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>Pause .....</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>THE THIRD PANEL .....</b>	<b>76</b>
<b>Winding More Bobbins.....</b>	<b>76</b>
Inter-text 1: Connection, Rhizome, Network.....	76
Inter-text 2: Social Capital .....	87
Inter-text 3: Pursuing Action Research.....	95

Monday 18 July 2005 Reflection.....	106
<b>THE FOURTH PANEL .....</b>	<b>107</b>
<b>Scattered images: An Instance-in-Action .....</b>	<b>107</b>
Teaching Teachers .....	108
Disordered Chronologies and Sexual Deviants.....	124
On Track to What?.....	141
Restraining Governance.....	151
Mrs Clarke is Here To Ask You To Help Us.....	166
One Shocking Piece of Politics.....	182
<b>Pause .....</b>	<b>199</b>
<b>THE FIFTH PANEL .....</b>	<b>202</b>
<b>Weaving the weft – or – a transitory co-ordination . . . ..</b>	<b>202</b>
A twisted thread of legitimation and ideological commitment .....	203
A thread of One-or-multiplicity .....	206
A thread that flows.....	210
A futuristic thread .....	213
<b>February 2006: Cutting-off.....</b>	<b>220</b>
Leaving the field .....	220
Taping in the whiskers .....	222
Certifying the pedigree .....	223
<b>Catalogue 1: the weavings.....</b>	<b>224</b>
<b>Catalogue 2: list of acronyms.....</b>	<b>231</b>
<b>References .....</b>	<b>232</b>

## ***Summary***

In common with many Western nations, Australian governments, both state and federal, have increasingly embraced network-based approaches in responding to the effects of globalisation. Since 2001, thirty one Local Learning and Employment Networks (LLEN) have been established across all areas of Victoria, Australia in line with recommendations of a Ministerial Review into Post Compulsory Education and Training Pathways. That review reported that, in the globalised context, youth in transition from schooling to independence faced persistent and severe difficulties unknown to previous generations; it also found problems were frequently concentrated in particular groups and regions. LLEN bring together the expertise and experience of local education providers, industry, community organisations, individuals and government organisations. As a result of their local decisions, collaboration and community building efforts it is intended that opportunities for young people will be enhanced.

My research was conducted within an Australian Research Council Linkage Project awarded to Deakin University Faculty of Education in partnership with the Smart Geelong Region LLEN (SGR LLEN). The Linkage Project included two separate research components one of which forms my thesis: a case study of SGR LLEN. My data was generated through participant observation in SGR LLEN throughout 2004 and 2005 and through interviews, reflective writing and archival review. In undertaking my analysis and presenting my thesis I have chosen to weave a series of panels whose orientation is poststructural. This approach was based in my acceptance that all knowledge is partial and fragmentary and, accordingly, researchers need to find ways that highlight the intersections in and indeterminacy of their empirical data. The LLEN is - by its nature as a network - more than the contractual entity that gains funding from government, acts as the administrative core and occupies the LLEN office. As such I have woven firstly the formation and operational structure of the bounded entity that is SGR LLEN before weaving a series of six images that portray the unbounded LLEN as an instance-in-action. The thesis draws its theoretical inspiration from the work of Deleuze and Guattari (1987).



Despite increased use of notions of networks, local decision-making and community building by governments there had been little empirical research that explored stakeholder understandings of networks and their role in community building as well as a lack of theorisation of how networks actually ‘work.’ My research addresses this lack and suggests an instituted network can function as a learning community capable of fostering systemic change in the post compulsory education training and employment sector and thereby contributing to better opportunities for young people. However the full potential of the policy is undermined by the reluctance of governments to follow through on the implications of their policies and, in particular, to confront the limiting effects of performativity at all levels.

## ***A viewer's guide...***

*[A Thousand Plateaus]* does not pretend to have the final word. The authors' hope, however, is that elements of it will stay with a certain number of its readers and will weave into the melody of their everyday lives. (Massumi 1987, p.xiv)

This thesis is made up of many connections, the intention of which is to suggest other connections for its reader. This principle is evident in *A Thousand Plateaus* (Deleuze and Guattari 1987) from which I draw my theoretical inspiration. That work is written not by chapter but by plateau, these non-linear plateaus are intended to discourage a sense of unity in favour of an expansive plane in which one passes from one point to another before connecting to something else again.

Here my challenge has been to bring such a perspective to the undertaking of a case study. Case studies, of which this thesis must be one, concern the detailed study of bounded systems (Stake 1978, 1995). The boundedness is what creates 'the case'; this sits uncomfortably within my Deleuzian perspective and its notions of endless proliferation. At the same time the case I am studying – the LLEN-in-action – is neither bounded nor a system; it is an evolving network. I have resolved these methodological tensions by writing my own series of plateaus.

As in *A Thousand Plateaus* any of the plateaus, or panels as I have called them here, may be read independently of the other. If you are interested in the methodology I have adopted, the first Panel is the place to start; it also connects closely with the third Panel where I outline my conceptual toolbox. It is in this third Panel that I introduce the three-ply yarn with which I weave the latter sections of the thesis: rhizomatic thinking; social capital and, finally, action research. Each ply contributes a different dimension; here I wish to briefly outline my rationale for their selection.

Prior to commencing this thesis, I was not a 'Deleuzian' – whatever one might take that to mean. Initially, I began to tackle this rhizomatic work with little more than a sense that it might offer a way of thinking about networks given it is 'an art of multiple things' the principle of which is 'to only retain ... what augments the number of connections' (Deleuze & Guattari cited Rajchman 2000, p.4). This, to me, appeared to be the fundamental aim of a LLEN charged - in simple terms - with networking the networks. However, in the process of creating this thesis I have come to be not only convinced of the appropriateness of that choice but have also

come to appreciate the potential rhizomatic thinking offers in assisting us to become perceptive to what happens at the points of connection between multiplicities such as schools, employers, government, the labour market, individual teachers and students and so on. These transitory points of intersection offer both complications and potential, as my weaving in the latter sections of this thesis will progressively display.

I have also placed the work of Bourdieu, most particularly his discussion of the forms of capital, in my conceptual toolbox. Bourdieu (1986) argues that a specific kind of labour is required to transform economic capital, of the kind invested in funding LLEN, to the social capital that governments are attempting to foster. I am arguing that this specific labour is fundamentally the work of LLEN. I use this ply to tease out the nature of this labour; I also draw on this ply to explore the extent to which social capital acted as a resource to collective action in the Geelong community and thereby influenced the capacity of SGR LLEN to succeed in its endeavours.

Finally, my third ply is one of action research (Lewin 1946, 1952); in many ways this selection was made for me. Not only is the research of which this thesis forms one part based in an action research methodology but also SGR LLEN itself declared its intention to adopt an action research methodology<sup>1</sup>. However, for me this mode of learning weaves strongly with the potential of rhizomatic thinking: both are concerned with those points in practice when the unknown, prevalent in the current context of post compulsory education, training and employment, demands that we experiment not only in our thinking but also in taking action.

Beyond this three ply yarn, I also weave a small, intricate piece of this work with a single ply of Foucault (1977). This thread, comprising his concept of the panopticon along with his discussions of surveillance and normalisation, is taken up to weave one of the detailed images I now describe.

If you are interested in getting a feel for what an unbounded LLEN-in-action does, the fourth Panel offers a number of images. As Catalogue 1 at the end of the thesis attests, these images were chosen from a wide range of potential portrayals. Initially, I expected to portray attempts to improve the provision of vocational

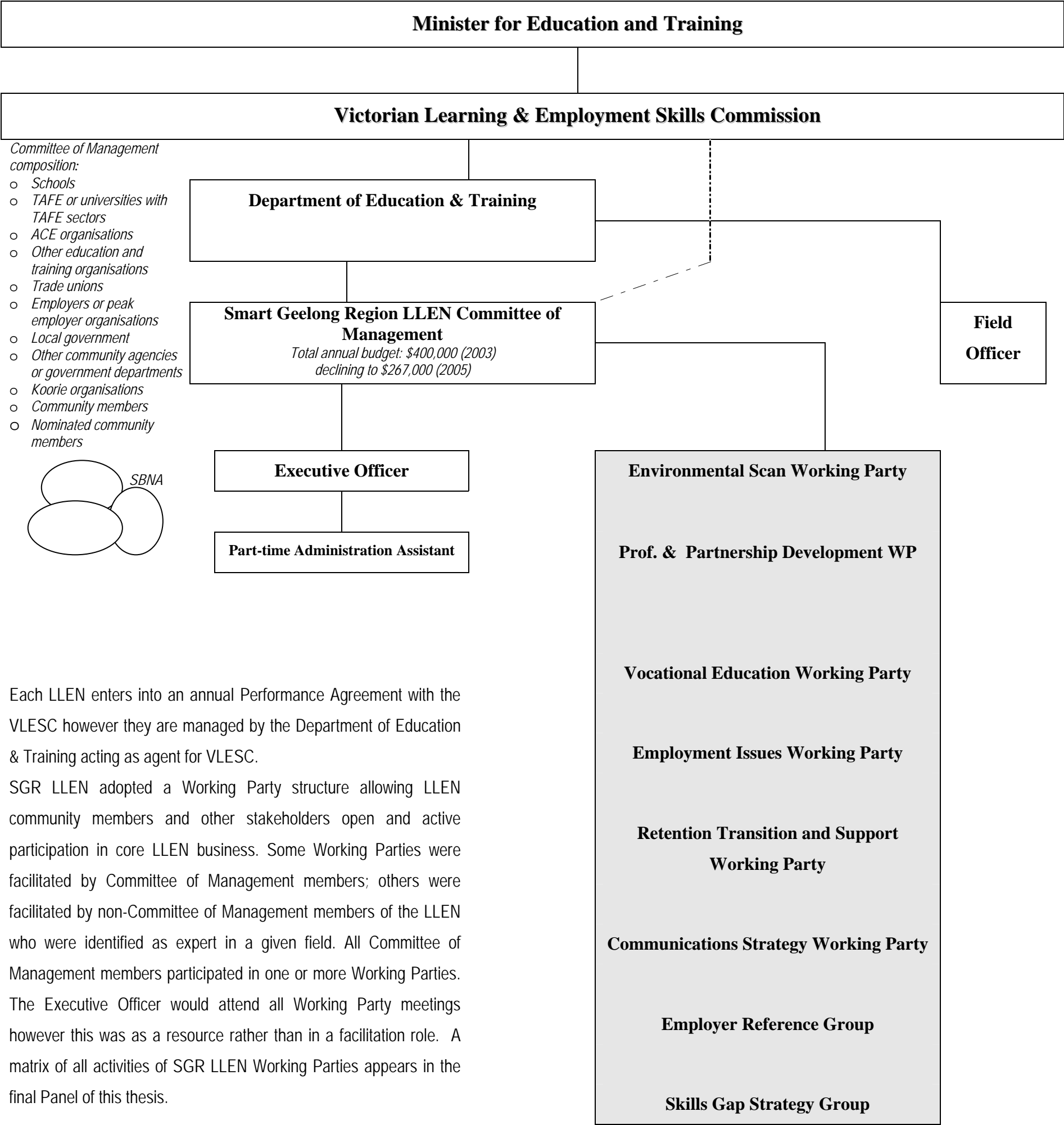
---

<sup>1</sup> As will become apparent in this thesis, this intent has only been realised in part. However for my purposes here it is sufficient to declare this commitment.

education and training within SGR LLEN's region. However, as the research progressed the LLEN itself came to realise that such a focus would not foster systemic change: if anything, it would leave the system more entrenched. As such, the images chosen are those deemed most striking in displaying the attempts to forge systemic change within a performative context that constrained the potential to do so. In providing a range of images, it is intended to provide an array of entry points with which the reader can connect.

The second Panel provides a study of the orchestration of the formation and operation of the bounded LLEN. However, as a starting point, on the successive pages I provide the reader with a tracing of the LLEN and a contextual map of its position within the evolving post compulsory education, training and employment sector. Immediately, a caveat is required. Both the tracing – in the form of an organisational chart of SGR LLEN – and the map of the sector are static, implying some sense of fixity. Such images do not and can not capture the complex interrelationships and movement that characterise all networks, including this network-in-action. However, they do serve to provide the viewer a beginning from which to construct a more complete understanding as I embellish these images with the threads that are woven through the pages of this thesis. The fifth Panel, where I attempt a transitory co-ordination of all that has gone before, should be read at the end.

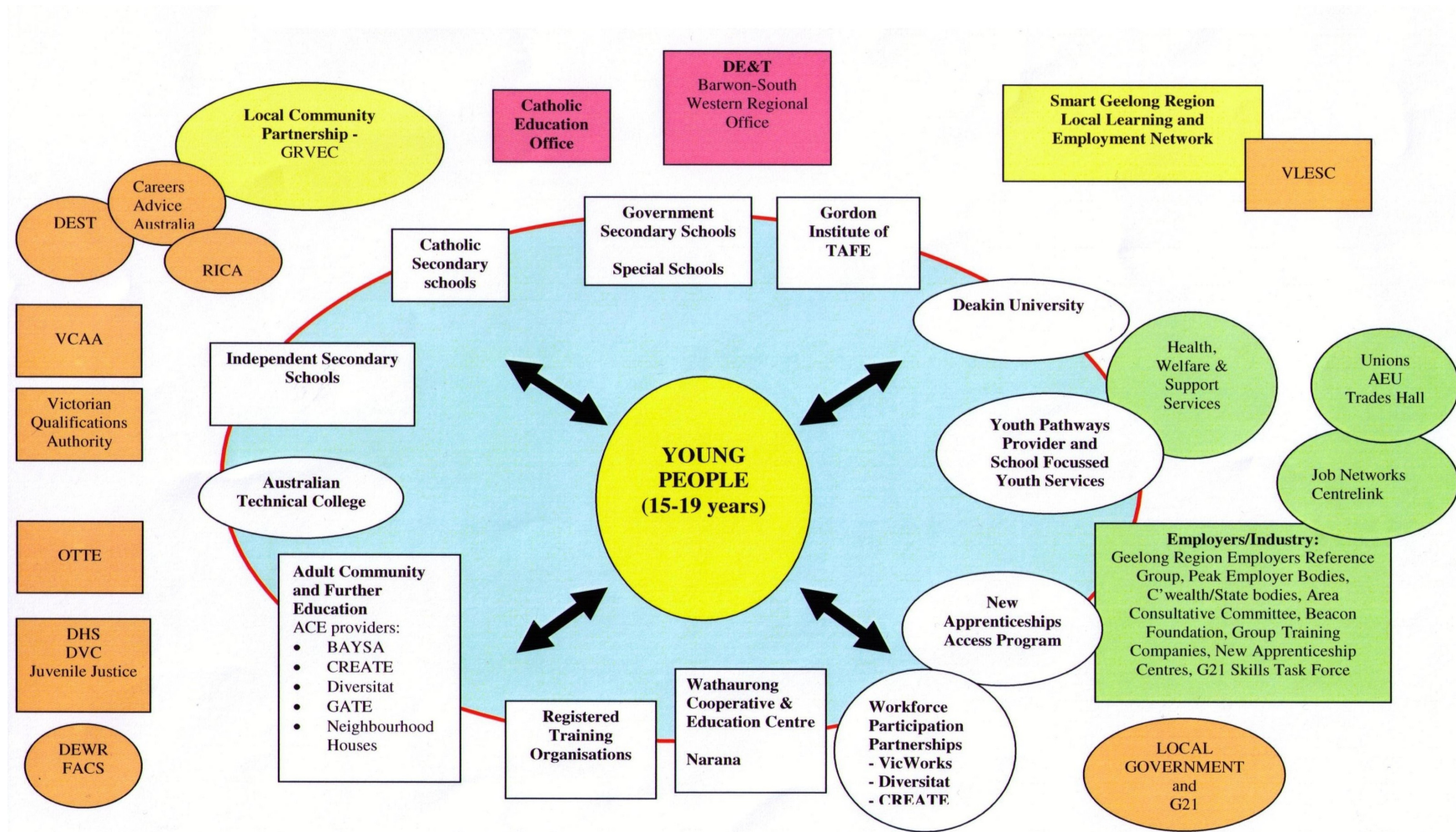
Figure 1: Organisational Chart Smart Geelong Region Local Learning and Employment Network  
2003 - 2005



Each LLEN enters into an annual Performance Agreement with the VLESC however they are managed by the Department of Education & Training acting as agent for VLESC.

SGR LLEN adopted a Working Party structure allowing LLEN community members and other stakeholders open and active participation in core LLEN business. Some Working Parties were facilitated by Committee of Management members; others were facilitated by non-Committee of Management members of the LLEN who were identified as expert in a given field. All Committee of Management members participated in one or more Working Parties. The Executive Officer would attend all Working Party meetings however this was as a resource rather than in a facilitation role. A matrix of all activities of SGR LLEN Working Parties appears in the final Panel of this thesis.

**Figure 2:** Map of post compulsory education, training and employment sector partners, Smart Geelong Region, 2006 (SGR LLEN, 2006).



Where one thread becomes attached to another  
or where one linear element transverses a second  
When fibers overlap and twist actively binding  
together  
or passing over and under each other  
And when a simple knot or loop manages to hold a  
network of threads interlaced, meshed,  
fused  
I observe and marvel  
how a textile is made  
A continuous thread travelling up and down  
in between,  
around a tautly stretched harp of threads  
becomes a pliable plane  
a fabric, a cloth  
a weaving, a tapestry  
a message

(Sheila Hicks cited in Constantine and Larsen 1972, p.173)

## The First Panel

### *May 2003: Bringing the Weaver to the Loom*

Often in the stages of undertaking this doctoral research the metaphor of a woven tapestry draped my mind<sup>2</sup>. Creation of a tapestry of scale involves a loom that frames the work and is dressed with warp threads stretched lengthwise to be crossed by the weft threads that the weaver progressively builds. Whereas cloth weaving involves the weft always moving horizontally, tapestry allows the weaver to simultaneously work vertically and horizontally, building separate shapes and colours as she passes multiple bobbins behind each warp thread on a vertical loom. While warp threads provide direction, their work is not obvious; they are visible only as orderly ridges under the weft threads. However without the warp threads there would be no tapestry. The weft threads, woven in varied colour and texture, represent endless individuality. The weaver sits facing the right side of the tapestry so as to allow a considered view of the evolving work, evaluating the effect and making adaptations as the work progresses. The images that are woven are based on a cartoon<sup>3</sup> – a full-size outline - mounted behind the warp; this gives the weaver a map from which to work. This metaphor holds for my research: a case study of the Smart Geelong Region Local Learning and Employment Network (SGR LLEN). As I outline in this initial Panel, the cartoon was created and the loom constructed by others; it was my task as weaver to interpret<sup>4</sup> a design and weave the weft.

---

<sup>2</sup> My understanding of tapestry weaving has been greatly enhanced by information provided by the Victorian Tapestry Workshop in South Melbourne, Victoria, Australia. Established by the Victoria government in 1976, it is the only workshop of its kind in Australia and one of few in the world able to weave by hand large-scale tapestries (Victorian Tapestry Workshop 2003).

<sup>3</sup> Cartoon *n.* & *v.* **1. n.** Full-size drawing on stout paper as design for painting, tapestry, mosaic, etc.; full-page (or large) illustration, esp. Satirical one on politics in newspaper or magazine; amusing drawing with or without caption; sequence of these in STRIP<sup>2</sup>; film made from a succession of drawings that simulate a cinema film; hence ~ IST ... (Sykes 1976).

<sup>4</sup> It can be misleading to declare a weaver 'interprets' or 'translates' the inspiration of others. A tapestry of scale will involve weavers who are trained in art. They draw on their understanding of line, form and colour to collaborate with the artist rather than slavishly following an original (Victorian Tapestry Workshop 2003).



## Sub-text: the loom<sup>5</sup>

All academic knowledge is socially constructed. This construction is not primarily an individual activity, but is the collective working of communities of scholars, over history. (Hodkinson 2004, p.11)

This research formed a discrete component of an Australian Research Council Linkage Project that was awarded in March 2003 to Professor Jill Blackmore, Dr Jennifer Angwin, Dr Lyn Harrison and Dr Geoff Shacklock at the Faculty of Education, Deakin University in partnership with the Smart Geelong Region Local Learning and Employment Network (SGR LLEN). Since 2001, 31 LLEN have been established across Victoria, Australia on the recommendation of the Ministerial Review into Post Compulsory<sup>6</sup> Education and Training Pathways (Kirby 2000). The Linkage Project involved four academics, myself as a PhD candidate and a Research Assistant from the Faculty of Education as well as the Executive Officer of the SGR LLEN. A Reference Group formed of members of the SGR LLEN as well as the academic project team from Deakin University and other academics was established to monitor progress, reports and outcomes as well as providing advice and expertise through the three year duration of the Linkage Project.

The Linkage Project included two separate but interwoven components. Both were concerned with exploring the notion of learning networks as new strategies of educational reform and community capacity building addressing risk and interdependence arising from globalisation. The first component involved use of an action research (Kemmis and McTaggart 1988a; Zuber-Skerritt 1996)<sup>7</sup> methodology to investigate the effectiveness of learning networks as a policy response to dealing with 15-19 year olds categorised as at risk of disengaging from their education. This component of the Project explored stakeholders' - including schools and young people – responses to the LLEN and understandings of learning networks and risk; in working with young people it was intended to utilize youth

---

<sup>5</sup> Research involves textualising the world through the production and consumption of knowledge claims in the form of texts. Such texts always have a sub-text that is *beneath* the text – the operation of research paradigms and traditions and the discourses through which they are expressed and have their effects for the researcher and the researched (Usher 1997b, p.37).

<sup>6</sup> Compulsory education in Victoria ends at age 16, usually at completion of Year 10. Most students continue to post compulsory education which involves continuing to complete Years 11 and 12. The senior school qualification, the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE), is completed in four units over these two full-time years.

<sup>7</sup> Notions of action research are woven throughout this thesis. The conceptual basis of action research is outlined in the third Panel.

researcher methodologies. This component was to be undertaken by the research team based in the Faculty of Education at Deakin University.

The second component of the Linkage Project involved a case study of the SGR LLEN that forms this thesis. It was this component of the Project document that outlined the dimensions of the tapestry; it also acted as the cartoon, the map to which I continually referred. At the outset it was intended to involve four foci: mapping the meta-processes of the establishment of the SGR LLEN; investigating, describing and analysing the networks and their interrelationships with employers, schools and youth agencies in the region; exploring the role of the SGR LLEN with regard to the Smart Geelong Learning City; and identifying other studies and comparing with other LLEN. However, at my colloquium to confirm my PhD candidature it was recognised that the data generation process was too wide-ranging and the comparison with other LLEN was removed. Collectively the ‘surviving’ three foci enabled the exploration of my central question: to what extent is a governmentally instituted network able to function as a learning community capable of building community and thereby improving opportunities for young people in the Geelong region?

As such, the focus of this thesis was initially established in detail in the original application for Australian Research Council funding, without any involvement on my part and prior to my candidature commencement. However my selection for and acceptance of this opportunity for candidature was based on my recent research and professional activities that had focused on the interface between education and the labour market. At the same time, my biography made this research particularly meaningful for me; it is to that I now turn.

### **Con-text: the weaver<sup>8</sup>**

When you think about it, you are the thread that holds the events of your life together. (Kolb 1984, p. x)

I am a proud New Zealander, born in Wellington in spring of 1959, the second daughter in a family that would be complete with the arrival of my younger sister five years after my own birth. Looking back, I am in awe of the strength of my

---

<sup>8</sup> Texts always have a con-text that is *with* the text – the situated autobiography of not only the researcher but also the reader. This autobiography is marked by significations of gender, sexuality, ethnicity, class and so on (Usher 1997b, p.36).

parents: both had arrived as immigrants in the middle 1950s – my father from Holland, my mother from England. They had met in Wellington shortly after their individual landings, married in 1956, and became first-time parents in 1957. My parents had migrated to New Zealand in the belief that it was a land of post-World War II opportunity and they worked hard to realise that belief. Throughout my childhood years my father established and built up his building business, working from his factory alongside the family home which he progressively renovated throughout all of my childhood years. My mother was the parent who raised my sisters and me, shaping us as a modern middle-class New Zealand family. My childhood was one of community: my father was a Rotarian, my mother actively involved in sport and community service. We attended the local primary school before moving to the local secondary school. My secondary schooling was troubled: while academically able I struggled to fit the college milieu. I left school at the end of what was then referred to as 5<sup>th</sup> Form, aged 15 and six months' pregnant. However, I completed my secondary school by distance education in between caring for my infant daughter with the support of well-developed family and community networks and, eventually, tentatively found my way into my university studies at age 25.

It was toward the end of my undergraduate degree that I discovered that post compulsory education and the broader field of adult learning was my passion. My initial degree was completed, as is the case for many women, on a part-time basis over an extended number of years and traversing an astounding range of disciplines. It was woven within a life that included child-bearing and rearing; last-minute assignments completed in the maternity hospital in the days immediately preceding childbirth and academic texts balanced precariously over the head of my second child, a son, whilst breastfeeding. It was a feature of many weekday nights and weekends; a costly personal discipline to progress whilst balancing domestic and professional responsibilities as my paid work progressed from my initial 'obvious' career as a secretary to more challenging, responsible and rewarding roles in management. In the final years of that initial degree I engaged with feminist, sociological and educational theory and, finally, began to question some of my own understandings of my experiences to that point. The personal reward I experienced in that reflective process led me to commit to advanced studies in adult learning and to focus my career in the field of post compulsory education. I

consequently worked for six years as a Management Advisor for Skill New Zealand<sup>9</sup> implementing the government's skill development policies before moving into industry training for a further two years immediately prior to commencing this candidature.

This situated autobiography has intersected with the situated biographies of the researchers with whom I have worked: my research was simultaneously conducted both within and on a network. The positioning of my research within the broader Linkage Project has influenced the colour and texture of yarn<sup>10</sup> I have selected in ways other than if I had worked in isolation. At the same time, my autobiography has influenced the Linkage Project in ways other than if any other candidate had written the case study component. Not only was I a doctoral candidate during the three years of my candidature, I was also the sole parent of a son finding his own way through the maze of his senior years of secondary school, applications for higher education and entry into the workplace. As new arrivals in Australia, encountering such an overt emphasis on one's tertiary entrance score for the first time was a salient lesson regarding the research context. As such, the intent of the policy underlying the formation of LLEN had a personal relevance for me. Of particular significance, the professional experiences I had acquired prior to my candidature created expectations for the industry partner, that is, the SGR LLEN: my agreed role as participant observer raised questions regarding exactly how I would participate and to what end. During a Project Team meeting with the university team four months after I commenced and at the point of developing my colloquium proposal the question of my process of participant observation was discussed. This reflected a concern regarding the tension between what the university team understood as 'participant observation' to mean, and what it was believed the industry partner understood that role to mean. In itself, this was symptomatic of a further tension regarding how the research partnership would itself 'work.' In weaving a tapestry the most important aspect of dressing the loom is gaining the correct tension in the warp threads; if the tension is not right the weaving will not progress smoothly later on. The evolution and resolution of these

---

<sup>9</sup> Skill New Zealand was a Crown agency working at the interface of education and the labour market. The organisation has now become part of the New Zealand Tertiary Education Commission.

<sup>10</sup> The term 'yarn' refers to all weaving materials that are used for either warp or weft.

expectations and the maintenance of a ‘correct’ tension between all the partners of the research has required on-going attention and repair throughout my candidature.

### **Sub-text: the design**

The moment when a subject enters into relationship with an object in order to represent it is not a moment where the simple alignment of certainties gives dramatic form to the hidden fixity of a quantifiable self... The moment is to be understood in terms of the new assemblage created in interconnection, where the play of light, thought, sweat, dream, skin, signification, computing, all touch in a passing event of involvement and invention. This event is produced somewhere at some time, and to that extent is conditioned by history, science and politics, and out of their materials, but is as unique as all the other moments of interconnection going on at the same and at different times, with which it may or may not be linked. (Mansfield 2000, p.143)

In this section I provide an overview of my methodology. I commence with the agreed end point by exploring the literature on case study. I then move to introduce my methods, the threads that have been selected to produce the data that enables the weaving of a poststructural<sup>11</sup> ethnographic case study as well as outlining the management of ethical considerations. The chapter closes with a discussion of my approach to working with the data – my weaving technique - and, in particular, presents the rationale for my theoretical approach.

### *Case Study*

Case study involves the detailed and intensive analysis of a single case. The case for study functions as a bounded system characterised by a wholeness and the integration of its parts (Stake 1998); the most common use associates case study with a specific location – a community or an organization (Bryman 2001). Early writers suggest case study research develops in one of two ways: either an hypothesis is given and a bounded system is selected as ‘an instance drawn from a class’ or a case is given ‘within which issues are indicated, discovered or studied so that a tolerably full understanding of the case is possible’ (Adelman, Jenkins and Kemmis 1976, p.141). This research is an example of the latter form of development with the SGR LLEN demonstrating its boundedness through its

---

<sup>11</sup> I use the term ‘poststructural’ which is in itself problematic as it implies singularity rather than the ‘bundle of different discourses, knowledge traditions and methodologies’ (Lee 1992, p.8). Following Lather (1992) I use poststructural to mean the working out of academic theory within the culture of postmodernity, that is, the shift in material conditions of late 20<sup>th</sup> century monopoly capitalism. Where cited authors have used the term ‘postmodern’ I have retained their use of that term. Given the limitations of this thesis I have not engaged with the subtleties of usage between these terms as debated by some writers.

founding status as an incorporated association. Zeegers (2002) suggests that case study ‘boundedness’ presents a limitation in terms of the kind of poststructural analysis that is my intended approach. I agree, and have overcome this limitation by presenting the formation and operation of SGR LLEN in its bounded form as an entity before presenting the LLEN-in-action as an unbounded network of its members.

Case study that derives from the latter form involves the increasing permeability of the boundaries as the study progresses and the embeddedness of the case in context is uncovered (Adelman et al. 1976). It is this ability to locate research in its idiosyncratic, concrete complexity that leads Flyvbjerg (2001) to go so far as declaring case study the pre-eminent social science research method. Case study ‘proliferates rather than narrows. One is left with more to pay attention to rather than less’ (Stake 1978, p.7). Thus the benefit of multiple approaches to data generation that can capture ‘the tapestry of official discourses and institutional practices, and the possible relationships within these’ (Zeegers 2002, p. 41). Whilst not a necessary condition, case study tends to be associated with qualitative research methods; it provides both a frame within which methods are used (Smith 1995) and a format for reporting qualitative descriptive work (Wolcott 1992).

### **Concerning Validity, Reliability and Generalisability**

The question of validity, reliability and generalisability must be touched on. Whether these criteria are relevant to largely qualitative methodologies is highly contested: some writers consider them appropriate and have devised mechanisms to assess qualitative research against such criteria (Bryman 2001; Denzin and Lincoln 1998; Lincoln and Guba 1985); others do not recognise the issue and argue for a focus on epistemological consistency and a concern with the intent of the research in identifying any design criteria that should inform it (Kvale 1996; Richardson 2001; Scheurich 1997; Stake 1978, 1998; Stenhouse 1982; Stronach and MacLure 1997; Walker 1980; Zeegers 2002).

Particularly in questions of external validity, writers who argue against the imposition of criteria designed for quantitative studies on qualitative studies propose that the case is not a ‘sample of one’ and should not be subject to criteria that suggest that it is (Bryman 2001; Stake 1978, 1998; Walker 1980); the findings

of qualitative research are intended to generalise to theory rather than populations (Bryman 2001; Smith 1995). However

damage occurs when the commitment to generalise or create theory runs so strong that the researcher's attention is drawn away from features important for understanding the case itself. (Stake 1998, p.89)

While cases reveal 'complex specificness' that heighten their circumstantiality they may also reveal implications and relevance for other contexts (Wolcott 1994); case studies can be 'logically in harmony with the reader's experience' providing some readers with a 'natural basis for generalisation' (Stake 1978, p.5). However, the construction of these 'particular versions of truth' can also 'provide a critical space to push thought against itself' (Britzman 2000, p.38).

A poststructural approach such as I have adopted in weaving with my data begins not only with a perspective that reality is discursive and multiple but also, for some writers, an 'unabashed recognition that all epistemology, ontology, and the ways of thinking that yield such categories as epistemology and ontology are socially conditioned and historically relative or contextual' (Scheurich 1997, p.33). Denzin (1994) explains that such a position reflects two crises in qualitative research. Firstly, a representational crisis encompassed in a single, but complex, issue – the recognition that 'lived experience' is created in researcher texts; ethnographic writing is nearly always a narrative production based on a logic that separates writer, text and subject matter. Poststructuralism has prompted questions around the authority of reading or understanding and the assumption that there is a direct relationship between a reader's reading and a text's telling (Britzman 2000; Cherryholmes 1993). Poststructuralism lays down the challenge that it is language that creates experience and, in that creative process, transforms and defers that which is being described. This is Usher's 'pre-text' which comes *before* the text: not only language as the repository of meaning but also discourses as particular ways of organizing meanings, rhetorical devices and so on (Usher 1997b, p.36-7). Meaning is thus always in motion and the authority of any research text is thus a concern (Cherryholmes 1993).

This leads to Denzin's (1994) second crisis, a legitimization crisis, and a rethinking of what we mean by validity, reliability and generalisability. Discussions of validity, triangulation, credibility, coherence and so forth are based in an assumption that there *is* a 'real' out there to validly capture in the first place. Such debates effectively involve efforts to establish a research text's warrant to its own

‘authoritative re-presentation’ (Denzin 1994, p.297) of that ‘real’ and, thereby, assert the power of the text. As such, validity is the researcher’s mask of authority (Blumenfeld-Jones and Barone 1997; Lather 1993). Lather offers a range of alternative measures of validity that accommodate the poststructural turn: ironic, paralogical, voluptuous and, in accordance with my approach that will be presented later in this section, rhizomatic (Lather 1993, p.300). My aim is for a Deleuzian ‘nonmethodical rigour of the intuitions of [my] problems and concepts’ (Rajchman 2000, p.24).

In the poststructural view ontology precedes epistemology: rather than a concern with how to undertake systematic empirical observation the necessary first step is a shift in the way the world is seen and the construction of a new world to investigate (Usher 1997b, p.31). This involves moving beyond the objective-subjective dichotomy and embracing alternatives that undermine assumptions that reality is both knowable and consistent; that the world has qualities and quantities that relate one to the other in predictable proportions and that standing opposite these knowable structures is an analysing subject (Mansfield 2000). These writers contend that validity is ‘but a mask for a boundary or policing function’ (Scheurich 1997, p.84); a ‘determination of whether the Other has been acceptably converted into the Same, according to a particular epistemology’ (Scheurich 1997, p.85). In contrast, poststructural case studies highlight a multiplicity of discourses, some of which are contradictory and inconclusive (Vaughan 2004), all of which are plausible (Honan 2001).

We need new imaginaries of validity . . . [that] need to highlight, support, celebrate polyphony, multiplicity, differences(s), the play of the Other. These new imaginaries need to reconstruct ‘validity’ or ‘truth’ as many sided or multiply perspectival, as shifting and complex. (Scheurich 1997, p.88)

Poststructuralism leads us to focus on complexity, plunges us into uncertainty and disorients us. But this too is productive as it draws attention to the way different discourses construct different worlds and thereby directs us ‘towards a reflexive stance’ (Usher 1997b, p.30); poststructuralism provides important opportunities to break with dominant readings and interpretations (Cherryholmes 1988). Usher argues that reflexivity is a resource that can be worked with to interrogate the writing and reading of research texts however this requires ‘foregrounding research as a textual, presencing practice rather than a neutral, technicist process.’

Foregrounding does not involve some kind of lapse into subjectivity; rather it is



about working with reflexivity in a socio-cultural sense that includes the con-text, pre-text, sub-text and inter-text of the research (1997b, p.36-8). Acknowledging this it is to a concern with the detail of my design that I now turn.

## *Generating the Data*

### **Participatory poststructural ethnography**

According to Britzman, poststructuralism has demonstrated that the ground on which ethnography is built is ‘a contested and fictive geography’ (2000, p. 230). Qualitative research based on ethnographic methods emphasises social life in terms of process: how events unfold over time (Bryman 2001); in drawing in poststructural theories the fragmentary, non-chronological nature of this emphasis is brought to the fore:

While ethnography promises the narrative cohesiveness of experience and identity and the researcher’s skill of representing the subject, poststructuralist theories disrupt any desire for a seamless narrative, a cohesive identity, or a mimetic representation. . . . Thus the tradition of ethnographic authority derived from participant observation becomes a site of doubt rather than a confirmation of what exists prior to representation. (Britzman 2000, p.232)

This troubling recognition also interweaves with the specifics of the research: the circumstances of the case, the research design and the consequences of research are fundamentally interrelated (Adelman et al. 1976) and politically laden (Scheurich 1997). In regard to the circumstances of this research, it is framed by an ARC Linkage Project Agreement that involves the subject of the research, SGR LLEN, as a partner in the research. As incorporated associations, LLEN have members, a Committee of Management and paid staff: commonly an Executive Officer, an Administration Officer and, in some instances, project staff. While this agreement lessened many potential methodological difficulties, for instance in gaining access to opportunities to observe the instance-in-action, it also created differing expectations around where I would be at any given time and what I would do while I was there. In the agreement that framed up the Linkage Project it was stated that I would spent 60% of my time at the LLEN. Yet for me the sub-text of the research – that is, the effect of the discourse of doctoral candidature – made this untenable. This issue was the first point of tension I encountered and was resolved by my use of monthly project meetings where both my academic supervisors and the Executive Officer of the industry partner, who attended the initial project meetings, were able to understand my efforts to gain an even tension.

Another sub-text was the commitment of SGR LLEN to pursue a participatory action research methodology in undertaking its work. Thus this research was based in a commitment to research *for* or *with* rather than *on* other people (Robottom and Colquhoun 1992). This methodology was particularly appropriate given the agreement that underpins this research and the expressed desire of the Executive Officer of the SGR LLEN that one consequence of the research be her own professional development. Stake (1978; 1995) argues that case study is at its best when it adds to existing experience and understanding; case researcher roles include those of teacher and advocate. As such, on a number of dimensions this research was influenced by a participatory ethos; such collaborative relationships in research depend on 'respect, trust, equality, flexibility and reciprocity and the conditions which establish them' (Shacklock and Smyth 1997, p.4). These relationships are not static; rather they are continuously shaped and re-shaped by negotiations and resistances (Kaplan 2003; Shacklock and Smyth 1997). Throughout the course of this research the relationships between the partners in the ARC Linkage Project, between myself and the Executive Officer of the LLEN, and between myself and the other members of the Faculty of Education team, which included my academic supervisors and for whom I was the primary link with the LLEN, were the focus of such relationship work.

### **The mode of inquiry<sup>12</sup>**

In 1987, Harding argued there were only three ways to conduct social inquiry: observe behaviour, listen to people or examine artefacts. Each of these is a recognised component of the ethnographic approach that understands research as involving not only participation and observation but also speaking with individuals and archival study thereby enabling a detailed and intensive analysis. In the course of this research I used all of these processes. As well, I began a research journal that came to be central to my inquiry as the task of weaving the data progressed. According to Pillow (2003, p.176) reflexive processes including research journals

are accepted as a method qualitative researchers can and should use to both explore and expose the politics of representation, represent *difference* better . . . and establish 'ethnographic authority'. (original emphasis)

---

<sup>12</sup> Following Honan (2001) I use the less concrete term 'mode of inquiry' to echo the assertions made thus far regarding the partiality of research processes.

The research journal began on the recommendation of my supervisor as an account of my reflections that seemed significant in the course of my participation observation. It came to include reflections not only on what I observed but also on guidance and opinion – explicit or otherwise - received from both of my supervisors and others in my communities; it tracked my sense of becoming-academic. Pillow (2003, p.176) notes that this attention to researcher subjectivity has been influenced by poststructural theory and is one of ‘the most noticeable trends to come out of a use of reflexivity.’ My research journal acts as a barometer of the shaping and re-shaping of relationships within and beyond the ARC Project team. It records my observations on my emotional and physical well-being as I progressed through my years in the field; it also records events in my life that influenced the course of my research and the energy I could devote to it. I used my journal to clarify my thoughts and draft notes on patterns I felt would weave into my tapestry; these draft notes – that I recognise now as my initial attempts to ‘word’ the world into existence in my own way (Richardson 1994) - were invariably unpicked or reworked into more complex patterns as further data was generated and my reflexivity became more uncomfortable (Pillow 2003). After a period I came to recognise the research journal as a tool by which I was able to filter the flood of data I gained during participant observation for the purpose of analysis as well as ongoing research – it was a prompt of things that I knew I wanted to remember and observe further even when, at times, I didn’t know why.

The remainder of this section will introduce my two principal methods of data generation: observing behaviour and listening to informants; it is to a particular focus on observing behaviour, that is, acting as a participant observer, that I now turn.

### **Observing behaviour**

For Bryman (2001), participant observation refers to the observational aspect of ethnography and involves the immersion of the researcher in the case for an extended period of time to allow behaviour to be observed, to take part in and listen to conversations and to ask questions. In participant observation the researcher must ‘begin with the immediate experience of human life’ (Jorgensen 1989, p.18); while I began my extended observation armed with my preliminary readings, the issue of what images, texts and discourses would become important in my

observations, what they did to each other and how they would connect to me was always open and in motion (Alvermann 2000). A commitment to openness demanded a relative lack of structure and a high degree of flexibility (Ball 1982); a non-linear logic that called on a variety of skills, required me to make judgements, be creative and deal with many non-rational factors that influenced the process of the study (Jorgensen 1989). Such an approach accords with Foucault's (1974) injunction that researchers look for non-linear approaches that provide the opportunity for depth.

Smith (1978, p.329) comments on the intellectual operations that occur during observation as the researcher is immersed in an 'overwhelming flood of unorganized data' including disruption of the 'cognitive map.' The degree of 'culture shock' experienced can be a test for the researcher as to how well they have rendered problematic their own assumptions about the case under study; the ethnographer is constantly asking 'what kind of person am I in this situation' (Walker 1980, p.47). Long term ethnographic studies impose strain on the researcher given the need to maintain workable and ethical relationships at the same time as observing, interviewing and analysing. It involves a 'certain psychological cost' that must be borne by the researcher (Ball 1982, p.58).

It has been argued that there are six measures of adequacy in participant observation: opportunity for direct observation; freedom of access; intensity of observation; triangulation; sampling and attentiveness to 'muted' clues (Smith 1978). This concern for the adequacy of observation in part reflects recognition that the researcher herself is a social being and needs to acknowledge and reflect upon the ways her situated autobiography contributes to the functioning of the case as well as her interpretation and representation of that case (Kvale 1996; Pillow 2003; Power 1998; Usher 1997b). However as Britzman notes, whatever the adequacy of 'being there,' for the poststructuralist there remains no guarantee of access to truth; all 'tellings' will remain partial and fragmentary (2000, p.232).

The data generated will vary according to the role the participant observer adopts. The role adopted by the researcher and the social positioning that is granted to that role shape the image which the participants will hold of the researcher and the type of data that will be generated (Ball 1982). Roles range from complete participation to complete observation; more than one role can be adopted in a single piece of research: the choice of role shifts by context and is influenced by any attempt to

minimise interference in the research context. In the course of my observation the Executive Officer and Committee of Management of SGR LLEN positioned my role as researcher as valuable; committed themselves to my on-going presence and never declined any request I made to observe. My role was most often, but not always, that of a complete and passive observer; complete participation was an initial expectation of the SGR LLEN however the nature of the case was such that complete participation was neither feasible nor desirable. It was not feasible as the SGR LLEN is a network: its operation takes place in the spaces between organisations, there was no available participant role to fill; it was not desirable as my position as a PhD candidate within an ARC Linkage Project demanded an ongoing awareness of the need to progress with and meet the requirements of my candidature thus allowing data generation and analysis to proceed within the time constraints available. Furthermore, I held a responsibility to the needs of the other components of the Linkage Project which informed and was informed by the ethnographic case study.

In the latter months pre-colloquium my transition into the field as participant observer became more pressing: the LLEN moved into the period of negotiating a new Performance Agreement with the Department of Education & Training ('the Department'); within this process the Strategic Planning process was to be framed and this was recognized as a rich opportunity. It was agreed within the Project Team that the Executive Officer request permission from the Committee of Management for me to attend the Strategic Planning Day as observer. My supervisors and I agreed that it would be ideal if I could subsequently attend all Committee of Management meetings, as well as appropriate Working Party meetings. Ultimately throughout 2004 and into 2005 I acted as an observer at the LLEN Committee of Management meetings and a variety of other Working Party and network meetings that assumed importance as the pattern of the research evolved. Increasingly as a collaborative relationship between myself and the LLEN Executive Officer developed, I would be overtly invited to change role to observer-as-participant in a given context; at all times this shift in role was recorded in my field notes. Finally, on a handful of occasions I acted as complete participant, usually in the form of representing the SGR LLEN at conferences or other public forums.

### Listening to informants

To enhance the data gained by participant observation I also spent time speaking with individuals. Freebody argues it is ‘no longer theoretically or empirically warrantable to treat interviews as transparent windows onto people’s stable, self contained knowledge or beliefs about a topic’ (2003, p.134). Interviews undertaken within a poststructural approach are open to the possibility that it is what is distinctive, rather than what is in common, within and across interviews that is notable (Freebody 2003; Riessman 2001); poststructuralists challenge the notion researchers can control the reliability of interviewee statements by processes such as cross-checking or triangulation (MacLure 2003). Furthermore in this case study, the focus of my interviewing has been shaped by the circumstances of the case. My intent has been to focus on the porosity of a range of communities within the network and, at an individual level, with those individuals working to understand that porosity and to intersect the boundaries of those communities. As such, the voice of the Executive Officer of the LLEN is critical given it is that task, more than any other, with which she has been charged. My own voice appears, as do the voices of significant others who contributed to this ‘boundary work’<sup>13</sup>.

My approach to interview echoes the notion that an interview is a ‘co-ordinated interaction’ (Freebody 2003), ‘literally an *inter view*, an inter change of views between two persons conversing about a theme of mutual interest’ (Kvale 1996, p.2, original emphasis). Kvale provides two metaphors of the interview that align with different epistemological positions: the interviewer as miner or the interviewer as traveller. This research adopts the latter approach, one that ‘refers to a postmodern constructive understanding that involves a conversational approach to social research’ (Kvale 1996, p.5):

The alternative *traveler metaphor* understands the interviewer as a traveler on a journey that leads to a tale to be told upon returning home. The interviewer-traveler wanders through the landscape and enters into conversations with the people encountered. The traveler explores the many domains of the country, as unknown territory or with maps, roaming freely around the territory. The traveler may also deliberately seek specific sites or topics by following a *method*, with the original Greek meaning of ‘a route that leads to the goal.’ The interviewer wanders along with the local inhabitants, asks questions that lead

---

<sup>13</sup> Anne Marie Ryan, SGR LLEN Executive Officer, is a partner to this research and is openly identified in this thesis. All other interviewee names are pseudonyms.

the subjects to tell their own stories of their lived world, and converses with them in the original Latin meaning of *conversation* as ‘wandering together with.’ (Kvale 1996, p.4, original emphasis)

Such ‘professional conversations’ (Kvale 1996, p.5) can, through their inherent storytelling, instigate a process of reflection for both interviewee and interviewer that leads to new insights and understandings. Throughout 2004 and 2005 the SGR LLEN Executive Officer and I entered into regular conversation focused on our mutual reflection and collaborative sense-making. I also undertook semi-structured interviews, conversations in which I followed ‘a method,’ with other stakeholders in SGR LLEN, employees in other organizations involved in SGR LLEN and a variety of other informants focused on the stories I needed to hear thereby gathering what I was unable to see for myself (Stake 1998). The interviews enabled a productive inter-textuality with the observational data (Usher 1997b): it was only in weaving back and forth with both threads that pictures appeared sufficient to produce an ethnography that gained coherence yet retained complexity.

Interviews commonly adhere to a three-part taxonomy: structured or fixed response, semi-structured or unstructured (Freebody 2003). The latter two allow some degree of latitude to the interviewee to narrate what is of relevance to them. Both forms were used in this research with the SGR LLEN Executive Officer interviews adopting an unstructured approach: only a few highly general issues were put to her and she was then free to tell whatever story she wished to tell. For the semi-structured interviews, interviewees were selected through a process of snowball sampling which involved the researcher using initial contact with a small group as a platform to establish further contacts (Stake 1998). Such forms of convenience sampling are problematic when it is intended to generalise from research to other populations. However in case study, as discussed earlier, this problem recedes. Given the focus of this research on a network model it was ideally suited as it acknowledged the inability to establish an appropriate sampling frame, the LLEN’s evolving membership and the need to pursue interviews with individuals who had particularly relevant stories to tell. Such purposive sampling allowed information rich informants to contribute to the case study (Patton 1990).

Unstructured interviews such as those conducted with the SGR LLEN Executive Officer are useful when the researcher is not clear what they want to know and are necessary in studies where the intent is to explore complexity. Such an approach offers more scope for researchers to give up power by creating a context where

interviewees are actively involved in working with the researcher (Freebody 2003; Pillow 2003; Riessman 2001; Simons 1982).

Thus a postmodern approach will, in line with the traveller metaphor of the interviewer, emphasize the constructive nature of the knowledge created through the interaction of the partners in the interview conversation. (Kvale 1996, p.11)

Kvale's position is that the interview involves partners whom remain, however, unequal given that the interviewer defines and controls the situation (Kvale 1996, p.6 ). However as Pillow (2003, p.179) notes, reflexivity can work in all stages of the research including developing reciprocity with interviewees thereby 'hearing, listening, and equalizing the research relationship.' This focus on interaction raises the question of 'interview-ability' (Freebody 2003, p.148). Interviewees reflect on their knowledge of 'what-am-I-for-this-interview' as a resource to draw on their rights and fulfil their responsibilities in the interview context. In this research the interview-ability of my main interviewee, the SGR LLEN Executive Officer, was strong: our relationship was framed up by the ARC Linkage Project Agreement to which the SGR LLEN was financially committed; she saw personal benefit in the research (as an opportunity for her professional development); over time respect, trust, equality, flexibility and reciprocity evolved to a degree where both partners were comfortable within and committed to the interview relationship and the benefits they were gaining from it (Shacklock and Smyth 1997).

Hollway and Jefferson (2002) suggest that in interactive approaches to interviewing the responsibility of the researcher is to be a good listener to the interviewee who adopts a role as storyteller rather than as respondent; as the story unfolds the focus of the interview develops and changes. However structured the interview, the process of interaction is central. Interviewees will 'proceed to answer in terms they deem, at that moment, to be relevant to the specific question, to the ongoing and developing context, and to their understandings of their interactional rights and responsibilities' (Freebody 2003, p.134). The emphasis is on the meaning constructed *between* the research partners and *within* a research context; such accounts are 'versions of the state of their belief as it is appropriate to the specific interpretive occasions in which the [interviewees] find themselves' (Freebody 2003, p.136). Bourdieu (1999, p.608) suggests the 'reflex reflexivity' required to perceive and monitor the effects of the social structure of the interview as it is unfolding is based on a 'craft . . . a sociological "feel" or "eye"' that is reflective



and methodical yet does not involve the application of a method or the implementation of a theory. As Scheurich (1997, p.66) notes, such occasions involve a 'shifting carnival of ambiguous complexity'; a 'radical indeterminacy' at the heart of interview interactions that no methodology can overcome (Scheurich 1995, p.250).

The more sustained the relationship, the greater the informality of interview and the more background knowledge the researcher should have of the situation within which she is increasingly immersed (Stenhouse 1982). Bourdieu concurs and suggests that research can only bring out the 'realities' it seeks if it rests on prior knowledge: 'the only spontaneous process is a constructed one, but it is a *realist construction*' (1999, p. 618, original emphasis). The alternative for Bourdieu is to attempt to withdraw from any kind of researcher intervention and construction which simply leaves the context free for 'preconstruction', that is, the automatic effects of social mechanisms' (1999, p.620). However such background knowledge provides no security for the interviewer. MacLure draws on Derrida's (1998) notion of the double-bind to foreground the '*inevitable* ambivalence' around the search for ontological security (MacLure 2003, p.127, original emphasis). For MacLure, attempts at collaborative research do not centre on issues of power imbalance or voice; rather they form a 'logical dilemma that cannot be solved because one can only unbind one of its knots by pulling on the other to make it tighter' (Derrida 1998 cited MacLure 2003, p.127). The dynamic of the interview partnership that I was involved in with the Executive Officer evolved over the course of 2004 and 2005; Hollway and Jefferson (2002), drawing on Walkerdine (1997), argue that information of feelings in and around the interview process are of value in understanding such dynamics; my research journal provided the yarn that enabled this aspect to be notated and ultimately woven into my case study. I will return to this question in my discussion of analysis.

### **Ethical Considerations**

Jorgensen (1989) outlines the debates that have taken place over the application of ethical principles in contexts of participant observation and, in particular, the question of how people are involved. These arguments suggest that the participant observer interacts with people under the ordinary conditions of their everyday lives and, while my interest - that is, research - may differ from the interests of others

that they interact with, there is no greater or lesser ethical obligation than that held by others. From this perspective while interview subjects might be subject to formal ethical procedures those involved only by way of observation must be subject to different guidelines. Regardless, for Stake (1998, p.103) the position of case study researchers as ‘guests in the private spaces of the world’ demands that ‘their manners be good and their ethics strict’ and it is such a perspective that has guided my actions.

For this research, ethical approval was gained on the basis that informed consent be gained from all interviewees as well as those who were repetitively and closely observed, that is, the SGR LLEN Committee of Management. It was agreed that varying procedures be implemented depending on the level of observation: in regard to the SGR LLEN Committee of Management explicit written consent was to be sought before formal observation occurred. Committee of Management members were provided with plain language statements that confirm a verbal introduction provided by the SGR LLEN Executive Officer. They were asked to complete a consent form agreeing to my use of the data gained during observation; if they were also individually interviewed, they were asked to complete an additional consent form. In the event that any member declined involvement in the research the issue was to be managed by eschewing use of their data in my thesis. As Committee of Management members changed each consecutive member was managed in the same manner: an initial introduction and verbal information, subsequent written information and an invitation to participate. In the case of interviews with other stakeholders, interviewees were informed of the objectives of the interview and the likely outcomes for the project prior to interview. Plain language statements were provided to all interviewees and consent forms completed.

However, it was my experience in this research that even when informed consent had been granted, ethical problems arose. This reflected the open nature of the research: it was not possible to know in advance exactly what data would be collected, where it would be generated or how it would be used. Given the circumstances of the case most participants could not be granted anonymity. As time progressed members of the LLEN became so accustomed to my presence it became apparent that some had either forgotten my role was one of research or had opted to be completely open in my presence for reasons of their own. These issues

required an on-going reiteration of my role at forums I observed – sometimes this occurred, at other times it did not: my ethics were lost in the hubbub of the business of the meeting. In responding to this situation my approach has been guided by attempts to minimise risk. Most commonly this has involved indicating to my participants any material I intended to use in public forums and giving them the opportunity to review and discuss the resultant texts before ‘going public.’

### *Working With The Data*

#### **Concerning Transcription**

In this research all interview conversations were tape recorded and transcribed to allow the interaction and development of both interviewer and interviewee to be captured in detail. At the outset I did not propose to record all interviews however as my interviewing experience evolved I found my ability to be a partner in the interview was compromised by my note-taking. Furthermore, as I will outline in the following section, I found the process of transcription assisted my analysis. As a result during 2004 I did any proposed organisation of the interview prior to arriving for the interview, I recorded all interviews on high quality equipment and undertook all my own transcription. Recording has been argued to ensure the researcher does not misrepresent the interviewee however the problems of transcription and its status as an interpretive process have been well documented (Kvale 1996; Lapadat and Lindsay 1999).

My initial attempts at having recorded interviews transcribed by someone other than myself were disastrous: the quality of my initial equipment, the unstructured nature of the conversations combined with my New Zealand accent apparently made the tapes difficult to transcribe. Perhaps the attention to detail required to capture, at a minimum, the spoken words is only invested when it is your own research that you transcribe. The work involved in correcting the earlier transcripts with the benefit of my field notes and memories of the original conversation was laborious but did make evident to me that the process of full transcription was worth the investment of time and effort.

My interest in transcription lay not in gaining veracity of the narratives shared but in the narrative itself and how it shifted across space and time (Hollway and

Jefferson 2002, p.32; Riessman 2001). Even if I had asked interviewees to verify transcripts I recognise that even when affirmed what is said in interviews

cannot be taken as a reliable proxy for the observation of that phenomenon or event. This is not because people tend to mislead interviewers (although at times there may be good reasons why they might), but rather because phenomena and events do not relate directly, finally and comprehensively to one fixed account. There are many ways to tell the 'truth' about something. (Freebody 2003, p.166-67)

Researchers must also engage with the problem of the 'massive transformation of data' that occurs in transcription – the shift from 'sounds in time' to 'signs in space' (Tripp 1983, p.35) . Furthermore, the process of transcription commonly places the 'sounds in time' into the linear chronological format; an "empty" form waiting to be filled with analytic intention' (Blumenfeld-Jones and Barone 1997, p.83). Commonly, this format holds in the presentation of research in a standard format that comes at the expense of other possibilities and through which we lose awareness of the political character of the linear chronological form and its effect on content (Blumenfeld-Jones and Barone 1997). I will expand on my attempt to avoid this force in the following section.

Transcription itself is a form of textual production; the simplest forms of punctuation can determine the sense of a phrase which, for Bourdieu (1999) represents nothing less than a translation or interpretation. When transcription is undertaken with a view to deliberately orient the reader's attention towards pertinent features such interpretation is even more marked; transcription is 'writing, in the sense of rewriting' (Bourdieu 1999, p.622). However, for Bourdieu, such rewriting is of value in providing the reader of any quoted transcript with the 'tools for a comprehensive reading, a reading capable of reproducing the stance that gave rise to the text' (1999, p.624). This latter point responds to Britzman's (2000) concern about the ethnographic authority of researcher texts and the assumption that there is a spontaneous and direct relationship between a reader's reading and a text's telling. Kvale (1996) concurs and suggests that fixing a conversation or, I would add, a memory into a static form provides a sense of solidarity that can be misleading; a solidarity that can be aggravated in the process of analytical coding and categorising. This point leads me to a weaving of my theoretical approach and its implications for analysis. It is to this concern that I now turn.

### **Theoretical Approach ‘and . . . and . . . and . . .’(Deleuze and Guattari 1987)**

In accordance with the ARC Linkage Project of which this research forms one part, my candidature involved the development of a case study of the formation and operation of the SGR LLEN. Within the limits of a thesis - a specific genre that demands a beginning, middle and end - it has not been possible to engage with all that has been, is and will be SGR LLEN. The LLEN is both the bounded organisation with whom government contracts and the unbounded and shifting network of its members. My approach evolved in the course of my research; an approach that acknowledges the ‘productive dilemma’ of ‘entanglement, knots, weaves and tissues’:

Researchers . . . and their subjects produce *text*. Their accounts are always fabrications . . . weaving something new, yet assembled out of fragments and recollections of other fabrications such as the interview ‘data’ and field notes, as well the scattered traces of innumerable other cultural texts of identity, policy, institutional life, career, curriculum, and so on. Notions of analysis as mastery or surrender reflect the desire to cut loose from that textuality; to escape the sticky threads of contingency, bias, self-interest and ambiguity that constitute text. . . . Analysis has to involve ‘getting a few fingers caught’ in the weave if it is to set anything at all in motion. (MacLure 2003, p.127)

During the process of data generation I came to appreciate the impossibility of a single weaving on a fixed sett<sup>14</sup> doing justice to the myriad of potential patterns that could be woven within the constraints of my loom. Despite my initial disposition to pursue an orderly, intellectual narrative such as those that have served me well in my academic journey thus far, I have become persuaded to compose ‘raggedy panel(s)’ (Scheurich 1997, pp.2-3) whose orientation is poststructural. Such an approach accords with suggestions that researchers need to find ways that highlight the multiplicity and indeterminacy of their empirical data (Scheurich 1995); to acknowledge the parallels between research and art rather than research and science (Sparkes 2002). Poststructural approaches enable researchers to choose *not* to choose between oppositions, *not* to work to transcend them or ignore them but rather to complicate relations *between* them (Atkinson 2003, p. 8, original emphasis). This has led me to draw on the work of Deleuze, and in particular ‘his

---

<sup>14</sup> The term sett refers to the closeness of density of the warp; how many ends per inch form the warp.

best and most inventive work' (Rajchman 2000, p.25) *A Thousand Plateaus. Capitalism and Schizophrenia* published in with collaboration with Felix Guattari (Deleuze and Guattari 1987)<sup>15</sup>.

My intent is thus rhizomatic; it involves a different image of the relationship of thought and experience. The multiplicity of a rhizome, in accordance with botanical terms<sup>16</sup>, is part of its nature. Rhizomes don't have a centre; they expand endlessly in any number of directions resulting in haphazard and temporary intersections<sup>17</sup>. The phrase 'experimentation in contact with the real' is indicative of Deleuze & Guattari's recognition that while intersecting multiplicities form rhizomes that are open and diverse, they are also historically located (Gough 2004). As such, the 'minor philosophy' of Deleuze & Guattari comes 'into closer contact with sociocultural issues and practical concerns' (Semetsky 2004, p.227).

The key Deleuzian metaphor contrasts the rhizome to the tree that has been conceptually dominant in modernist philosophies:

The tree is filiation, but the rhizome is alliance, uniquely alliance. The tree imposes the verb 'to be,' but the fabric of the rhizome is the conjunction, 'and . . . and . . . and . . . ' This conjunction carries enough force to shake and uproot the verb 'to be.' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.25)

This results in an increase in potential and possibility. The arborescent and the rhizomatic are not opposed models: 'there are knots of arborescence in rhizomes, and rhizomatic offshoots in roots' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.20). While I could declare and pursue arborescence in my research it would be a selective reading of a rhizome: an attempt to suppress the unstable, plural and dynamic nature of things by focusing on only that which is fixed, singular, confirmed. In contrast, Rajchman (2000, p.52) likens a rhizomatic approach to a form of 'conceptual art . . . a logic for an experience and activity of thought that is deformed or obscured when

---

<sup>15</sup> Whilst I identify my work as poststructural I acknowledge that such a label sits uncomfortably alongside a Deleuzian approach that sits outside any 'body' of thought. I retain the label for the purposes of this thesis as it enables me to draw on and contribute to the broader body of work that has since the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century challenged representational thinking.

<sup>16</sup> 'A rhizome is a type of stem that expands underground horizontally, sending down roots and pushing up shoots that arise and proliferate not from a single core or trunk, but from a network which expands endlessly from any of its points' (Mansfield 2000, p.143).

<sup>17</sup> Here I must pause and return to my woven tapestry metaphor. Deleuze & Guattari specifically note that the idea of felt is closer to the idea of rhizomatics than weaving is. Felt 'implies no separation of threads, no intertwining, no right or wrong side, only an entanglement of fibers' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.475). However, for me the notion of tapestry weaving best captures the idea of a rhizomatic approach within the arborescent constraints of a doctoral candidature.

reduced to a theory of inference.’ While a method may be useful to correct errors in inference, if the effort is to get away from illusions of representation and recognition in thought, to find new ways of thinking then a different form of logic is required. The logic of multiplicities is concerned with showing and working out the

complications in our thinking. It is a logic of the creation of concepts that derive from problematizations . . . If conceived of as a machine, it would not be a calculating or computing machine . . . but rather some sort of ‘complicating machine’ moving between usual distinctions, surprising us. (Rajchman 2000, p.51)

Using a rhizomatic model involves a concern with the middle, a space that is made of lines moving in multiple directions (Semetsky 2004, p.230). This is Deleuze & Guattari’s ‘plateau’: always in the middle, never at a beginning or end and involving ‘any multiplicity connected to other multiplicities by superficial underground stems in such a way as to form or extend a rhizome (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.22). Looking at the middle disrupts taken for granted understandings and perceptions of linearity; it is in considering middles and plateaus that it is possible to

decenter key linkages and find new ones, not by combining old ones in new ways, but by remaining open to the proliferation of ruptures and discontinuities that in turn create other linkages. (Alvermann 2000, p.118)

It is this notion that allows me to consider how a LLEN fosters structural change.

The rhizomatic approach also provides for multiple entryways and multiple readings (Deleuze and Guattari 1987). Whilst my images are woven individually and offer distinct perspectives, each one is present in the other. Together they are a form of text with edges that are ragged:

Texts are not smooth, grid-like weaves with neat edges. That is why they do not give themselves up to unravelling by the master philosopher/analyst who knows the right thread to pull (Derrida 1998: 37-8). They are not well-wrought tapestries or close-knit fabrics that bind their arguments into grids of meaning or stitch together a coherent self . . . Texts are always incomplete and fragmentary because they are part of the unceasing fabrication of the world, which involves both making and unmaking. Bits are unravelling at the very instant that new connections are being knotted together. So texts do not have clear-cut edges: or at least, their borders only come into being at the moment that they are carved out by the ‘cutting trace, the decision of each reading.’ (Derrida 1981 cited MacLure 2003, p.128)

Given this analytic perspective, I moved away from my initial intent to use software such as NVivo to undertake my analysis. Poststructural writers have problematised an overemphasis on ‘the mechanics of coding . . . with no corresponding focus on the complex ambiguities of language, communication, and interpretation’

(Scheurich 1997, p.63). Adopting a poststructural perspective demands acceptance that 'the real' is unstable and contingent; attempts to know the 'real' involve representing it through a signifying system and that process of representation constructs and shapes in a way particular to the codings of the signifying system (Lee 1992). Particularly in working with interview data, analytical coding results in a representation that demonstrates:

rhetorical reduction of complexity to simplicity, of differential relations to firm identities . . . of diffusely textured situations to tightly boundaried containers, of webs of feeling to numbing objectifications. (Ryan 1989, p.1-2)

How do I understand my analysis as a different and more ragged kind of categorising? Whereas coding puts a given event either here or there, or maybe in multiple points, my analysis is concerned with establishing connections between categories in which the data might have been placed. As such, rather than seeing any given event as belonging 'somewhere(s)' I was concerned less with the category of belonging and more with connections between things, be they people, LLEN projects, government policies, power and so forth. In other words, what is significant in this case study is not an enduring meta-thing I presume to understand when certain categories of things are fixed and then these fixed points are explored alongside one another. Rather I follow the intersecting lines which, when they intersect, cause a point to appear. The understandings gained by considering these points of intersection are only ever temporary and disintegrate into shreds as new relationships and connections come into play continuously. As Roy (2003, p.1) asserts:

Most truths are less interesting than the complex and dynamic intercrossing of forces, intensities, discourses, desires, accidents, idiosyncrasies, and relations of power that produce those culminations. For these networks . . . cannot fail to indicate at the same time unactualized possibilities, fields of indefinitude, and lines of escape.

My research reflects the position that knowledge generated cannot be considered absolute and my mode of enquiry reflect this. Thus my primary tools of analysis have been my field notes and research journal; in the weaving between these texts my analysis has progressed. The pages of my field notes came to operate on two interrelated levels: on the right hand page would be my notes of what I thought I observed. On the left hand page would be my questions, reflections, physical and emotional reactions to these observations. These pages would become the basis of the themes I would then pursue in my subsequent interviews with the Executive Officer during which the same process of further questioning, reflecting and



reacting would be recorded on the left hand pages of my field notes. On returning to my study I would distil both pages into my research journal by reflecting on both the continuities and the ruptures - what was in the process of connecting; what had suddenly begun to unravel – as well as questioning the location and function of discourse, how it was produced, regulated and what its effects were (St. Pierre 2000).

I found that the process of transcription, whilst labour intensive, provided a strong analytical tool. This occurred not only in terms of a detailed re-living of the interviews in which I had been a partner but also by virtue of time. There was often a significant lag in time between undertaking the interview and the process of transcription. Particularly in regard to the unstructured interviews I undertook with the SGR LLEN Executive Officer which occurred approximately once every three weeks, between the time of interview and the time of transcription additional interviews and observations had been undertaken. These were fresh in my mind and, in re-living the earlier interviews by way of transcription, I was able to see the lines of flight that had occurred for *both* interview partners as we travelled together and, in our travelling, constructed and reconstructed our map of the SGR LLEN. The transcripts provide something of a messy confessional that captured my journey through candidature and my research partner's journey through the evolution of a LLEN. I soon adopted a process of ending each line numbered transcript with a series of reflective notes, in effect linking the past – that is the transcript - with the present – that is my reflections at the time of completing transcription. Such writing became a method of discovery as discussed by Richardson (2001): in the writing process I would learn something that I did not know before I wrote it.

The transcription process coupled with my research journal also contributed to the identification of relationships across the dimensions of this research: my personal world, the case study, the PhD candidature within a Linkage Project and the relationship between the action research component of the Linkage Project and the action research methodology of the LLEN. In a process evocative of Scheurich (1997, p.1) I have 'gone backward after I have gone forward; I have drifted sideways along a new imaginary, forgetting from where I had once thought I had started'; in this way the 'making and unmaking' of the case study proceeded. Whereas once this would be the 'hidden chapter' of research I have, like Britzman

(2000, p. 231), opened up and included this data in an effort to be ‘accountable to complexity’ (Lather 2000, p.305).

A final comment must be made. Poststructural approaches in general, and work that engages Deleuzian concepts in particular, have faced the challenge of being excessively complex. However any attempt to ‘push at the boundaries of the conventionally sayable must, by definition, be difficult to explain and difficult to grasp’ (Lee 1992, p.2); at the same time the level of complexity within poststructural texts is often no greater than, for example, statistical research. Dismissive positions have been argued to betray an unwillingness to read and think about theories that critique modernist discourses that, whilst familiar, are silent on their effects on real people (St. Pierre 2000, 2004). Critiques have also been levelled at the limited practical usefulness of poststructural approaches (see Lather 1986 for overview). However, within a Deleuzian approach the emphasis is on finding one’s own way; it works to ‘encourage “uses” while frustrating “applications”’ (Rajchman 2000, p.118). As such, the usefulness lies not in immediate application but in challenging basic assumptions upon which our thought and practise is based:

More simply, it did not happen that way. To think that the journey happened in some way that fits a particular narrative structure that is endemic to modernism itself is to overlay a pre-set structure or pattern onto that which fits and that which does not, to commit inclusions and exclusions, though the ‘control’ or ‘order’ of the structure is ever, to some degree, incomplete, contradictory, heterological, and productive of its own subversions. (Scheurich 1997, p.3)

## Sunday 13 March 2005 Reflection

*It is cool in my study: 23C at 9.00am. Outside the sky is a blistering blue and it is already nudging 30C. It is close to silent – my son Berend sleeps on, oblivious to my labour. Thoughts are moving from my head through my fingers to the keyboard at which moment they appear on the screen before me. The only sounds I am aware of are the hum of the computer, the tap of my fingers striking the keys, and my under-the-breath mutterings as I struggle to capture whatever it is in my mind that I feel compelled to transform to text. Only a short time ago I arrived in this space having returned from a morning walk. On this particular morning I departed from my usual route. Instead of walking along the Barwon River then homewards through suburban streets I took to a laneway. In Geelong the suburbs are laced with laneways tucked between the major roads and this morning I discovered laneways close to my home I'd not walked into being before. It was hot and, as I moved further from the sealed road, I reflected on the risk that I may have to walk some long way to find my way home if I got lost in these spaces.*

*As I walked along these little interconnected roads – sometimes grassy, other times paved in one fashion or another yet barely wide enough to accommodate a vehicle – I felt a connection with what has been on my mind this particular week in the final year of my candidature. How is it I – the most linear of women - came to be rhizomatically wandering at this point in this thesis? This week I have been reading Elizabeth's (St. Pierre 1997) account of her initial movement towards poststructural inquiry by way of writing and it inspires me to continue wandering my laneways. As did her armchair ethnographer, I have sat at my desk and wandered from Elizabeth's page to and fro between today's writing and my earlier writing to my fieldnotes to a picture of a loom to A Thousand Plateaus and so on...*

*I recognise that I am weaving on all my small looms at the same time; I pick up one loom and weave a few strands. In this weaving/writing my data collection and analysis proceeds and a transitory connection is made. At some point I realise this colour is also needed on that loom. I am compelled to reach for another loom and, using the same thread and bobbin I weave a few strands on the second loom, a little bit more of the image appears on both looms. There is now a connection between these two looms and, as I continue, other looms are rhizomatically drawn in with the haphazard intersection of the threads. Points appear. Now I can step back from my work and, before me, a temporarily interconnected image of the interconnection that is SGR LLEN is becoming. It does not form a whole, it is not and will never be complete.*

*Like Elizabeth (St. Pierre 1997, p.9), I can no longer believe data must be textualised before it can be analysed; my analysis proceeds as I peer down a laneway, as I wander-together (Kvale 1996) with my research partner; as I sit on the back porch with Lee taking computer-based lines of flight over the format of this thesis, as I write these words. My writing too is palimpsest – it is written and overwritten but unquestionably traces remain of what has gone before. This is a frightening place to be on certain days of the week. Other doctoral students ask 'but precisely what steps do you take to do it?' – 'it' being analysis - and I have no easy answer; there are no linear steps I can list for them to follow as my steps are backwards, sideways and forwards, always in the middle: the middle of data collection, the middle of the literature review, the middle of analysis, the middle of my life, the middle of write-up, the middle of ethics. These are laneways far from the method-streets I began walking at the commencement of this candidature but, in finding my unique way through them, I am convinced that I am moving closer to embracing the curiosity that enables one to 'get free of oneself' (Foucault 1984, p. 8).*

## ***Pause***

The postmodernist context of doubt distrusts all methods equally ... But a postmodernist position does allow us to know “something” without claiming to know everything. Having a partial, local, historical knowledge is still knowing. (Richardson 1994, p.517-18)

This Panel has introduced the research and its positioning within an ARC Linkage Project. It has also provided some perspective of me as author of the thesis and of the metaphor that has informed my understanding of my work: I am weaving on a vertical loom constructed and dressed with warp threads by others; it has been my task to take up that loom, select the threads and weave wefts into multiple representations to form a case study of the SGR LLEN.

I have also used this first Panel of the thesis to outline my design. My pursuit of a poststructural ethnography drew on multiple modes of inquiry to generate data. The multiplicity of the reality evident in that data has been represented by adopting a poststructural approach to analysis and by weaving the data and analysis on a series of small looms thereby providing a portrayal of events that are always in the middle and fundamentally interconnected.

Context is the ground within which the rhizome expands, sending down its roots and pushing up its shoots. The rhizome is inherently connected to and part of its context, and vice versa. It is to a concern with weaving the political, social and geographic context of my research that I now turn.

## **The Second Panel**

### ***Weaving The Policy Context***

Prior to working with the non-representational Deleuzian map there is a need to provide a contextual map – a cartoon for the reader. This second Panel is concerned with setting the scene. Firstly I provide an overview of the policy context within which LLEN have evolved; this view includes an exploration of notions of globalisation and risk as well as the implications of these forces for governments. I then step closer to the specific location of my loom in a city called Geelong: I consider the demographic, social and political aspects of the research context before moving to outline in detail the formation of SGR LLEN and its operational approach.

For now, I am concerned with the research policy context. I open by defining my use of the term ‘network’ before moving to a brief overview of the recent policy directions in a context of increased risk and interdependence. I then introduce the two central state government reports: the review of public schooling implemented in March 2000, *Public Education: The Next Generation* (Connors 2000) and the *Ministerial Review of Post Compulsory Education and Training Pathways in Victoria* that was handed down in August 2000 (Kirby 2000). It is the Kirby Report, as the latter report is widely known, that has pushed the network model to its central position in the Victorian context. Finally I traverse the specific recommendation within the Kirby Report that brought about the establishment of SGR LLEN.

### **The Colour of my Woven Network**

Notions of networks derive from multiple sources including the idea of the intuitive and counter-intuitive networks of the network society (Castells 2000), the wired society (Webster 1995), the lifelong learning concept (Delors 1996), the learning organisation (Senge 1990), inter-organizational theory (Kickert, Klijn and Koppenjan 1997), political science (Pierre 2000; Rhodes 1997) as well as the notion of professional learning communities (Lieberman and Grolnick 1998). Differing research traditions have also produced varying definitions and uses (Considine 2002). Blackmore (2002) argues there is a common collapse in the literature

between notions of learning communities and learning networks, possibly reflecting an assumption that networks are ‘naturally’ communities.

A review of over 200 articles addressing the concept of community in education found a lack of accepted definition (St Clair 1998). However, in searching the literature on ‘learning communities or learning networks’ a clustering was evident to me: on the one hand, the term *learning communities* often addressed questions of staff development, particularly in the context of education. Notions of learning communities emerged increasingly during the 1990s in the literature around teacher professional development (Lieberman and Grolnick 1998). More recently, the Australian National Training Authority took up the concept in addressing the professional development of vocational education practitioners (Mitchell, Henry and Young 2001). On the other hand, the term *learning networks* commonly addressed the idea of communication and information technologies in education: the use of the information technology to provide more flexible learning opportunities for both learners and educators (I & J Management Services 2000). Robinson & Keating (2005, p.1) argue LLEN can also be ‘considered as policy networks with characteristics which tend to categorise them as loosely integrated issue networks.’ The definition that has focused my research reflects the policy context within which I weave: post compulsory education in Victoria, Australia:

local planning networks . . . to  
develop collaborative approaches towards planning and improved delivery of  
post compulsory education and training programs and services  
investigate and trial key elements of regional coordination and delivery of  
programs.  
(Kirby 2000, p.19)

## **The Recent Education and Training Policy Context**

By international and national standards Victoria provides a highly dynamic education and training context (Keating and Robinson 2003); one that has out-performed the national average on many measures of educational and labour market participation (Long 2005). It is characterised by a high degree of devolution in the compulsory and post compulsory education sectors, the highest level of private schooling in Australia, innovative TAFE<sup>18</sup> and university arrangements as well as

---

<sup>18</sup> TAFE refers to Technical and Further Education colleges.

the largest and most diverse adult and community education (ACE) sector in Australia (Connors 2000; Keating and Robinson 2003). It is also ‘departmentally’ diverse with sub-systems and separate Unions for each of the sectors of education as well as being ‘regionally’ differentiated (Connors 2000). This multi-layered departmental arrangement coupled with a highly diverse and dynamic context creates the potential for tension between the education system and its component parts at a time when multiple stakeholders are becoming involved with the education agenda (Connors 2000).

During the 1990s, in common with many other communities nationally and internationally (Kickert et al. 1997), Victorians experienced a shift away from the welfare state ideology within government coupled with the imposition of private sector management practices (Blackmore 1999, 2002). As in other sectors of government, in a context of tighter accountability and reduced resources education policy devolution was ‘reworked from the centre’ (Connors 2000, p.16): the devolution of functions shifted from curriculum to ‘administration, management and control’ (Connors 2000, p.16). As had occurred in other domains, performativity<sup>19</sup> supplanted paternalism as the meta-discourse which legitimised the state’s control functions (Yeatman 1994). While self-management of schools saw a range of functions and responsibilities associated with administration, accounting, employment and maintenance devolved to school principals and councils - with a resultant massive increase in related workloads - there was a conterminous return to central control of a range of curriculum and pedagogical matters relating to student assessment, a shift promoted on the basis of quality and performance (Shacklock 1998; Strathern 2000). Thus teachers and schools operated within an increasing sense of close external scrutiny (Shacklock 1998), a sense that was intensified with the introduction of the ‘Professional Recognition Program’ that, for the first time in Victorian schools, tied teacher classification, promotion and salary to a system of performance review (Directorate of School Education 1995).

---

<sup>19</sup> Lyotard (1984, p.44) defines performativity as ‘... the principle of optimal performance: maximising output (the information modifications obtained) and minimising input (the energy expended in the process).’ For Ball (2000) performativity is ‘a system of “terror” in Lyotard’s words, that employs judgements, comparisons and displays as a means of control, attrition and change.’ I explore this argument in the fourth Panel of this thesis within the discussion on governance of SGR LLEN.

This ‘centralised decentralisation’ placed risk management in the hands of individuals, families and educational institutions by way of discourses of choice and local management (Blackmore 2002) at the same time a sense of ‘common good and interconnectedness’ was damaged (Connors 2000). Furthermore, the degree of centralised control ‘far outweighed’ the scope for local participation and management meaning schools ‘remained subservient to the activities of the state’ (Thomson 1999, p.11). Funding systems placed public and private schools in competitive relationships (Blackmore 2002), a development that brought ‘widespread disquiet’ and ran counter to the co-operative practices sought in many communities (Connors 2000, p.17). In the early 1990s these shifts resulted in the closure of nearly 300 primary and secondary government schools, the loss of around 8,000 teaching positions and a massive reduction – some hundreds of millions of Australian dollars - in the education budget (Shacklock 1998). At the same time as the state social infrastructure for health and welfare was ‘hollowed out’ (Blackmore 2002, p.20) the increased flexibility for schools that self-management was to release would be supplemented through increased parental labour and funding (Blackmore 2000). As such it is little surprise that the impact of self-management appeared highly correlated to the socioeconomic standing of the area in which schools were located (Shacklock 1998).

Local responses to these developments saw increased voluntarism in communities where ‘buying in’ out-sourced services was limited by the economic constraints of a given community (Blackmore 2002). In many communities organic networks emerged as individuals and institutions came together to deal with common problems. However, schools and other education and training providers remained in a system where funding was premised on individual student numbers within a marketised and devolved context. Schools are thus forced to behave in entrenched ways including privileging the focus on the competitive academic curriculum and tertiary entrance rankings<sup>20</sup> notwithstanding that 70% of students in Victoria do not move directly from school to university. In recent years both the federal and state

---

<sup>20</sup> The VCE results lead to what is known as the Equivalent National Tertiary Entrance Rank or ENTER. The ENTER is a competitive, standardised and nationally portable mark that is the source of considerable media, and familial anxiety for those completing Y12, towards the end of each school year. For those intending to progress to university the ENTER is vital: universities publish the required ENTER for their programs and rank all students who have nominated the program as a preference.



government have recognised that competitive relations have undermined efforts of schools and other public agencies to engage youth in education and training that will expand their options in negotiating the 'risk society' (Beck 1992). It is to a brief discussion of this broader global context that I turn before moving to introduce the shift in policy that has led to the formation of LLEN.

### *Globalisation*

In a context of increased risk and interdependence (Blackmore 2002) structural reform in the post compulsory education sector, as in other sectors, is increasingly based on the concept of networks; this context has its source in globalisation. Globalisation is a term that conveys a number of intertwined phenomena (Giddens 1999a; Hutton and Giddens 2001). It involves the growth of supra-national political bodies including the United Nations and the OECD and the formation of global education policy communities (Henry, Lingard, Rizvi and Taylor 2001); its force and momentum is superior to that of individual nations (Hutton and Giddens 2001). Globalisation is strongly linked with the 'deformed character' of contemporary capitalism (Hutton and Giddens 2001, p.6), the impact of communication and transport technology on the way economies interact and compete and on the shape and form of their labour markets (Strain 2000b). In particular, globalisation has resulted in a decline in manufacturing jobs, an increased demand for so-called knowledge workers in certain areas – either local or global - and new industrial workers in others (Jarvis 2004; Thomson 1999). In other words, globalisation is political, technological, cultural and economic; it has been 'influenced above all by developments in systems of communication dating back only to the 1960s' that have enabled a flow of finance and capital that has no earlier parallel (Giddens 1999a, p.1); it has been reinforced by the collapse of Soviet communism and the perception that there is now no alternative (Bauman 1992). Globalisation also transforms our daily life through its influence on mobility and migration (Cope and Kalantzis 1997), family structures and gender roles, communication and entertainment and exposure to a new range of risk situations such as genetically modified foods (Hutton and Giddens 2001). Thus at the same time as globalisation fosters economic, technical and cultural integration it also fosters social and political fragmentation at a local level (Blackmore 2000; Strain 2000b).

According to Urry (2003, p.10) Castells' (2000) analysis of the network society is important in breaking the notion of globalisation as 'a finished and completed totality.' For example, in advanced societies, downgraded labour is concentrated in low-skill, low-pay activities and temporary work commonly undertaken by women, ethnic minorities and young people. However, the resulting bifurcation of work and polarisation of the labour force is not the necessary result of technological progress or the evolution of the post-industrial society: it is 'socially determined and managerially designed in the process of the capitalist restructuring taking place' (Castells 2000, p. 266-7). Thus Castells prefigures the complexity of globalisation (Urry 2003). Castells argues that we have now entered a new social 'space of flows', a space organised not so much to move things from one place to another – including information, people, money, products and so on - but more to keep them moving around. In contrast and conterminously much community life – including that which occurs within and around schools – is fundamentally based in a space of place. Thus Wittel (2001) has proposed that a new 'network sociality' must prevail, a sociality that will challenge existing networking practices and assumptions – a networking in tune with the space of flows (Shacklock 2004). Within this globalised context new opportunities and new risks are unleashed. It is to a consideration of risk, and particularly the risk connected to young people, that I now turn.

### *Risk*

The idea of risk is a relatively recent concept that has its roots in 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century explorers' ventures into uncharted water: risk is inseparable from questions of probability and uncertainty; it concerns 'hazards that are actively assessed in relation to future possibilities' (Giddens 1999b, p.1). In advanced capitalist societies the problems of the production and distribution of wealth are systematically accompanied by the production, definition and distribution of risk (Beck 1992): a 'positive embrace of risk is the . . . source of . . . energy which creates wealth in a modern economy' (Giddens 1999b, p.1). An ability to positively embrace risk presumes access to resources, both social and material, including the ability to use insurance to redistribute risk. This has resulted in two paradigms of inequality – one concerned with the distribution of wealth, the other concerned with the distribution of risk - that follow different distributional logics (Giddens 1999b).

Risk is a 'systematic way of dealing with hazards and insecurities induced and introduced by modernization itself' (Giddens 1999b, p.21). Questions of risk and identity are two structurally defining aspects of late modern society and have fostered a new role for governments: an obligation to convey a sense of security by assuming responsibility for the identification and redistribution of risk (Strain 2000a). It is important to recognise that, in this process, government *creates* risk and identity discourses. For example, discourses of youth at risk often derive from concerns about globalisation. The uncertainty of youth transitions in the globalised context of deindustrialisation and consequent demand for changing skills and credentials has created a context where various experts are called on to assist in calculating and measuring risk thereby attempting to better understand, intervene in and control youth transitions (Kelly 1999). The process of watching and monitoring youth in and of itself results in their transitions being understood in increasingly complex and uncertain ways that escalate anxiety about youth transitions (Kelly 1999). Thus, risk brings the non-political into the political realm; the potential for catastrophe has extended the sphere of concern of governments and focused it on certain groups within a society such as the poor who attract an unfortunate abundance of risk' while the rich can purchase 'safety' (Beck 1992, p.35). Giddens (1999b) argues that the welfare state itself is a risk management system. At the same time, risk fosters a new significance for knowledge: risks cannot be possessed in the same way that wealth can; but knowledge of and ability to manage risk can be possessed and used for economic and political benefit as well as personal safety.

Not only is risk a social concern, it is also an individual concern. The labour market is the motor of individualised risk (Beck 1992). The labour market creates dependence on wages and consumption whilst separating the individual from traditional forms of support. Individualisation 'manifests itself in the acquisition, proffering, and application of a variety of work skills' (Beck 1992, p.93). Steady employment becomes the main source of security at a point where traditional full employment policies have become unworkable (Strain 2000b). Beck (1992) argues that individualisation is brought about by the interaction of three labour market

dimensions: education, mobility and competition<sup>21</sup>. Firstly, those with formal education create their own situation in the labour market and, by consequence, their social biography; the greater the duration of education the greater the opportunity for self discovery and acquisition of credentials to enable upward mobility or prevent downward mobility. Secondly, the point of entry to the labour market fosters mobility as individuals become independent of earlier ties and are forced to draw on their resources of social and cultural capital to take charge of their lives. Thirdly, the increasing competition for limited opportunities in the labour market leads to what Beck refers to as ‘individualization among equals’; any shared background dissolves in the need to establish the individuality and uniqueness of one’s ability to contribute. Those who leave school early significantly lessen the resources they bring to manage their mobility into and through the labour market, they become the ‘miner’s canaries’ of ‘our society in crisis,’ highly vulnerable to the risk society (Bessant 2002, p.33). It is important to note however that these changes are not absolute: structures such as family, class, gender, race and locality remain significant, albeit in changed ways, for both young people (Ball, Maguire and Macrae 2000) and older people (Wyn and Dwyer 1999).

At the same time, individuals are held responsible for managing risk notwithstanding that the risks have been produced by institutions and society: risks are positioned as ‘*consequences of the decisions [individuals] themselves have made*’ (Beck 1992, p.136, original emphasis). Ball, Maguire and Macrae note that the young people in their research did not see their decisions as being structurally constrained but rather the product of individual choice (2000, p.2). Such decisions include a decision to leave school at a point beyond the duration legislated as compulsory but now identified as ‘early’ within discourses of globalisation and risk. Thus te Riele (2006) argues that the term ‘at risk’ should be replaced with the term ‘marginalised,’ a term that would better reflect that some students are marginalised in their connection to school rather than inherently ‘at risk.’

While the category ‘youth-at-risk’ has at times come to function as a generalised deficit category (Bessant 2002; Dwyer and Wyn 2001; te Riele 2006), the notion of

---

<sup>21</sup> These dimensions do not interact in a vacuum. They reinforce each other and act in conjunction with other contextual developments including a collective increase in standard of living that is coupled with greater differentiation between rich and poor as well as increasing access to recourse through judicial process (Beck 1992).

manufactured risk can be used to explore how knowledge about youth is transferred into 'obvious' post compulsory education policy and the implementation of responses that do not necessarily align with the experiences of young people living in a variety of social landscapes (Ball et al. 2000; Bessant 2002; te Riele 2004; Vaughan 2005). Both post compulsory education policy and youth are constructed within a capitalist discourse which assumes a context of social cohesion exists and that economic competitiveness can deliver social justice and enhanced well-being for all (Avis 1997). Policy objectives developed in response to globalisation increasingly deal with 'intangible' issues, for example, with learning rather than with education. They also involve a broad and diverse range of actors acting in a context where the nature of government itself is changing (Edwards and Boreham 2003; Kickert et al. 1997; Pierre 2000; Rhodes 1997) and where implementation is subject to tension between competing discourses at the local level (Edwards and Boreham 2003). It is to this changing form of governance that I now turn.

### *Networks and Governance*

Robinson and Keating (2005) provide an overview of the term 'governance' and its use. They suggest that, regardless of emphasis, there is a common shift from 'governing state' to 'enabling state.' This change in the meaning of 'government' (Kickert et al. 1997) is indicative of, among other things, globalisation 'pushing downwards' (Giddens 1999a). Not only does globalisation create the potential for nations to lose some of the economic power they once had it also creates new pressures for local autonomy: at the same time as nations become too small to solve the big problems they become too big to solve the small problems (Giddens 1999a; Snelling 2003). This combination fosters a risk society that is beyond solutions offered by traditional politics (Beck 1992):

The kinds of circumstances in which no single actor can solve a problem alone nor compel others to seek effective solutions are precisely the sort which propel networks to centre stage. (Kickert et al. 1997, p.137)

In late modern society effective problem solving by government is argued to involve interdependency and cooperative efforts: policy development and implementation requires the concerted effort of multiple actors that possess some capability to act; it involves dependency on others to develop policy and convert it into action (Kickert et al. 1997; OECD 2001). Central government, it is argued, is no longer able to control the complexity and pluralistic diversity that are

fundamental characteristics of late modern societies: such approaches have come to be seen as ‘monolithic,’ ‘slow to respond’ and unable to understand and ‘deal with regional and local diversity’ (Keating and Robinson 2003, p.1; Seddon, Clemans and Billett 2005). Other challenges have also contributed to the challenge to central governments including the financial crisis of many governments (Pierre 2000), the 1980s ideological shift towards individualism and market forces (Pierre 2000) and the resulting emergence of private sector management practices (Rhodes 1997).

A ‘central steering perspective’ does not take into account the dependencies of government on its social environment or its interdependencies with many other social actors. Such a ‘macro’ (Keating and Robinson 2003) model incorrectly assumes governments have knowledge of all the problems, preferences and available solutions. It also disregards the values, interests and strategies of target groups (Kickert et al. 1997). In responding to these criticisms, a ‘multi-actor perspective’ has been presented – a ‘bottom-up’ approach that focuses on provision of resources and policy discretion to local actors thereby strengthening their autonomy. Such a ‘micro’ (Keating and Robinson 2003) model measures success in terms of the degree of autonomy held by local actors. This model has been critiqued on the basis that it effectively calls for a retreat of central government from the public domain or central rule for the benefit of local actors without regard for the broader society (Kickert et al. 1997).

Theoretically, a ‘network perspective’ provides an alternative that either resides between these extremes (Keating and Robinson 2003) or as the ‘logical inversion’ at the opposite end of the hierarchy (Stephenson 2004) in the current context where neither ‘defeatism nor control freakery is acceptable as a strategy for governance’ (McCarthy, Miller and Skidmore 2004, p.20). This perspective recognises that policy development and implementation takes place in networks consisting of various actors none of which possesses power to determine the strategies of others<sup>22</sup>. It involves changes in the role of both federal and state government, and how they relate to each other (OECD 2001). This model involves a shift from government to governance (Robinson and Keating 2004; Tett 2005); from

---

<sup>22</sup> Clearly it is highly contestable to suggest that power is equally held in a relationship between those governing and those governed. Notably in Victoria, while responsibility and accountability were devolved, power and authority – including access to resources – remained with those who govern. However, here I am concerned with presenting the arguments presented in support of the shift to networks and governance.

bureaucratic control to sets of diverse governance relationships frequently couched in terms of private sector management practices, notably ‘explicit and measurable standards of performance’ (Keating and Robinson 2003, p.2). It also involves a challenge to our assumptions about public –v- private ownership with individuals acting as ‘co-producers’ of the services they receive from the state (McCarthy et al. 2004). Such a model measures success in terms of collective action to establish purpose and manage risk (Kickert et al. 1997): whether people ‘run to, not away from, problems’ (Stephenson 2004, p.45). Network perspectives are evident in the increasing emphasis on developing social partnerships with their ‘asserted ability’ to overcome bureaucratic rigidities, address adverse consequences of market mechanisms and provide solutions to the social exclusion and risks associated with poor educational participation and outcomes (Levitas 1998).

Network perspectives are based on notions of an enabling state, one that governs by coordinating other powerful actors (Pierre and Peters 2000) and involves a focused effort to foster both community development and ‘joined up’ government (Keating and Robinson 2003); the LLEN were a ‘micro-model’ of this joined up government specifically concerned with youth (Department of Education & Training 2005a). Keating and Robinson suggest that the establishment and operation of LLEN can be seen as a mechanism to improve governance (Robinson and Keating 2005, p.25).

Thus the lofty aspirations for networks:

Networks are purposeful social entities characterised by a commitment to quality, rigour, and a focus on outcomes. They are also an effective means of supporting innovation in times of change. In education, networks promote the dissemination of good practice, enhance the professional development of teachers, support capacity building in schools, mediate between centralised and decentralised structures, and assist in the process of re-structuring and re-culturing educational organisations and systems. (OECD 2003, p.153)

However, the practice of social partnerships is more complex than the policy logic permits (Seddon et al. 2005); some commentators claim such approaches will remain ‘always just beyond reach’ of governments – while the benefits will be extolled, the actual costs will be underestimated (Tett 2005, p.2). Furthermore, our institutions are ‘not programmed to understand’ networks: while they have been embraced by governments the significance of network perspectives has not been grasped, a ‘governance gap’ remains and their potential has not been harnessed (McCarthy et al. 2004, p. 12). Long noted that while there were ‘more voices in the policy development process,’ a top-down approach still pre-dominated (2005, p.iii).

According to Hutton and Giddens (2001, p.6) the ‘deformed character’ of contemporary capitalism with its ‘hardened’ competitive logic has fostered a social polarization that can only be rectified by deliberate governmental and industry policies that engage with new production systems and labour processes. The election of a ‘reformist’ Labor government in Victoria at the end of 1999 fostered a change in approach. Labor was committed to fostering greater social cohesion and identified the education and training policy domain as central to the realisation of that commitment (Keating and Robinson 2003). As well, Labor drew on OECD research that indicated a shift from program-based approaches to network perspectives in solving problems related to those who were failed by the school system (Department of Education Employment and Training 2001, p.2)<sup>23</sup>. Contemporaneously, local government in Victoria began to focus on education and learning and the ‘natural fit’ between the outcomes attributed to education and the goals of local government (Hill 2003; Snelling 2003). Meanwhile, at federal level ‘an historic commitment to improving Australian Schooling within a framework of national collaboration’ and including the strengthening of schools as learning communities working in partnership with business, industry and the wider community was agreed within the *Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-First Century* (Ministerial Council on Education Employment Training and Youth Affairs 1999). This commitment sat within a broader embrace of ‘three sector partnerships’ – government, corporate and community – that would underpin Australia’s economic, political and social development (Kemp 1999 cited Seddon et al. 2005, p.31). In 1999 the federal government established a Youth Pathways Action Plan Taskforce to build on the vision of the Adelaide Declaration. The resulting Report *Footprints to the Future* (Eldridge 2001) called for the earliest possible implementation of the Adelaide Declaration’s goals within a framework of six principles: a national commitment to young people; education and training as the foundation for effective transitions; career and transition support; focused local partnerships; changing the ways young people are supported; and responding to diversity.

---

<sup>23</sup> During the course of this research the Victorian Department of Education, Employment and Training was restructured. Subsequent to 2003 it was referred to as the Department of Education & Training. My use of the term ‘the Department’ refers to an iteration of either title.



The policies that have implemented this broad shift in focus from competition to cooperation have their seeds in ‘the energy of . . . local capacity building networked projects’ (Blackmore 2002, p.4). Labor’s vision for Victoria in 2010 was articulated in *Growing Victoria Together* (Department of Premier & Cabinet 2001): a Report ‘premised on the benefits to be gained from ensuring that a range of voices are involved in decision making’ (Robinson and Keating 2005, p.25). The vision - thriving industries and high quality jobs, a protected environment, caring safe communities in which opportunities are fairly shared and access for all to high quality health and education services through their lives – places a central focus on the role of education and lifelong learning. As I write these words in 2005 this community commitment was reinforced with the release of the state government’s *A Fairer Victoria* – a \$788m policy commitment that ranged across a broad set of social action objectives based on community capacity building and included a stated intention to support and build on the work of LLEN (Department of Premier & Cabinet 2005). The release of this document reiterated a commitment to joined-up government:

But it is not just about money – we will make government departments work together, we will stop them burying people in red tape and we will link the performance contracts of senior bureaucrats to better outcomes. (Anon 2005)

It is now timely to take up twin looms on which to weave the recent state government reports into education and training and the networks that have been implemented as a consequence of them.

### **Public Education - The Next Generation: the Connors Report**

In Australia, education is a state responsibility notwithstanding the exertion of increasing influence by the federal government through the use of targeted funding and the granting of increase power to the Ministerial Council on Education Employment Training and Youth Affairs over the past two decades (Cairns 2003). Early in 2000 the Victorian Government implemented two reviews of education and training that are of central concern to this research: a review of post compulsory education and training pathways (Kirby 2000) and a review of the future directions of the state’s public schools (Connors 2000). This section provides an outline of pertinent aspects of the schools’ review; I then introduce the post compulsory review in detail as it is that review that brought about the implementation of LLEN.

The review of public schooling implemented in March 2000, *Public Education: The Next Generation* (Connors 2000), was forward looking: it was concerned with improving a public education system to which many Victorians were ‘deeply attached’ (Connors 2000, p.15)<sup>24</sup>. In positioning the Report it was noted that the review process uncovered goals for the Victorian schooling system that generally accord with the principles of lifelong learning: preparation for active participation in society; fostering adaptability to change; readiness for further education and the workforce; development of individuals abilities and interests as well as ability to work with others; and enjoyment of schooling and a love of learning (Connors 2000. p.15).

The findings of the Connors Report indicated that public schools were under pressure and that there was strong opposition to policies that had fostered competition over collaboration within the public education system as well as between the private and public systems. Administrative workloads within schools were adding unnecessarily to this pressure and infrastructure resourcing, from both government and community, was identified as a key problem. While the Report commended the flexibility and freedom brought about by devolution and recommended it be confirmed and strengthened, in some areas it was noted that the nature of the broader system had damaged the sense of ‘common good and interconnectedness’ and this was placing the system at risk through forcing schools to prioritise organisational efficiency and competition over meeting the diverse needs of students (Blackmore 2002; Connors 2000; Department of Education & Training 2003). A further risk was evident in the growing polarisation of schools and the development of ‘rich’ and ‘poor’ schools (Blackmore 1999; Shacklock 1998). The lack of equal distribution of education opportunities and outcomes were noted as was a lack of equity of access to quality teaching (Connors 2000; Department of Education & Training 2003).

In responding to this context, a Recommendation 2 provided for four elements including:

Networks consisting of their member schools collaborating to provide enhanced opportunities for students, to promote educational excellence and to meet the diverse needs of their communities in the provision of student support

---

<sup>24</sup> Notably, however, Victoria also comprises the largest private school sector – that is, fee paying schools that are also supported by government funds - in Australia.

services and in such other areas of cooperation as would be identified by schools in the network. (Connors 2000, p.8)

The possibility for School Networks lay in devolution, advances in communication technologies, shifts in governance models and the experience gained by schools through self-management (Connors 2000, p.30). Networks would be ‘flat . . . bottom-up structures, formed and run by their member schools’ (Connors 2000, p.29). It was stressed that such networks not be another layer of administration; care was to be taken to ensure flexibility. Operational funding was to be by way of schools pooling resources, this would ensure ‘ownership’; member schools would, however, gain through ‘economies of scale’ and ‘efficiency benefits’ (Connors 2000, p.29). In other words, School Networks would be resource neutral for government. At the same time, the networks would become a strategic forum and would facilitate pathways between schools and other agencies. In reflecting on these findings the Report noted the need to reconsider the role of government and the relationships between government, social structures and schools. It called for a ‘whole of government’ approach that acknowledge the schools, acting alone or in their networks, would not address these challenges successfully (Henry and Grundy 2004).

This means that the links between schools and other agencies are vital. Local schools need the means to maximise those relationships that enhance curriculum and teaching for students and that contribute to the wellbeing of students generally, that extend their opportunities for learning, and that provide a crucial safety net. (Connors 2000, p.20)

The synergy between School Networks and the structures envisaged by the *Ministerial Review of Post Compulsory Education and Training Pathways in Victoria* were clear. It is that document that I now take up.

## **Post Compulsory Education and Training Pathways: the Kirby Report**

In focusing on young people in transition from school to the labour market, Labor had set two specific targets: by 2010 90% of young people would successfully complete Y12 or its equivalent; by 2005 there would be a 6% increase in young people aged 15-19 engaged in education and training in rural and regional Victoria. The intent of the post compulsory education and training review implemented in

January 2000 was to explore the needs of young people<sup>25</sup> and the provision of educational programs and services for them at the post compulsory level (Kirby 2000, p.165). In August 2000 the *Ministerial Review of Post Compulsory Education and Training Pathways in Victoria* was handed down. In the Introduction to the Kirby Report, as it is widely known, the aim was stated as to ‘review participation and outcomes for young people in post compulsory education and training in Victoria’ (Kirby 2000, p.3) and to make recommendations for future action.

In analysing the employment and education and training context currently faced by young people in Victoria the Kirby Report noted that pathways were ‘uncertain, unequal and poorly signposted . . . the transition process has become more complex and unpredictable’ (Kirby 2000, p.7). Victorian and Australian education and training were ‘mediocre by international standards’: participation levels were poor, outcomes were skewed against certain groups, linkages between sectors, industry and support resources were weak. There was a lack of coordination between parts of the system, a lack of strong and clear vision and a lack of accountability for all young people: many fell ‘through the cracks’ (Kirby 2000, p.7). A primary goal of the Kirby Report would be to shift the gaze of education: the focus of provision must move from the needs of institutions to the needs of young people (Kirby 2000, p.8).

However, at a local level the commitment and inventiveness of schools and other providers was commended. A large number of programs had been designed to provide education, to link youth with industry and to provide guidance and support. Most of these initiatives were the result of an organic response at a local level where organisations had demonstrated the capacity to work together to extend provision. The Kirby Report was premised on the argument that ‘there are strong links between the economic future of the state and the country, the cohesion and

---

<sup>25</sup> In regard to defining ‘young people’ Kirby notes ‘many submissions have assumed that “young people” referred to in the Terms of Reference are 15 – 19 year olds. This was not specified in the Terms of Reference or in any of the documents released through the Review’ (Kirby 2000, p.77). Rather the concern was with ‘the broad transition years’ that for young people in Australia, according to OECD, lasts on average 6.5 years (Kirby 2000, p.77). The Pathways Project that served as a pilot for the LLEN concept specifically referred to a focus on ‘all 15 – 19 year-olds across Victoria’ (Stokes and Tyler 2001, p.9). While the LLEN Implementation Guide (Department of Education Employment and Training 2001) did not offer a definition of ‘young people’ the defined targets focused on 15 – 19 year olds and this focus appears to have become cemented in subsequent evaluations and Ministerial comments.

values of the community, and the education outcomes for young people' (Kirby 2000, p.8). The Report argued that the benefits of economic development and education should be extended to all youth and that a failure to do this would weaken the economic future as well as weakening 'a social fabric that is based upon principles of social justice' (Kirby 2000, p.8). The evidence gathered had reinforced arguments that youth faced persistent and severe difficulties unknown to previous generations. Furthermore, there was evidence of locational disadvantage, that is, problems were frequently concentrated in particular groups and regions any response to which would demand a broader commitment. This would include a more coherent and outward-looking policy framework as well as greater collaboration and integration by providers and other organisations in the community: it would require a response that was both 'whole-of-government' and 'whole-of-community' (Kirby 2000, p.9).

As noted, the Connors Report had recommended the establishment of School Networks. The recommendations in the Kirby Report also included Networks that would not only include representatives of School Networks but also bridge beyond them to include other education and training providers, industry and other community agencies and organisations. The Report made reference to the range of collaborative networks that operated across the state; the networks were found to have a variety of origins, were frequently cross-sectoral and had as their main objective the improvement in the range and quality of provision for young people. LLEN would build on these collaborative networks by developing a local co-operative approach to planning that would include the renewal and strengthening of communities, minimising duplication and wasteful competition and acknowledging community and industry shared responsibility and ownership of post compulsory education and training (Victorian Learning and Employment Skills Commission 2002).

Local planning networks have the potential to meet some of the broad objectives that have underpinned Government policy and this report. (Kirby 2000, p.11)

The Government should aim to develop and nurture a state-wide pattern of local planning networks consisting of relevant education and training providers, industry and other agencies. This should be achieved through a phased development program. The full implementation of local planning networks will have implications for the evolving relationships between the Government and its administration and the providers of programs and services. (Kirby 2000, p.11)

Other recommendations focused on provision in senior secondary schools, provision of post compulsory guidance and advisory services, professional development in the post compulsory sector, and improvement of the financial arrangements in the sector. Finally attention was also given to administrative structures and support given to the establishment of the Victorian Qualifications Authority. Each of these recommendations has been implemented to some degree.

### *The Implementation of LLEN*

The Kirby Report was explicit in its support of networks, devoting recommendations 11 and 12 to the establishment process. As a first phase up to 15 'local planning networks' would be supported for a three year period, concurrently the number of networks would be extended so that 'by 2005 post compulsory education and training across the state is planned, delivered, monitored and accountable for outcomes through a regional system of planning networks' (Kirby 2000, p.19).

A further five recommendations (15, 17, 20, 22 and 24) expanded the concept to recommend activities for the local planning networks. These activities included the development of a youth options charter (15), the development of capacity to track the destinations of young people (17), the development of professional development programs with the networks (20), the involvement of the federal government through direction of its Jobs Pathway Program funding through the networks (22) and the investigation of the potential for networks to allocate both student based funding and funds for programs and services (24).

Immediately after the release of the Kirby Report a Pathways Project was undertaken by the Department to implement recommendations relating to a recommendation 16 which concerned guidance support for 15 – 19 year olds (Angwin, Blackmore, Harrison, Hodder and Shacklock 2001; Stokes and Tyler 2001). Twelve areas in Victoria, including Greater Geelong, were funded to further develop a local network, appoint a Pathways Negotiator and work with approximately 100 young people in developing pathway plans. Each of the areas adopted a unique approach to the Project, in Greater Geelong the Project was auspiced by local government and involved a research project that included interviewing young people about their experiences. The state evaluation of the overall Pathways Project (Stokes and Tyler 2001) found that three distinct models

had evolved of which a 'network facilitation model' was most effective in fostering innovative, systematic, cross-sectoral approaches. This was in contrast to models that placed the work in the hands of a few negotiators or facilitators. Regardless of the model, development of a shared vision was a 'process that occurs . . . over time' (Stokes and Tyler 2001, p.10), could be disrupted by staff changes and required support, that is, some kind of staff development, to grow and be acted on. While collaborative cultures were welcomed by both young people and providers and had begun to evolve with time, networks readily fell back to working knowledge based on past practice if they were not supported; staff development in assisting with the establishment of structures that supported the network's goals was therefore significant (Stokes and Tyler 2001, p.10). In both the government evaluation (Stokes and Tyler 2001) and the Geelong Project report (Angwin et al. 2001) it was apparent that schools generally did not see the work of the networking or the question of youth at risk of early school leaving as being 'core' work. The dominant image of school being about academic success in the senior school qualification - the VCE - persisted meaning schools sought to maintain their reputations and focused on the academic curriculum despite expanding their curriculum increasingly since the early 1990s<sup>26</sup> to include options in vocational education and training (Blackmore 2002).

The Kirby Report recommendations were progressed through an Implementation Team based within an Office of Portfolio Integration that was created in May 2001<sup>27</sup>. It was resolved that LLEN would be established as incorporated associations with each LLEN normally encompassing between one to four local government areas, as is the case in Geelong where Greater Geelong, Surf Coast, Queenscliff and Golden Plains (partial) areas were encompassed. A staged implementation process recognised differences in regional 'preparedness': initially focus was placed on regions that could demonstrate existing strong networks.

---

<sup>26</sup> Vocational education and training was initiated in the post compulsory years in secondary schools as a result of three reports: *Young People's Participation in Post Compulsory Education and Training* (Finn 1991); *The Australian Vocational Certificate Training System* (Carmichael 1992) and *Employment Related Key Competencies* (Mayer 1992).

<sup>27</sup> Since the release of the Kirby Report government has moved to reform the post compulsory sector through setting retention and completion goals and targets, through structural reform and implementation of a range of initiatives including *On Track*, *Managed Individual Pathways*, and the *Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning* (VCAL). All of these initiatives will be discussed later in this thesis.

While consideration was given to the view that local planning networks could evolve organically (Keating and Robinson 2003) it was not accepted that this would enable the benefits of the networks to be made available across the state. However a voluntary process was adopted where submissions to be included were invited.

LLEN were to be funded by and accountable to a Victorian Learning and Employment Skills Commission (VLESC) established on recommendation of the Kirby Report. However, their individual Performance Agreements would be managed by the Department acting as the agent of VLESC. While not unique, this arrangement created particular challenges for communication that had to be resolved through the on-going development of processes and protocols (Keating and Robinson 2003). Four main objectives were outlined for LLEN that align closely with those proposed by Kirby. LLEN were to:

Maximise education, training and employment outcomes, particularly for young people

Maximise positive outcomes of people in post compulsory education, training and employment

Establish a new relationship between education and training providers and government that involves

- less central intervention but
- greater accountability of providers to government, local industry and the local community; and

Provide local input and be informed by state-wide policy and planning.  
(Department of Education Employment and Training 2001, p.4)

These purposes were linked with the goal for LLEN: to improve education, training and employment outcomes for young people; LLEN would be a key initiative in helping the Labor government achieve its target of 90% Y12 or equivalent completion by 2010. LLEN would achieve this goal through a community building approach: it was recognised that the community building aspects of the work of LLEN would commonly precede the achievement of improved outcomes for young people (Victorian Learning and Employment Skills Commission 2002, 2003a). At the same time, the next phase of post compulsory education and training reform, building on the 'solid starting point' of LLEN and other initiatives had commenced. This involved a consultation process to create a framework that would allow a fully interlinked post compulsory education and training system<sup>28</sup> (Victorian Learning

---

<sup>28</sup> Concurrently the newly established Victorian Qualifications Authority produced a consultation paper entitled *The Credit Matrix: Building Bridges Between Qualifications* (Victorian Qualifications



and Employment Skills Commission 2003b, p.7). The need to create a legislative context that was relevant, supportive of the achievement of government's education and training policy objectives and unobstructive of innovative service delivery was also recognised and, at the time of writing, had commenced by way of a *Review of Education and Training Legislation* (Department of Education & Training 2005). This review was an opportunity to provide a post compulsory sector framework for 'clarity of thinking and precision of responsibility and action at central and local levels' (Long 2005, p.iii). However, Long would also comment on the 'relatively modest funding' dedicated to the Kirby reforms (2005, p. iii).

The LLEN foci of 'whole-of-government, whole-of-community' echoed across Victorian government departments and are evident in the establishment of a Department for Victorian Communities. Community building is a means of developing social capital<sup>29</sup> (Keating and Robinson 2003; Victorian Learning and Employment Skills Commission 2002). At the same time, social capital is a necessary but not sufficient condition for community development (Flora, Sharp, Flora and Newlon 1997); social capital is both a prerequisite for, and consequence of, effective policy (Putnam 1993). The author of the Kirby Report declared early on that if LLEN were to succeed anywhere, it would be in the community that is Geelong (Millar, L.M. 2005, pers. comm. 15 March). It is now timely for us to put this activity in context – it is to a weaving of the context of SGR LLEN that I now turn my attention.

---

Authority 2003). The concept of a qualifications system involved the development of a common measure to put value on and enable comparison of learning within different kinds of qualification.

<sup>29</sup> Social capital refers to 'the ways in which social relationships serve as a resource, allowing individuals and groups to cooperate in order to achieve goals that otherwise might have been attained only with difficulty, if at all' (Kilpatrick, Field and Falk 2001, p.2). This concept is outlined in greater depth in the third Panel of this thesis

## **Geelong**

In this section I provide context for the weaving of the next section where I will outline the formation of SGR LLEN. To achieve this I work with increasingly fine yarn<sup>30</sup>; I commence with a geographic and demographic background; I then take up a finer yarn to detail the transformation of the City of Greater Geelong (COGG) into Smart Geelong – Learning City.

### **City of Greater Geelong**

Over 3.5 million of Victoria's population of 5 million live in the state capital, Melbourne (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2003). If you take to the six-lane highway that ribbons out of Melbourne and head 75kms south-west toward the Bellarine Peninsular you will find yourself driving through flat brown marshlands that ultimately bring you to the city of Geelong, the second most populous city in Victoria. The Geelong region has commonly been conceptualised as covering the four local government areas of the City of Greater Geelong, Surf Coast Shire, Golden Plains Shire and the Borough of Queenscliff. However with the formation of the G21<sup>31</sup> Geelong Regional Alliance in 2003 the Colac Otway Shire has also come to be identified with the Region. This broader region covers the range of demographic categories of urban, rural, semi-rural, country towns and coastal living (Tregenza 2002). Given the physical landscape with the expansive Port Phillip to the north and Bass Strait - the body of ocean that separates Victoria from the southernmost state of Tasmania - to the south the region nestles in a natural and highly identifiable enclave, many of its boundaries being clearly defined.

Resident population in the region in 2003 was 241,000. The region is forecast to continue growing at an annual average of 1.4%, a rate higher than the Victorian rate; Surf Coast and Golden Plains Shires are respectively the second and third fastest growing rural municipalities in the state (Smart Geelong Region Local

---

28 The term yarn refers to all weaving materials that are used for either warp or weft.

<sup>31</sup> The name G21 brings together notions of Groups, Geelong and Goals (G) and the 21st Century (21) (Geelong Regional Alliance n.d.). G21 is led by volunteers from local business and the public sector and formed, according to then State Treasurer and Minister for State and Regional Development John Brumby, the 'biggest regional development undertaken by councils in Victoria... a truly unique partnership between the State government, the council ... all of the key local players, economic, social and environmental' (Bishop 2003).

Learning and Employment Network Inc 2002). Population is projected to reach 300,000 within the next 20 years at which time one in three residents will be over the age of 60 (Geelong Regional Alliance n.d.). The region suffers from a continuing exodus of people aged in their late teens to early thirties (Strategic Economic Solutions 2003; Tregenza 2002). Within the region, the population profile differs by location: rural Golden Plains Shire has a markedly younger population while the seaside Borough of Queenscliff has a markedly older population (Smart Geelong Region Local Learning and Employment Network Inc 2002). The resident population of the region is heavily concentrated in the City of Greater Geelong urban area; this includes a concentration of the region's unemployed in the suburbs of Corio, South Barwon, Bellarine and Geelong West (Smart Geelong Region Local Learning and Employment Network Inc 2002; Tregenza 2002). Social disadvantage persists in the northern suburbs of Geelong with Corio holding its 1999 ranking into 2003 as one of the most disadvantaged postcodes in Victoria (Vinson 2004). This has brought the area within the focus of the recently formed Department for Victorian Communities and is the subject of three community building projects: the *Streetsahead Community Building Project* – also operating at Whittington in East Geelong – *Rosewell Best Start Program* and *Norlane and Corio Neighbourhood Renewal Program* (Department for Victorian Communities 2003). However, the city of Geelong itself demonstrates strong economic polarization: against these areas of disadvantage are marbled pockets of affluence that are home to a number of prestigious private schools.

Economically, the region is projected to become a 'powerhouse' of the state by 2015 given projected levels of economic and employment growth beyond the state average (Farago 2003). Within the region there has been employment growth of 12.5% over the past five years, a rate higher than state or national increases (Strategic Economic Solutions 2003) and this is projected to continue to 2015 (Geelong Regional Alliance n.d.). However, until recent years unemployment in the region consistently exceeded the state average (Smart Geelong Region Local Learning and Employment Network Inc 2002). Of those in work, approximately 20% travel out of the region to their employment, this percentage has doubled over the past decade (Smart Geelong Region Local Learning and Employment Network Inc 2002; Tregenza 2002). There is evidence that increasing numbers of people now also commute into the region to work (Geelong Regional Alliance n.d.), a

process that puts further pressure on opportunities for the local unemployed. Employment gains are most evident in retail, construction, property and business services, health and community services and education<sup>32</sup> while some sectors - mining, government, manufacturing and utilities - experienced loss of employment opportunities. Given the traditional dependence on the manufacturing sector in particular, directly employing over 20% of all employees in the area in 1998 (Tregenza 2002) and deriving 41% of regional employment opportunities in 2004 (Peart 2005), these changes profoundly influenced the flavour of local employment opportunities. The major manufacturing industries in the region including Shell, Ford and Alcoa Aluminium are located in the northern suburbs and despite being faced with a skills shortage that, by March 2005 had become the centre of a major political debate (ABC Television 2005), 77% of the manufacturing jobs lost in the five years to 2001 were those that previously provided an entry point to secure work for youth (Strategic Economic Solutions 2003). This was one factor that contributed to the unemployment rate for 15 – 19 year olds remaining at 16.8%, higher than the Victorian average (Angwin and Schulz 2004). Thus while risk is evident in the current context of SGR LLEN, it is significantly influenced by the social landscapes of young people (Ball et al. 2000). As I will now detail, this understanding of risk brings the question of lifelong learning and the establishment of the Smart Geelong Learning City into focus. My approach here is firstly to ‘unpick’ the concepts of lifelong learning and the learning society before re-weaving them in the context of SGR LLEN.

---

<sup>32</sup> Geelong has established a niche as an education and research centre given the high profile of independent, international and private schools and colleges operating alongside a strong state education system. It also boasts a large and well-established Technical and Further Education college, a vibrant adult and community education sector as well as the Waurin Ponds and Waterfront campuses of Deakin University. The region is ranked third in Australia for the supply of research and development (Geelong Regional Alliance n.d.). Research centres include Deakin University, Barwon Health, two research centres for the Commonwealth Scientific & Industrial Research Organisation and the Marine and Freshwater Resources Institute.

## Lifelong Learning<sup>33</sup> and Learning Societies

These are the personal and social contours of a Risk Society, which oblige schools to prepare children for creating and engaging in a Learning Society. Learning, in a risk society, becomes not merely enhancement of self, or means of social and economic self advancement but . . . an indispensable mode of being and acting in the world. (Strain 2000a, p.244)

In late modern society information has become central to global capitalism (Giddens and Hutton 2001). Learning as a process of gaining and managing information has gained an equivalent place in emerging society as that fulfilled by productiveness in early modern society (Strain 2000a); the 'human side of enterprise' is seen as a crucial factor in competing in the globalised world (Brown and Lauder 2004, p.50)<sup>34</sup>. Learning by way of both formal education and training and through the fostering of lifelong learning has become a central policy concern for national and local governments (Field 2000; Morris 2001):

Knowledge, itself, therefore, turns out to be not only the source of the highest quality power, but also the most important ingredient for force and wealth. Put differently, knowledge has gone from being an adjunct of money power and muscle power, to being the very essence. (Brown and Lauder 2004, p.50)

According to Brown and Lauder, while such statements may exaggerate the centrality of knowledge for governments, when coupled with their diminished power in a globalised context, advanced Western governments have been forced to compete in so-called 'knowledge wars' (2004, p.50). The incredulity and the

---

<sup>33</sup> Some writers have taken phrases such as recurrent education, lifelong education, lifelong learning, adult education and continuous education to cover the same semantic territory. While often used as a synonym for adult education lifelong learning more accurately concerns a 'complete rethinking of the total educational process' (Morris u.d., p.4). Although Collins (1997) argues that the terms lifelong education and lifelong learning are used interchangeably, it is also noted by Boshier (1997, p.45) that this is a source of confusion. Boshier argues for the distinction of education from learning and both of these from schooling to avoid a comparison between lifelong learning and a 'kind of life sentence of schooling.' This paper uses the term lifelong learning given its concern with both formal and informal learning within and beyond educational institutions as well as the shift toward a vocabulary which centers around the concept of learning over the concept of education as was formerly the case (Morris u.d.). In Geelong the definition initially adopted was that of the World Initiative on Lifelong Learning: 'Lifelong learning is a continuously supportive process which stimulates and empowers individuals to acquire all the knowledge, values, skills, and understanding they will require throughout their lifetimes and to apply them with confidence, creativity and enjoyment in all roles, circumstances and environments (Wong 2002, p.5). With the launch of G21 the question of definition was a central issue of concern for the Lifelong Learning Pillar which, in its initial development, was called the Education and Training Pillar and was focused only on the formal education provision by schools, the university and so forth. The definition now acknowledges the social component of learning and has been confirmed as 'Lifelong learning is all learning activity undertaken throughout the lifecycle of individuals and communities that extends knowledge, skills and competence within personal, civic and social contexts adding value to the economy.'

<sup>34</sup> See Schuller and Field (1998) for a critique of the 'social disembodiedness' of human capital theories.

decentering of authoritative knowledge positions referred to earlier have paradoxical consequences for education and learning (Edwards and Usher 2001). On the one hand, lifelong learning becomes oriented toward performativity for both learners and education providers; lifelong learning becomes the means to attaining, maintaining and providing evidence of the flexibility demanded to survive in the globalised context. On the other hand, lifelong learning is the metaphor for the 'unruliness of knowledge' (Edwards and Usher 2001, p.273) – the valuing of different sources and forms of knowledge and a corresponding devaluing in discipline-based knowledge. A further aspect of the paradox is the accelerating individualisation and, consequently, commodification of knowledge that results from information and communication technologies. However such technologies also provide opportunities for distributed forms of learning that remain collaborative. As such, Edwards and Usher (2001) conclude the very demands of performativity are simultaneously opening and closing possibilities for lifelong learning. Such a position accords with the argument put forward by Karmel (2004) that the lack of a lifelong learning policy in Australia is not a cause of concern given a fluid and open formal education system and, in some states at least, an active adult education sector. The 'rhetorical power' of the lifelong learning concept had found acceptance within the education and training sector and the wider community despite its 'somewhat hollow' use in a broad and increasing range of policy statements, a focus which was not being matched by levels of academic examination (Department of Education Science and Training 2004, p.5; Tuijnman 2002).

If education and training are positional goods that have the potential to contribute to economic, societal and individual benefit (Marginson 1993) then lifelong learning manifest in a learning society is no less than a 'precondition for social inclusion' (Strain 2000a, p.244). At the most pragmatic level, the increasing proportion of the labour force utilising knowledge has led to the emergence of the contested notion of the learning society (Jarvis 2004). Edwards (1995) argues the reason the concept acquired so much acceptance was its opacity: very different notions could hide in it. While the concept does not distinguish between education and learning Jarvis (2004) argues that the learning society is more accurately described as being both educative and learning. The concept of the learning society provides an overall framework for the development of partnerships through which rhetoric(s) of

lifelong learning can be converted to reality. The learning society ‘applies its lifelong learning experience to achieving the principles of community self improvement and development’ (Morris 2001, p.12). The notion of ‘seamlessness’ is central to the ideal of the learning society: the collapse of the divide between academic, community and vocational learning is intended to facilitate the transition between education sectors, provider localities and the labour market. As such the learning society is concerned with educational reform, not only within schools but also in industry and society, in ways that relate to changes in the broader economy and society (Young and Spours 1997).

Edwards and Usher (1999) suggest three dominant discourses of the learning society. Firstly, the term refers to an educated society, one that provides educational opportunities throughout life in conditions that lead to self realisation and good citizenship. Secondly, the term refers to a learning market that focuses on choice and stresses the economic relevance and benefits of learning and the acquisition of vocational credentials. Finally, the term can refer to the expanding role of information and computer technologies leading to fluid identities, cross-cultural activities and different forms of sociality. However, for the purposes of this research the typology offered by Edwards (1995) is useful. The first type is the concept of a free and democratic society which offers opportunities to all to use formal education and, therefore, implies the expansion of formal provision. The second type is the concept of a free education market where providers offer competing learning opportunities aimed at enhanced human capital. Finally, the third type is a poststructural concept of open learning networks which are creatively used by learners to foster a wide range of skills and abilities. Over the past decade, all of these discourses have been evident in the Victorian context (Geelong Regional Alliance n.d.; I & J Management Services 2000) however I would suggest that while it is the third type of learning society that is being striven for in the work of SGR LLEN, the dominant discourse in the endorsement of the learning society through the implementation of learning towns by the Victorian Government in 2000 was that of a free education market. It is to a weaving of the formation of the Geelong Learning Town that I now turn.

## Smart Geelong - Learning City

The concept of the learning city surfaced in the 1970s and was first formalised during the First International Congress of Educating Cities in Barcelona in 1990; the OECD Conference on Lifelong Learning in 1992 reinforced the focus on cities in operationalising the concept of lifelong learning through harnessing existing disconnected city resources and networks (Morris 2001). In Australia, Victoria was at the forefront of learning city activity being the first region outside Europe to host an OECD Learning Cities and Regions conference. The Victorian Government was also the first Australian government to endorse and provide seed funding to the extent of \$750,000.00 per annum over three years to foster learning communities<sup>35</sup>: the Learning Towns initiative. Since May 2000 ten Learning Towns have been established across Victoria; Geelong was declared a Learning Town in December 2000. Its project – ‘Smart Geelong – The Learning City’ was managed by the Smart Geelong Network through its lead agency, Geelong Adult Training and Education (GATE), an adult and community education provider.

Smart Geelong Network represents a number of organisations involved in education and research. An education and training committee had initially been established in 1994 within the Geelong Chamber of Commerce (‘the Chamber’), currently the largest Chamber of Commerce in Australia. The committee’s establishment reflected the influence of staff within the Chamber with extensive previous involvement and an abiding commitment to education and training. That committee was temporarily, and unenthusiastically, taken over by the City of Geelong before returning to the Chamber in 1995 and adopting its current form as Smart Geelong Network, a company limited by guarantee, with the aim of providing opportunities for growth in its member organisations by way of capital equipment sharing, consultancies (local, national and international), cost sharing, group purchasing and so forth. At the time of this research, the Chair of Smart Geelong Network was the Vice-President of the Chamber<sup>36</sup>. Smart Geelong Network was centrally involved

---

<sup>35</sup> For comparative purposes \$9million per annum over three years was allocated to the LLEN initiative. However the LLEN initiative involves 31 LLEN covering all parts of the State of Victoria whereas the Learning Towns initiative involves linking ten non-metropolitan communities.

<sup>36</sup> By the end of this research, she had become President of the Chamber of Commerce.



in the implementation of G21 and provides an ‘umbrella’ for the activities of the Research, Lifelong Learning and Health and Wellbeing Pillars within G21<sup>37</sup>.

In Victoria the decision to implement the Learning Towns initiative through adult and community education providers was based on the rationale that they provide a lead role in turning everyday lifelong learning into beneficial social and economic outcomes at a community level (Wong 2002); this approach dovetails neatly with the intent of learning cities: to widen participation in lifelong learning and to promote the regeneration of local regions (The Editors 2003). However, as Morris (2001, p.11) argues the term ‘learning city’ is something of a misnomer that seems to imply a ‘municipal grandiosity’ that is often not present despite the central role of local government in pursuit of the goal. This was evidenced in Geelong where local government initially did not see education as being part of its core business:

We went to the City [representative] . . . and said, ‘We would like the City to proclaim Geelong as Smart Geelong – Learning City’ and she said, ‘What does that mean?’ And I said, ‘Nothing, other than it gives people an idea that the City is interested in what we are doing.’ She said, ‘Oh I don’t know about that.’ And she wouldn’t do it. So I said to the Mayor, after waiting about six months, ‘When . . . are you going to do it?’ He said, ‘I know nothing about it.’ So we made a small presentation to them and he said, ‘Yeah, we’ll do it.’ They put on a reception and they had Geelong proclaimed officially as Smart Geelong – Learning City. Not that it went terribly far as far as the City was concerned but that proclamation is still there. (Matthew, LLEN committee member, 2005)

The LLEN and Learning Towns initiatives both link local and state government in attempts to operationalise lifelong learning; they potentially provide a structure for local government to become increasingly involved in the post compulsory education and training sector (Snelling 2003). However in Geelong this synthesis has taken time to evolve. In both policy instances there was an assumption within the Geelong community that the City of Greater Geelong would provide leadership in implementation. In neither instance did this occur. When the opportunity to apply for Learning Town funding was announced by the state government it was the networks of the Chamber that successfully bid, in partnership with GATE, to become the first funded Learning Town in Victoria. The eventual proclamation of Smart Geelong – Learning City by the City of Greater Geelong in December 2000

---

<sup>37</sup> As a result of the implementation of G21 the Smart Geelong Network is now reviewing its role and function (De Gilio 2004, pers.comm. 11 May, Smart Geelong Network n.d.). The Geelong Business Network (GBN), a community based and supported organisation that was established in 1985 by the City of Greater Geelong, is also active. It acts as a broker of business networks for small to medium enterprises to promote cooperation, partnerships, alliances and joint commercial action. GBN staff had been closely involved with the LLEN since inception and in 2004 the benefits of working network – to – network lead to a strengthening of this connection.

occurred shortly after state government announced late in 2000 the opportunity for regions to be involved in the first phase of the LLEN implementation, scheduled to occur by mid-2001. Fifteen LLEN were to be established in the first phase; while the City of Greater Geelong called an initial consultation meeting for the community they did so at the bidding of the Chamber and, subsequent to the meeting, declined to act as the auspicing agent for a LLEN. As such, the Chamber acted as the auspicing agent for SGR LLEN, a situation that did not occur anywhere else in Victoria where local government commonly were deeply involved in establishing LLEN (Snelling 2003). Similarly, it was not until 2004 and after a consultation process by a new Manager within City management that the City of Greater Geelong even became a member of SGR LLEN. Smaller Councils within SGR LLEN region – particularly Golden Plains Shire which was both a member and acted as local government representative on the SGR LLEN Committee of Management as well as being active in other LLEN – were actively involved from the start. However, the City of Greater Geelong adopted, and for the first three years (the proposed duration of the entire LLEN initiative) maintained the stance, that education – conceptualised as ‘schools’ - would be taken care of by other organisations.

It was acknowledged that there was potential for tension between the LLEN and Learning Town initiatives when LLEN were implemented (Snelling 2003; Wong 2001). Both initiatives are fundamentally concerned with learning, collaboration and local solutions through a community building approach. However, while Learning Towns were aimed at developing learning partnerships and integrating economic and social development (Snelling 2003) for LLEN this work had a focused purpose: to improve education, training and employment outcomes for 15-19 year olds in the region (Department of Education Employment and Training 2001). Considerable work was undertaken by the LLEN Executive Officer to develop a synthesis once the LLEN was operational: the foundation facilitator of Smart Geelong - Learning City became actively involved in SGR LLEN Working Parties and the G21 Lifelong Learning Pillar which continues to be led by the Executive Officer of the LLEN and auspiced by the Smart Geelong Network. SGR LLEN office is also productively co-located with the Barwon South Western Region Adult, Community and Further Education Regional Council who, from 2005, have been brought more centrally into the Learning Towns initiative through

a funding change signalled by Minister Kosky in *Future Directions for Adult and Community Education* document (Department of Education & Training 2004a).

In this policy statement, central funding for Learning Town community projects would progressively cease with the project funds being transferred to a Community Learning Partnership funding pool. Learning Town entities would be able to apply for funding to implement lifelong learning projects and, importantly, the consolidation of the funds may lead to stronger integration of projects to profile lifelong learning in the community. In Geelong, the original facilitator of Smart Geelong - Learning City resigned during 2003. With the loss of her expertise, the nebulous profile of the Learning Town had been further eroded to the extent that the contract partner, GATE, appeared to many in the community to undertake Learning Town activities in isolation; for some the Learning Town was something that went on within the walls of the ACE provider. The alignment of Learning Town projects with the Community Learning Partnerships that are co-ordinated through the Regional Council for Adult, Community and Further Education is seen as more open and gives potential for greater dove-tailing of all lifelong learning activities within funding constraints. It is, however, noteworthy that of the \$750,000 each year available across the state for Learning Town initiatives fully \$300,000 (in 2005 and 2007) to \$400,000 (in 2006) each year is contract pool funding to support the implementation of a Performance Management Framework (Adult Community and Further Education Board 2004). This leaves an average of only \$40,000 project funding per Learning Town to transfer to the Community Learning Partnerships funding pool. Beyond this, a further \$50,000.00 is available each year for the next three years to support collaboration within the Victorian Learning Town Network and a further \$10,000 additional support is available, for 2005 only, to assist the Network of Learning Towns to apply for additional funding from other sources (Adult Community and Further Education Board 2004).

Given the lofty aspirations for learning cities outlined earlier this loss of targeted funding from state government tends to water down impressions of commitment to the promotion of learning cities generated in 2000 when Victorian sat at the forefront of Learning Town activity in Australia. However the take up of G21 by local government has considerably enhanced interweaving of local government, Learning Town and LLEN initiatives in the Geelong region. I now turn to creating a portrayal of the formation of SGR LLEN in this highly networked context.

## ***SGR LLEN Formation: Networking the Networks***

In responding to the Kirby Report (Kirby 2000) the Minister of Education & Training announced a staged implementation process for LLEN. A voluntary process was adopted: regions were to be invited to bid to be in the first phase of the implementation. In Geelong, subsequent to prompting by the Chamber, the City of Greater Geelong called a well-attended public meeting in November 2000 at which staff from the Department provided an overview of the LLEN initiative that, at that point, involved a three-year contract and Performance Agreement between government and each LLEN as an incorporated association.

Subsequent to the explanatory meeting, the Mayor was asked to call a further meeting at which a bid could be progressed. That meeting took place at City Hall late in November 2000 and was an important touchstone in how SGR LLEN would evolve. From the outset government had stressed community building as the foundation of LLEN; LLEN were ‘the beginnings of a new way of working across the areas of government, and a new way for government to work with [the community]’ (Department of Education Employment and Training 2001, p.2). Given the emphasis on collaboration and cooperation between providers and agencies in a context that had until recently forged competition and division, an important initial goal for LLEN was to develop a collective commitment. This required care in establishing the composition of the Committee of Management:

The Committee of Management will be no more than 15 people, drawn from all or some of the membership categories and will include a chairperson without direct links to any service provider. Ultimately it will be up to the broad network of all stakeholders to determine the actual categories and the level of representation on the LLEN from each category.

It is anticipated that the process of determining these categories and the level of representation from the categories would take place in the period prior to the incorporation of the LLEN. This is a sensitive process and will require maximum time for consultation to ensure that the broader network endorses the final Committee of Management structure. (Department of Education Employment and Training 2000, n.p.)

In the course of the meeting a local agency, Geelong Regional Vocational Education Council (GRVEC)<sup>38</sup>, reiterated a suggestion they had already put

---

<sup>38</sup> GRVEC was originally a self-appointed body intent on ensuring students gained exposure to industry in the form of structured workplace learning for students undertaking vocational education within their senior school studies. Since 1996 they have operated with funding provided by the Federal government. GRVEC is now one of 200 Local Community Partnerships funded and

independently to the Mayor of the City of Greater Geelong that they change their name and 'become' the LLEN under the sponsorship of the City. From the point when the LLEN initiative was announced there was 'a bit of drama about . . . the overlap' (Freya, LLEN committee member, 2003). GRVEC argued that their well-established structure already had all the aspects required of LLEN including industry representation and thus any consultation process could be minimised. This suggestion met with resistance from many of the organisations attending the meeting who argued any LLEN that was not open and inclusive in its membership and operation would fail to garner the community support that would be fundamental to its success; it was also recognised that GRVEC's role was more operational than that intended for LLEN. The meeting resolved to appoint a Working Party drawn from existing networks to mount a joint bid to establish a new entity that would undertake this broader role.

The Working Party had ten members that broadly reflected the representative requirements issued by the Department<sup>39</sup>. They met for the first time in January 2001 to compose the bid document which was, in the absence of willingness from the City of Greater Geelong, signed by the Chamber as auspicing agent. This central involvement of an industry body was commended by the Department. The timelines for LLEN implementation were tight yet Geelong was well placed to work within them given the strong relationship that already existed between the Chamber and Smart Geelong Network. In February 2001 the fifteen Phase One LLEN were advised of the success of their bids by the Department; Geelong was 'first to get the nod' (Matthew, LLEN committee member, 2005) in being selected to participate.

After the announcement the Chamber, as the auspicing agent, received a \$10,000.00 grant being an advance on its first year's grant to assist in establishment of the LLEN<sup>40</sup>. The members of the Working Party met for the first time on 28 February

---

managed by the Australian government Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) and locally managed by a Board including representatives from education, industry and the community.

<sup>39</sup> The proponents of the bid were the Chamber (auspicing agent), Barwon South Western Regional Council of Adult Community and Further Education, Barwon Adolescent Youth Support Agency (now known only as BAYSA), Corio Community College (now Corio Bay Senior College), CREATE (a community based training organisation), Deakin University Faculty of Education, GATE, Geelong Ethnic Communities Council, GRVEC and the Gordon Institute of TAFE.

<sup>40</sup> SGR LLEN was to be funded \$400,000.00 per year for a three year period after which time LLEN were to be self-sustaining. This status could occur in one of two ways: LLEN would have non-

2001, immediately after a two day conference held by the Department, and set about the process of, on the one hand, incorporation, and on the other hand in accordance with their agreed principles, consultation. While there was a desire to move quickly to establish SGR LLEN there was a strong recognition of the need to be inclusive, open and transparent which, while slowing the establishment process, provided ‘a very sound foundation for the LLEN by giving . . . all interested parties the opportunity to take part in the main decision making’ (Smart Geelong Region Local Learning and Employment Network Inc 2002, p.2) . In this way the Working Party aimed to open the way for the community’s commitment to the LLEN. On 7 March 2001 a public meeting was held which attracted over 150 attendees. The aim of this meeting was twofold: firstly, to report on the role and functions of the LLEN; secondly, to discuss with the community the composition of the Committee of Management.

At the public meeting three decisions were taken. Firstly, the Interim Committee was formed and the Interim Chair was elected. It was decided that the Chair would be held by the auspicing agent representative; thus the Chamber representative became Chairperson. Subsequently he was elected as Chairperson of the Committee of Management and has remained in the Chair since that time. The second decision was that the Interim Committee should consist of one person from the first nine mandated membership categories<sup>41</sup>. Thus the establishment of SGR LLEN was in the hands of a representative of schools (government and non-government), TAFE, ACE, other education and training organisations, unions, employers, Local Government, community agencies and Koorie organisations<sup>42</sup>. Finally, the meeting decided to implement the Committee of Membership selection process as recommended in the LLEN Guidelines (Department of Education

---

government funding or they would have created structural change which would remove the need for any entity to be funded. However, before the end of the initial three year period of the LLEN initiative and subsequent to an interim evaluation (Victorian Learning and Employment Skills Commission 2002) the initiative was extended for a further two years, with decreased funding and no funding projected beyond 2005. During 2004 a review was undertaken and, at the time of writing – mid 2005 - the potential for a further extension and some reallocation of funding remains.

<sup>41</sup> The Generic Rules for LLEN aligned with the requirements of the Incorporated Associations Act 1981 and included the framework of the composition of the Committee of Management. The Committee was to have a maximum total size of 20 within which there was discretion for the community to decide the ideal number of representatives for each membership category.

<sup>42</sup> In numerous languages across Australia, ‘Koorie’ or its variants means man or people. Since the 1960s, it has become widely used to describe Aboriginal people linked to the geographical area that roughly accords with the state of Victoria.

Employment and Training 2001). The Interim Committee met every week for five months to action these decisions. A second public meeting was held on 21 May 2001 when the name for the LLEN was chosen, the regional boundaries were confirmed and the preferred composition of the first Committee of Management was decided. This consultation went beyond the requirements: the Guidelines (2001) gave the Interim Committee the power to compose the Committee in accordance with a number of principles but did not require the community to be involved in that process. Regardless, the proposed composition of the Committee of Management had to be forwarded to VLESC for consideration and approval.

In the Key Implementation Tasks outlined by the Department for LLEN the timelines proposed that by March 2001 a LLEN Office would be established and the process for selection and appointment of an Executive Officer would have commenced. Many LLEN moved quickly to appoint their Executive Officer to allow the work of the LLEN to commence:

Other LLEN they set up their Committee of Management straight away, they appointed their Executive Officer straight away and they did it all without consulting anyone. And they wonder now why they, why the community looks at them and says, 'Well you didn't consult us, why should we work in with you?' They did it all the wrong way. Some of them had appointed their Executive Officer within the first two weeks and they wonder why they weren't being held in high regard. (Matthew, LLEN committee member, 2005)

In contrast, SGR LLEN cautiously approached these tasks: 'we said steadfastly that we will not be appointing' (Matthew, LLEN committee member, 2005). The process of selecting and appointing an Executive Officer was seen as one that must be owned by the community and held over until an informed and representative Committee of Management was appointed; at the same time, the Interim Committee were prepared to act as a working committee thereby allowing the work of the LLEN to proceed. It was accepted that LLEN were being instituted within communities that held the remnants of a competitive culture. Furthermore, given a complex post compulsory education and training sector, there was a high risk of some members of the community not understanding exactly how a LLEN could add value, 'their initial response was to be threatened and to feel that a partnership let alone any formalised partnership would be a danger' (Freya, LLEN committee member, 2003). Some education providers were also cautious and perceived a risk of LLEN usurping their authority or competing in providing services:

We said at the outset, 'We will not ever take your authority away. We are here to help.' Typical government statement: 'we are here to help you' (*laughs*).

But we said, 'We will not take any of your opportunities away, we will not become a training body or a training authority.' (Matthew, LLEN committee member, 2005)

Notwithstanding this cautious approach, SGR LLEN was incorporated on 21 June 2001. Elections to the first Committee of Management were conducted by the Australian Electoral Commission at a General Meeting on 18 July 2001, some months behind the April/May timeline set by the Department. In a joint meeting with the Interim Committee, the Committee of Management met for the first time on 10 August 2001. The process of establishing the structure of and undertaking elections for the initial Committee of Management had been difficult given a lack of understanding in some sectors about the role of SGR LLEN. As such some initial Committee of Management members were not present because of a commitment to creating improved opportunities for young people but more to adopt a 'watching brief' on what SGR LLEN was doing. Given the requirement that the Committee of Management be established by early May 2001 to enable the negotiation and signing of the funding agreement with VLESC, the Interim Committee had limited opportunity to counter 'all these weird stories about what the LLEN was doing and what the LLEN was going to do' (Matthew, LLEN committee member, 2005). Furthermore, as I will explore in the third Panel of this thesis, social capital - a resource to collective action (Stone and Hughes 2002) - involves expenditure of time and energy (Bourdieu 1986). 'Freya,' a LLEN Committee of Management member, explained it this way:

This has been an agenda for the education department of Victoria if not for every other education department for 15, 20 years. Now these are giant bureaucracies, it's the biggest, apart from health, resource component of a state government and it hasn't solved the problem. When you give \$400,000 to a voluntary group in a community of 200,000 people with 24 schools and 18 months later say you're not producing outcomes, I don't think that was fair and reasonable and it wasn't really a partnership.

If there are ten agencies in an area all having a stake in early school leaving and fixing it . . . ultimately over a 10 year period what you want to do is to combine all those resources strategically to get a better result. . . . I don't even think you have to move them out of the organization but you do have to combine it and that's about building trust. But if we can all claim the result, 'you can do it this way' and so on and that takes time. So you either put a lot of money in, give people \$5m and they will fix it, or you give people 10 years and they haven't done that. They've given them nothing and they've given them no time. So, I'm not very impressed with government support for the idea. I don't think they got it.

In the initial stages of SGR LLEN there was limited opportunity to develop the social capital that would either enable some sectors of the community whom had mandated places on the Committee of Management to participate or enable other



sectors of the community whom did participate to fully co-operate. As such, the formative days of SGR LLEN were contested. There were ‘creative tensions as each of the key stakeholders sought to find their place and contribute’ (Smart Geelong Region Local Learning and Employment Network Inc 2002, p.4). In response, the LLEN made a patient effort to build relationships within the Committee of Management and across the community.

From the outset the Committee of Management of SGR LLEN indicated a desire to be directly involved in the activities of the LLEN. Whereas most LLEN adopted a structure of standing committees with responsibility for operational tasks such as finance, SGR LLEN adopted a Working Party structure focused on core business. Each Working Party was allocated a portion of budget, an arrangement that ‘drove the Department insane’ but resulted in a high level of ownership of core business. Some Working Parties were facilitated by Committee of Management members; others were facilitated by non-Committee of Management members of the LLEN who were identified as expert in a given field. All Committee of Management members participated in one or more Working Parties. Working Party meetings were to occur approximately once per month for two to three hours<sup>43</sup>. While it was recognised that a Working Party structure could ‘tend to overwork people’ (Anne-Marie, Executive Officer, 2003) this structure was fundamental to the philosophy underlying SGR LLEN: it enabled active participation by members of the LLEN and other community stakeholders, it demonstrated the commitment to avoid the perception of ‘empire building’ that could have occurred if available funds had been used to employ staff; it maximised the connections within the network and, finally, it underscored the perspective that the LLEN was the network, not the entity that gained funding from government, acted as the administrative core and occupied the LLEN office. While the Executive Officer would attend all Working Party meetings her role was to act as a resource in fostering connection rather than a facilitator.

In the LLEN Guide (Department of Education Employment and Training 2001) the issue of staff was directly addressed: the Committee of Management would appoint an Executive Officer but, beyond that, the scale of staff was left to each LLEN to

---

<sup>43</sup> As they evolved Working Parties adopted their own processes: meeting more, or less, frequently with greater or lesser degrees of organisation and varying levels of attendance.

determine. However, the Guide reiterated that LLEN should not become an additional layer of bureaucracy. As such, it was anticipated that each LLEN would involve only an Executive Officer and an Administration Officer. For larger LLEN, such as SGR LLEN, 'it might be appropriate to have one or two additional staff members' (Department of Education Employment and Training 2001, p.5). In aligning these requirements with the preferred Working Party structure SGR LLEN appointed an Executive Officer and a part-time Administration Officer. Once the Executive Officer had commenced it became apparent that there would be a need for some additional staff. At that point Project Officers were recruited for the Vocational Education Working Party and the Youth Voice Working Party – two of the initial six Working Parties. These staff were managed by the Executive Officer, reported to their respective Working Parties and were based in the community – a structure that was complex to manage but aligned with the philosophy. Importantly, the Project Officer for the Vocational Education Working Party was the Executive Officer of GRVEC, the organisation that had promoted itself as the 'logical' LLEN the preceding year. She was seconded to the SGR LLEN Working Party for a year, a move that enabled tremendous progress in aligning these federal and state initiatives. This connection was generative on another level: her replacement at GRVEC for the term of her secondment had been involved with in the start up of a LLEN and, prior to that, had many years' experience in addressing local problems through partnership and collaboration. At the end of the secondment, the Executive Officer returned to her role with GRVEC and also took over the role that her replacement had gained as a member of SGR LLEN Committee of Management. The Project Officer for the Youth Voice Working Party was more problematic. His one year appointment ended with a sense of confused expectations: from the Executive Officer's perspective he had not done what he'd been asked to do; from the Project Officer's perspective what he had done had not been understood; from both perspectives there was recognition that in asking youth to voice their opinions, the opinion voiced, if indeed it could be gained, would often open up issues that were beyond resolving. Towards the end of contract for the initial Project Officer a Youth Voice Trainee was appointed, his role continued under the guidance of a second Youth Voice Project Officer who would later be appointed in 2003 for a period of one year<sup>44</sup>.

---

<sup>44</sup> Throughout this research various efforts to gain access to the voice of youth proved inherently

A further Project Officer was seconded on a short-term basis from G-Force Recruitment to focus on School Based New Apprenticeships (SBNA)<sup>45</sup>. From 2004-2005, the only staff employed by SGR LLEN beyond the Executive Officer and Administration Officer would be SBNA Co-ordinators: three full-time positions, one for each of the School Network based in the Geelong region and based in the community. These positions were funded partially by SGR LLEN, partially through a federal grant for implementing SBNA and partially through contributions from participating schools. With this image of the staffing structure in place, I will now turn my attention to a closer weaving of the operation of SGR LLEN.

---

challenging and resulted in a change in methodology in the ARC Linkage Project.

<sup>45</sup> G-Force is a Group Training Company and a major recruitment player in the local employment context. Like GRVEC, G-Force entertained aspirations to 'be' the Geelong LLEN when the initiative was announced. Until 2004, G-Force been contracted by GRVEC to arrange structured work placements. In 2004 GRVEC changed their approach and recruited a team to work directly with local employers. This GRVEC team and the SBNA Co-ordinators employed by SGR LLEN now work collaboratively. For G-Force this development was not welcomed; they remained distant from and, therefore, suspicious of much of the work of SGR LLEN until the end of 2004. In the fourth Panel I outline the opportunity that reversed this perception of the LLEN.

## ***SGR LLEN Operation: Partnerships, Pathways, Pedagogy and Promotions***

From the outset SGR LLEN saw its strength being in its Working Party structure. To complement the Working Party structure, a number of issued-based sub-groups were also established. This structure attracted members from a diverse range of agencies and groups and enabled a large number of LLEN organisations to become actively involved in delivering on the LLEN objectives. It also enabled communication within the LLEN as members would often be involved in more than one Working Party. In this way SGR LLEN would model its ambition to be ‘just an opportunity’ (Matthew, LLEN committee member, 2005) to act rather than an entity that would act. This tension between an understanding of a LLEN as an entity that ‘should do something’ as opposed to an understanding of a LLEN as being just another part of the network which ‘would do something’ has remained constant throughout the operation of SGR LLEN.

In the first year of SGR LLEN operation six Working Parties were implemented. Working Parties were open to any member of the community to attend but operated with a reasonably stable core of members. They were facilitated by either a member of the Committee of Management or a LLEN member with specific expertise and/or connections. The Working Parties were, firstly, an Environmental Scan Working Party. All LLEN were required to undertake an annual Environmental Scan to provide baseline data on the education, employment, training and social support needs, issues and participation patterns of 15-24 year olds<sup>46</sup>. Secondly, a Professional and Partnership Development Working Party that would work to facilitate cross-sector professional development activities; as I will outline below, the methodology for this professional development would be action research. Thirdly, a Vocational Education Working Party that focused on the

---

<sup>46</sup> The Environmental Scan was, and continues to be, a difficult issue for SGR LLEN. As an accountability target within the Performance Agreement it must be undertaken; it is intended to establish baseline data on the education, employment, training and social support needs, issues and participation patterns of 15-24 year olds in the Geelong region. However research within the LLEN indicates Working Parties were not able to analyse data provided in the first three Environmental Scans, their size was ‘off-putting’ and their electronic format was ‘a barrier’ (Kate, LLEN committee member, 2003). Access to the 2005 Environmental Scan outside the LLEN was restrained by the Executive Officer who, given her dissatisfaction with the content and format of the Scan, limited its distribution. It was not until 2005 that the Department finally granted LLEN access to a wide range of data they already collected from all schools, in effect defusing the issue.

expansion of vocational education by way of an increase in the provision of structured workplace learning opportunities for students and an increase in the engagement with employers. This focus was developed with reference to the Federal framework for vocational education to ensure synergy rather than competition. Fourthly, a Youth Voice Working Party which focused its work in the northern suburbs of Geelong, working in partnership with the *Streets Ahead Community Capacity Building Project*. The fifth Working Party, named Employment Issues, aimed to create pathways to sustainable employment by forging partnerships between schools and the employment sector. The Employment Issues Working Party was responsible for the Education and Training Partnerships with Industry Strategy (ETPIS) Project that was developed by SGR LLEN and involved a series of concurrent projects. Finally, the Pathways Working Party would focus on a range of issues including the development of a coordinated transition and support service for early school leavers or those at risk of early school leaving. SGR LLEN was also involved in two other major initiatives: firstly the implementation of the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) trial at Corio Bay Senior College, one of 22 Victorian sites involved in the trial: to provide support and guidance to the trial a VCAL Reference Group was established<sup>47</sup>. The other initiative was the ARC Linkage Project of which this thesis is one component.

By 2003 eight Working Parties were active: a Communications Strategy Working Party and a Managed Individual Pathways Working Party had been added to SGR LLEN operation. The Communications Working Party was primarily concerned with improving SGR LLEN communications with the then 250 members of the LLEN. The Managed Individual Pathways (MIP) Working Party was formed to oversee the implementation of a further aspect of the government's response to the Kirby Report that involved the provision of better access to pathways and support in the transition from school to work, further education and training. In 2004 the Working Party structure was refined further to its current form. The Managed Individual Pathways and Transition and Support Working Parties combined to form

---

<sup>47</sup> The evaluation of the VCAL trial was positive and resulted in 200 Victorian sites, including 10 in SGR LLEN region, offering VCAL as an accredited pathway option in 2003. Of the 10, nine were schools and one was the Gordon TAFE. By 2005 all schools and a number of adult and community providers were offering VCAL.

a single Retention, Transition and Support Working Party. The Youth Voice Working Party was disbanded with the intention being to replace it with a Youth Reference Group. In part this recommendation from the Executive Officer to the Committee of Management reflected the end of the contract for the Youth Voice Project Workers however the recommendation also reflected the on-going difficulty in finding an effective avenue to gain the voice of youth in developing strategies to assist them. Two other Reference Groups were also established: the first being an Employer Reference Group to be supported by the Employment Issues Working Party; the second being a Skills Gap Strategy Group. Both of these Reference Groups were chaired by prominent local industry players: the former by the local General Manager of Telstra Countrywide<sup>48</sup>, the latter by the Executive Officer of the Geelong Area Consultative Committee (GACC)<sup>49</sup>; the establishment of these Reference Groups was considered a major breakthrough by SGR LLEN. From the start, the importance on industry involvement in LLEN had been recognised (Department of Education Employment and Training 2001; Kirby 2000). While the Department had pushed for industry to be active in the Committee of Management, during 2002 the Executive Officer came to believe that industry was sufficiently represented within category memberships on the Committee of Management. Instead, the focus would be on gaining industry involvement in Working Parties as that was where the work of the LLEN could 'bridge' into the core business of industry.

A key decision that influenced the operation of SGR LLEN was the adoption of an action research methodology. The concept of action research was central to this research: the Linkage Project of which this research is one component was based in an action research methodology. Furthermore, SGR LLEN adopted the concept of action research in both its operation and in its project work. In a resource published by SGR LLEN, this work was identified as 'participatory action research . . . a central activity in social change projects' (Smart Geelong Region Local

---

<sup>48</sup> A telecommunications corporation partially owned by the federal government. The Employer Reference Group and its contribution is detailed in the fourth Panel 'Mrs Clarke is Here to Ask for Your Help'.

<sup>49</sup> The Geelong Area Consultative Committee is one of 56 community based organisations across Australia funded by the federal government. Area Consultative Committees work in partnership with the federal government's Department of Transport and Regional Services to identify opportunities, priorities and development strategies for their regions thereby promoting employment and training opportunities, growth of the business sector and regional development.

Learning and Employment Network Inc n.d., p.3)<sup>50</sup>. This action research focus was particularly evident in the operation of the Employment Issues Working Party and the Partnerships and Professional Development Working Party. In regard to the former, the ETPIS Project involved three interconnected aspects: firstly, the development of stakeholder involvement; secondly, the regional co-ordination of VCAL work placements; finally a series of five smaller projects that explored innovation in developing the employability of young people. The entire Project used an action research approach in conjunction with a range of learning activities for Project Leaders. In regard to the latter, each year the Professional and Partnership Development Working Party invited applications for Action Research projects which would contribute to the strategic work of SGR LLEN and would be funded for \$8,000.00. Successful applicants reported on the learnings from their projects and showcased their findings at local gatherings including Learning City Festival events and the annual SGR LLEN Conference. This action research focus has involved SGR LLEN drawing on Deakin University's Faculty of Education Research Institute for Professional and Vocational Education and Training (RIPVET) to provide facilitation and education on action research processes.

By 2004 the Executive Officer had come to understand the work of SGR LLEN as always being concerned with three foci: partnerships, pathways and pedagogy<sup>51</sup>. It was not until the end of 2004 that a fourth foci was added: promotions. As indicated previously, for SGR LLEN from the start 'everything we did in terms of money was to conserve it.' Not only had the staffing structure been minimised, while some LLEN hosted dinners or invested in capital items to attract interest and

---

<sup>50</sup> This resource does not offer a definition of action research. Instead, it offers 'a series of general descriptions of what action research is as a participatory activity' (Smart Geelong Region Local Learning and Employment Network Inc n.d., p.3) along with a series of statements of what action research is not. These statements underscore action research as being more systematic than reflective practice, as being more than problem solving, as being other than research 'on' other people or the application of 'scientific method' to teaching (Smart Geelong Region Local Learning and Employment Network Inc n.d., p.4).

<sup>51</sup> This word was recognised as jargonistic and was subsequently replaced with the term 'professional development' which held the "P" theme. Coincidentally the idea of professional development also linked directly to the government's response to the Kirby Report which included establishment of LLEN as one of five initial processes. The remaining four processes were: system wide planning and accountability by way of reform of the State Training Board to become VLESC; better access to pathways and support including establishment of the VQA; more choice in delivery and content by way of reform of the Board of Studies to become the VCAA and, as indicated, enhanced education and training professional skills including inter-sectoral professional development programs which would include a focus on support for LLEN, collaborative planning and delivery of programs and services, leadership and community building (Kirby Implementation Team n.d.).

gain profile, SGR LLEN worked through its network of Working Parties. By 2004 this approach had become a dual-edge sword: while the maximum amount of money had been retained to feed networking activity and action research projects the communication of this activity across the network had not occurred at a level sufficient to convince some members of the community, both within SGR LLEN and outside of the LLEN community, that value was being added or that SGR LLEN was 'working.' There was a lot of 'wait and see' which became a problem because the community could not see the underground growth of the rhizome or the connection between the various offshoots of its activity. The 'wait and see became nothing happened' (Freya, LLEN committee member, 2003). From the perspective of the Executive Officer, some of the Committee of Management took time to 'get their heads around the idea' that they were elected and had responsibility to communicate with their constituent group. However it was not that simple: while many of the education agencies had highly developed communication processes some of the other stakeholder groups did not have any mechanism to communicate even where they took up a commitment to communicate.

Meanwhile, the work of the Communications Working Party had focused on quarterly newsletters to members, the production of Annual Reports and occasional media features which could not capture the complexity and range of activity given a declining budget at a time of increasing activity. SGR LLEN *had* gained a profile – the question 'what is a LLEN?' had been replaced by the problematic statement that 'the LLEN should do it.' This indicated the contested understanding of the role of the LLEN for those who conceptualised the LLEN as an 'opportunity.' Some community members suggested these multiple readings of the LLEN reflected on-going problems in manipulating the SGR LLEN website which resulted in a lost opportunity to forge a shared understanding of the LLEN and to transfer knowledge that had come from action research into the community<sup>52</sup>. However it also reflected the on-going tension referred to previously regarding the role of the LLEN. For the Executive Officer the situation was recognised as a risk for SGR

---

<sup>52</sup> This was a complex and enduring problem. By 2003 SGR LLEN had established its website which was to be an open repository for information: meeting Minutes, newsletters, Working Party reports and so forth. However, due to problems with the organisation hosting the site, the lack of staff with sufficient expertise to pursue a solution, and a lack of funds to 'buy' a solution, the website remained dormant and, for the most part, empty. The extent to which this should have been a priority remained a matter of conjecture within the Committee of Management throughout the course of this research.



LLEN not only in terms of how to achieving the goals set by SGR LLEN but also in terms of how to ensure those achievements were appreciated. This issue will be explored in detail in the final Panel of this thesis.

## ***Pause***

This Panel has involved an effort to weave the background of my tapestry. I have outlined the recent policy context. I have taken up broad threads to highlight themes of globalisation, risk and the changes they forge in forms of government. I have taken up duller, quiet threads to weave the education and training reports, and their consequences, that spread rhizome-like through the context I am portraying. It was refreshing to put down that loom and pick up my Geelong loom with its bright colours, beautiful harbour and proud community. I have woven an image of the changing landscape of City of Greater Geelong before adding the detail that makes it Smart Geelong – Learning City. And within this smart city, I have taken the most detailed threads to portray the formation and operation of SGR LLEN. It is time to have a break, step out into the sunshine, reach my hands above my head and stretch the length of my body before returning to the cool of my study where I will settle down once more to wind the next bobbins, those that will enable the weaving of multiple and simultaneous images of SGR LLEN as an instance in action.

## The Third Panel

### *Winding More Bobbins*

“Now that’s really mixing things up!” one might protest at this point. But there is really no cause for alarm. (Deleuze and Guattari 1983, p.xviii)

This Panel is concerned with the introducing the theories and concepts (the yarn) wound onto bobbins that are used together with bobbins wound with empirical data. Some bobbins have been wound but their colours and textures do not appear: they were never used, were unpicked or unravelled. Of those that were used, multiple bobbins hung on the face of my tapestry at any one time; wound with many strands of yarn. Many more were used then put aside only to be taken up later as the weaving progressed.

### **Inter-text<sup>53</sup> 1: Connection, Rhizome, Network**

So you will never get to the bottom of a concept like *multiplicity*, you will never be able to figure out what it *really means*, nor, if you become the least bit Deleuzian, will you want to. Rather than asking what a concept means, you will find yourself asking, ‘Does it work? What new thoughts does it make possible to think?’ (St. Pierre 2004, p.284)

Here I wish to provide an introduction, of sorts, to the conceptual bobbins I have wound, commencing with a Deleuzian bobbin. Immediately I strike a problem as Deleuzian concepts ‘travel’ (Rajchman 2000) and, in so doing, defy the fixity of a definition. Deleuzian thinking involves pushing into a zone that precedes a stable, insubjective ‘we’: there is no assumption of foundational ‘common sense’ (Rajchman 2000). Different conceptual ‘bits’ initially introduced in relation to a particular problem are used in new contexts and seen from new perspectives; the coherence amongst the ‘bits’ shifts from one piece of work to the next as new concepts are added and fresh problems are addressed. Rather than being labels with which to name the world, concepts are ‘creations that testify to the positive power of thinking . . . we create concepts in order to transform life’ (Colebrook 2002, p.xxi). Deleuzian philosophy involves creating concepts that are ‘always new’: the move away from understanding things as fixed allows concepts to be taken up and

---

<sup>53</sup> Texts have inter-textuality – what is *between* the texts – that is, the presence in this thesis of the texts of prior authors. This means two things: I can cite those authors, making their work present while they are not. Secondly it means that text is productive both in transforming prior texts, by way of new readings, and by making possible new texts as a text can only be written if the discourse exists to reveal a world to be researched (Usher 1997b, p.38).

their dynamism ‘re-injected’ into other events ‘creating a fabric of heightened states between which any number, the greatest number, of connecting routes would exist’ (Massumi 1987, p.xv). Thus Colebrook refers to the circularity of Deleuze’s works: ‘once you understand one term you can understand them all; but you also seem to need to understand all the terms to even begin to understand one’ (Colebrook 2002, p. xviii-xix). Coherence is not given by logical consistency or teleological development but rather by the plateaus into which concepts fall in a loose way (Rajchman 2000, p.21). Like my thesis, the ‘bits’ don’t, and aren’t intended to, work as a linear narrative

the whole is not given and things are always starting up again in the middle, falling together in another looser way. As one thus passes from one zone or ‘plateau’ to another and back again, one thus has nothing of the sense of a well-planned itinerary; on the contrary, one is taken on a sort of conceptual trip for which there preexists no map – a voyage for which one must leave one’s usual discourse behind and never quite be sure where one will land. (Rajchman 2000, p.21-2)

Yet this *is* a thesis and within it, as with transcribing so with analysis, I must provide the reader with the tools for a comprehensive reading, ‘a reading capable of reproducing the stance that gave rise to the text’ (Bourdieu 1999, p.624). Thus here I provide an overview of the Deleuzian concepts I have taken up; in the following Panels I weave with these concepts and, in so doing, create new thoughts. It is in plugging what can be called a Deleuzian machine into other machines that different assemblages become possible and the non-thought potentially made available. Thus, in the following Inter-texts I introduce concepts that ‘really do mix things up’; concepts where at times the ‘philosophical fiction’ (St. Pierre 2004, p.291) that is the self lurks in the landscape:

We invoke one dualism only in order to challenge another. We employ a dualism of models only in order to arrive at a process that challenges all models. Each time, mental correctives are necessary to undo the dualisms we had no wish to construct but through which we pass. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.20)

As I have already reflected upon I have had to make this journey towards and beyond poststructuralism in the course of my candidature. However, I favour ‘forever rearranging the furniture’ (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.21) rather than throwing it all out; I need ‘small supplies of significance and subjectification, if only to turn them against their own systems when the circumstances demand it . . . you have to keep small rations of subjectivity in sufficient quantity to enable you to respond to the dominant reality’ (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.160). The concepts

that will be encountered interweave with each other; collectively they contribute to ‘rhizomatic’ thinking.

### *Assemblage*

Connection and interaction are central to all life. This characteristic of connection and the style of thought that inheres in it – one that privileges experimentation (and) over ontology (is) - is sympathetic to the action research methodology that underpins the work of SGR LLEN as ‘to attain the multiple, one must have a method that effectively constructs it’ (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.22):

Thinking is understood through the uses to which it gives rise, the connections it opens. But for that it needs the sobriety of a certain realism. Often it is a matter of making visible problems for which there exists no program, no plan, no ‘collective agency,’ problems that therefore call for new groups, not yet defined, who must invent themselves in the process. (Rajchman 2000, p. 8)

Each of us are assemblages of genetic material, ideas, powers of acting, affects, perceptions and relationships to other bodies (Colebrook 2002, p.xx). Deleuze & Guattari use the notion of assemblage to help us get away from the idea of a whole that pre-exists assemblage; an assemblage establishes connections between multiplicities from each of the fields of reality, representation and subjectivity (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.23). Importantly, any whole that results from the assemblage has no status other than being a part alongside the other parts.

An assemblage, made up of multiplicities, acts simultaneously on symbolic, material and social flows. They are produced within these flows and ‘belong’ to them however they are not confined by them. There is no ‘order’ that governs the assemblage as a whole; ‘the law of any assemblage is created from its connections’ (Colebrook 2002, p.xx). Thus, the Executive Officer would recognise in 2003, ‘I know that no amount of planning will lead to any given outcome because that’s the nature of things.’ I will be drawing on this concept to explore the unpredictable nature of the LLEN-in-action.

### *Becoming-x*

It is within these assemblages that multiplicities encounter the opportunity for ‘becoming’: this concept enables us to explore both the perception of the LLEN as an opportunity to become-something-else as well as the role of individuals in creating the conditions for becoming. For Deleuze & Guattari our thinking is limited because it begins in ‘being’ - or ‘what is’ - which it then imagines as going

through becoming, changing or moving in some way. They suggest that to really think we need to free our thinking, a process they refer to as ‘become-imperceptible,’ no longer seeing the world in terms of fixed and extended objects (Colebrook 2002). Thus Deleuze and Guattari explain becoming as ‘the movement by which the line frees itself from the point, and renders points indiscernible’ (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.294). Becoming gives us access to transformation through a refusal of closed structures within which difference is confined (Roy 2003). This, in turn, means acknowledging that people themselves are always in a process of becoming – they themselves are multiplicities – and this fluidity fundamentally influences how we understand all the interactions in which they engage.

If the first principle of becoming involves multiplicity, the second principle seems in opposition: wherever there is a multiplicity there is an exceptional individual with whom an alliance must be made in order to ‘become’ (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.243). Thus multiplicity and becoming are the same thing: a multiplicity is continually transforming itself according to the thresholds and borderlines that are crossed: a crossing of the borderline constitutes a becoming (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.249). One of these exceptional individuals is the Executive Officer: she draws and occupies the borderline of the LLEN. It is her role to foster the LLEN’s becoming by creating spaces – physical, emotional, intellectual and so on - for others to cross the borderline and, in the process, to open the opportunity for new ways of thinking and acting.

### *Body without Organs*

Becoming-x involves desire. Here, desire is not related to the want for something that cannot be; rather it accords with the idea of life as a process of striving (Colebrook 2002, p.xxii). I feel this concept offers particular explanatory strength in considering the voluntary work undertaken by the members of the LLEN in responding to the call to ‘work collaboratively for youth’ and the attempts of the LLEN to remove the barriers to that collaboration and connection. To allow desire to flow it is necessary to make a Body without Organs (BwO), the life underlying our forms of organisation (Colebrook 2002, p.xxi). The BwO is ‘what remains when you take everything away’ (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.151). The BwO is not opposed to organs per se, but to their organization in ways that stratify them; in

contrast the full BwO is a body populated by multiplicities (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.30). The BwO is concerned with opening the body, whatever the body may be, to connections thereby allowing intensities to pass and circulate.

The BwO is inevitably experimental: not a thing, but a way of being. It is not created by 'wildly destratifying' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.160); rather it is through a 'meticulous relation with the strata that one succeeds in freeing lines of flight, causing conjugated flows to pass and escape and bring forth continuous intensities for a BwO' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.161). There are two phases to the BwO, each included in the other and each using the same procedures. The first is for the fabrication of the BwO, the second is to create movement over or across it. Failure can occur at either stage, and it is the same failure: you think you have made a BwO but nothing passes. Thus we must ask:

(1) What type is it, how is it fabricated, by what procedures and means (predetermining what will come to pass)? (2) What are its modes, what comes to pass, and with what variants and what surprises, what is unexpected and what expected? (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.152)

I can use questions to help explore my key research question concerning the extent to which an instituted network can function as a learning community, maximising desire sufficient to cause rupture. These questions can focus on what form of network can create movement, what happens when it moves and, as I have already outlined in the second Panel, how one establishes the LLEN in the first place.

### *Deterritorialization*

LLEN have been instituted as incorporated societies, a status that was to enhance their ability to move beyond the boundaries – the territories - that constrain innovation in the emerging post compulsory education, training and employment sector. For Deleuze & Guattari, everything in life, from bodies to societies, is a form of territorialization, that is, the connection of forces to produce distinct wholes (Colebrook 2002, p. xxii). However, there is no completely territorialized space as within any territory there remains the possibility of an assemblage occurring, one that opens the territorial assemblage onto an assemblage of another kind thereby constituting a becoming. There is also no absolute deterritorialization, this is an extreme possibility but one that can only be imagined rather than achieved.

Thus deterritorialization is the movement by which one 'leaves the territory' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.508). While deterritorialization can occur, so can

reterritorialization: a compensation that obstructs (makes negative) or segments (makes relative) the line of flight beyond the territory. Anything can reterritorialize, that is, 'stand for' the lost territory. Thus Deleuze & Guattari (1987) explain that the state apparatus actually performs a deterritorialization but immediately overlays that by a series of reterritorializations – a process that is apparent in, as one instance, the establishment LLEN. The government deterritorialized through instituting LLEN as incorporated associations, comprised of and accountable to their local communities. However, as I portray in the fourth Panel, it immediately overlayed that process with governance and accountability arrangements that segmented the ability of LLEN to pursue their strategic objectives. A second phase of reterritorialization can be identified in the 2004 implementation of the model of good self governance: LLEN could not refuse this injunction as their future instalments of funding were conditional on it.

Whilst deterritorialization is largely productive, under conditions of extreme and sudden deterritorialization it can have catastrophic effects. These too can be productive or counterproductive: they may release innovative processes that would otherwise have been blocked or they may resonate and, instead of opening towards a BwO, may lead to closure of an assemblage. This group of concepts is particularly powerful in understanding the 'what happened' of the LLEN-in-action; it is this concept I am using in the fourth Panel to explore the events associated with the federal government's sudden introduction of Australian Technical Colleges into an unprepared state context.

### *Haecceity*

Deleuze & Guattari use the term haecceity to refer to 'perfect individuality lacking nothing' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.261) Haecceities are not 'things,' rather they rest in a capacity to affect and be affected. Thus the individuation of a life is not the same as the individuation of the subject that leads the life given the latter concerns an 'altogether different' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.262) plane of form, substance and time. Haecceities are individuations that are not individualizations. For instance, a moment during a concert, an hour of a day, things that are not one of a kind but an individuation of something that belongs to no kind and remains indefinite (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.261). A life is composed of such moments that precede us as conscious persons yet are expressed in our lives. Deleuze and



Guattari allude to the work of Virginia Woolf and the ‘bits of experience that can’t be fit into a nice narrative unit, and so must be combined or put together in another way’ (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.262-3; Rajchman 2000, p.85). A haecceity is not a backdrop for subjects: ‘it is the entire assemblage in its individuated aggregate that is a haecceity’ (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.262). It is this concept that enables us to understand at its most subtle level the interrelationship between us and the past, present and future contexts of our lives. My use of this concept is, unsurprisingly, very personal; I have drawn on it in my reflections of my experience of becoming-academic.

### *Lines of flight*

The role of the LLEN can be understood as strengthening lines of flight: the means by which one deterritorializes, moving beyond the segmentations that characterise the education and training context in Victoria. In other words, rhizomes contain lines of segmentarity according to which they are organised, signified, attributed and so on; they also contain lines of flight down which they flee by means of which they deterritorialize. The basic principle is that there are ‘leaks’ or lines of flight within the society and society can be understood in terms of the manner in which it deals with these lines of flight (Rajchman 2000). Deleuze refers to the ‘segmentations’ of life with which ‘making multiplicities’ would always have to contend. Segmentation of social space works with horizontals and verticals to chart movement; becomings work with diagonals and transversals which suggest other spaces and other movements. With diagrams, we expose such lines and the possibilities they open up; thus Deleuze and Guattari liken the rhizome to a map instead of a tracing. There is a rupture in a rhizome when lines of segmentarity ‘explode’ into a line of flight. The challenge is to allow desire to flow: to extend the line of flight to the point where it becomes the BwO.

### *Multiplicity*

It is the category of ‘multiplicity’ that enables us to dispense with recourse to an original or subsequent totality; a multiplicity is a connection of parts with any ‘whole’ being nothing more than a part alongside other parts (Deleuze and Guattari 1983). For example, the role of teacher does not involve multiple roles but rather a multiplicity of roles, each composed of the others and not able to be fully separated

(Roy 2003, p.74): the notion of unity appears only when there is a ‘power takeover’ by the signifier (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.8). Deleuze and Guattari’s multiplicity is qualitative – an ‘event’ that cannot be divided up: the student and teacher exist only in their reciprocity and cannot be separated; the event is not happening to each of them, they *are* the event (Roy 2003, p.71).

Deleuze uses the term many ways distinguishing between, on the one hand, multiplicities that are molar, extensive, divisible, organisable and conscious – for example, government agencies. These multiplicities exhibit an arborescent formation and are predisposed to territorialize, establishing power and stability; they are ‘pseudomultiplicities’ (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.8). On the other hand, there are multiplicities that are molecular, intensive and unconscious – it is this concept that I am applying to the LLEN. These multiplicities exhibit a rhizomatic formation, ‘constantly constructing and dismantling themselves in the course of their communications as they cross over into each other at, beyond or before a certain threshold’ (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.33). It is not however a question of opposing these molar and molecular ‘machines’: they interpenetrate. It is my contention, argued in the final Panel of this thesis, that one of the major restraints for SGR LLEN was the inability for the Department to perceive itself within the LLEN. Rather, it maintained its hierarchical position above the LLEN: its points of intersection were along pre-established paths. This compromised its ability to establish a productive relationship with the LLEN and this, in turn, undermined the LLEN’s ability to pursue the strategic agenda, one that the Department itself desired.

Multiplicities are distinct in the way they continue: always starting in the middle rather than moving from beginning to end as a whole might. Here sustainability rests in the actualisation of a qualitative rather than quantitative multiplicity:

To continue a multiplicity is to move into a zone that is not logically predetermined, but rather ‘invents by differentiating’. That is why duration supposes a form of time that no longer works through succession or permanence, but rather as an open whole, constantly ‘differentiating’ and starting up again from peculiar points. Such a whole is not ‘organic’ (expressed in each of its parts, or articulated into members working harmoniously together); and the multiplicity it brings together is not fragmentary but only uncompleted like a wall of free, uncemented stones. (Rajchman 2000, p.59)

Thus the issue is not how many members a LLEN has, nor how structured it becomes, but rather its ability to continue to experiment in the face of new

challenges and, in the process, to maintain the desire of an evolving group of members to work collaboratively for youth.

### *Plane of consistency*

In this study of SGR LLEN the concept of the plane of consistency becomes the ideal: it is the concept we draw on to identify the point which would render the need for any LLEN redundant. Proceeding by consolidation, the plane of consistency ties together heterogeneous, disparate elements; it is inscribed with haecceities, intensities, becomings, assemblages and so-called 'smooth spaces' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.507) that allow one to move from any point to any other with minimum resistance (Roy 2003, p.73). These smooth spaces are desirable given that they are filled with events rather than perceived things; they subordinate points to trajectories; we occupy them without counting whereas in striated spaces we count 'in order to occupy' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p. 474-79).

The plane of consistency is abstract, it 'sections' multiplicities, intersecting them in order to bring any number of multiplicities with any number of dimensions into coexistence (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.251). Thus the plane of consistency is the abstract machine that is the intersection of all assemblages; it serves to interconnect BwOs (the plane of consistency specific to desire), to extend intensities, to transform assemblages. It proceeds by 'alogical linkages always effected in the middle' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.508); constructing the plane piece by piece through eliminating blockages, destructive lines and rivals to the BwO and so on, retaining only that which increases the number of connections.

### *Rhizome*

The rhizome is used to contrast the arborescent that has been conceptually dominant in thought and writing. I use this concept to work productively with, rather than against, complexity (Lee 1992) in portraying both the LLEN-in-action and my process of completing this thesis. Whereas the arborescent embraces and fosters order, hierarchy and direction; the rhizome embraces and fosters randomness, proliferation and decentred connection. Any point in a rhizome can, and must be, connected to anything other (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.7), a proliferation of connections, 'the sudden joining up of different intensities, flows, and densities to form new assemblies that have no fixed form or outline' (Roy 2003, p.75). The

arborescent and the rhizomatic are not opposed models: both are present within the LLEN and within this thesis. Rather, what looks like opposition is a means to create pluralism: you begin with the distinction only to see that all distinctions are active creations which are capable of further distinction (Colebrook 2002, p. xxviii).

Rhizomes are not amenable to any structural or generative model; these models are principles of tracing, a reproduction that operates according to genetic principles. In contrast the rhizome pertains to a map. The map must be produced, it is 'always detachable, connectable, reversible, modifiable, and has multiple entryways and exits and its own lines of flight' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.21). Thus

we should no longer think in terms of lines going from one fixed point to another, but, on the contrary, must think of points as lying at the intersection of many entangled lines, capable of drawing out 'other spaces.' (Rajchman 2000, p.100)

It was these 'other spaces' and their 'potentials' that progressively became the focus of the Executive Officer of SGR LLEN. Whereas initially she would focus on making stronger connections between the prior structures and provisions of the various vocational education and training providers as the LLEN evolved she came to focus her energy on the 'zones of indistinction' (Rajchman 2000): the spaces of uncertainty where there was nothing prior to trace and within which becomings could be in the making or from which they might arise. Thus rather than focusing on lines connecting fixed points she would focus on bringing the points into movement. This is when you get rupture in a rhizome: when fixed lines form a line of flight. However that line of flight itself is part of the rhizome. Thus, even when a rupture occurs 'there is always a danger that you will reencounter organizations that re-stratify everything, formations that restore power to a signifier' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.9). This remains a significant challenge until the plane of consistency is reached.

A final word. The language of connection, rhizome and network brings notions of neural nets or internets. However, Deleuze rejected this analogy. For him, the computer analogy allowed insufficient scope for those 'margins of sense', that is, affect and percept, that are required for thought (Rajchman 2000, p.11). Deleuze has a different image of the machine of thinking. The abstract machine - the plane of consistency that is the intersection of all assemblages – doesn't work mechanically and is not separated from our bodies. Deleuze's is logic of the mind *and* the body, they go together rather than the mind being 'above' the body. Thus

Deleuze and Guattari adopt the idea that we are desiring machines; machines that express life through connection (Rajchman 2000). This is what Buchanan (2002) talked about in considering the structure of networks: grasping the nature of parts in isolation offers little hint of how they might work in combination. It is to the winding onto my bobbin the literature threads of networks as a component of social capital that I now turn.

## Inter-text 2: Social Capital

The transformation of economic capital into social capital presupposes a specific labour, i.e., an apparently gratuitous expenditure of time, attention, care, concern, which . . . has the effect of transfiguring the purely monetary import of the exchange and, by the same token, the very meaning of the exchange. From a narrowly economic standpoint, this effort is bound to be seen as pure wastage, but in the terms of the logic of social exchanges, it is a solid investment, the profits of which will appear, in the long run, in monetary or other form. (Bourdieu 1986, p.253)

In Victoria, this ‘specific labour’ is the work of the LLEN. It has been argued that amongst the most beneficial impacts of LLEN as a group has been their contribution to the creation of social capital (Robinson and Keating 2004).

Robinson and Keating (2004) explore the relationship of social capital and the state, arguing that the state government has created the conditions for social capital to develop by sponsoring and supporting initiatives such as LLEN; at the same time however the level of social capital in a given community will influence the capacity of a LLEN to succeed (Robinson and Keating 2004, p.29). While social capital is ‘a whole of society “big picture” category that does not directly fold onto local settings’ (Thomson 1999, p.2), it can be understood as a resource to collective action which may lead to a broad range of outcomes of varying social scale. Just as Deleuze’s concepts ‘travel’ (Rajchman 2000), so too do Bourdieu’s concepts, a fact that Bourdieu himself argued was a positive attribute, describing them as ‘open concepts designed to guide empirical work’ (Bourdieu 1990, p.107). In this Inter-text I wish to define my understanding and use of the term social capital thereby enabling the weaving of the fourth and fifth Panels of this thesis<sup>54</sup>.

For individuals, this can mean access to the reciprocal, trusting social connections that help the processes of getting by or getting ahead. For communities, social capital reflects the ability of community members to participate, cooperate, organise and interact for mutual benefit (Cavaye 2001, 2004). A focus on social capital stands in contrast to deficit approaches: community development begins by assessing the network resources of a community and using a participatory approach to generate knowledge and trust which facilitate reciprocity and co-operation in

---

<sup>54</sup> In this thesis it is not my intention to justify or attempt the measurement of social capital although the images I portray would contribute to such an attempt by providing the ‘thick data’ to support any attempt to use indicators and measures. However for the interested reader a range of frameworks for the Australian context is now available (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2004; Kilpatrick et al. 2001; Stone and Hughes 2002).

growing the community's capital resources (World Bank 1998). It is this potential that has fostered growing grassroots, governmental, business and academic interest in 'community' in general and the concept of social capital in particular (Burt 2000; Cavaye 2004). Yet it has attracted criticism much of which – like its popularity – has focused on 'relatively untested assumptions' about how it is manifested, generated and distributed: despite a range of studies relatively little is still known about social capital *in practice* (Stone and Hughes 2002, p.1).

### *Defining social capital*

While the notion of social capital is so difficult to define it is 'chaotic' (Fine 1999, p.9) the term is frequently connected with Robert Putnam's writing on democracy in modern Italy. Putnam defined social capital as 'the features of social organisation, such as networks, norms, and trust, that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit' (Putnam 1993, n.p.). Most definitions of social capital

focus on membership in networks and the norms that guide their interactions. These in turn generate secondary features such as knowledge and trust, which then facilitate reciprocity and cooperation. (Kirkpatrick, Field and Falk 2001, p.4)

It is, in other words, the 'substance that allows society to function' (Fine 1999, p.9). Putnam explored the decline in social capital, a process accelerated by the growing autonomy of individualization in the context of globalisation (Glastra, Hake and Schedler 2004). Other writers emphasis the work of Coleman (1988; 1994) declaring he 'can probably claim to be the real originator of the concept of social capital' (Schuller and Field 1998, p.3). Coleman's definition suggests:

Social capital is defined by its function. It is not a single entity but a variety of different entities, with two elements in common: they all consist of some aspect of social structures, and they facilitate certain actions of actors – whether persons or corporate actors – within the structure. (Coleman 1988, p.3)

Coleman identified three forms of social capital that echo Putnam's definition. Firstly, trust: social capital is high in relationships of trust and where trust is exercised by mutual acceptance of obligation. Secondly, information channels: social capital demands the exchange of ideas and information. Finally, norms: norms and sanctions constitute social capital where they encourage or constrain people to work for the common good over self-interest. Both Putnam and Coleman portray social capital as a collective resource that grows with use: its networks,

norms and trust and self-reinforcing (Kilpatrick, Bell and Falk 1998, p.1; Schuller and Field 1998).

Fine (1999) acknowledges Bourdieu (1986) as the initiator of the theory of social capital but notes that his more critical consideration has been put aside and the ‘tamer’ work of Coleman (1988) and Putnam (1993) has gained ascendancy in the literature. However it was Bourdieu who ‘emphasised the social construction of the content of social capital’ (Fine 1999, p.10). It is a closer view of his theory that we now turn.

### *Bourdieu's Social Capital*

For Bourdieu, capital - which in its objectified or embodied forms takes time to accumulate and contains a tendency to persist in its being - is a force inscribed in the objectivity of things so that everything is not equally possible or impossible (Bourdieu 1986, pp. 241-2). Bourdieu argues it is impossible to consider the social world unless that consideration moves beyond the forms of capital recognized by economic theory and includes capital in each of its three ‘fundamental guises’ (Bourdieu 1986, p.243). Specifically, Bourdieu refers to *economic capital*, the capital which is directly convertible into money and can be institutionalized as property rights; *cultural capital* which can be convertible to economic capital and can be powerfully institutionalized in the form of educational qualifications; and *social capital* made up of connections which can be convertible into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the form of a title of nobility. Here I am going to limit myself to an overview of social capital.

Bourdieu defines social capital as

the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition – or in other words, to membership in a group.  
(Bourdieu 1986, p.248)

Thus social capital enables us to explain the ‘work of connections’ which are evident when different individuals profit differently from apparently equivalent cultural or economic capital by way of their ability to ‘mobilize by proxy the capital of a group’ (Bourdieu 1986, p.256). As such, social capital depends not only on a network of connections with a volume of capital but also on the ability to effectively mobilize those connections. As such, social capital is not independent



of, and ‘exerts a multiplier effect’ on, capital possessed by an individuals or groups in their own right (Bourdieu 1986, p.249).

Bourdieu’s networks of connections are

the product of an endless effort at institution, of which institution rites . . . mark the essential moment and which is necessary in order to produce and reproduce lasting, useful relationships that can secure material or symbolic profits . . . the network of relationships is the product of investment strategies . . . aimed at establishing or reproducing social relationships that are directly usable in the short or long term, i.e., at transforming contingent relations . . . into relationships that are at once necessary and elective, implying durable obligations subjectively felt . . . or institutionally guaranteed. (Bourdieu 1986, p.249-50)

This work implies expenditure of time and energy and therefore - directly or indirectly - economic capital. As such it is neither possible nor profitable unless one invests in it a specific competence - knowledge of connections and skill at using them and so on - and an acquired disposition to acquire and maintain this competence, which are themselves integral parts of this capital.

In any network, a form of delegation is institutionalized by which it is able to focus its volume of social capital into the hands of an agent whom is charged with authority to represent the group and, with the aid of the group’s social capital, to exercise a ‘power incommensurate with the agent’s personal contribution’ (Bourdieu 1986, p.251). In its least institutionalized form, this agent will be the identified head of a ‘family’; in the context of the SGR LLEN one such agent is the Executive Officer. At the same time the agent uses on the network the power which the network focuses through her. Inherent in this process of representation is the potential for the agent to take the place of the network:

not least because his [sic] distinction, his ‘outstandingness,’ his visibility constitute the essential part, if not the essence, of this power, which . . . is fundamentally a symbolic power; but also because the representative, the sign, the emblem, may be, and create, the whole reality of groups which receive effective social existence only in and through representation. (Bourdieu 1986, p.252)

As such, there is a risk that the Executive Officer potentially ‘becomes the LLEN’ for the community. Thus, the challenge is to be a Deleuzian ‘exceptional’ individual – able to draw, occupy and thereby expand the LLEN rhizome by smoothing the flow across boundaries - without being the Bourdieuan ‘outstanding’ individual who, in the process, becomes too visible and, in the minds of the community, takes the place of the network.

## *The Dimensions of Social Capital*

How do the three dimensions of social capital – commonly stated as networks, norms and trust – each contribute? Research suggests networks are central as they act as a breeding ground for norms and trust, all of which can be positive or negative from a social perspective. Dasgupta (2000) suggests the most socially beneficial networks are non-exclusive, merit-based, adaptable and innovative; these are networks that evidence the strength of so-called ‘weak links’, a point that merits explanation. Granovetter (1973) explored the strength of the connection between people: most people have stronger connections to family and good friends and weaker connections with acquaintances. In the strong connections, clusters will also be apparent: if one person is strongly linked to two others it is likely these two will also be strong linked. Thus strong links tend to always fall in triangles. This is important in that a strong link can be removed from a network and, because of the existence of the other strong links, there is little impact on the social distance – the degree of separation – within the network. The strong links protect the network in the event that links are damaged or lost, both of which have occurred within SGR LLEN as it has undertaken its experimental methodology. In contrast, it is the weak links that ‘sew the social network together’ (Buchanan 2002, p.43): they form bridges that provide shortcuts across the distance of the network and allow it to reach social worlds that would otherwise remain ‘distant and . . . quite alien’ (Buchanan 2002, p.44). It is the weak links that have the ability to facilitate a line of flight, to spread information widely, to somehow move the ordered fragmented cliques that we find in real social networks into what are known as small worlds<sup>55</sup>.

---

<sup>55</sup> Milgram (1967) famously demonstrated the small world properties of social networks with his research demonstrating each person on earth is potentially separated from any other person by only six steps. While the possibility of ‘six degrees of separation’ can be supported mathematically through using random graphs, such an explanation does not accommodate the effect of clustering. When we consider social networks, while each person will in nearly every instance be connected to many others, most people live in a community made of clusters of local connections and, as such, their connections are not random. Sociologists including Granovetter (1973) were the first to explore the importance of this difference between random and orderly networks. It is only recently that mathematicians have been able to portray the paradox of networks: how social networks function most effectively by being simultaneously random and orderly, chaos mingling in equal balance with order (Watts and Strogatz 1998). For the purposes of understanding how networks ‘work’ what is of significance is the principle of *how* we are connected: a small percentage of randomly placed links is capable of holding any network, in either the physical or social world, together.

However, different networks possess different abilities not only to establish weak links but also to 'bring home to certain nodes distant events, places, or people, to overcome the friction of space within appropriate periods of time (Urry 2003, p.10). The nature of social capital varies according to the characteristics of a network including the scope or extent of the network, the density of social ties and the diversity of social relations. According to Stone & Hughes (2002), different combinations of characteristics reflect distinctions between different types of internal and external links. Internal 'bonding' social capital refers to trust and reciprocity within a dense or closed network. External 'bridging' social capital refers to overlapping networks where the resources and opportunities of one network become available to another. Diversity of overlapping networks brings a broader range of resources however it can also inhibit the development of trust and reciprocity because of differences. External 'linking' social capital involves social relations with those in power which can be used to gain both resources and power. Importantly, the relationship between network types, within the norms inherent in them, and network characteristics is not linear. Different combinations of characteristics will affect the 'capability of social capital' (Stone and Hughes 2002, p.5) and, therefore, the outcomes that can be achieved.

Considering the second dimension of social capital – norms – Dasgupta (2000, p.341) defines a norm as a 'behavioural strategy that is subscribed to by all'; such norms foster trust and enhanced cooperation as they allow more efficient judgments on the reputation of others. While norms can be oppressive they are not inherently so, those that embrace diversity and inclusion foster willingness to consider new ideas and accept change (Flora, Flora and Wade 1996). The third dimension, trust, is important as it affects not only what people choose to do, but often what they *can* do (Flora et al. 1996). Pollit (2002) notes the central role that trust plays in overcoming the vulnerability that economic coordination and cooperation involves without taking recourse in the 'bluntness' of contractual arrangements.

Pollit (2002) likens social capital to a physical resource that can accumulate by investment or depreciate by misuse. While inequalities of access to social capital can be as profound as inequalities to other forms of capital minorities often have well developed stores of social capital that can serve as 'collateral' for people potentially excluded from mainstream markets (Putnam 1993). However, a concern with the value of social capital in sustaining community must be attentive to the

way ‘community’ is defined – ‘who is inside and thus benefits from social capital, and who is outside and does not’ (Putnam 1993, p.5) – as well as being attentive to the reproduction of structures of power, advantage and disadvantage (McClenaghan 2000).

### *Social Capital in Action*

Social capital acts as ‘the oil that lubricates’ situated learning and ‘plays an important role in influencing change and sustaining an environment which is ready to adapt and change’ (Kilpatrick et al. 1998, p.3). The ‘headline message’ is that ‘more social capital means more lifelong learning’ (Ecclestone and Field 2001, p.3); networks that operate on a basis of trust and have productive norms to guide their interactions encourage the sharing of ideas, skills, and information as well as fostering and openness and receptivity to new ideas, skills and information.

Thus for Putnam (1993) social capital appeared to be a precondition of economic development and effective government; social capital enhanced the benefits of investments of other forms of capital. How does this occur? First, networks foster norms of reciprocity which provide a mechanism to cooperate in competitive situations. Second, networks also facilitate coordination and communication and amplify information about the trustworthiness of other individuals thereby reducing transaction costs. Finally, networks embody past success at collaboration, they provide a template of how to collaborate in future. Woolcock (2001) adds a further benefit: networks foster cohesion and high levels of trust that can be drawn on in the face of external or internal ‘shock.’ However the degree of its benefit is contingent on the extent to which it includes both bonding and bridging links and this has consequences for networks: efforts to build the strength of external bridging and linking links can be at the cost of having to weaken internal bonding links (Kilpatrick et al. 2001; Woolcock 2001)

While economic approaches are necessary but not sufficient for societal well-being; social capital is a necessary but not sufficient condition for community development (Flora et al. 1997). Putnam (1993, p.5) stresses ‘social capital is not a substitute for effective public policy but rather a prerequisite for it and, in part, a consequence of it.’ Pollit (2002) notes that much government policy potentially undermines development of social capital through limiting people’s opportunities to build links with both their specific, that is familial, and generalised networks. Long commutes

to workplaces, social policies focused on getting parents into the labour market, school foci on exam outcomes rather than extra-curricular activities all discourage engagement. This point is echoed by Thomson (1999, p.2) who states social capital is ‘destroyed by public policies that disrupt, ignore and destroy the local social fabric.’ Like lifelong learning, social capital is a social construct that relies on individual behaviour for its use and misuse and is hence vulnerable to wider social and political change (Pollitt 2002).

Recalling the portrayal I provided in the second Panel we are aware that Geelong was already rich in bonded networks. The importance of the role undertaken by SGR LLEN has been to build *weak* links – to not only ‘dust disorder’ into the richly clustered and intertwined context that already existed but also to make these weak links visible given their central importance to the functioning of the rhizomatic network. We can picture this by applying the same weaving metaphor that underpins this thesis to the work of the LLEN: the weak link is the yarn that the LLEN takes from one small-loom or project to many others weaving all simultaneously to effectively change the post compulsory landscape. Without this inter-loom work there would be isolated pockets of activity and networking but the social fabric would remain unchanged and young people would continue to fall through the gaps. Preliminary research into LLEN achievements suggests they have enhanced levels of bridging and linking social capital (Craig and Fowler 2003; Robinson and Keating 2004). However, it is simplistic to assume that increased levels of social capital lead directly to increased community capacity (Bourdieu 1986; Cavaye 2004). In the subsequent Panels of this thesis I will attempt to portray a more complete image of the struggle to achieve this more rounded blend of social capital in the Geelong region. For now, I have one more bobbin to wind and it is concerned with action research as the methodology of SGR LLEN.

### Inter-text 3: Pursuing Action Research

To think in terms of multiplicities rather than identities ... requires us to rethink a range of practical concepts of person, action, and belief. Only then can we understand the basic principles in Deleuze's practical philosophy surrounding those problematizing moments that require thinking and in which thinking intervenes – the peculiar time of those questions for which there preexists no automatic or habitual response, no ready program or project, not even an accepted language or description or judgment, on which we must experiment and experiment with ourselves to see. Only then do we see the practical problem of making visible and thinkable what is 'unattributable' and new in what is happening – and so what has happened or might yet happen – to us. (Rajchman 2000, p.81)

My weaving thus far has portrayed the intent for LLEN to be planning networks. It has also outlined the need for these networks to contribute to sustained systemic change in an emerging post compulsory sector. While LLEN would 'at the most basic level' share information among stakeholders (Keating and Robinson 2003, p.10), the emerging focus on community building that was affirmed as the core contribution of LLEN (Victorian Learning and Employment Skills Commission 2002) moved the emphasis from knowledge management to knowledge creation, that is, from networking to learning. Accordingly, here I take up threads of literature that will enable consideration of my central research question: to what extent can an instituted network work as a learning community capable of fostering systemic change?

My central focus rests on questions of informal social learning: the social processes and outcomes of learning in community. While the question of capacity building within LLEN was discussed in the 2002 Evaluation (Victorian Learning and Employment Skills Commission 2002) this focused on the Department initiating formal processes that would enhance knowledge *transfer*. These range from a marketing strategy to consolidating 'tacit knowledge as accessible understandings, routines and procedures' and providing a strategic support unit to provide 'a highly mobile and adaptable "on request" source of support' to LLEN in activities such as action research and change management (Victorian Learning and Employment Skills Commission 2002, p. iii). These statements position knowledge as a stable commodity that can be rounded up and moved around a network on demand; they rest within what Habermas (1972) defined as a technical knowledge-constitutive interest, one that treats the production of knowledge as a process that is separate from action and change. Here I pursue a concern with the informal, situated, continuous, contradictory and collaborative nature of knowledge that is created and

recreated within this network as one of many to which each member belongs. Such an approach rests within an emancipatory knowledge-constitutive interest, one that aims to change existing practice and its rationale: it is an inherently critical paradigm which can extend the understandings gained through positivist or interpretivist paradigms. Accordingly, this bobbin is wound with three threads. Firstly it contains a perspective of the informal learning of individuals. Secondly, a consideration of the social nature of learning that occurs in situated activity; here I am drawing on Lave and Wenger's (1991) notion of legitimate peripheral participation. Finally, it adds the strong yarn of action research that has been the aspiration of SGR LLEN.

### *Informal Learning*

Informal learning is learning that is controlled primarily by the learner and takes place in the normal course of daily events without a high degree of structure (Marsick and Watkins 1990). It includes the sub-category of incidental learning which is learning that occurs as a 'by-product of some other activity' such as social interaction, sensing organizational culture, making mistakes or even formal learning, often without any awareness on the part of the learner (Marsick and Watkins 1990, p.12). Whereas informal learning can be enhanced by providing specific kinds of learning contexts, unlike incidental learning it remains under the control of the learner whom may not be open to learning, preferring not to question the need to do anything differently, not identifying the experience as a learning opportunity or simply rejecting the option of learning (Jarvis 1987).

An important aspect to informal learning is the conscious awareness of one's learning: there is a point of decision to pursue a 'discovery' (Jarvis 1987) and move towards enhanced understanding notwithstanding the disruption this process can cause to one's established responses (Barer-Stein 1987). As such, informal learners need to be 'attentive' to learning opportunities, embrace not only the opportunity but also the disruption – the deterritorialization – that ensues. It is the most insignificant of things that can throw us into a becoming: 'You don't deviate from the majority unless there is a little detail that starts to swell and carries you off' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.292).

There are three defining characteristics of informal learning: it is experience-based, non-routine and often tacit. The first of these, experience-based learning, refers to

‘the way in which people make sense of situations they encounter in their daily lives’ (Marsick and Watkins 1990, p.14). The use of experience is not unproblematic and raises questions around how experience itself represents, as well as how it is represented and used (Usher, Bryant and Johnston 1997a). The second defining characteristic of informal learning is that it is needed most when a situation is non-routine at the same time as it is non-routine in itself. Non-routine situations can be ‘completely new and thus fully non-routine’ or ‘potentially routine, but treated as non-routine for some reason’ (Usher et al. 1997a, p.18). In the context of the LLEN the situation is persistently non-routine: young people are highly transient, the labour market context changes rapidly, accountability requirements change as government pursues the outcomes it needs to present to the electorate, LLEN members change the strategic direction of their organisation and so on. It is this non-routine character of informal learning that produces the need for skill in critical reflection and the uncovering of the third defining characteristic: tacit knowledge. Tacit knowledge is intangible and typically resides outside of a person’s main focus of attention: it is personal knowledge that involves values and world views and is embedded in personal experience (Marsick and Watkins 1990). Accordingly, it has two components: ‘know-how’ and ‘taken for granted’ beliefs, ideals and mental models (see Lewis 2003). While the tacit dimension of knowledge cannot be fully articulated it needs to be explored as tacit and explicit knowledge are both essential for the creation of new knowledge (Guile and Young 1999).

Thus informal learning offers the thresholds and doors that are central to becoming, but those thresholds and doors are situated in certain spaces. It is now timely to wind the concept of situated learning onto the bobbin: the argument that the social situation and its practices create the possibilities for learning with the individual learner a participant in a collective process (Harrison, Reeve, Hanson and Clarke 2002). It is this yarn that I now take up.

### *Situated Learning*

Jarvis, Holford and Griffin (1998) suggest there are two ways of thinking about the social context of learning. Firstly there is a focus on what we learn from social interactions. An example of this could be the concerns around the ‘hidden curriculum’ of schools. Secondly, there is a focus on the social purposes for which



people learn. These purposes can be collective and could include learning to advance the interests of a community. Knowledge is not a stable commodity that belongs to an individual and is then shared with others: informal learning is highly situated and dependent on social relations to occur (Harrison et al. 2002). At any one time, individuals are informally learning in a range of communities where meaning is negotiated and renegotiated as members of the community develop and share their expertise, carrying knowledge(s) between settings, resituating and integrating it in the course of their everyday lives (Harrison et al. 2002).

Collective learning cannot be dismissed as being only socialisation: it is also ‘a mutual, proactive process, in which the group . . . “acts back” on the environment’ (Jarvis et al. 1998, p.44). The reconceptualization of Vygotsky’s ‘zone of proximal development’, including the work of Lave and Wenger (1991) has brought new perspectives of the social nature of learning to the fore<sup>56</sup>. It is their ideas that I now wind onto this bobbin.

Lave and Wenger (1991) developed their concepts in studying the apprenticeship model and the idea of ‘legitimate peripheral participation.’ They moved beyond a focus on apprenticeship as an institution through adopting a societal and historical perspective of the zone of proximal development. This perspective is important in reconceptualising learning in a period of continuous social change; it emphasizes the relationship between social, cultural, linguistic and technical practices thereby demonstrating how these practices afford individuals and groups opportunity to learn over time (Guile and Young 1999). Learning is not merely situated in practice but is an integral part of social practise. Legitimate peripheral participation is not an education form or pedagogy; learning takes place no matter the form or the presence or absence of any educational intent. Legitimate peripheral participation is a concept that brings together theories of situated activity and theories about the production and reproduction of social structures (Lave and Wenger 1991).

The concept of community underpins the idea of legitimate peripheral participation and is ‘both crucial and subtle’ (Lave and Wenger 1991, p.115). A community of practice is ‘a set of relations among persons, activity and world, over time and in relation with other tangential and overlapping communities of practice’ (Lave and

---

<sup>56</sup> The zone of proximal development is the difference between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the potential development level as determined by problem solving collaboratively with more able peers (Vygotsky 1978, p.86).

Wenger 1991, p.115). They are fundamentally about life: ‘being human’ (Wenger 1998a, p.134). Such perspectives challenge the assumption that networks are ‘naturally’ communities; communities of practice differ from networks.

Communities of practice can enforce norms where networks are often too diffuse to do so; they have a closed membership where networks are open; they have a shared domain of knowledge where networks are less concentrated (Cohen and Prusak 2001; Lave and Wenger 1991; Wenger 1998a; Wenger, McDermott and Snyder 2002). Yet participation frameworks are *adaptive* structures; they are ‘more the variable outcome of action than its invariant precondition’ (Hanks 1991, p.17).

All communities of practice share a basic structure consisting of a *domain of knowledge* that creates common ground, a *community* that creates the social fabric of learning and a *practice* that is the set of frameworks, ideas, instruments, information and so forth that the community members develop, share and maintain (Wenger et al. 2002). Such communities must be addressed in

processual, historical terms. Claims *about* the definition of a community of practice and the community of practice actually in process of reproduction in that location may not coincide. (Lave and Wenger 1991, p.116, original emphasis)

Lave and Wenger emphasised the links between the everyday practice of individuals and the orientation of these practices within broader constellations including the new forms of social practice – the historical, social and institutional discourses and styles - of the ‘risk society’. Thus ‘knowing in practice’ involves an interaction between the local and the global (Wenger 1998a, p. 141). We negotiate what we consider to be knowledge ‘across practices’ (Wenger 1998a, p.141).

Situated learning as conceptualised by Lave and Wenger occurs in a participation framework rather than an individual mind. The starting point is not knowledge – which cannot be defined in the abstract – but rather practice. The act of participation is of central significance and is always based on situated negotiation and re-negotiation of meanings in the world (Lave and Wenger 1991; Wenger 1998a). Meaning arises out of negotiations combining participation and reification – the ‘process of giving form to our experience by producing objects that congeal this experience into “thingness”’ (Wenger 1998a, p.58). It is only by its practice that a community establishes what it is to be either a competent participant or an outsider or something between the two (Wenger 1998a, p.137). For the purposes of learning, the community offers peripheral forms of participation. However these

too involve some involvement with the three dimensions of membership. Peripherality is a positive position: when enabled it ‘suggests an opening, a way of gaining access to sources for understanding through growing involvement’ (Lave and Wenger 1991, p.37). We can liken this to the increasing complexity and growing number of connections that Deleuze and Guattari honour. Full participation in a community of practice does not imply movement to an imagined centre; rather it attends to a rich diversity of relations involved in community.

A community of practice is ‘an intrinsic condition for the existence of knowledge’ (Lave and Wenger 1991, p.115); being ‘knowledgeable’ involves having the knowledge and skills for successful engagement in a community of practice (Guile and Young 1999) and participation in the cultural practice of the community is ‘an epistemological principle of learning. The social structure of this practice, its power relations and its conditions for legitimacy define possibilities for learning’ (Lave and Wenger 1991, p.115). There is a multi-dimensional interaction between experience and competence: usually as newcomers our experience must align with a regime of knowledge. A community of practice is a ‘privileged locus for the *acquisition* of knowledge’ (Wenger 1998a, p.214, original emphasis):

A living context that can give newcomers access to competence and also invite a personal experience of engagement by which to incorporate that competence into an identity of participation. (Wenger 1998a, p.214)

However our experience may also foster a new regime of knowledge when there are ‘no words’ for that experience.

A well-functioning community of practice is a good context to explore radically new insights . . . A history of mutual engagement around a joint enterprise is an ideal context for this kind of leading-edge learning, which requires a strong bond of communal competence along with a deep respect for the particularity of experience. (Wenger 1998a, p.214)

With these conditions in place the community of practice can be a privileged locus for the *creation* of knowledge (Wenger 1998a, p.214, original emphasis). This is Deleuzian thinking - moving beyond cliché and setting thinking free requires a form of violence: ‘thinking is inseparable from a violence that problematizes or shakes up *doxa* and gives something new to be thought; and to conceive of it one needs the violence or “strangeness” of what can’t yet be said in the dominant or common language’ (Rajchman 2000, p.10).

For Lave and Wenger it is this two-way interaction of experience and competence that is crucial to the evolution of practice: ‘in it lies the potential for a

transformation of both experience and competency, and thus for learning, individually and collectively' (Wenger 1998a, p.139). Learning can be understood as a change in the alignment between experience and competency regardless of which takes the lead in causing the realignment. Thus Wenger refers to the crossing of boundaries - a process which can enhance or impair learning. Boundary crossing involves creating a tension between experience and competency, offering the potential of practice based connections including peripheral connections for outsiders. Thus the community of practice has 'layers' from core membership to extreme peripherality and it is in the interaction of all the levels that generativity and dynamism lies. It is the periphery that is 'a fertile area for change' (Wenger 1998a, p.118); like the boundary it is at the edge but the periphery is the point of permeability, overlap and connection. And it is Deleuze and Guattari's 'exceptional individual' (1987, p.243) that creates the conditions for the crossing of the boundary to occur.

In the organisational literature, communities of practice have become a common structure to implement 'problem-based' approaches to learning. The notion of legitimate peripheral participation positions learning as a special form of social practice that derives from participation – it gives learning an 'actional ground' (Hanks 1991, p.18) and emphasises the need to explore, devise responses to and learn from 'problems' in context. However it is the specific focus on experimentation as a mode of operation - opening the community to connections, flows, intensities; not wildly de-stratifying but rather making changes 'measured with the craft of a surveyor' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.160) - that enables the idea of situated learning to be strengthened by a rhizomatic approach. Thus it is time to wind my bobbin with the concept of action research.

### *Action Research*

It is recognised ignorance not programmed knowledge that is the key to action learning: men [sic] start to learn with and from each other only when they discover that no-one knows the answer but all are obliged to find it. (Revans 1983, p.3)

As I have already outlined, the concept of action research is central to this research. Action research addresses two inadequacies perceived in scientific approaches to social science research: firstly, the difficulties of making people who are not part of research accept the relevancy of research and act on the findings and secondly, the inaccuracy of claims of researcher disengagement (Bunning 1997). In reflecting on

the history of action research in education Kemmis and McTaggart (1988a, p.27) noted:

Researchers hope to overcome the biases and susceptibilities of participatory ways of understanding – so that they can develop a platform from which the world of schooling may be seen as a limited world which may be comprehended ‘objectively.’ It is a natural consequence of this analytical fragmentation . . . that researchers no longer speak the language of teachers and their students; their concerns are no longer the concerns of teachers.

Action research rests on three central tenets: the natural function of a system is most evident under intentional change; ‘research effect’ is not only inevitable it can be advantageous from the point of view of both action and learning; and, finally, ethical concerns demand that research subjects are not only not exploited but are empowered in the research process (Bunning 1997).

The intellectual roots of action research are commonly traced to Dewey’s (1910; 1926) contestation about the nature of educational enquiry and Lewin’s (1946; 1952) approach to uniting theory and practice (Kemmis and McTaggart 1988a)<sup>57</sup>. For Dewey, educational enquiry was an example of a general method of intelligence or ‘Complete Act of Thought’ – a method everyone, including students and school committees, could undertake when confronted by problems which could be addressed through a collective effort of enquiry and reform. For Lewin, the emphasis was on challenging social science research that had previously conceptualised the relation between theory and practice as a problem of applying the results of research (McTaggart 1991). Action research was argued to enable advances in theory and social change to be made simultaneously; it provided procedures that enabled the pursuit of a critical social science (Kemmis and McTaggart 1988a). On this claim it has been challenged by poststructuralist writers (Sanguinetti 1999). These critiques have centred on the critical framework of action research as a reflection of the modernist project with its analysing subject, knowable structures and ‘truth’ that can be unproblematically known. The poststructuralist critique has contributed to the development of a more sophisticated understanding of action research (Kemmis 1996), one that recognises the play of power relationships and the role of language in ‘creating’ experience (Cherryholmes 1988, 1993).

---

<sup>57</sup> It has been suggested that the idea of action research first appeared within the United States Bureau of Indian Affairs between 1933 and 1945 however Lewin’s work in social psychology shortly thereafter provides its theoretical basis (McTaggart 1991, p.5-6).

Lewin described the action research ‘spiral’ of planning, acting, observing and evaluating that has been elaborated to a cyclical process in which a community identifies a problem, experiments with a solution, monitors results, reflects on the process and uses the resultant information to reformulate the problem and recommence the cycle. Learning involves using the action research spiral to address the gap that is the difference between espoused theories and theories-in-use, that is, what we think we do and what we actually do (Argyris 1992/1994). Schon’s (1983) work on reflective practice provided further advocacy for the idea of practice-based enquiry. Learning from experience involves drawing inferences from the words and actions of others onto which we impose meaning and through which we formulate our future actions; errors occur if high level inferences are made before the appropriateness of our initial inferences are tested. Such ‘single-loop learning’ can be effective in the achievement of goals and targets but does not enable the questioning of assumptions and values as a basis for change.

However, action research is more than a series of steps around a spiral of circles: it is ‘a series of commitments’ (McTaggart 1993, p.21). As its ‘central feature’ action research is concerned with the use of changes in practice as a way of inducing improvement in practice (Brown, Henry, Henry and McTaggart 1982, p.2), however large or small the practice might be. Action research occurs when a community decides

to work together on a ‘thematic concern’ . . . not simply to do action research or to undergo ‘staff development’, and especially not at the behest of ‘management’. . . a group identifies an area where members perceive a cluster of problems of mutual concern and consequence. The individuals and the group they comprise need to recognise that in changing things they will confront the culture of the institution . . . and society they work in. (Brown et al. 1982, p. 22, original emphasis)

McTaggart argues that the ideas of group decision and commitment to improvement were crucial to Lewin’s work. That a community was involved was central: Lewin argued action research was difficult to accomplish alone given the politics of change. As such, participants would need support and training: ‘We should consider action, research and training as a triangle that should be kept together for the sake of any of its corners’ (Lewin 1946, p.42). In the commitment to socially just improvement there is an implied undertaking for participants to ‘create the material and political conditions necessary to sustain the common project’ (McTaggart 1993, p.24). Action research is not ‘merely about learning’

(McTaggart 1993, p.22). It fundamentally involves a commitment to action (Jarvis et al. 1998, p.119).

Thus the political nature of action research can be glimpsed. Three different kinds of action research have been proposed that use Habermas' (1972) theory of knowledge-constitutive interests: technical, practical and emancipatory. Firstly, technical action research is 'other-directed,' involving the co-option of practitioners to work on research devised by others and generally aimed at improving existing practices within existing constraints (Tripp 1984). Practical action research is analogous to craft; while it is practitioner-directed and conducted it may be assisted by a facilitator. Practical action research aims to develop new practices as well as improving existing practices but remains within an unproblematised view of constraints (Carr and Kemmis 1986; Tripp 1984). Finally, emancipatory action research is undertaken by a 'self-leading group' and aims to develop new practices and/or change constraints (McTaggart 1991; Tripp 1984). Action research in general, and emancipatory action research in particular, appears as the 'obvious' framework for research that enables 'radical discontinuities and transformations' (Hooley 2005, p.69).

While each of the forms of action research I have portrayed is defensible according to different criteria the important point is that the complementarity of knowledge interests cannot be assumed: the kind of action research that is undertaken will reflect a process of contestation which determines not only epistemology but also ontology: for instance the way that education itself is conceptualised and controlled by interests in the community (McTaggart 1991). In the course of this research I have observed each of these forms of action research and some action research that, while labelled as such, did not appear to me to involve any of its principles. As McTaggart notes, despite the popularity of the idea in Australia, action research is 'extremely difficult to initiate and sustain, even when (perhaps *especially* when) systemic imprimatur was given and other conditions were apparently favourable' (McTaggart 1991, p.39, original emphasis).

Mumford (1997, p.5) emphasises that action research is 'a planned and organized process for doing and learning, not a reactive post-experience view that something could be learned from a particular activity.' Furthermore, the most productive form of action research is that those who are involved have a responsibility for implementing the results of their learning. I have suggested LLEN must act as

learning communities to meet the intention of sustainability woven through the Victorian Government policy. Furthermore, the LLEN is not only a ‘learning’ network but also an ‘employment’ network. Solutions to employment issues require a particular focus for LLEN in community-building, a function identified as being of first importance (Victorian Learning and Employment Skills Commission 2002); education and employment outcomes for young people would emerge from healthy communities; they were not the precursor (Victorian Learning and Employment Skills Commission 2002). Community-building puts a particular focus on the knowledge creation of a *learning* network rather than the knowledge management of a learning *network*.

I have come to see action research as one way in which we can think rhizomatically when we consider a problem and recognise the inadequacy of previous solutions: action research is akin to working with the Deleuzian map ‘entirely oriented toward an experiment with the real’ (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.12). In drawing our action research maps we don’t trace what ‘is’; we construct the unconscious, use our practical and intuitive knowledge(s), foster connection, remove blockages, reverse, constantly modify and so on. In implementing cycles of action research we remain always in the middle and move closer to Deleuze and Guattari’s injunction to always put the tracing – with its highlighted regulations, accountabilities, structures, identities - back onto the map. It is in putting the points of structuration onto action research maps that we connect them back to the possibility, foster movement and the productive potential of deterritorialization.



## Monday 18 July 2005 Reflection

*I am reflecting on a gathering that happened yesterday. We enjoy a wonderful lunch at the home of our supervisor. We are all at different stages and we share our stories; our supervisor is present, but the moment is ours.*

*We agree to keep meeting, to nurture and support each other in a community of practice. How best to proceed? We discuss options. As a full-time student, I am now most involved in my thesis. As such, they have questions to ask about my earlier questions and how I came to question those. We discuss my methodology, how I came to it and how I understand it now. I offer to read my methodology at our next gathering. 'Oh, but you have finished that. It wouldn't be the most use to you; you won't want to talk about that now.'*

*And that is the very point. I respond other, 'It isn't finished. I construct it as I talk about it, and as I work within it. I understand it as never finished. In weaving it for you; I re-write it and, at the same time, I generate and analyse data. That is my methodology.' They look unsure.*

*Today I am writing these words in the middle of transcribing a tape. I listen to words spoken over a year ago; I type a transcript; I reflect on what I am hearing and simultaneously type reflections at the base of the transcript; my gaze moves from the screen to my open notebook resting on the desk to the left of my keyboard. A shaft of sunlight lies across the page and I am struck by yesterday's moment and this moment.*

*I open up a blank computer window and try to capture this experience. This seems to me to be something of what Deleuze and Guattari refer to as 'the problem of writing' (1987, p.20):*

In order to designate something exactly, anexact expressions are utterly unavoidable. Not at all because it is a

necessary step, or because one can only advance by approximations; anexactitude is in no way an approximation; on the contrary, it is the exact passage of that which is under way. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.20).

*I am now reflecting once more on my methodology because, just at this moment, this singular idea presses upon me with obscure necessity (Rajchman 2000, p.118). I glimpse a transitory understanding of myself as rhizome. I am learning my craft and it seems that I have reached that point*

*. . . pause, I know what I want to say. It hovers unformed in my awareness, just beyond my reach. I open another computer window and bring up a think piece I wrote in the past. I reflect on those words. I continue . . .*

*I am learning my craft and it seems that I have reached that point*

*. . . another pause. I consider that this story should become an article. As doctoral students we, wherever we are, stand as analysing subjects. We 'remote' ourselves from the theoretical articles we read; we declare when we are generating data and when we are 'finished that bit.' Does this not reinforce the perspective that we are 'apart from' rather than 'a part of' our research? Perhaps there is a way to continue Sunday's moment? I could take these reflections of what is happening across around within me and bring them into an academic paper to trouble that stand. I continue . . .*

*I am learning my craft. Yet here is fleeting recognition that I have deterritorialized. At some moment, a point I cannot isolate, I changed in nature and I recognised it on Sunday. It was a haecceity for me and in that moment I realised I have imbibed my theoretical perspective. Everything can be connected, and must be.*

*my fingers now move hesitantly across the keyboard  
can I capture such a moment perfectly individuated  
yet indefinite  
in the one-dimensionality of text?*

## The Fourth Panel

### ***Scattered images: An Instance-in-Action***

In the preceding Panel I wound a series of conceptual bobbins as a sub-text to this Panel where I take up all the bobbins wound thus far and a series of smaller looms. The looms enable me to weave with different warp settings, weft densities, colour mixes and techniques. By its very nature, tapestry involves a process where each part of the weft builds on what has gone before; relationship is fundamental. However, unlike cloth weaving which progresses in a perpendicular fashion, tapestry weaving allows radical changes in shape, colour and texture. Rarely will a yarn weave across all the warp threads. Even with a single loom the skilled weaver can introduce layered effects. However for my purposes I choose to move to a series of smaller looms thus allowing variation in both warp and weft and, thereby, providing for the density of weaving to suit the nature of the image: closely-spaced warps and fine wefts give regular flat grain, widely-spaced warps and thicker wefts provide a lively textured grain. Each loom tells a story<sup>58</sup> within the operation of SGR LLEN.

---

<sup>58</sup> Gough (1994, p.53) suggests educational researchers are ‘actors in a story-telling practice.’ Thus facts are not only important elements of the stories we fashion from them but are also given meaning by the story telling practices which produce them; he argues that the binary opposition between ‘fact’ and ‘fiction’ is itself a fiction. I accept this position and pause at the end of this fourth Panel to include such a ‘faction.’

## Teaching Teachers

*The LLEN Executive Officer sighed. 'I know the Principal is committed to the LLEN thing deep down. You know? We have these really passionate discussions about what's possible and all of that sort of thing. Then he gets back to his school and he says to me that there is still a whole pile of people he's got to get rid of. He didn't select them, he doesn't want them, they are not committed to the whole thing, actually they haven't even connected to it.'*

*'So,' said the Executive Officer, 'we had a meeting and asked a group of Principals what they wanted from a Graduate Diploma in Applied Learning as a new form of pre-service training for teaching staff. And what they wanted was to attract people who already had a discipline area to*

The border of this Panel contains vignettes that set the scene for the weaving on this particular loom which concerns the 'jewel in the crown' for SGR LLEN: the development of a new program by Deakin University's Faculty of Education, the Graduate Diploma of Education (Applied Learning) (GDAL). This move was prompted by the challenges facing post compulsory education providers including secondary schools, TAFE institutes, and ACE providers. As described in the Second Panel of this thesis, these organisations were increasingly being challenged to prepare young people to create and engage with a learning society through their capacity for lifelong learning. The implications of this challenge had been indicated in multiple policy documents. At a Federal level *Footprints to the Future* (Eldridge 2001) identified the need for substantial paradigm shifts in the institutional relationships between and organisational arrangements of education and training providers and the need for teachers to be professionally prepared for this new role. Similarly the *Career and Transition Services Framework* (Ministerial Council on Education Employment Training and Youth Affairs 2004) was premised on collaboration and partnership in working with young people in transition to employment and emphasised the need for staff who were both professionally trained and committed as well as able to access extensive school-community networks. These collaborative arrangements would include non-traditional learning sites including industry and community agencies. Similarly, both the reviews commissioned by the Department in Victoria (Connors 2000; Kirby 2000) indicated a need for an expanded vision of teaching that included schools, ACE and TAFE; with increased targets for school retention

*which there would be added this 'applied' skill. We were surprised and asked, "Why would you want that?" "Well," said the Principals, "we understand the problem about the academic nature of curriculum and all of that. So, if we had some other little thing next to the discipline, we could actually get the Math teacher to teach in an applied way."*

*She leaned forward towards her confidant. 'You see, they couldn't get rid of their discipline approach to the thing! So then we said, "If you were going to employ these staff, would you make up a full-time load for them with all the reforms that are based on an applied learning concept?" And they said, "No." The only way they could employ them would be if they had a discipline area and they could deploy*

teachers would also be required to cater for a broader range of learning needs. Recent policy initiatives such as VET in Schools, Enterprise Education, SBNA and, additionally in Victoria, the VCAL<sup>59</sup> have created a force, albeit contested, for new forms of pedagogy, curriculum and assessment that bridged the academic/vocational divide and departed from the discipline based approaches that had dominated and structured the activities of secondary schools and, to a greater or lesser degree depending on context, had constrained their ability to work collaboratively (Deakin University Faculty of Education 2005a; Henry and Grundy 2004). In the course of discussions between LLEN members, including members who worked within the Faculty of Education at Deakin University, the idea for a new kind of program for 'teachers of the future' was seeded.

While the broad aim of the GDAL was to foster in graduates a commitment to and capacity for lifelong learning that would enable them to respond to this new context, the specific aim of the GDAL was to enable graduates – who would come into the program with skills already gained from a career within industry, youth agencies and so forth - to meet the requirements for registration as teachers, particularly with the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) but also with other employing authorities in Australia and overseas. The motivation for this was multi-faceted: not only would it provide schools with a different kind of resource, a 'professional educator in the knowledge era' (Deakin University Faculty of Education 2005a, p.11) who could work in partnership with students in multiple learning sites, it would also provide a mechanism to seed reform

---

<sup>59</sup> VCAL enrolments increased rapidly. In its first year 16 students opted for the new senior certificate in SGR LLEN region, by 2005 504 students were enrolled. By 2005 every Catholic school, all but one government school, the TAFE and ACE all offered VCAL.

*them at Y7, Y8 or whatever it happened to be.'*

*She continued relating her 'horrible' story. 'I said, "Well answer me this then. All of you have got VCAL, you've all got VET, and you've all got an SBNA program. They are three of the reform areas. What impact have those things had on the way your schools operate?" So a Principal is sitting there, my leading light Principal, "Actually that is an interesting question" he said. "And the answer to it is none."'*

inside schools. As a 'teacher' these graduates would have the credibility to challenge the entrenched practices of other teachers. It is the portrayal of the 'what happened' as a consequence of this specific aim that I am weaving today.

Because the specific aim of the program was to allow graduates to gain teacher registration, some form of training had to take place<sup>60</sup> and it had to be undertaken by a recognised teacher education provider. However, fundamental to the program was its applied delivery: a mix of two-week intensive on-campus teaching blocks spread across four seasonal schools and a final study week at the end of each semester. After each intensive, the students would spend 4 – 6 weeks in an Applied Learning and Teaching Experience (ALTE) placement:

Throughout the ALTE placements students are encouraged to explore and experience how genuine examples of applied learning go beyond the traditional walls of a school classroom and beyond the traditional boundaries of educational institutions, workplaces and community agencies. It is intended that you will be learning, first hand, how applied learning can be used to engage students in deep and meaningful learning experiences by adopting a 'hands-on' and experiential approach in your own professional learning. (Deakin University Faculty of Education 2005b, p.2)

The ALTE was intended to provide a minimum of 60 days<sup>61</sup> concentrated work based learning in a secondary school, TAFE institute or ACE provider, or some other alternative

---

<sup>60</sup> Within the consultations it was suggested that registration would not be forthcoming 'if some kind of exchange of knowledge couldn't be proved to VIT.' VIT requires one year of full-time training, thus this program came into alignment with the current teacher education Graduate Diploma in Education Studies. However in part the innovation of this program lay in the skills these students already had as mid-career professionals who would be able to work with school students in industry, schools and other settings. Furthermore on multiple occasions during the community consultations the concern was expressed that 'the training doesn't stifle the very attributes you are seeking'; it was argued that schools were full of teachers who had four years of teacher education but were unable to work effectively with all students. This comment prompted a response that 'that argument wouldn't win any friends in the teaching sector.' These tensions indicate an intersection between the signifier 'teacher' and the potential for recognising prior learning and current competency. My own earlier work (Kamp 2003) provides an example of the failure to realise this potential in regard to mature women students seeking qualifications in the New Zealand context. However these tensions also intersect with concerns about the de-professionalization of the teaching profession in a changing industrial relations context.

site. These weeks involved three days on placement<sup>62</sup> and two days of study during which the students would be connected to other students and their lecturers, both academic and non-academic, through the university's on-line technology. The usual 'practicum' for teacher training would be met through these placements with teaching practice integrated wherever possible with action research projects to combine theory with practice. It was recognised that the quality of both placement and the on-campus blocks, which would include input from exemplary practitioners across the community – some of whom would be enrolled in the program themselves – was vital and relied on the relationships that the Faculty was able to build with schools, TAFE, ACE and employers. This relationship building depended on the Faculty's participation in community organisations and occurred in large part through the involvement of the Faculty with SGR LLEN, the Department, the G21 Lifelong Learning Pillar, ACE, TAFE and GACC.

*'Will the LLEN be able to show the GDAL as an outcome of its work?' her confidant asks.*

*'Yes' says the Executive Officer. 'All the concept papers position the LLEN as the partner.'*

*'Do you know if any of the other LLEN have got anything quite as . . . '*

*'Wonderful?' interjects the Executive Officer.*

*Her confidant laughs.*

*'Fundamental. I mean, it has been an on-going*

Deakin University's Faculty of Education was well placed to be the provider. While the program would reside within the Faculty, it was not a 'child' of the Faculty; it was 'born of partnership' with Deakin University being one of the partners. Deakin's Faculty of Education had been active researchers in the field of action research and critical pedagogy (Kemmis and McTaggart 1988a, 1988b; McTaggart 1991); this expertise would need to be drawn on given the recognition that the University, the students and the community would all be part of this discovery about the

---

<sup>61</sup> For full-time students.

<sup>62</sup> ALTE placements could be negotiated as larger, single blocks throughout the program if cause to do so was established.

*issue from Day 1. Even before I came here in the course of my work it was clear teachers struggled to make this shift. You know, that question of how do Principals, even the LLEN Principals, how do they make it spread through their school?*

*This is coming at it from the outside-in on another level. You are getting multiple avenues rather than just admiring the problem as too big to shift. You actually could make a huge impact.'*

*'You see, why this project is so important to me,' she says 'and I've put mega-hours in supporting the team in this. Why it is so important is that we recognise it as an opportunity to build the capacity of the region.*

nature of an applied learning pedagogy (Deakin University Faculty of Education 2005a). Furthermore, not only were some of the Faculty members of SGR LLEN and involved in the COM, a research institute of Deakin University located within the Faculty had also been commissioned by the Victorian Qualifications Authority (VQA) to evaluate VCAL in 2002 and 2003. This evaluation had demonstrated that teachers were having difficulty with the changing curriculum and an expanding commitment to lifelong learning in a variety of contexts. However, that is not to suggest that there was unanimous support for the GDAL. Some sections of the Faculty, including some involved in the course delivery, questioned the theoretical underpinning of the initial program content and mode of delivery. Others suggested that demand for the program reflected a lack of appreciation of the potential of programs already being delivered in the Faculty: teachers were already trained in an applied manner that combined theory and practice and had always learnt the practical skills of teaching during their practicum. This position was challenged by those staff within Deakin University who were working to implement the GDAL; they had attempted to construct the intensive curriculum from the teacher education units that were already in use and had found they 'didn't fit.' As such, the team had devised eight new units to achieve the task<sup>63</sup>.

As I write, the GDAL is mid-way through its first year and is demonstrating problems common to many one-year duration programs. These include some students missing intensives and, therefore, theoretical material or struggling in

---

<sup>63</sup> It is beyond the constraints of this loom to explore the development of these new units. However in discussion and debate many taken for granted tools began to unravel, for instance, the assumption that each unit would have an individual study guide and maybe a reflective journal. The more desirable alternative was argued to be one study guide with a journal as the central and integrating process for the entire program.

*And we want the Geelong region to own this course. You know? And I can see this band of merry warriors who can teach in schools, or TAFE, or ACE, or in the youth organisation, just available as a very skilled group of people pursuing this post compulsory agenda.'*

*Her confidant nods.*

*'Yes. And teachers will listen to teachers. So if you have people who are teachers –*

*'These are the new teachers,' says the Executive Officer.*

*'Yes but in a completely different way, with a different world view in their heads because they can say "I do what my training was, but my training was different." I loved to hear that yesterday when you made that comment about it being kept completely separate from the current teacher education program because that is so entrenched, if it is*

inappropriate or difficult placements. They also include difficulty with, or resistance to, theoretical concepts. At the same time, the program is facing a range of teething problems as all 'new' programs do. These include the learning processes of the academic staff about the different opportunities within and expectations of the students in the program and how they respond to those opportunities and expectations. They also include the working-through of how best to structure the units of the program. However, what I wish to explore now is the extent to which this program has a particular problem that is linked to the signifier 'teacher.'

The essence of the program was that it would mirror the applied learning pedagogical approach central to the students' understanding of themselves as applied learning teachers of young people in a range of learning environments including but not limited to schools. During the public forums for the Parliamentary Enquiry into Teacher Education, current teachers had related how their process of learning to become 'teacher' had not modelled the process of teaching they would subsequently need. As such, the GDAL was informed by theories of adult learning, work based learning including action research and learning as knowledge production as distinct from knowledge transmission, and organisational learning. These kinds of theories had appeared in staff development within schools for some time in the literature around teacher professional development (Lieberman and Grolnick 1998) and the professional development of vocational education practitioners (Mitchell et al. 2001). To meet VIT's specific teaching practicum requirements to gain teacher registration, within the ALTE students had to spend a minimum of 45 days being supervised by a registered teacher. These days could be accumulated through a combination of school,



*imbedded in it, it will disperse it.'*

*She laughs. 'Well some of the Faculty have tried to get the heads of others around it and the most they could do was to add a social welfare unit to the current teacher training programs. But you see the problem we've got here though? Who the hell is going to teach this?'*

*'Well' said the Executive Officer, 'I hadn't really understood the complexity of all of this or the nature of the politics that we are actually up against. And um it is patently clear to me that people haven't grasped what this means, to have a post compulsory education and training sector. And um you know there's a*

TAFE, ACE or industry but at least 23 days had to be in a secondary school. Managing the pedagogical complexities and forging the links with industry that are fundamental to this turn towards applied learning processes required a particular kind of paradigm shift in schools to which the GDAL graduates could contribute, a point not lost on some Principals who had already committed to the operation of their school as a '*becoming* structure' (Roy 2003, p.60), that is, a multiplicity. For instance, one local school had worked on an action research project with SGR LLEN in 2002 which involved a wilderness adventure for Y9 students and teachers. As a result of their findings, the school then made the commitment to reform Y9 curriculum and pedagogy towards an applied learning model as a result of which they faced a 'revolt' from many teachers. Contemporaneously, the school had developed a partnership with a number of ACE agencies aimed at the establishment of an adult learning centre to deliver a VCAL Pilot Project for young adults returning to learning. The Principal and his advisor continued with these projects with many teachers passively resisting the innovations or resigning from the school. However the number who left the school was insufficient to forge a 'line of flight'; while a structure of innovation was present, innovation itself was not. This school indicated a willingness to take *all* of the GDAL students for their ALTE: the Principal recognised the paradigm shift the students could contribute to the school at the same time as the students would gain by meeting their practicum requirements in a school where their applied focus would be supported at the highest level.

However, this situation would not be the norm. Just as SGR LLEN had experienced difficulties in seeking structured workplace learning opportunities for young people

*lot of things that I could have inserted into that conversation but that wasn't the point of yesterday's meeting. It was about listening to what these people think this is all about, what they think they need. And it is devastating.'*

*I think we've got to stop using the word 'school'. I think that we're training people to work in a post compulsory education and training sector. That is what we are doing.'*

as part of VCAL, SBNA and so forth, the ability to secure not only a placement but an appropriate placement was difficult and, given the theoretical underpinning of the program, crucial. The Faculty already sought hundreds of practicum placements in schools for their undergraduate and postgraduate pre-service teacher education students each year; the GDAL students required a specific kind of placement that appeared to flummox many schools. Students were in their first ALTE by February 28 2005 after only one two-week intensive on-campus; those in schools on their first ALTE at times found themselves struggling to contribute in a discipline area as teacher education students 'usually' did. As such, some GDAL students came back asking to be taught to be 'an old-fashioned teacher' as they believed that until they could, they had no credibility with teachers already in schools and felt unable to contribute to this opportunity for significant professional development in schools (Deakin University Faculty of Education 2005a). Teachers – according to themselves and to some students – were experts: there was 'a certain idea of what a teacher does.' In other words, in modelling an *expanded* concept of the role 'teacher' some students felt they were positioned, or positioned themselves, as *lesser*.

Even where a placement was in a secondary school delivering VCAL, which certainly linked but did not have the breadth intended for ALTE, there was a high likelihood that such vocationally-oriented applied learning programs were not identified as quality curriculum, that a teacher-centred, expository, classroom-based pedagogy prevailed and that where schools had entered partnerships with other education providers in delivering programs these were an adjunct to their core business rather than a force for change (Deakin University Faculty of Education 2005a).

Commonly, despite the rhetoric and some pockets of receptivity, VCAL was perceived as something a school had to do when it wasn't busy with the stuff that is – as defined by the system and the public – 'the measure' of secondary schools: the VCE and the ENTER score it generates. Staff in some schools, who were involved in ALTE placements, told me that VCAL was 'just a headache' that 'made schools neglect most of their students, that is, the VCE students' (Lee, school timetabler, 2004)<sup>64</sup>. Yes, they offered VCAL. But only because they were in a competitive funding situation and if the school across town offered VCAL then they had to offer it too. A further perception was that VCAL was for a 'type of student who had no idea and wouldn't commit' (Keith, teacher, 2004) rather than acting as an alternative for those students moving towards apprenticeships, further vocational education and training or employment. These diverse perceptions created tensions within schools between those working positively with the various post compulsory initiatives, those who felt overwhelmed by them and those who were opposed to them.

Given the action research focus of the GDAL, this context in itself would not constitute a problem: what wasn't working could be as strong a source of learning as what was working. However, if the ALTE placement was in a school that was not aware of or committed to the broad aim of the program and its theoretical underpinnings, or was divided by the diverse reactions of its current teachers, then it could create

---

<sup>64</sup> The VCE is the largest single program element of post compulsory education provision in Victoria having been the only program until the mid-1990s. The great majority of school students do not progress to university – in SGR LLEN region the percentage is approximately 30% of those enrolled in secondary education; approximately 12% complete the undergraduate degree they enrol in (Smart Geelong Region Local Learning and Employment Network Inc 2002, p.10). However the VCE is dominated by the ENTER requirements, the discipline approach which parallels it, and parents, teachers, and students share the view that VCE is 'about' going to university (Kirby 2000, p.69)

significant tension for the GDAL student. Given the ALTE placements were negotiated along with all the other practicum placements handled by one of the Faculty's School Experience Officers, there was potential, particularly in this pilot year, for this significance to be lost.

Furthermore, within the Faculty of Education's GDAL course team there was some lack of clarity of what would constitute an appropriate ALTE placement.

One way of understanding these dynamics in the ALTE placement is to consider teachers' work as *bricolage*<sup>65</sup> (Hatton 1988/2000). Hatton outlines the parallels between what teachers do and what bricoleurs do. Firstly, teachers tend to accommodate, rather than transcend, constraints on their work even when that work moves beyond the classroom. Secondly, while institutional constraints do limit creativity, a tendency to rely on concrete rather than abstract theory and a limited array of 'tools' ensure that teacher creativity can be very limited. This leads to the third parallel: when teachers do extend their array of 'tools' it is by collecting them as they are encountered and in regard to their ability to solve a particular problem rather than through the deployment of theory. Fourthly, research suggests that when theory is deployed it is often through co-opting explanatory categories with which to perform intellectual bricolage. Fifthly, teachers often (sensibly) employ the bricoleur's 'devious means,' for instance provoking a frustrating learning situation to 'spark' interest in the lesson

---

<sup>65</sup> Drawing on the concept as developed by Levi-Strauss (1974) bricolage is understood in terms of its practitioner, the bricoleur: a 'professional-do-it-yourself' person. Rather than considering a project and then asking what tools are required for its completion, the bricoleur reviews the pool of tools they have and considers how they might be used to complete, or approximately complete, the project. Understanding the project does not motivate the bricoleur to acquire new materials; it is the possible uses of the tools to hand which determines not only the degree to which the project is completed but, potentially, also the extent to which the project is understood. Furthermore, the tools the bricoleur acquires in the first place are not collected with a particular use in mind but more in the hope they might be useful (Hatton 1988/2000, p. 1361-2).

*It is August 2004 and stakeholders gather at the LLEN to review progress. The Executive Officer sits beside her friend and collaborator in the GDAL, the man from Deakin University.*

*He speaks to the group. 'Well, it is now tracking through the University Committee Process. It has to get through on the academic front, that's the accreditation process, and the economic front, the Planning and Resources Committee. That will stack up alright, we've got 30 Commonwealth Supported Places for 2005 and the subsequent three years. Once it's recognised through Deakin and VIT it could be delivered nationally.'*

*The conversation moves along: the recruitment and selection process; the supervision process for the ALTE. The man from ACE interrupts the discussion.*

to follow. Finally, an integral part of teachers' work and bricolage is '*ad hocism*.' Ad hoc responses are often devised and enacted within the confines of a limited and fixed culture; they are unlikely to solve a problem in any lasting sense. However *ad hocism* can also be appropriate when theory fails to generate means that are adequate to all desired ends. As such, bricolage is not a bad thing *per se* and can be a realistic response to the lack of time and limited opportunities for professional development experienced by teaching staff since the reforms of the 1990s. However, pedagogically inadequate bricolage can block reform efforts in schools. Beginning teachers had been 'in large measure thrown back on their own individually collected and contrived resources in real classrooms' (Hatton 1988/2000, p.1366); they were now established teachers – supported industrially and licensed as autonomous professionals (Seddon et al. 2005) - who gained their knowledge of teaching through experience within existing constraints and had a vested interest in maintaining those constraints:

Existing constraints, including the culture which contributes to its own dilemmas, are what these bricoleurs own and to some extent control. For such teachers to consciously set about making changes in their existing culture would be to erode those skills in which they take their competence to consist. (Hatton 1988/2000, p.1367)

Hatton suggests that teachers' work as bricolage is formulated in large part through a lack of, or the ill-timed introduction of, a sufficient and *applied* theoretical framework during the process of teacher education. Furthermore, the work based component of teacher education, the practicum, required a shift towards the promotion of reflective action and this in turn had implications for teacher educators. Teacher education itself had been:

massively implicated in the production of bricoleurs of the wrong kind. . . . It is worth remarking that the

*'It seems this is about more opportunities for those people who are already qualified.'*

*The man from Deakin sighs. 'Well, one of the things lurking as a concern is that people will use this as some kind of short cut into teaching.'*

*'We will definitely be caught up in that situation,' says the Executive Officer. 'The minimum criteria for entry are hard to demonstrate for some people who would be ideal candidates.'*

*'Yes.' says the man from Deakin. 'These are issues that we've thought about. We tried to build a bridging process into the actual program but it became too hard when the program is only a year long. So we will recruit and select and those that have insufficient qualifications will do a bridging process and then enter the program.'*

view that only experienced teachers have worthwhile things to say about teaching is ripe for challenge. . . . Without a serious challenge to existing views and orientations of the tertiary bricoleurs, necessary radical changes in programs, strategies and content are likely to be effectively resisted or, indeed subverted. (Hatton 1988/2000, p.1377,1378)

The GDAL is an attempt at such a radical change to post-primary teacher profession, a change for which a pressing need had been argued (Henry and Grundy 2004). This was not just an alternative pathway for prospective teachers. Rather, it was an attempt to pilot a shift in what it means to be a professional educator in a knowledge era contemporaneously with fundamental organisational changes in secondary schools driven by a policy framework for essential learning that increasingly focused on cross-disciplinary processes rather than disciplinary content (Deakin University Faculty of Education 2005a, 2005b). As such, the GDAL was not only of interest to the Geelong community but also to the Victorian Schools Innovation Commission, the federal Parliamentary Enquiry into Pre-Service Teacher Education and the state Department of Education which was also innovating in attracting mid-career professionals into teaching. Furthermore, the program had been developed in consultation with VIT who had been supportive and provided advice to guide the process. However, VIT's role could also be understood as *bricolage*; at this point they could only work creatively with the registration tools they had to hand rather than designing new tools to fit the task. Yet in constraining the pilot in this manner there was a loss of innovation.

What does this portrayal tell us about the potential of the GDAL to be an 'example of what a reform strategy can look like'? It is time to engage more directly with some Deleuzian thoughts. A Deleuzian lens would suggest that the demands of a post compulsory education, training and

*We could explore other options, but that is work for the future.'*

*The Executive Officer crosses her arms. 'I will accept that. For now. But the central issue is delivering what is needed, not fitting into an arbitrary qualifications system.'*

*'It's not arbitrary,' says the man from Deakin University. 'It's established and we have to work inside it. We've ended up with a compromise to meet the requirements of VIT.'*

*'Okay,' says the Executive Officer. 'In terms of a change process at least you are in ongoing dialogue with them, it's a beginning. We have to have them moving with us to gain access to structural change.'*

employment sector require teacher education programs that foster an understanding of the generative pedagogical possibilities of the irregular spaces and moments that teachers, tertiary educators and students now move within.

This is not a case of adding another tool to the repertoire of future teachers. Rather it 'connected to the very images teachers held of themselves and their roles that reified the boundaries and limited possibilities of action' (Roy 2003, p.5). In attempts to contain difference within the constraints of what is manageable, that is in becoming *bricoleur*, not only is the potential for innovation subverted but stress is introduced through friction generated in the situation the attempt itself creates. For Deleuze it is impossible to deal with difference from a perspective of unity; rather we can focus on multiplicity as 'the multiple in the pure state, to cease treating it as the numerical fragment of a lost Unity' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.32). What is required is to work positively with difference; to complicate thinking including our identitarian thinking around 'student', 'teacher' and 'curriculum.' Instead the intersection and temporary connection between teacher and curriculum, or student and teacher, is understood as a situation where multiplicities encounter each other and form an assemblage. Whereas we commonly think of change, relationship, ambiguity, mixture and so forth as something that happens subsequent to stable and fixed entities coming into contact with one another, Deleuze & Guattari posit the fundamental interpenetration of things: being involves 'endless and multiple involvements that enwrap things in the world in an inevitable, albeit dynamic and transitory interrelationship' (Mansfield 2000, p.140). Every event or entity is composed of multiplicities, including ourselves, the student, the teacher and the curriculum, and their connections include social, artistic, ethical and affective dimensions. Thus, just as social

capital meets a need to understand the ‘work of connections’ which are evident when different individuals profit differently from apparently equivalent cultural or economic capital by way of their ability to forge connections and effectively mobilize the capital of a group (Bourdieu 1986), multiplicity meets a need to understand the pedagogical potential of multi-dimensional connection which some teachers can capitalize on while others cannot. Instead of being passively affected by or fiercely resistant to reform opportunities offered by programs such as VCAL, or indeed the practicum aspect of the GDAL, the attempt involves developing an appreciation for the richness of these lines of undeniable force; the opportunity to foster connections which work productively with desire, release intensity and result in multiple and even contradictory possibilities:

Multiplicities can be rearranged, disassembled, and reassembled to form new assemblages. This means that thought and affect can be transformed and extended in previously unthought-of ways by taking into account sensations and intensities that were previously excluded. (Roy 2003, p.87)

*April 2005 and the Executive Officer is reflecting on whether she still believes this is ‘the jewel in the crown.’ ‘Yes, yes, I do. That section of the university has seen it is time that the university lived in the community. That it cannot sit in Deakin and run this course with any integrity. And so the whole second school*

Clearly, a fundamental tension exists in this LLEN Project. The phrase ‘experimentation in contact with the real’ is indicative of Deleuze & Guattari’s recognition that all of these efforts are historically located (Gough 2004). In working innovatively, Principals and current teachers are confronted with contradictory and compelling demands. During the community consultations reference was made by teachers of the ‘panic’ of going into a learning environment with process, rather than fixed curriculum, as a guide. As Ball (2000, p.3) explains, in the contemporary context of performativity teachers experience ‘a state of conscious and permanent visibility . . . at the intersection of government, organisation and self-formation.’ Research also indicates the ability of experienced teachers to learn will be strongly



*that they had was conducted at one of the local secondary schools and they're going to move it around now so they will be locating it in other schools and other education sites. It is like taking the course out there into the community and it is going to become, the reason it is the jewel is - apart from the fact that it is training people to help with the reform - it is going to be opening the doors when the participants are working and any teachers and others who are there can come in and they can learn with the people and all of that kind of thing. And I just love it. That is why I love it.'*

influenced by the cultural norms and practices of their school department (Hodkinson and Hodkinson 2003). Yet 'panoptic performativity' directs the whole effort of some schools away from pedagogy and reflective practice and toward ensuring they can 'measure up' (Perryman 2006). While what students learn is often uncertain, unpredictable and dependent on goings-on at various levels in a given context at a given time (Davis 2000) teachers articulate the panic of perhaps not being able to justify their practice:

every time I do something intuitive I just feel guilty about it. "Is this right; am I doing this the right way; does this cover what I am supposed to be covering; should I be doing something else; should I be more structured; should I have this in place; should I have done this?" (Jeffrey and Woods 1998, p.118)

The teachers-for-the-future that will graduate from the Graduate Diploma in Applied Learning at Deakin University are being trained specifically to do 'something intuitive'; they are being asked to subvert the very context in which they must be deemed competent. As newcomers they engage in the peripheral practices – many tacit and intuitive – that are legitimated by the teaching community; this is how they learn to become a community practitioner (Lave and Wenger 1991; Wenger 1998a). Thus central to this effort must be an effort by those teaching these teachers to move away from the signifier 'teacher' into the flux of the multiplicities – this involves the ongoing learning of the full members of the teaching community, one that will reproduce that community (Wenger 1998a). This process is fundamental to deterritorialization and movement into open terrain, avoiding the danger identified by Deleuze & Guattari, 'You may make a rupture, draw a line of flight, yet there is still a danger that you will reencounter organizations that restratify everything, formations that restore power to a signifier, attributions that reconstitute a subject' (1987, p.9). It is in being 'lesser' that innovation proliferates.

To understand what SGR LLEN was seeking in this program we need to picture change as a process of creating porosity in the lines of segmentarity within and around the arborescent system that is a school. The intent is to have more than impact, it is better envisaged as a multi-directional and dimensional invasion, a metaphor that accords with the LLEN Executive Officer's description of these students as 'warriors'; the graduates, by gaining experience of schools and authority as 'teachers' would be better equipped to undermine those school structures that were barriers to the formation of a post compulsory sector. This portrayal sits somewhat in tension with that of other stakeholders in the LLEN. On occasion in the course of my research I heard the comment that the LLEN was not interested in teachers and didn't do things for schools. The evidence for these assertions was that teachers didn't know about the LLEN or the LLEN didn't put sufficient project funds into schools. These charges were accepted, comfortably, by the SGR LLEN Executive Officer. This was confrontational work that required the ability to 'think a long way ahead and think strategically and not be concerned about people cackling out there and understand that if there wasn't cackling there'd be nothing there, it would be a dead beast, a dead parrot' (Freya, LLEN committee member, 2003). What this network was attempting to do was to nurture the life of a new sector within which schools and teachers would operate and, in the process, would move beyond their boundary distinctions about learning, classrooms, teaching, teachers and curriculum. She was interested in 'the messy lives' of teachers, but only of those teachers willing to see their messy lives as part of an emerging post compulsory education, training and employment sector.

## Disordered Chronologies and Sexual Deviants<sup>66</sup>

*I invite you to imagine a scene: it is 11.30am on a sunny Tuesday morning in the first Term of the 2005 school year at a secondary school in Corio, one of the 'problem' neighbourhoods in the northern suburbs of Geelong. Behind a closed door in the hall that opens into the gymnasium two young women relax in a small common room that is packed full of 'things-that-might-come-in-useful-one-day'. The young women, both aged 17, are doing what senior students do with their free periods: one sits on the desk, leaning back against the window to enjoy the sun beating on her back. She is swinging her legs and sipping from a water bottle. The other relaxes in an armchair, studiously working her way through a pack of crisps as they chat about the events of the morning. It is only when you cast your eyes down a little that you notice, curled in the arm of the second young woman, a newborn infant. Nicholas is a mere nine days old and is already at his community school; his mother is an enrolled student completing her senior school certificate. She is on leave from classes at present as Nicholas can't go into the on-site childcare centre until he is 6 weeks' old. However you are struck by the wonderful realisation that his mum, a young woman who walked away from her first experience of secondary school years ago, now chooses to be at school even when she doesn't have to be.*

### Weaving the background

The scene you have just imaged is one of many that I observed at the Young Parents' Access Project (YPAP), one of the first initiatives SGR LLEN networked. The Project is based at a senior<sup>67</sup> secondary school in Corio, one of Geelong's northern suburbs, in a community which continues to be recognized as one of the most disadvantaged in the region (Mukherjee 1997; Vinson 2004). This community disadvantage is evident within the school population: in 2002, CBSC had an independent student population – that is, students who had already left their parental home and were living independently – of 57 students from the overall enrolment of around 366 students. 52% of the CBSC population held health cards – only available to the lowest income earners<sup>68</sup> – and only 45% of students or their families contributed financially to the school by way of voluntary school fees of a few hundred dollars per year (Angwin, Harrison, Kamp and Shacklock 2004). The need for a response to the educational needs of teenage parents had been apparent to

---

<sup>66</sup> This title is drawn from Lesko (2001, p.147) where she poses the question 'Shall we continue to make school-aged mothers visible only as disordered chronologies and sexual deviants?'

<sup>67</sup> Senior secondary schools are schools enrolling only Y11 and Y12 students, the two years generally associated with completion of the VCE.

<sup>68</sup> Health care cards are income tested. For a single person initial eligibility is based on a total gross weekly income of less than \$351.00.

the staff at the school for many years given the birth rate for 15-24 year olds in the area was nearly four times the national average (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2001). Early parenthood has been found to be the greatest single cause of dropping out of school for teenage girls; the younger the pregnant teenager is, the more likely it is that she will never complete her senior school (Brindis and Philliber 1998). Early parenthood is also linked to school dropout to a lesser extent for teenage fathers: such disparity as there is reflects that teenage fathers are on average two to three years older and less consistently have a continuing commitment to a relationship with and responsibility for their child (Osofsky, Osofsky and Diamond 1998). Students who are not succeeding at school are disproportionately likely become pregnant and, if they haven't already, to drop out of school when they do become pregnant (Furstenberg, Brooks-Gunn and Morgan 1987). Teenage mothers did not achieve as much education as older mothers, were often pressured to leave school by the school (either overtly or covertly), or by their families, or found it difficult to perform their schoolwork. The chances of ever graduating are worse for those who drop out before their pregnancy and are then faced with the challenge of returning than for those who are in school when they become pregnant (Brindis and Philliber 1998). While both 'good' and 'bad' students get pregnant, some students 'handle it better' which means, according to Pillow, keeping your pregnant self and/or mothering self separate from school (2004, p.115)<sup>69</sup>.

Research indicates teenage parents, both fathers and mothers, are much more likely to experience economic hardship and family disruption in later life than those who bear and rear children when older. Teenage parenting does not, in itself, confirm a life of poverty and welfare dependence, but prior disadvantage, combined with limited academic ability and aspirations, increases the odds of hardship for teenage parents and their children (Bonell 2004; Furstenberg et al. 1987; Luker 1996; Milne-Home, Power and Dennis 1996; Osofsky et al. 1998; Polit 1992; Social Exclusion Unit 1999). Low educational achievement of teenage parents foreshadowed difficulty in the labour market: teenage mothers were less likely to find stable and remunerative employment and to suffer marital instability, as such,

---

<sup>69</sup> It is interesting to note that the Kirby Report explored in depth the issue of early school leaving in Victoria. This included an analysis of motives for early leaving by gender. Girls are up to four times more likely to leave early for 'health reasons' which, one can only assume, includes the reason of teenage pregnancy.

were more likely to become reliant on welfare and to suffer poverty. However research is not available to indicate that this economic disadvantage persists (Brindis and Philliber 1998). Teenage pregnancy is a symptom of poverty rather than a cause of poverty: while teenagers from all social classes become pregnant it is those from disadvantaged social groups that are more likely to persist with their pregnancy and become teenage parents (Brindis and Philliber 1998; Kelly 2000a; Luker 1996). As Beck (1992) reminds us, the rich can purchase 'safety' from the risks associated with life events such as 'too-soon' parenting: teenage pregnancy can be hidden through abortion and private service provision for teenage parents (Kelly 2000a).

### **Con-text: the weaver**

The weaving of this loom has troubled me: I pull the word-threads together; I stand back and consider the work. It is flat, it has no depth. I unpick the work and re-order the threads but still it does not flow. Yes, the image portrays the observations I have made over the past three years but it does not connect to the me that was, and remains, a teenage parent. This Panel will contain too many gaps unless I provide con-text: how does all that research intersect with my life? The process of undertaking the literature review for YPAP was, for me, a haecceity. It wasn't just research, it was my 'bits of experience' being told by other researchers who do not even know of my existence. This new 'bit of experience' – doctoral candidate researching teenage parenting – came together in an individuation that was uniquely mine and led me to think differently about the earlier parts of my life and the consequences of 'too-soon' parenting. As such, I must weave my own background as well.

In my world then – New Zealand in the 1970s – the school leaving age was 15 and many students did leave at 15, or perhaps have achieved their School Certificate which was completed at the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> Form year, to enter a buoyant labour market. There were a further two senior years of school available, Sixth Form Certificate and University Entrance exams were attempted at the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> Form year and, for the most able, a 7<sup>th</sup> Form year was available. It was during my 5<sup>th</sup> Form year that I became pregnant. Having no apparent ability to consider an proffered abortion, I completed the school year 'invisibly': the school was never told of my pregnancy; my uniform was adjusted – a new loose-fitting jersey knitted

– to hide my swelling belly; endless notes were written by my parents to excuse me from any ‘risky’ physical education classes. My friends were not told. The only people who knew of this teenage pregnancy were me, my child’s father, and our

**Memory September 1975**

rainy windshield  
me, front seat passenger  
i thrill, adult-like, hands resting,  
my father to my right, focus on the road  
my mother Home, thousands of miles  
absent

me, not telling  
denying the child inside

respective families. I sat my 5<sup>th</sup> Form exams in the school hall with all the other candidates, then emptied my locker, walked out of the school grounds and went home to await the birth of my child whom, it was intended, would be adopted. What would then happen to me was never really spoken of. My family was ‘new’ to the middle-classes, working-class immigrants who had

socially ‘climbed’: there was no cultural capital that would lead any of us to suggest I aspire to university studies.

In 1970s middle-class New Zealand the usual practice was to abort or adopt ‘unplanned’ children. In recent years I have found out that three of my school friends also had teenage pregnancies. One was sent away to a home for teenage mothers for the term of her pregnancy and the child was adopted out. One remained at home with her family and her child was also adopted out notwithstanding that she ultimately married the child’s father. The third pregnancy was terminated. I am the only one who had the joy of being able to take action on that fear of never knowing what would become of my child, of knowing for sure that she was safe, of watching her become. My family came from working-class backgrounds where, as my father

**Memory 9 March 1976**

adopt. The Right Thing.  
but how to know  
she’d be safe  
at night?  
by Being she has challenged the plan  
her small silent strong voice

me, telling my father  
‘she stays’  
my father, telling me  
‘you’re right’

would tell me subsequent to my decision to raise my daughter myself, ‘you don’t

give your children away.’ As such, although we did not ‘purchase safety’ from the risks of teenage parenting, we did have the economic and social capital to manage the financial risks. I did not have prior disadvantage: my parents had ‘made it’ to the middle-classes and did have strong community networks that supported all of us through the transition of having my daughter join our family. But I remained at risk on other dimensions: although I was, apparently, academically able I had no meaning I could attach to that ability. I see myself in Reay’s (2004, p.435) analysis of Bourdieu’s habitus: ‘circumscribed by an internalized framework that makes some possibilities inconceivable, others improbable and a limited range acceptable.’ My studies seemed to have no meaning to my world as daughter + parent + girlfriend + sister + student – in that order. Our response to my pregnancy – as was the response of my friends to their pregnancies - was to hide my pregnant-self from my school so I could complete my School Certificate. I cannot declare that my school would not have supported me if I had declared my pregnancy: it never occurred to me or my family that we would ask for, let alone demand, such support. I did continue my schooling subsequent to my daughter’s birth – through enrolling with the New Zealand Correspondence School - but this did not provide me with any sense of engagement and, once I completed my Sixth Form Certificate, I formally disengaged from school. I had no educational aspirations: my aspirations were to marry my child’s father, to make a nice home of the flat under his parents’ home, and raise our daughter as best I could. Thus a ‘working-class habitus can still be embodied in ambiguously located individuals within the field of education, generating uncertainty, ambivalence, anxiety and a sense of disenfranchisement’ (Reay 2004, p.440). Like those teenage parents I found in the literature, I have experienced the ‘odds of hardship’ that a lack of aspirations can bring. I have gotten by on part-time work and a low-income, I have suffered marital instability and have been dependent on welfare, I have

### **Memory April 1976**

the doctor knows best

‘why is that child with you?’

confirming fear that holds hands with my uncertainties

‘you’ve ruined her life, your life’

cheeks wet, throat tight

my father, telling me

‘he’s wrong’

§

been a sole-parent for the greater part of my life. However, those disadvantages have not persisted: like many other teenage parents I eventually formed an assemblage of the bits of life in a way that enabled me to release my potential. It has been personally rewarding to witness the efforts of a school determined to proactively provide teenage parents, both enrolled and returning, with the opportunity to integrate their continuing education with their life, to identify and work with their abilities, to aspire and to realize some of those aspirations within their community school.

### *Developing the YPAP*

The Corio school had always encouraged pregnant students to focus on continuing their education regardless of their pregnancy and had attempted to develop flexible solutions to assist their success. These included modifying the VCE program to allow additional time to complete its requirements, support in accessing welfare entitlements, assistance with transport, interaction with childcare providers, flexible attendance arrangements, change and breastfeeding facilities and so on. Although as a rule it was not supported because of the disruption caused to other students, many teachers would accept the presence of students' children in classes when a lack of childcare was a barrier to attendance for a teenage parent. Even where it was quietly accepted, this accommodation of the students' children in classrooms had been problematic: it placed pressure on teenage parents to minimise the visibility of their child, it was distracting for teachers and other students, and did not allow for the school to be attentive to the developmental needs of the child or to confront the issue of the absence of on-going childcare. The school recognized that access to childcare was often the factor that made the challenge of combined parenting and schooling too difficult, particularly for those students living independently. By access, the school meant not only availability but also feasibility: even if places were available in community childcare teenage parents often lived in the vicinity of the school and the logistics of taking up an available place without access to transport created a disincentive to school attendance. In 2002, the extent of teenage pregnancy in the area was underscored with the publication of the SGR LLEN Environmental Scan (Tregenza 2002); this combination of circumstances brought about a pitch of intensity sufficient to prompt action.



At a meeting convened by the LLEN the Principal articulated his recognition that a huge number of barriers would be removed if in-school childcare facility was available but perceived it as ‘just not possible, it’s just too difficult’ (Angwin et al. 2004, p.12). However, the seeds of the Project were planted. A Centrelink<sup>70</sup> staff member was prepared to ask exactly why provision of in-school childcare couldn’t be achieved. Department of Human Services (DHS) was also in attendance. Their interest lay in their belief that the children of teenage parents were appearing in juvenile crime statistics. Around the same time, the school was considering applying for an Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) Skills Centre Grant. The Skills Centre would allow teenage parents to learn about child development and would enable that learning to be assessed and thereby contribute to completion of the VCE. The Centre would also allow other students within the school, as well as students from other schools, to learn about the Project and undertake childcare work placements. These two ideas came together in one project: an in-school childcare centre that included a training room where all students, including those that were parenting, could pursue nationally recognized courses including Certificate III Community Services (Childcare). Alongside these capital works the YPAP would include a Parent Support Worker and the modification of the VCE curriculum to meet the needs of the teenage parents. On this loom I wish to foreground an image of the establishment of YPAP as an example of community and government attempting to ‘join-up’ and it is to the detail of this attempt that I now turn my attention.

*‘An excellent example of how-not-to-do-it.’<sup>71</sup>*

In May 2002 the Project began to evolve through the work of a local Steering Committee that included two LLEN Committee of Management members. The first Steering Committee meeting included representatives from local, state and federal government agencies, senior school staff and local education providers. It was

---

<sup>70</sup> Centrelink is the federal government agency delivering a range of social support services including income support. As Pillow (2004) explains programs for teenage parents often have conflicting goals based in a dual-role discourse with the only acceptable dual roles being parent and worker. Education is only necessary to the extent that it prepares the teen mother for the work force. This discourse is strongly focused on those teenage parents seen as being at risk of being welfare dependent: the location of a school and the race and socio-economic status of the students greatly influence the strength of ‘dual-role’ discourse and can be crucial in securing funding.

<sup>71</sup> This sub-title is drawn from the comments of a staff member of the Department reflecting, with hindsight, on the establishment of YPAP (Department of Education & Training 2005a).

suggested by the Department that the greatest challenge would be identifying sources of funding, particularly for required capital works, that is, the actual childcare centre. Such a Project was outside the criteria for capital works from within the Department's budget and was an uncomfortable area in which to set a precedent: as Pillow (2004, p.4) suggests not only school communities but schools themselves are conflicted over whether teen pregnancy is 'a school issue, or a social issue, a moral issue, a family issue, a women's issue, a local issue, a government issue, or a welfare issue.' As well, financial viability needed to be factored into the Project: once established the childcare centre had to operate as a 'breakeven' childcare entity enrolling enough children to attract government subsidies sufficient to cover operating costs. As such, promotion within the broader community was essential. This linking with the broader community served a second purpose: the intent to also provide childcare to parents outside the school community reflected research indicating that breaking the cycle of teenage pregnancy and parenting required an integrated and multi-faceted school-in-the-community model (Brindis and Philliber 1998; De Jong and Cottrell 1999; Weatherley 1991).

In the meantime, the need for a Project Coordinator to undertake the work involved in establishing the Project was evident and this position became a priority for funding. From the start it had been agreed that the success of the Project would in large part rest on the ability to recruit, select and retain staff who were supportive of the principles underpinning the Project, understood the philosophy of community building and had the knowledge and expertise to operate a childcare centre and engage with and support teenage parents. Yet there was no money for staffing the Project within the global budget of the school; the Steering Committee had to cobble funds together by drawing on resources they could immediately access within their own organisation's budgets and by offering their knowledge of local, state and federal government funding sources. It was agreed that second-hand equipment would be sought from government sites that were closing and in-kind funding would cover a number of costs; this avenue would include an attempt to engage local churches and service clubs<sup>72</sup>.

---

<sup>72</sup> The greatest level of financial support from the community came from a Melbourne Rotary Club who donated over \$60,000.00 to the Project over the course of its establishment. Local industry was also a strong supporter and individuals in the community offered what they could: one man came to the school and gave them a three wheel bike.

Word of the Project spread rapidly through the school and its community. It soon became apparent that the school would have a waiting list for places in the childcare centre even before it was completed. The first priority for allocation of places was established as currently enrolled full-time students. However, there was a strong commitment within the Steering Committee to respond to the interest shown by former students who had dropped out of school when they became parents and now wanted to re-engage. Despite this clear level of demand and briefings to the state Minister of Education there was no indication of financial support from the government. At the same time, a federal funding application had not only resulted in no outcome but also in no response – a situation that would persist for a further year after which the application would be declined. A further pool of funding was inaccessible given the need to match any application on a dollar-for-dollar basis. The application for federal funding for a Skill Centre Grant was turned down because of an insufficient business plan, a situation that was hardly surprising given the application was written by the School Nurse whose hours had been increased by DHS to enable her to undertake the Project Co-ordinator role. This is not to underestimate her contribution. Rather it is a recognition that she was working outside her area of expertise, on a part-time basis, completing funding applications in a highly competitive arena for limited financial resources<sup>73</sup>. At a local government level there was no access to funding for capital works however the City of Greater Geelong offered short-term funding for a Parent Support Worker who would develop the parenting program, assist with accessing support for the welfare needs of the teenage parents<sup>74</sup> and mediate between teachers and parents-as-students when problems arose.

Following delays resulting from restructuring within the Department, the Manager Cross Sectoral Policy and Projects Division did offer assistance to the school to recast a funding application and look for a local partnership ‘to ensure their

---

<sup>73</sup> This lack of expertise was underscored later in the Project when a Director was appointed to the childcare centre. On her commencement the Director immediately recognised problems in the basic design of the centre that compromised child safety and had to be rectified before registration could be gained.

<sup>74</sup> These tensions in what equal opportunity looks like for the pregnant or parenting teenager is related to tensions and debates over what constitutes equal opportunity for any pregnant or parenting woman. Pillow notes that teen parents may need support specific to their needs however ‘they also need the support that any mother parenting as a single-parent with limited income needs’ (2004, p.11).

program can meet the needs of the young women, plus operate within the Department's policy environment' (e-mail 30 April 2003). That policy environment was not supportive: in the Victorian context there is a policy vacuum around the issue of parenting students. The Department affirms the right of pregnant students to continue their schooling provided a medical certificate in relation to fitness to attend after the 34<sup>th</sup> week of pregnancy is available. The extent of the policy is that schools are encouraged to modify the curriculum if necessary and provide ongoing support either through internal processes or by way of distance education. There is no allocated funding for the additional costs of providing for the in-school needs of parenting students. This is illustrative of the discursive themes Pillow (2004) has identified that justify existing treatment of teenage parents. The theme 'pregnancy as a cold' leads to parenting students being treated as any other student. While this seems to achieve the desire to be treated 'normally' and situates the pregnant and parenting students as fully capable it also means that she does not need, and does not have the right to, additional support services or special modifications:

If pregnancy is like a cold, then it is temporary, not serious, does not inhibit learning, and while the pregnancy may impact school attendance, it will only briefly impact the teen's normal life as a student. Like a cold there is no additional treatment needed for pregnancy – the student will recover on her own. Also like a cold, the teen mother will not require any special treatment after her "recovery", the birth. However, at the height of "contagion," when the effects of the cold reach their height, the pregnant teen may be advised not to attend school to avoid spreading her germs to other students. (Pillow 2004, p.99)

However, it would be wrong to over-emphasise the contribution that policy in itself can make. In the United States Title IX, the legislation guaranteeing the pregnant or parenting student an equal education was passed in 1972. However Pillow (2004) argues the legislation did not serve as an impetus to schools to coordinate their responses to parenting students. Schools are often unclear about their legal obligations and, where efforts have been made, they often rest in the dedication of a single individual. In part this reflects a lack of federal funding initiatives to implement Title IX; while schools often stopped the outright dismissal of students – sometimes by placing them in existing alternative schools settings - there has been little incentive to proactively work to secure their rights (Pillow 2004, p.86). Furthermore, the issue of providing in-school childcare crosses into other policy arenas. For instance, childcare subsidies in Australia lapse after a given number of absences. In other words, if children are absent from the childcare centre for more

than 30 sessions the government subsidy ceases and the income received by the childcare centre reduces. In a school context this is inherently problematic because, during school holidays, teenage parents wanted their children to be home with them. They are not absent, but neither are they present.

Towards the end of 2003 the question of government support became the major focus. One of the funding applications had been redrafted to the state government however the 'grapevine' word was that while applications were being accepted, there wasn't actually any money available. This lack of resource was a common theme at the time as the Victorian government was bearing the costs of preparations for the 2006 Commonwealth Games. The Committee resolved to proceed regardless and to also apply to a DHS pool of funding for capital works potentially worth approximately \$250,000.00. However, during the meeting at which this was discussed one of the Steering Committee members, representing local government, noted that her organisation were also putting in an application for the funding based on the current policy directions which advocated 'hubs' of service provision in the broader community. As such, local government would not offer a letter of support to the YPAP application as it involved a conflict with her organisation's application. For the Principal and the other Steering Committee members there was a bitter sense that the Project would be in a stronger position if government at all levels made a committed decision either way. If there was support it should be made manifest, if there was not support that should also be made clear and the Steering Committee would be able to actively lobby for private philanthropic funds on the basis that, despite lip-service, government funding would not be forthcoming. The Principal had had a number of discussions with government staff and the childcare centre had been visited by two state Ministers of Education who had praised the concept but appeared unable to push aside bureaucratic barriers to create specific funding; given a lack of clear policy direction the Project did not fit easily into the Department's funding guidelines and the boundaries around the guidelines seemed entrenched. As such, support and funding needed to be sought within other policy frameworks however the Project did not fit any one departmental agenda given its multi-dimensional intent. There was a misfit between this Project - the potential of which rests in an assemblage of multiplicities: the school, the teenage parent, government, community, the Principal and so on - and the strata that is the government funding structure and with which the Project

had to connect. While assemblages are produced in strata, they must depart from it in a process of deterritorialization – the operation of the line of flight:

Anything can serve as a reterritorialization, in other words, ‘stand for’ the lost territory; one can reterritorialize on a being, an object, a book, an apparatus or system. . . For example, it is inaccurate to say that the State apparatus is territorial: it in fact performs a [deterritorialization], but one immediately overlaid by reterritorializations on property, work, and money. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.508)

Given this context the school remained reliant on community volunteerism to complete building plans and renovations for a project that Ministers were often publicly noting as an example of school innovation in a way that suggested their support. The irony of the situation lead the Steering Committee to consider whether to go to the media. However there was a reluctance to ‘go public’ about the issues being encountered with government processes as long as there are there were individuals within government who were strongly committed to the establishment of the childcare centre and were actively trying to ‘join-up’. Media coverage that had already occurred had also had the unexpected consequence of providing a perception that the Project had been funded, established and was now fully operational. The Principal attended a cross-Departmental meeting and had spoken of the barriers the school was encountering in attempting to establish the Project notwithstanding that it was a model of what the government was promoting. All the government departments that would have a role in the Project were present, all were supportive but, apparently, none was willing to be ‘the’ owner of such a new, and potentially contentious, project. Teenage parents are problematic in schools: the represent a particular powerful manifestation of risk, one that is fundamentally in tension with the outcomes sought by schools – outcomes that favour ‘middle-class becomings with their blessed-by-the-State trajectories and lines of development’ (Roy 2003, p.21).

At the same time within the school some teachers were aggrieved that, in the absence of any other alternative, global funds had been drawn on to fund this Project for one small cohort of students whom were not considered by all to ‘deserve’ such attention. Even where teachers were ideologically supportive, a factor which impacts dramatically on pedagogy, they and the parents-as-students were always operating ‘under, within, and against predominant discourses’ (Pillow 2004, p.140). As I have already noted, in the contemporary context of performativity teachers experience ‘a state of conscious and permanent visibility’

(Ball 2000, p.3), schools are sites of profound anxiety for teachers, students and parents who have concerns about ‘fitting in, being judged, and measuring up to their respective roles’ (Luttrell 2003, p.173). These ‘dogged identities’ reflect arborescent thinking and replicate the established order, a ‘likeness to the model of the good student, or the model of the good teacher’ (Roy 2003, p.106). Teenage parents, regardless of their conformity to the model of good student, are also ‘deviant by virtue of [their] obvious rebellion against the proper chronology of events’ (Lawson 2000 cited Lesko 2001, p.138). In this context it is difficult to imagine the answer to Luttrell’s question: What would schools look like if educators took a stance of interest and curiosity rather than discipline and punishment toward girls’ fertility? (2003, p.176). In other words, what are the implications of bringing the life concerns of the minoritarian group that are teenage parents to the centre of a school? Deleuze distinguishes between the ‘normal’ student and an indefinite one, a kind of ‘anybody’ – the first is a statistical entity, the second a vital potential (Rajchman 2000, p.87). Rather than focusing on abnormalities and departures from the majoritarian norm Deleuze suggests a focus on ‘anomalies’ which express forces peculiar to a life or to an ‘anybody.’ This has profound consequences for schools and the outcomes they seek for students. Roy (2003, p.115) provides us with an apt illustration that occurs in the context of a newspaper office:

We sit around and the editor holds forth on a special issue he is bringing out on alternative schools: addressing issues on teenage pregnancy, drug abuse etc. Macy whips around angrily: ‘Did you hear how he said “teenage mothers”?’ What’s he know about teenage motherhood? I’m a teenage mom and am proud of it. Wouldn’t give it up for nothing. I love my baby’ (Field Notes 45/27/02). With these words, Macy impugns the patronizing discourse about teenage pregnancy, and a new plateau of intensity emerges showing the poverty of the discourse. I am witnessing a living curriculum. Macy spotting patriarchy, Macy grappling with monolithic patriarchy, Macy resisting with her multiplicity, with her right to be a student + a mother+ a teenager + . . . Observing [the teacher] I realized that he was focused entirely on what the editor had to say, and had not paid attention to what Macy said in response. . . . Macy’s outburst could help reconvene the murmurs and ‘stammerings’ that Deleuze constantly alludes to in his writings . . . and the curricular possibilities and connectivities that could emerge out of that experience. [The teacher] seemed more focused on the formal aspects of ‘what the students learned,’ that is on *recovering* what was given in the newspaper office, rather than actively seeking the embodied perceptions of students. In the process, he misses what the differential perceptions produced and the rhizomatic connections that surrounded him.

As Lesko explains, teenage parents perplex secondary school teachers: if they are already adults by virtue of their status as parents, what place do they have in schools increasingly concerned with keeping youths ‘socially young’ (Lesko 2001, p.145)

and how should they be treated? Kelly (2000a; 2000b) uses the notion of the 'dilemma of difference' to explore the contradictions and tensions that surround the presence of pregnant and parenting teenagers in mainstream schools. Managing the dilemma of difference can lead to stigmatizing and stereotyping which in turn have consequences for outcomes. As such the dilemma must be dealt with in ways that recognize complexity. As Deleuze and Guattari argue, difference cannot be managed from a point of unity: regimes, including schools, 'should be judged in terms of the space they allow for multiplicities and their individuations – for the time of 'a life' (Rajchman 2000, p.82). At the heart of judgments about the importance and success of the Project were assumptions about the economy of student worth, what counted as legitimate learning and who had the authority to make that judgment (Angwin et al. 2004). The students enrolled in the Project were – as were all students in the school - engaged with VCE and VCAL programs. These programs have currency in educational and employment markets beyond the school and community (Dwyer and Wyn 2001; Teese and Polesel 2003). These are the acceptable outcomes for Victorian schools achievement against which reflects on the kudos of the school, its levels of enrolment and, therefore, the amount of global funding it attracts. However, the development of skills and knowledge within the YPAP includes outcomes that move beyond those recognised in formal post-compulsory certification (Ball et al. 2000; Blackmore 2005); the curriculum moves beyond our current conceptualization of 'school'<sup>75</sup>.

Toward the end of 2003 the Steering Committee received advice that the long-standing application for federal funding had been declined. The Principal had sought further information on the reasons for decline given the support that had been offered in principle. His request for further information was also declined. However, in what the Principal would refer to as 'the most positive note for the whole year' conversations with high level bureaucrats indicated that there was potential the Department and DHS might be able to find a way to jointly commit and, through collaboration, foster \$490,000.00 of funding to the Project, sufficient to reimburse the school for capital works already undertaken and cover operating costs until the childcare centre could breakeven. This progress was suggested to be

---

<sup>75</sup> During 2005 the school identified the productive connection to be made with Deakin University's Graduate Diploma of Education (Applied Learning) developed in conjunction with SGR LLEN and portrayed later in this Panel.



the result of four Ministers putting pressure on two government Departments to find a way to 'join-up.' As well, there was some potential that ANTA would provide the Skill Centre funding which would allow a classroom for VET programs to be connected to the childcare centre. However, all of these 'commitments' were yet to be acted on by government. By December when the Steering Committee met for the final time in 2003 the confidence that had been evident in November had proved misplaced. DHS had dropped the priority on the collaboration with the Department, it was deemed unlikely that any funding would be committed to this Project. Those within government who had attempted to broker this collaboration were 'bitterly disappointed' as was the Principal who now faced a gaping shortfall in funding for 2004 with 10 teenage parents hoping to continue their education and all places in the childcare centre taken.

Ironically, the Victorian Premier was keen to use the YPAP as a political launch early in 2004. For the Steering Committee this underlined that while the political will was there, the bureaucratic will was not. Representatives of the state DHS Partnerships Unit attended the first Steering Committee meeting of 2004 at which the evaporation of the promised collaborative funding was discussed. Their recommendation was that an application to DHS be reworked and resubmitted again to fit their established criteria – criteria that were based on a hub model the inappropriateness of which for teenage parents had been a factor in the drive to establish the Project in the first place. At the same time, the DHS staff noted that the school must understand that the competition from other childcare centres that did 'fit' their preferred model would be difficult to overcome. For the Principal, energy and patience was waning. He knew that regardless of whether a further application might succeed the school could not sustain the childcare centre financially until the next funding decisions were announced. Beyond this, the more pointed question was the appropriateness of having to 'fit' the Program to a funding regime that could not 'flex' to accommodate innovation of the very sort required by government, addressing the specific needs of a group at risk of disengaging from or failing to re-engage with secondary schooling, and in line with its targets for an increase in Y12 or equivalent completion by 2010.

In its drive for an integrated approach to policy government had requested that the Project sit within the *Neighbourhood Renewal Project*, the initiative led by the Office of Housing in the DHS. *Neighbourhood Renewal* is intended to:

Empower local communities to shape their own futures. The initiative builds on the strengths of each community and enhances local skills, capacity and leadership. Government will be more responsive to shared community goals.

The emphasis will be on working together. Government and community resources will be harnessed and better coordinated to improve housing, infrastructure, employment, education, safety, and health and wellbeing. (Office of Housing 2002, p.3)

For the school to communicate effectively with personnel managing and implementing government policy staff needed to be able to understand and use policy discourses around *Neighbourhood Renewal*, *Strengthening Communities*, *Community Capacity Building* and so on. For example in the establishment of the YPAP discourses around childcare and its use, or abuse, became dominant at the expense of those discourses regarding the educational opportunities made available by locating a childcare centre in a school. At a local level the economic, cultural and social capital of the Steering Committee had enabled an idea that was ‘just not possible’ to become possible. However while their bonding and bridging networks were effective in bringing people together to share information and build commitment in conceiving the YPAP they were insufficient to release the amount of funding, or to access the skill set needed, to support the establishment of the Project in ways that would release its full potential. For this to occur linking networks were required that would provide access to power. As Roy notes, in considering innovations such as YPAP we can critique the state and the spaces it works within: seeking innovation while ensuring there is no massive shedding of strata: category ‘student’ must remain in line with the state machinery (Roy 2003, p.94). The confrontation with power occurs through experimentation in breaking open the categories and structures on which power depends (Roy 2003, p.94).

On June 14, 2004 the YPAP was officially launched by the then Minister for Education Services and Minister for Employment and Youth Affairs. At the launch the Minister made a public announcement of capital funding for the Project. This funding enabled the school to be reimbursed for the establishment costs it had borne; it would also fund the construction of the second stage of the childcare centre that would enable an increase in enrolments<sup>76</sup>. However, funding for the operation of the Project and, in particular, the salary to retain the existing Parent Support

---

<sup>76</sup> Subsequently, the state government would feature the Corio Bay Senior College child-care as a case study in their publication *Schools as Community Facilities. Policy Framework and Guidelines* (Department of Education & Training 2005b).

Worker and employ, or co-locate, a further Parent Support Worker to support increasing enrolments in the Program, remained ‘outside’ the parameters of state government’s funding formulae for schools. Thus - with the school having shouldered the burden of risk - the childcare centre was achieved with the perverse result of increased expectations on the school about what teenage parents would achieve - given their children were now in childcare - notwithstanding the lack of funding to provide the vital educational support of the Parent Support Worker. At a broader level, the Project and its participants did not come to be seen as an opportunity, a ‘vital potential’ within the school assemblage<sup>77</sup>. Instead, teenage parents remained a problem that was now being dealt with and the barriers to a ‘joined-up’, long-term, multi-disciplinary commitment to the Project’s objectives remain largely intact, issues remaining to be ‘worked around’ rather than removed.

---

<sup>77</sup> For example, Kidger (2004) discusses research on four projects in the United Kingdom where teenage parents have beneficially delivered sex education sessions in schools.

## On Track to What?

One of the challenges for LLEN lies in such prevailing ideas of youth development as being a slow, steady movement towards adulthood. These ideas partake of panoptical time: ‘a time framework that compels us – scholars, educators, parents and teenagers – to attend to progress, precocity, arrest or decline’ (Lesko 2001, p.41). Foucault (1977) had introduced the notion of the panopticon to explore a mode of surveillance in prisons that was total and affected the subjectivities of both the prisoner and the guard. This notion of panoptical time can be used to explore how ideas of what is ‘normal’ development are used to privilege certain ways of being, to monitor who is deemed to be ‘at risk’ of not conforming to these notions and to govern their behaviour. Such at risk discourses construct youth as making decision, adopting behaviours and dispositions that jeopardize certain preferred, fundamentally normative futures (Kelly 2000b) notwithstanding the fluidity of the globalised context. In the process of seeking to manage risk, new aspects of risk are created thereby constituting further areas for intervention. On this loom I intend to weave the implementation and consequences of *On Track* – an initiative of the Victorian Government – for SGR LLEN. To do this I intend to momentarily put aside my Deleuzian bobbin and take up a Foucauldian bobbin wound with 3-ply yarn: Foucault’s concept of the panopticon, his discussion of surveillance and normalisation (Foucault 1977) and Lesko’s discussion of panoptical time.

### *On Track and On Track Connect*

During 2003, early in the life of LLEN, the Victorian government acted on Recommendation 17 from the Kirby Report: that ‘the capacity for tracking the destinations of young people in their post compulsory years be developed through the local planning networks’ (Kirby 2000, p.21). *On Track* and *On Track Connect* involve the Department and LLEN and was:

an important Victorian Government initiative designed to ensure that Year 10 to 12 government and non-government school students are on a pathway to further education, training or employment after leaving school. (Victorian Learning and Employment Skills Commission 2004, p.2)

*On Track* involves contacting all students in Years 10, 11 and 12 who left school the preceding year. The *On Track* policy is a state initiative that converges with the monitoring and tracking element of the Career and Transition Services Framework

(Department of Education Science and Training 2003) launched by the federal government in 2003. The intent of *On Track* is to identify those youth not involved in education, training or full-time employment: any young person not ‘appropriately’ involved is offered the opportunity to be referred to LLEN for additional support. This referral component of *On Track* is called *On Track Connect* and involves LLEN drawing on their knowledge of local agencies, networks and support systems to broker and negotiate ‘appropriate referral arrangements’ and to provide advice to young people about options for ‘reengagement’ thereby connecting them with an ‘appropriate pathway’ (Victorian Learning and Employment Skills Commission 2004, p.2). The information gathered through *On Track* is to be used to provide a ‘better understanding of outcomes of education as well as assisting Government to improve pathways planning both centrally and at the local level’ (Victorian Learning and Employment Skills Commission 2004, p.2). As well, the data collected is provided to schools and aggregate data for their region is provided to each LLEN. Here I want to look underneath this policy and undertake an ‘eventalization’ (Foucault 1991a) of the implementation of *On Track*. To do this, we must now work with some theoretical yarns.

### *Panoptical time*

Not all times are the same . . . There remain public and private times, slower and faster times, and more and less rationalized times. (Lesko 2001, p.35)

Lesko (2001) argues that the modern age is defined by time. She adopts the suggestion that it is the clock, not the steam engine, which is the premier machine of the industrial age. Drawing on Landes (1983), Lesko notes the invention of the clock brought the ability to attend to the passage of time and thereby to make judgments of productivity and performance; productive use of time became one measure of valuable individuals in Western contexts. The sciences were also active in the imposition of panoptical time; for Foucault (1973) this occurred in the development of natural history and the shift from a concern with the laws and regularities of the cosmos to the description of change and growth in nature over time. In narratives of youth development it is the ending that is important, such narratives allow today’s events to be read as omens of tomorrow (Fabian 1991). Foucault suggested such ‘mutations of history’ involved an attempt to preserve sovereignty of the subject as if ‘we were afraid to conceive of the *Other* in the time

of our own thought' (Foucault 1972, p.12, original emphasis). Otherness is 'ominous': the future may be diminished by the actions of those who cannot or will not act in conformity with our construction of responsible or civilized ways (Lesko 2001 p.37).

Narratives of youth development evolved alongside social practices in the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century: longer stays in school, organised leisure activities for youth, juvenile justice policies and protection from child labour (Lesko 2001).

Consequently youth were understood as 'becoming,' 'a situation that provoked endless watching, monitoring, and evaluation' (Lesko 2001, p.38). The development of physical and psychological stages of 'normal' development such as those of Piaget (1983) and Erikson (1980) are both examples of panoptical time. The implementation of age-graded schools is a further example that is particularly pertinent to this discussion (Chudacoff 1989); the concentration of same age youth in 'stage-based' schools resulted in decreased tolerance of variation from the standards of 'normal' development. Progressing through the levels of the school has become normative, a plethora of statistical age-based norms have become the basis of not only governance but also of the way that youth think of themselves and their future opportunities (Hacking 1991). Research indicates a widening gap between the way Australian youth assess their options and the way others interpret their choices (Beavis 2006; Dwyer and Wyn 2001). Before we move on it is timely to reflect on how the use of panoptical time has resulted in notions of youth at risk.

### **Youth-at-Risk**

Increasingly alienated, in the classical sense, young people are also increasingly *alien*, alienated others, differently motivated, designed, constructed. And the awful possibility presents itself, insistently: they aren't simply visiting us, after which they'll simply go away; rather, they are here to stay, and they're taking over. (Green and Bigum 1993, p.122, original emphasis)

Discourses of youth at risk often derive from concerns about globalisation which, as I portrayed in the second Panel of this thesis, is a term that conveys a number of intertwined phenomena. In the globalized context discourses of youth risk have taken on an elevated profile when the labour market – as the space of arrival post-transition – is in itself increasingly marked by uncertainty, precarity and ambivalence (Furlong and Kelly 2005). The uncertainty of youth transitions in the globalised context has created a situation where various experts are called on to assist in calculating and measuring risk thereby attempting to better understand,

intervene in and control youth transitions (Kelly 1999). The process of watching and monitoring youth in and of itself results in their transitions being understood in increasingly complex and uncertain ways (Kelly 1999) and constitutes a range of anxieties about the dangers posed by, and to, some youth (Kelly 2003). While discourses of risk build on a historical process of constructing certain populations as deviant, delinquent and deficit (Swadener 1995), when applied to youth such narratives provide almost unlimited opportunity to anticipate and act against risk through regulating behaviour and disposition (Kelly 1999). The youth-at-risk discourse establishes specific ideas about ‘certain *preferred* or *ideal* adult futures and the present behaviours and dispositions of youth’ (Kelly 1999, p.204, original emphasis).

We can revisit the arguments of Beck (1992) that were outlined in the second Panel of this thesis to explore how this occurs. Beck suggests that processes of individualisation both carry and are carried by processes of standardisation: they deliver individuals ‘over to an *external order and standardization*’ that was unknown in earlier eras (Beck 1992, p.132, original emphasis). At the same time, individuals are responsible for managing risk notwithstanding the structural basis of the risks. Thus risks are positioned as ‘*consequences of the decisions [individuals] themselves have made*’ (Beck 1992, p.136, original emphasis). Such decisions would include the decision to leave school at a point beyond the duration legislated as compulsory but now identified as ‘early.’ While the category ‘youth-at-risk’ has come to function as a generalised deficit category (Bessant 2002; Swadener 1995; Tait 1995) it can, however, be used to explore how ‘knowledge’ about youth is transferred into ‘obvious’ post compulsory education policy and the implementation of responses that do not necessarily align with the lived experience of the young unemployed (Bessant 2002).

### *On Track to What?*

A Foucauldian perspective enables us to shift from big questions concerning the nature of power and its source to small questions concerning ‘what happens’ thereby allowing us to gain a ‘complex configuration of realities’ (Foucault 1983, p.217). In 1977 Foucault argued that disciplinary power involves the production of relationships of regulation that foster subjected, practised and docile individuals and populations. The appropriate end of governance is the ‘correct disposition of things

– even when these things have to be invented so as to be well governed’ (Rabinow 1984, p.51). Castel argues that we are witnessing a move beyond discipline to an obsession with efficiency; at the centre of this shift is ‘the administrator who plans out trajectories and see to it that human profiles match up to them’ (Castel 1991, p.295). Within this context the use of expertise enables the development of discourses that promise the risks, uncertainties and the messiness of the lives of young people can be

objectively, scientifically or critically identified. Once identified, various programs and interventions can then be mobilized to regulate the dangers, the uncertainties and the contingencies of an age of ‘manufactured uncertainty.’ (Kelly 2000b, p. 464)

The confidence *On Track* activity is intended to foster hides not only the superficiality of the quest for certainty but also the desire and willingness of young people to avoid such governance. For example, in a cursory review of the 2002 data (received by LLEN in 2004), SGR LLEN had an estimated number of early leavers of 457. However, those young people who consented to be contacted for *On Track* totalled only 248 (54% of the *estimated* total). The LLEN also had 2578 young people who completed Y12; of these 1779 consented to be contacted for *On Track* (69%). The pathways of the significant proportion of young people who were positioned as both ‘at-risk’ through their early school leaving behaviour and ‘elusive’ through declining involvement remained invisible. At the same time, those who were visible, that is, who had consented to being tracked were analysed in detail for their destinations and the reasons they gave for their decisions. This in turn is to be used to assist Government in understanding the ‘unthinkable’ and ‘ungovernable’ (Kelly 1999). For example, from 2004, *On Track* data will inform a five-year longitudinal study ostensibly ‘to provide a comprehensive picture’ on the movement of 2003 Y12 school leavers (Department of Education & Training 2004b).

Furthermore, the complexity of the lives of young people belies such linear portrayal. Considering the SGR LLEN *On Track* data, of Y9 and Y10 Early Leavers *that have been tracked* 70.1% are in vocational education and training, an apprenticeship, a traineeship or full-time work. Of the Y11 Early Leavers 67.5% are thus occupied. What is to be made of the fact that a higher percentage of those who left in Y9/10 are ‘appropriately involved’ than those who stayed a year longer in school and completed Y11? Research such as that by McMillan and Marks (2003)



illustrates the complexity of outcomes for early school leavers: in their research early leavers had more favourable outcomes than school completers who didn't progress to university. Not all early school leaving should be seen as negative, for some young people it is a positive and affirming decision (Teese and Polesel 2003). Where is the category 'at risk' in this scenario?

### *Managing the risk of risk*

Not only are ever more categories of risk constructed for young people to occupy (Kelly 1999) it is also risky for the agencies involved in the working with young people. Despite the partiality of the data, the LLEN has been flooded with requests from education providers for further breakdown of the data on which, presumably, they will plan their own programs and interventions. Whilst it is positive to see education providers seeking to base practice on research, the limitations of the data and the 'silences' within it must be articulated. At the same time, government remains conscious of managing its own risk. In the *On Track Connect 2004 Guidelines for LLEN*<sup>78</sup> a whole section is dedicated to Risk Management and the legal and privacy implications of such surveillance. Furthermore, while the lives of young people are messy and sexualised (Lesko 2001) the protocols, agreements, templates and scripts appended to the Guidelines are silent on these realities and this silence speaks loudly of the government's management of its own risk. Within panoptical time otherness is 'ominous' (Lesko 2001, p.37); it concerns a risk that government is unable to manage, therefore government adopts technologies that do not produce the risk:

[Experts] do not simply process risks that appear 'externally' over the horizon ... The apparatuses of surveillance and discipline ... routinely produce the risks they assess and manage. The important corollary of this point is that only those risks are produced which are in principle 'manageable'. (Crook 1999, p.171)

As Foucault notes:

Not any less was said about it; on the contrary. But things were said in a different way; it was different people who said them from different points of view, and in order to obtain different results. Silence itself – the things one declines to say, or is forbidden to name ... is less the absolute limit of

---

<sup>78</sup> Both the guidelines and the data provided to LLEN by the Department have been provided to LLEN after the LLEN had already taken action given the need to meet the Department's own, very tight, timelines to complete the project. As Lesko (2001 p.35) notes 'not all times are the same ... There remain public and private times, slower and faster times, and more and less rationalized times.'

discourse . . . than an element that functions alongside the things said, with them and in relation to them within over-all strategies. (Foucault 1977, p.27)

A few examples will illustrate the function of such ‘silence.’ For the 2004 process, the LLEN had recommended that school leavers giving consent to be contacted be asked for a mobile phone contact rather than a street address and landline. This request rested in an appreciation that some young people, particularly those identified as being at-risk, often are not ‘attached’ to a permanent residence. This request was not adopted by the Department. When commented on, the response from a Departmental staff member was ‘if we can’t contact them, we can’t contact them.’<sup>79</sup> The process of contact even of those youth who did consent to be supported was an ‘arduous task’ that had taken an ‘inordinate amount of time.’ While most of the 238 young people exiting Y12 in 2003 and referred were able to be contacted the effort involved some 703 phone calls over 38 days<sup>80</sup>. Most youth were contacted within the first three calls, some were only contacted after nine calls, three had had a message left and 13 were never able to be reached. Unsurprisingly to the LLEN, the most effective mechanism for contacting youth involved bulk SMS messaging to mobile phone numbers.

A further example that provoked discussion within the LLEN was the detailed script that had been provided by the Department for use once the young person had been contacted by phone. The script did not provide opportunity for discussion of personal, health, familial or social aspects of life that the LLEN had come to understand as being factors in disengagement from or re-engagement with education. When a youth worker commented to a staff member of the Department, ‘I’d ask about health . . . if you only look at education and training it will fail’ the response was ‘No, can’t do that.’ The further advice from the Department was that ‘[The script is] broad enough to do some of that’ however the matter would be referred back to see if ‘it was an issue for the Department.’ This is an example of the production of ‘hybridized knowledges’:

the reflexive constitution of knowledges by . . . expertise increasingly intersects with management, service delivery and budget knowledges to produce hybridized knowledges about ‘appropriate’ and ‘economic’ forms of guidance and government of youth at risk and their families. These processes of hybridization are often contested, mediated, messy and contradictory . . .

---

<sup>79</sup> All such unattributed quotes in this Panel are drawn from data produced during 2004 participant observation in various LLEN meetings.

<sup>80</sup> The Guidelines require at least three attempts at contact.

mobilize rationalities that exist in tension with the knowledges and purposes implied and professed by intellectual expertise in the domain of Youth Studies. (Kelly 2003, p. 173)

It might be suggested that, having identified a manageable risk there is a need to have youth to whom the produced risk can be attached. The LLEN found that many youth whom had been referred to them for assistance and were contacted ‘just don’t seem to want to know about it.’ This is indicative of Kelly’s (1999) argument that such policies involve a constant attempt to

know better the truths of youth at risk and the way to produce these truths, as youthful bodies, motivations, behaviours and dispositions . . . *elude* and *escape* the frames and categories which attempt to order them. (Kelly 1999, p.207)

It was suggested by the project worker that was completing the contacts for SGR LLEN that some youth didn’t understand the *On Track* survey they completed at exit from school: of the 218 youth that the project worker successfully questioned 86 (39%) refused any further contact. More significantly a number of youth stated that they had declined the opportunity to be involved in *On Track* as they exited school but nonetheless had been included and referred to the LLEN for *On Track* Connect. The project worker noted that often she ‘talked them into [the questioning]’ advising them to ‘just answer the questions and I’ll stop ringing you.’ This is in contrast with the assertion by government that ‘what they are telling us very clearly is that they appreciate this support’ (Department of Education & Training 2004b). Presumably the referral of reluctant participants indicates a policy decision that certain groups of youth, such as those working part-time, are at-risk and should be assisted in connecting with an appropriate pathway regardless of their expressed desire to receive such assistance. If so, this makes a significant difference to the scale of *On Track*: only four of the youth finally contacted by SGR LLEN were working full time while the great majority, 155, were working part-time or casually. Seemingly, the number of referrals to *On Track* Connect cannot be used as an indicator of the extent to which youth desire to be assisted to pathways other than those they are constructing for themselves.

How does a LLEN respond in such a situation? Again Foucault can assist our understanding of the complex configuration of realities with his notions of resistance and capillary power (Foucault 1980). The LLEN employed a youth worker to act as the project worker in undertaking the *On Track* Connect project. As such, the question of ‘silence’ within the Guidelines was the focus of persuasive arguments from the youth worker. SGR LLEN was intent on gaining ‘really

important data at the end of this process' that would enable an understanding of why youth did not pursue the opportunities for assistance made available to them. Having been declined the opportunity to do this 'formally' because of Departmental concerns about risk management the LLEN had acted in its capacity as an incorporated society independent of government and had 'quietly' extended the required script. The Department staff member involved in the Committee of Management was excluded from the process to remove any conflict of role. As a result of this 'responsive approach' the LLEN was in a position to gain 'rich data' on the recursive nature of youth transitions in the region, data that would assist them in working collaboratively to develop appropriate responses if a meaningful, strategic and sustainable intervention were to be implemented. For instance, it became clear to the LLEN that one of the major barriers to young people achieving their aspirations was the operational process of recruitment agencies working on government contracts. Young people had to make an upfront, on-the-spot decision regarding with which agency they would register for assistance. However young people often were completely uninformed regarding the services of different agencies or the suitability for their evolving needs and, once the decision was made, funding processes were such that they were not able to change agencies at a later point. For SGR LLEN the important questions resided in a different modality of 'becoming' that was not 'stuck in the present,' one that recognised youth find their own path to their own future in their own less public, slower or faster, more or less rationalised time. This is much closer to the Deleuzian notion of becoming that portrays young people as multiplicity, continually transforming themselves according to the thresholds they cross within the course of their own lives.

The 'lines' of which our lives are composed are always more complicated and more free than the more or less rigid 'segmentations' into which society tries to sort them, and so they may be used to draw or 'diagram' other spaces, other times of living. (Rajchman 2000, p.83)

If we move away from attempting to normalise trajectories we make room for Deleuze's 'anybody' with his or her vital potential (Rajchman 2000, p.87). Such a perspective accords closely with recent life-patterns research that suggests the need for a post-industrial approach to educational policy that focuses on the relationship between education and broader identity formation thereby equipping young people to 'thrive in a precarious employment environment' (Wyn 2003, n.p.).

## Getting Off Track

Government is

Intrinsically linked to the activities of expertise, whose role is not one of weaving an all-pervasive web of 'social control,' but of enacting assorted attempts at the calculated administration of diverse aspects of conduct through countless, often competing, local tactics of education, persuasion, inducement, management, incitement, motivation and encouragement. (Rose and Millar 1992, p.175)

On this loom I have argued that *On Track* is a tactic to minimise the risk of youth transition to adulthood in a globalised context. Within it *On Track Connect* acts as an intervention intended to connect youth to pathways that will lead them to futures deemed appropriate by others, in some instances irrespective of whether youth agree to such an intervention. *On Track* can be understood as an act of surveillance that not only manages but also produces a risk that is deemed manageable by government. Those aspects of the risk that are unmanageable – including those youth whom refuse consent to be 'governed' – are rendered invisible: the minimizing of uncertainty is the work of the State machinery (Deleuze and Guattari 1987). Hence the inherent tension that LLEN are charged with resolving: while there is a growing recognition of the need to understand youth transition in late modern times as being a 'recursive state, rather than a life state left behind once and for all' (Lesko 2001, p.63) the governance framework persists in constructing youth transition as involving development-in-time, partaking of panoptical time that compels us to attend to progress, precocity, arrest, or decline through initiatives such as *On Track*. Lesko (2001 p.62) suggests that the 'slow development in time of the modern panoptical [youth] is under pressure' by globalisation. However 'despite changes associated with virtual time, flexible bodies, and lifelong learning, the episteme of development-in-time appears likely to prevail' (Lesko 2001 p.63)<sup>81</sup>.

---

<sup>81</sup> There is a sub-text that must be woven, one that underscores both the power relations between researcher and researched and the attempts at the administration of diverse aspects of conduct to which Rose & Miller (1992) refer. An earlier version of the image on this loom was presented by me at a conference in 2004 at which Departmental staff members were in attendance. Subsequent to the conference the SGR LLEN Executive Officer was contacted by senior staff member at the Department in an attempt to undertake 'damage control' as I was reported to have made extreme and critical claims. The matter was resolved after numerous telephone conversations between the Executive Officer, myself and my supervisor. I was interviewed by the senior staff member at the Department at which time I offered to forward a full script from my presentation. The Executive Officer – with whom the presentation had been discussed prior to the conference – was unsurprised by this 'over-reaction' and stood by the presentation as accurate in conveying the complex 'what happened' of policy implementation.

## Restraining Governance

Seeing the connectedness of things is the starting point for understanding a world that otherwise appears baffling . . . Yet it is far easier to assume a world without connections, a world of fewer dimensions where simple heuristics carry us through. This is perhaps the hardest aspect of a connected world and the reason why our concepts and institutions may be doomed to lag behind the reality they seek to make sense of. (Mulgan 2004, p.59)

To begin this section I want to re-introduce the issue of performativity, a thread I first used in the second Panel of this thesis. Ball (2000, p.1) offers a working definition of performativity thus:

Performativity is a technology, a culture and a mode of regulation, or a system of 'terror' in Lyotard's words, that employs judgements, comparisons and displays as means of control, attrition and change. The performances (of individual subjects or organisations) serve as measures of productivity or output or displays of 'quality.'

The immediate image that occurs to me as I read these words is from an interview in May 2003, only weeks into my candidature. The Executive Officer and I were meeting for the first time: this was my introduction to SGR LLEN and I spent two and a half hours listening to her words and learning about my case. On that day SGR LLEN had precisely 210 members. This number was important: from the outset LLEN had been enjoined to expand their membership base as soon as possible thereby ensuring not only the election of a representative Committee of Management but also the involvement of all key stakeholders as the LLEN began its strategic and operational planning (Department of Education Employment and Training 2001). Of greater concern to the Executive Officer than the actual number of members on that day was the Department's act of publishing the membership numbers in 'a bit of a league table' thereby enabling comparison of one LLEN with another and opening up the question of 'quality,' of whether SGR LLEN was doing enough of the right thing notwithstanding that no-one knew what 'the right thing' might be. The constant measures that underpin performativity bring constant doubt: not knowing what judgement may come into play means attending to all and any comparisons (Ball 2000, p.3).

According to Ball, the 'struggle over visibility' involves a paradox: 'tactics of transparency produce a resistance of opacity, of elusivity – an escape from the gaze' that in itself is also disciplinary (Ball 2000, p.2):

It is not the possible certainty of always being seen that is the issue, as in the panopticon, it is the uncertainty and instability of being judged in different ways, by different means, through different agents; the 'bringing-off' of performances – the flow of changing demands, expectations and indicators that make us continually accountable and constantly recorded. (Ball 2000, p.2)

This flow of performativities involves a contradiction. At the point of an increase in core – or first order - business there is a simultaneous increase in the costs of non-core – or second order – business. This second order business includes the activities of performance management and monitoring which became vital to survival in a context of government accountability, contested funding and repeated reviews of the LLEN initiative. According to McCarthy, Miller and Skidmore (2004) this reflects a situation where – given the interconnected complexity of networks – demands for accountability do not vanish but are actually amplified. This context demands a change in both accountability tools and paradigms yet the linear process – one party being accountability to another – has persisted<sup>82</sup>. Thus the acquisition of performative information begins to consume so much energy it 'drastically' reduces the energy available for core business (Elliott 1996, p.15). This experience was evident in SGR LLEN as I will now portray through weaving two images. The first image concerns the relationship of SGR LLEN and the Department; the second image concerns the process of good self-governance implemented during 2004 by the Department and the consequences of this process for SGR LLEN.

### *'A Problematic, Argumentative LLEN.'*<sup>83</sup>

Governance is the act of governing and of being governed. Governance is control by arbitrary or constitutional authority. It involves the exercise of knowledge as well as power and usually involves systematic authority. To govern is to have authority and the power to impose policy. To govern is to administer affairs, regulate, influence, steer and set standards. Committees of Management are governing bodies which are themselves governed by virtue of the context in which they are established and operate. (Department of Education Employment and Training 2001, p.1)

Throughout the course of my research the LLEN retained its original Executive Officer<sup>84</sup> and this, coupled with a long-standing Committee of Management that had

---

<sup>82</sup> These writers suggest that in the future lines of accountability will be 'messy': multiple and overlapping as well as being based on deliberative as well as procedural processes (McCarthy et al. 2004, p.18-9).

<sup>83</sup> This heading quotes the Executive Officer's perception of how the Department in Melbourne categorised SGR LLEN during 2004.

a particular way of functioning, profoundly influenced the relationship between the LLEN and ‘the Centre’<sup>85</sup>, that is, the Department in Melbourne acting as the contract management agent of VLESC. At the local level, the relationship between the Regional Office of the Department and SGR LLEN was increasingly close, productive and confident; in contrast, the relationship with the Centre was almost consistently argumentative. In large part, this reflected the Executive Officer’s 2004 belief that they were ‘philosophically opposed’; this in turn reflected in part that both SGR LLEN and the Centre were subject to the flow of performativities and whilst the LLEN as an incorporated association functioning in its local community could, and would, work within and against (Sanguinetti 1999) those performativities, the Centre did not share that luxury. The consequences of this are clear: as Stoker (2000) notes, effective action at the local level is dependent on decisions taken at higher levels. For the four Field Officers that consecutively held responsibility for SGR LLEN from its establishment in 2001 the relationship was increasingly complex. As SGR LLEN and its Executive Officer became more established in their roles, more confident of the approaches they had adopted and bolder in their pursuit of implementation, the challenges increased. In part this reflects the experience of all LLEN: in principal the Department supported LLEN as they were endorsed in policy but in practice there were ‘mixed understandings about the role of LLEN and how they fitted into Departmental structures and authority relations’ (Seddon et al. 2005, p.38). Field Officers had experienced the cultural dissonance LLEN had engendered: they

felt constrained by the requirements of their job, their history within a bureaucratic and audit cultural, and their uneasiness about digressing from conventional ways of working in order to support highly differentiated LLEN development. (Seddon et al. 2005, p.43)

Particularly in regard to the final two Field Officers, management of those challenges created a further form of ‘second order’ business for SGR LLEN: growing a functional relationship with their Field Officer that would enable both the

---

<sup>84</sup> Only one other LLEN of the 31 LLEN had not experienced a turnover of Executive Officer by the end of 2005.

<sup>85</sup> It is problematic to refer to the Department in Melbourne as ‘the Centre’ as, within the network as I have conceptualised it, there is no centre. Rather, the network which includes the Department’s various hierarchies is better conceptualised as a morphing 3D grid with each of the intersections of the grid continually moving along, and creating points of intersection. However, on this particular loom I use the term to differentiate from the Department at the local level.



LLEN and the Field Officer to secure the outcomes that were most important to them.

### **The Performance Agreement**

Whilst there are many threads I could take up in my portrayal of this flow of performativities, one of the most vivid is the negotiation and reporting against the annual Performance Agreement between SGR LLEN and the Centre as the agent of VLESC. From the start this had been problematic. For example, in their first Performance Agreement LLEN were required to report on the numbers of students enrolled in all of their partnering provider organisations, including detailing the source of student resourcing and the outcomes the students achieved. This was required at a point when the members of the LLEN were only beginning to grow social capital within the network. In recognition of the danger of requesting such information so early in the formation of the network, the Committee of Management refused to report, advising the Centre, ‘We’re not going to comply. That is not the way you do, that is not the way *we* do things down here’ (Matthew, LLEN committee member, 2005). By 2003, as a result of this ‘softly, softly approach’ (Anne-Marie, Executive Officer, 2004) at the local level the LLEN, in undertaking a project on provider capacity to take students from *On Track Connect*, was able to gain sensitive information from key agencies which was willingly contributed by the agencies as established LLEN partners.

By 2003 the negotiation of the Performance Agreement with the Centre had reached its lowest point, requiring the mediation of senior staff within the Department. There was a suggestion that the core work of all LLEN – relationship building – was being constricted in the focus on outcomes and return on investment (Seddon et al. 2005). The SGR LLEN members in preparing for the negotiation of the Performance Agreement had developed a 25-page action plan that covered all the strategic initiatives they believed were required to pursue the local LLEN agenda which focused on a range of initiatives that would contribute to the development of a post compulsory sector. The Centre was not able to accept inclusion of that plan as the ‘agreed strategic action plan’ and required instead a one page sheet with neither more nor less than 25 initiatives, initiatives that the LLEN must guarantee it would achieve.

I fought I must say for at least three hours with saying, ‘I can’t comply with these processes. This is fraud that you’re asking me to do.’ You know?

Because they are only interested in saying that these things were done . . . these outcomes were achieved. I say to them, 'I've got a whole Strategic Plan of things that we're going to have a go at . . . because we think if we can pull them off they're going to make a difference' and they don't want to hear any of it. You know? So this is all that they wanted. . . . I was horrified that other LLEN would see this, you know? If this is what they think Geelong is doing . . . This is such a minimal thing, I'm embarrassed that we had to sign this . . . because my expectations of our LLEN are so much higher but I just couldn't guarantee that we would have 100% capability of delivering. And I don't even care about that, the fact that we're having a go is what's important. (Anne-Marie, Executive Officer, 2004)

Furthermore, for the first time in 2004 the Performance Agreement included a strategic focus on governance; this focus was intended to ensure LLEN would continuously improve their strategic leadership (Victorian Learning and Employment Skills Commission 2003c). By the end of 2004 when the 2005 Performance Agreement was to be negotiated the ground began to shift. At the beginning of 2004 a new Field Officer had been assigned to SGR LLEN and, initially, the connection between him and the Executive Officer was highly confrontational. Confrontation had also occurred with the previous Field Officer, not only at the Executive Officer level but also with the Committee of Management:

I think the barriers . . . are mixed but they are, in my view, that government has a lot of difficulty giving up its prerogative to direct and so really, particularly in the last 12 months as a Committee of Management member in Geelong, it's often been very exposed to the interventionist bit literally, the Field Officer being in our meetings and telling us what we should do and laying down the law, trying not to but in a sense doing that. (Freya, LLEN committee member, 2003)

However the direct monitoring relationship between the Centre and the Executive Officer dictated that the tension was most acutely played out at that point. It was not until late in 2005 that a mutually workable arrangement evolved whereby the Executive Officer gained confidence in the support offered while the Field Officer became increasingly receptive to the learnings that could be drawn from SGR LLEN's methodology as well as being able to meet his own accountabilities in linking – in some mutually workable form - SGR LLEN to the Centre as one of 15 LLEN for whom he was responsible<sup>86</sup>.

---

<sup>86</sup> In the initial phases of the LLEN initiative a team of Field Officers supported LLEN. Subsequence to a Departmental restructuring only two Field Officers remained and this contributed to an increased focus on self-governance and reporting. Whilst the move from government to governance are argued to represent a shift from bureaucratic control (Keating and Robinson 2003) they could equally be argued to represent only a change in the method of bureaucratic control. Furthermore, with 15 LLEN to support the limits of time and distance made it more difficult to establish a basis for relationship management as advocated in the literature (Robinson and Keating 2005).

A second shift occurred with the inclusion of a further strategic area by the Centre: ‘Effective Contribution to Statewide Programs’; furthermore the focus on ‘Governance’ established in 2004 was expanded in 2005 and required LLEN to achieve or maintain best practice in governance. As such, of the four strategic areas comprising the Performance Agreement two were directed by the Centre, the remaining two: ‘Improved Education and Training Opportunities for Young People’ and ‘Sustainable Improvements to Relationships’ were able to be interpreted by local LLEN in ways that best responded to their local context.

However, LLEN would receive less funding in 2005: whereas initially SGR LLEN had received \$400,000.00 per annum the figure for 2005 would be \$267,000.00 with no clarity as to whether there would be any funding for LLEN to continue beyond the end of 2005<sup>87</sup>. Despite three positive Reviews and the growing confidence of the Minister in the potential for LLEN to build on the capacity of local networks – confidence sufficient for her to commit to the extension of the LLEN initiative beyond its initial three years – in the performative context this funding came with increased accountability to provide evidence of the worth of the investment. That evidence was, however, to be provided within a framework that made visible only ‘a selection of the work of this LLEN and in some cases not even the most important parts of what we are doing’ (Anne-Marie, Executive Officer, 2005). Ironically, the Centre also endorsed this position. During the 2004 Review a number of LLEN had lobbied to be granted statutory authority that would give them a level of authority in exerting pressure on their partner organisations,

---

<sup>87</sup> During 2005 a Funding Review was undertaken by the Department subsequent to the decision to fund LLEN for a further three years. As a consequence of the Funding Review all LLEN were moved to base funding of \$200,000.00 per annum, with some LLEN gaining additional funds on the basis of location. This approach resulted in SGR LLEN losing further funding, reducing to \$200,000.00 per annum for the period 2006-2008. This decision reflected a context where LLEN were effectively competing for the same limited pool of funds as schools; it also reflected the Minister’s desire for remote areas to have additional funding to ensure service provision to young people. Thus the funding process post 2005 cut across the very principles of the LLEN initiative: LLEN were funded in competition with schools when they were charged with working collaboratively with schools; and the bulk of network funding went to those LLEN concerned with establishing infrastructure which would require recurrent funding. The consequence of this for SGR LLEN was that in 2006 there would only be funding sufficient for overheads, including the salary of one Executive Officer and one part-time Administration Officer, and the management of the state government initiative *On Track Connect*. There were no project funds available at all, a situation that was most significant for SGR LLEN which was known to spend far more on strategic projects than any other LLEN given its Working Party structure. Simultaneously, federal government funding for the implementation of SBNA ended which resulted in the loss of the three full-time positions which had provided a central link between SGR LLEN and local clusters of schools.

particularly schools, to co-operate with their strategic agenda<sup>88</sup>. This was understandable on one level: for example as Seddon, Clemans and Billett (2005, p.37) note schools have over 100 years' experience in interacting directly with the Department and had no practical necessity to work through LLEN. The response of the Centre had been to suggest that any LLEN that could not get their partner organisations to contribute without resorting to a legislative framework was not doing its job, a position accepted by the SGR LLEN Executive Officer. However once again in the Performance Agreement the Field Officer

said he wanted numbers. He didn't like practically anything I said. We had more conversations than just Schedule 1 but truly we are like this (*indicates clash*). So in the end the advice that I was getting from around the place was 'Just give him what he wants and get him out of here.' You know? So I made Schedule 1, I just invented figures from the ether and sent them off as well as all the partnership things that I'd gone to a lot of trouble to think my way through and the feedback I got was, 'Thank you, I have been through your Schedule 1 and I've counted all of the young people that the Geelong LLEN is going to be having an impact on next year and there are 275. Is that correct'? Well, I haven't answered that e-mail, I just thought 'No can do. Can not do, can not do.' (Anne-Marie, Executive Officer, 2005)

SGR LLEN learnt to act within and against performativity: the Performance Agreement, one consulted over and approved by some LLEN but inadequate to SGR LLEN, continued to exist but ultimately did not constrain the range of activity with which the LLEN would engage at a local level, notwithstanding that the lack of funding would demand new assemblages to enable that work to be undertaken. As a further example, Ball (2000) notes that the management of performance is a particular performativity that can be likened to Butler's (1999) notion of an 'enacted fantasy,' one that is there simply to be seen and judged. While the Committee of Management had been brought together prior to the Review process that SGR LLEN was involved in during 2004 this was not by way of rehearsal of any such fantasy. Rather it was because the LLEN Executive Officer recognised the need to maximise the kind of input a LLEN such as Geelong could provide to this final in-depth Review on the future of the LLEN initiative: acting against performativity. She wanted to grasp the opportunity for a discussion of the potential released by SGR LLEN's approach to its work as well as a demonstration of broader outcomes – those other than the 'distinctive Central approach to the definition of success' (Seddon et al. 2005, p.41) - that had its source in the perspective of local members

---

<sup>88</sup> This desire had also been articulated by participants in research undertaken by Seddon et al. (2005).

of the post compulsory sector<sup>89</sup>. Consider also that, by 2005, SGR LLEN had dispensed with the ‘glossification’ (Gewirtz, Ball and Bowe 1995) of its Annual Reports. In a context of limited and declining resources and a desire to direct available funds into core business the Committee of Management endorsed the recommendation of the Executive Officer that the Annual Report be as simple as possible. What ‘glossification’ did occur would be on documents that would strategically position SGR LLEN in regard to achieving its core business, for example, the Business Plan that was produced for the Jobs 4 Kids Campaign launched in 2005. As this campaign is specifically concerned with drawing industry into working for young people the mechanism for communication of the campaign adopted the discourse of industry. In both these examples, SGR LLEN has actively resisted, or manipulated, the fabrications of submission to performativity. However the Centre did not have the same freedom to act against and this was vividly portrayed in an incident that occurred during 2004; it is to weaving a portrayal of this incident that I now turn.

### **Being Outwitted by One’s Own Criteria**

What happens when you put an action research methodology such as that of SGR LLEN into a performative context? During 2004 the state government’s Community Cabinet was scheduled to occur within the SGR LLEN region, specifically on the Surf Coast. The Community Cabinet is a long-standing tradition within the Victorian Government in which the Cabinet is conducted in the community to allow community participation. However, it is also widely recognised as a promotional opportunity in that Ministers can invite the media to showcase ministerial visits to key projects.

In September 2004 the Executive Officer was contacted with a request to develop, and provide within 24 hours, a series of activities that would be appropriate for the participation of the Minister during the Surf Coast Community Cabinet. This request was not something that could be accommodated: not only did the LLEN not run activities for their own sake, neither are there any secondary schools on the Surf Coast so the option of demonstrating the LLEN’s work with a school also did not

---

<sup>89</sup> Subsequent to the Review process the Executive Officer of SGR LLEN was advised by a member of the Review team that the only place where she had seen the sort of ‘futures thinking’ that the Department itself was promoting internally, and seen it succeeding ‘vibrantly,’ was in visiting SGR LLEN during the Review process. (Hull, D. 2005, pers. comm. 28 April)

exist. When the Executive Officer responded thus to the Centre she was asked, ‘So you want me to report back to the Minister’s office that there is a nil response from the Geelong LLEN?’<sup>90</sup> This was not accurate: this was not a ‘nil response,’ it was an explanation of the SGR LLEN’s approach which could not accommodate the request. Having received this response from the Executive Officer the Centre approached the Chair of SGR LLEN and re-tabled the request; the Chair then contacted the Executive Officer and suggested three LLEN projects in which the Minister could be interested. This approach to her Chair incensed the Executive Officer who then rang senior staff at the Centre and expressed her disapproval in the tactics that had been brought to bear. The reaction she received was to be told, ‘Look at it from our point of view. They are coming down to a Community Cabinet. We have funded that LLEN down there for three years. If there is nothing for you to show about what difference it has made, what does that say?’

In the face of this threat of being seen to be failing accountability the Executive Officer asked for further clarification of what was required and was advised she needed to provide activities where there were young people that the Minister could see, doing something that the LLEN had funded or facilitated to demonstrate that for three years they had ‘actually made some kind of contribution.’ At this point she reiterated that the LLEN in Geelong did not operate that way and received the response, ‘That is the line that you have been playing for three years . . . the Minister is going to want to know, all the funding for three years, what is the LLEN doing?’ As such, the Executive Officer offered the three suggestions made by the Chair, each of which she endorsed, as examples of the LLEN doing what the Minister had requested:

The government has put the resources in your hands – now it is up to you to use them effectively to come up with something different. (Minister of Education and Training 2003, p.1)

These suggestions were rejected on the basis that they wouldn’t interest the Minister who wanted, ‘To go somewhere where she can see young people, actual young people doing something that the LLEN has funded.’ At this point the Executive Officer offered the Young Parents’ Access Project, the one project that would guarantee the presence of young people. This was declined because it was not in the Surf Coast and the Minister’s schedule would not allow her to travel to view an

---

<sup>90</sup> This, and subsequent Departmental quotes, were attributed by the Executive Officer.

activity. At this point the Executive Officer was again advised that the Minister's office would be rung and a 'nil response' lodged from SGR LLEN. The Executive Officer protested this action as undervaluing the strategy of the LLEN and reiterated that this was not a case of a 'nil response'; the LLEN was attempting to respond but the Centre was outwitted by its own criteria. At this point she was advised that the Centre would write to the Minister's office that the LLEN in Geelong 'didn't work in the same way,' that they took a more strategic approach and what was positioned as the failure of the LLEN to deliver on the request would be explained in that manner. However, it would ultimately become apparent that this promise had not been acted on.

Thus in the performative context the pressure was on the Centre to be accountable for the money that had been invested in SGR LLEN and to be able to demonstrate that accountability in what might be referred to as 'the done way.' In other words, the Department wished the LLEN to show the Minister an 'enacted fantasy' despite knowing that SGR LLEN was gaining a growing reputation as *the* LLEN to watch by virtue of 'doing it a different way.' The Centre required what didn't exist despite being well aware – having heard the LLEN 'play the line' for three years - that this was not the way SGR LLEN did its work. The LLEN did not accept that structural change toward a post compulsory sector that would better meet the needs of all young people would come from other than a strategic approach: what Deleuze would describe as a flow rather than the kind of event the Minister usually expected to visit. This is also what VLESC had declared from the outset: outcomes would come after community building. Yet the context of government funding demanded accountability in the form of performance of short-term activities as and when required by the Minister. At the same time, as I have already alluded to, the focus on quality in self governance was increasingly to the fore and it is to weaving these images that I now turn my hand.

### *'Drowning in Pedantry.'*<sup>91</sup>

Technologies and calculations which appear to make public sector organisations more transparent may actually result in making them more opaque, as representational artefacts are increasingly constructed with great deliberation and sophistication. (Ball 2000, p.10)

---

<sup>91</sup> This heading quotes a member of the Committee of Management as the group progressed through the approval of SGR LLEN's policies and procedures.

During 2004 all LLEN were required to assess themselves against a model of good governance that the Centre had contracted from a consultancy organisation that specialised in governance of not-for-profit organisations. All the results of the self-assessments were then tabulated by the Centre and returned to each LLEN who, once again, could see their performance against other LLEN. It was incumbent on all LLEN to achieve 100% compliance with the 36 items of the governance requirements by the end of 2004 to ensure receipt of their next grant. Ball (2000) notes that indicators such as those in the good governance model are almost routinely manipulated to present an organisation in the best possible light. However, this did not occur for SGR LLEN. The Chair, Deputy Chair, Executive Officer and Administration Officer undertook the self-assessment on behalf of the Committee of Management who assessed themselves rigorously with a resulting rating of 38%: of the six categories the results were grouped into the LLEN failed across five categories. For the most part these failures did not reflect that appropriate actions were not taken; rather they reflected that the actions taken or expected to be taken were not documented. As such, the LLEN faced a considerable amount of administrative work to develop and document its policies and procedures sufficient to achieve the 100% compliance and this, in itself, created another level of second order business.

The scale of the first order business the LLEN had set for itself was already fully occupying the time of the Executive Officer and Administration Officer to the extent that the Executive Officer recognised the only meeting she was keeping up with was the Committee of Management meeting and even then 'only just' (Anne-Marie, Executive Officer, 2005). Thus, it was resolved that the only way to achieve good practice in governance was to put out a public tender for the work. It is indicative of what one Committee of Management member referred to as 'the sledgehammer on the nut approach' (Curtis, LLEN committee member, 2004) that tenders ranged from \$5,500.00 to \$60,000.00 to develop policies and procedures to ensure good governance against funding of only \$267,000.00 at that point and declining thereafter. Ultimately an independent organisation won the tender and undertook the work of developing and integrating the full range of policy and operational procedures for SGR LLEN. They also were contracted to go beyond the requirements of the governance model to complete a risk assessment of the SGR LLEN which was then workshopped with the full Committee of Management.



We are 100% compliant and that is all that we are proposing that we are. We're happy that we've got our basic framework in place. . . . A lot of the LLEN have contacted us and I have e-mailed this to them, our Committee of Management was really happy to have that happen. They thought it was such a hideous joke that we might as well save anyone else from having to do it. (Anne-Marie, Executive Officer, 2005)

By 2005 with the issues of the implementation of governance behind them and a functional relationship in place with the Field Officer, SGR LLEN would find a portion, sometimes significant, of every Committee of Management meeting dedicated to the ongoing review and confirmation of its policies and procedures.

Crucially and invariably acts of fabrication and the fabrications themselves act and reflect back upon the practices they stand for. The fabrication becomes something to be sustained, lived up to. Something to measure individual practices against. (Ball 2000, p.9)

For those members of the Committee of Management who had been with the LLEN since inception this was understood as a regrettable chore; for those members who joined the Committee of Management at this point of increasing focus on governance issues there was some sense of 'is this it?' The Executive Officer recognised this tension but did not know how to reconcile the second order business required to approve and then maintain the policies and procedures that had been developed with the other first order business reporting that she recognised as being inadequate:

It is not deliberate and it is problematic, and I hope it will change because I don't agree with the fact that our Committee of Management is a governance body. And what has been so good about it, why people come, is because they do get a chance to deal with the issues and they ought to. . . . So for example the Vocational and Applied Learning Working Party is so big, it is dealing with some amazing things, and this whole SBNA Review process has been quite interesting. You can't fully ever report on that back to the Committee of Management because we don't just want these reports but in some way also what is going on in all the Working Parties needs to be conveyed to the Committee of Management in such a way that the issues that sit underneath all that activity are being discussed. Your observation is correct but . . . I haven't nailed the appropriate way to link those two things yet. (Anne-Marie, Executive Officer, 2005)

While the process of implementing policies and procedures had on some levels ultimately proved helpful for the Executive Officer given her previous experience was not in management, other aspects of the governance tool were undertaken for no reason other than it was a governance requirement that they must be undertaken in accordance with the model confirmed by the Centre.

### *Getting the tension right . . .*

From the outset there was a tension for SGR LLEN and, possibly, for all LLEN. Although LLEN were established as incorporated associations their funding was linked to a Performance Agreement that, as I have outlined, was only partially negotiable . They could not refuse the additional responsibilities for Statewide initiatives that could be, and were, added in as post compulsory education policy initiatives were introduced; they were restrained in what they could negotiate for inclusion in, or for exclusion from, their Performance Agreements:

The other thing they are doing is, increasing the mandatory things you have to do. You have to do On Track within your budget, then you'll have to do the variety of things to achieve the four goals that were set out, given to us within the budget. . . . Your discretionary money is reducing all the time and the discretionary money is the ideas money, the money to take risks, money to try new things, . . .to give an incentive to your partners, financial and other incentives. I don't think you need a lot of money for brokerage, I want to make that clear, but I think if you don't have money you've got to be given time.  
(Freya, LLEN committee member, 2003)

Their funding was contingent on implementing structures that enabled the Centre and the LLEN to demonstrate their respective accountabilities within politically convenient time spans.

If we were to take up our Deleuzian bobbin we could see this as the tension between deterritorialization and reterritorialization on the part of the state apparatus: the introduction of LLEN as incorporated associations was a deterritorialization, a focused effort to enable local communities to respond meaningfully to local needs, to foster both community development and 'joined up' government specifically concerned with improving education, training and employment opportunities for young people. This deterritorialization was immediately overlaid by a series of reterritorializations: a compensatory process whereby the loss of control by government was regained through complex governance requirements. At the same time some would suggest that this was all 'just going through the motions' and that the LLEN, when compared to the constituencies they represented, just did not understand governance (Anthea, LLEN committee member, 2004). Perhaps we can understand this tension between too much and not enough thus:

If we ask the general question, 'What holds things together?', the clearest, easiest answer seems to be provided by a formalizing, linear, hierarchized, centralized *arborescent* model. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.327, original emphasis)

However, as a network it was in the balance between enough and no more than enough: the governance intent for the LLEN needed to protect innovation whilst not being ‘undone by its exercise’ (McCarthy et al. 2004, p.20). A Deleuzian would conceptualise this as demanding a knot of arborescence in the rhizome rather than the imposition of an arborescent model such as that appropriate for the Committee of Management constituencies or the LLEN’s partner organisations. This is the ‘tight-loose approach’ – a tight approach in developing the simple rules to which all LLEN would work combined with a loose approach to specifying the application of those rules in context (McCarthy et al. 2004). Such an approach accommodates the recognition that networks are ‘differentially constructed by participants, so that there is no one tool kit for managing them all’ (Robinson and Keating 2005, p.20).

SGR LLEN would, however, act above and beyond these limits to respond to the needs articulated by the local community. The LLEN would work to ensure that the intensities available were directed to defending its strategic approach and going beyond any limitations in its Performance Agreement. According to Ball, this is a form of activism we must choose to adopt in the face of performativity:

We . . . have the opportunity to refuse these ways of accounting for ourselves, not as apathy, rather as ‘a hyper- and pessimistic activism.’ As Foucault puts it: ‘I think that the ethico-political choice we have to make every day is to determine which is the main danger.’ (Ball 2000, p.18)

Butler (1999) explains that the manufacturing and sustaining of ‘fabrications,’ the strategy of impression management, involves submission to performativity and the discipline of competition. It is an ‘investment in plasticity’ at the cost of authenticity and commitment (Ball 2000, p.9). The Committee of Management and Executive Officer of SGR LLEN recognised the risks of performativity and attempted to withstand submission to its requirements. However, there has been a cost in such authenticity. In digging in their heels to retain a unique way of working - notwithstanding demands for activities that can be counted or visited or models of governance that act as a homogenising force - both energy and limited resources have been expended on second order business and this has had consequences for the rigour of first order business and therefore to the LLEN itself and its accountability to its local community which, in the final analysis, is the ultimate measure of the quality of the LLEN.

And Curtis said to me . . . ‘Listen. I think we should adopt a position of . . . partial isolationism.’ And what that means is that the less they know, the better. He said what Kirby was all about was work local, work with what your community is after. That sort of thing. And it is not, that advice is not going to

come from the State. And you know, however we play this game, that is where our leverage is. What we are able to do locally. And I agree with that. (Anne-Marie, Executive Officer, 2005)

Enough. It is time for me to lay aside this loom and once gain take up a loom with a closer sett to portray in detail the attempt to connect industry to the work of the LLEN.

## Mrs Clarke is Here To Ask You To Help Us

*'Well,' says the Executive Officer, 'I'm a bit nervous about this actually but I'll just have to get my head around it . . . we've scheduled the first meeting of the ERG. There will be a meeting on 11 February 2004 at 3.30. Now we've got a 25 member group and the Geelong Business Network is going to convene that first meeting . . . and then he hands it back over to the LLEN. This first meeting is going to be so important to be able to pull out enough issues that the employers can see that they've got something to say about these things but also doesn't make this Reference Group seem onerous or any of those kinds of things.'*

Create in your mind the image of a young person in a school, asking the teacher for help. As you will soon read, such an image is the inspiration for the title of this loom: now the teacher is asking the employer for help. From the outset the involvement of industry in LLEN was considered crucial to their success. Kirby (2000, p.7) had noted that one of the factors in young people falling through the cracks of the education and training system was the weak linkages between the components of the system, support and industry. The role of LLEN would be to further develop collaborative networks that already existed by developing a local co-operative approach to planning that would include the renewal and strengthening of communities, minimising duplication and wasteful competition and acknowledging community and industry shared responsibility and ownership of post compulsory education and training (Victorian Learning and Employment Skills Commission 2002).

In Geelong, the central involvement of the Chamber of Commerce as the auspicing agency for the SGR LLEN bid had been commended by the Department from the outset. Once established, the Department had reminded all LLEN of the need to ensure industry representation on their Committees of Management<sup>92</sup>. In its initial stages this representation largely occurred through the active involvement of the Chair of the Geelong Chamber of Commerce who was the initial,

---

<sup>92</sup> Here 'industry' refers to industry – employers and employees – beyond the education, training and employment industries that were the central members of the Committee of Management.

and has remained the only, Chair of SGR LLEN. In subsequent elections the Executive Officer of the Geelong Area Consultative Committee (GACC)<sup>93</sup> also joined the Committee of Management. However, the absence of any ‘real employers’ on the Committee of Management was a frequent point of challenge. This perspective was at odds with that of the Executive Officer who, as early as 2002, had come to believe that the appropriate place for employers to be involved in SGR LLEN was in active roles within LLEN Working Parties. As such, from her perspective there had always been a level of industry involvement which reached well beyond the LLEN through the bridging networks that worked within industry. In 2003 the LLEN commissioned GBN to research and recommend ways in which the LLEN could move to an active partnership between the education and training sector, industry and other community stakeholders. As a result of this review (Geelong Business Network 2004), the major drive to broaden industry involvement for SGR LLEN commenced: the establishment of the SGR LLEN Employer Reference Group (ERG)<sup>94</sup>. Here I take up my bobbins to weave the story thus far of the SGR LLEN ERG and, in particular, its establishment of a Jobs 4 Kids campaign in connection with the Beacon Foundation. Specifically I intend a rhizomatic portrayal of this project, recognising its inherent connectedness; that its ‘traits’ are not necessarily linked to similar traits (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.21) and that this has consequences that must be worked through.

---

<sup>93</sup> See Footnote 49 for an explanation of Area Consultative Committees.

<sup>94</sup> SGR LLEN was the first LLEN to implement an Employer Reference Group.

## *Establishing the SGR LLEN Employer Reference Group*

*‘The last time we had an employer forum I was questioning in my own mind whether the right focus for the LLEN is to be talking about structured workplace learning where if we go about this idea of the LLEN as a space I would rather be creating a vision. . . . I don’t think it’s the right question for an employer to say “What’s in it for me?” I think we should be saying to the employers “What are you going to contribute to growing this region? Because if you can identify your contribution then all the other things we can help you put in place.”’*

*She sighs, ‘I can see that going down like a lead balloon, you know?’*

The purpose of the ERG was to ensure that education and training in SGR LLEN region addressed the realities of the workplace, both currently and into the future, in ways that would optimize the employability skills of young people in the region (Geelong Business Network 2004). It was one of six projects that had been initiated and coordinated by the SGR LLEN Employment Issues Working Party. The group would act as an advisory group to the LLEN Committee of Management through the Executive Officer and secretariat services would be provided by her. Protocols were established for the operation of the group under which any new projects or requests for information from the group by external parties would be approved by and initiated through the LLEN Executive Officer; the group itself was encouraged to communicate directly with interested others on their projects while retaining an obligation to consult with the LLEN should any issues of protocol or confidentiality arise. Under a direction of its Chair and Deputy Chair the group would have two roles: firstly to enable employers from a broad cross section of industries<sup>95</sup> within the region to input to the on-going development and implementation of education and training in the region; secondly to help transfer information from the education sector into industry on

---

<sup>95</sup> The inaugural meeting was attended by a range of employers representing the following industries: retail, hospitality, telecommunications, sport and leisure, manufacturing, recruitment, building and construction, financial services, education and agriculture. It was also attended by representatives for the Geelong and Victorian Chambers of Commerce, GBN, GACC, SGN and the Committee for Geelong (CFG, a non-political lobby group of individuals and organisations with a demonstrated commitment to improving through strategic advocacy the quality of life for all citizens of Geelong).

*‘Four of these people are on the GRVEC Board so you can already see where their heads are at and they lobbied to be there because they have a vested interest in GRVEC you know? And then you’ve got all these much smaller players . . . it feels like an interesting thing that they’re involved in and all that. . . . And . . . we’ve got to be really careful about where the leadership comes from. . . . I said “Not the LLEN, it needs to be an employer.”’*

education initiatives and issues.

Shortly after the inaugural meeting of the ERG, LLEN and GRVEC staff met with the elected Chair of the group to discuss how best to recruit employers for an active role with the LLEN. At this stage in the development of the LLEN it had become apparent that GRVEC was in many respects the service arm of the LLEN<sup>96</sup>. Each of the staff outlined their respective roles and the challenges they were encountering in connecting with employers. For instance, as a result of the surge of vocational education policy there had been a massive increase in the numbers of students experiencing structured workplace learning within their school experience. However, the demand for opportunities was well in excess of the supply. More employers needed to be recruited but even when they were able to be recruited either by GRVEC, or by schools making direct approaches to their communities, a fundamental problem existed in reconciling ‘business time’ with the periods, days and semesters of ‘school time.’ From the perspective of GRVEC and the LLEN the resolution to this was in establishing long term relationships between schools, students and employers that would enable the evolution of a ‘mutual time’ rather than ad hoc work placements. Whilst applauding such approaches, the Chair also ‘troubled’ the notion of LLEN promotion. Rather than focusing on how the LLEN could promote itself and its work to employers he suggested that the idea should be to ‘reverse engineer’ the plan into

---

<sup>96</sup> I expand on this unusual collaboration in the fifth Panel of this thesis. At this point it is sufficient to note the determination to work collaboratively at the local level for the benefit of the community despite the different drivers that resulted from LLEN operating within the state Labor government policy and GRVEC operating within the federal Liberal government policy.



something employers could quite simply connect to through use of their own discourse including formal business plans. For him, the idea of ‘the LLEN’ was meaningless and could safely remain so. In communicating with industry what would matter was ‘the call to action’: this was a group working to get jobs for kids. Within this call to action there would have to be recognition that some employers would not see disengagement from school as sometimes reflecting an inadequacy in the structures of education: employers would be looking to see some willingness to ‘stick at it’ by young people. In this conversation lay the seeds of what would connect to become the JOBS 4 KIDS campaign in conjunction with the Beacon Foundation. It is to an overview of each of dimensions to which we must now turn.

### *Making an Assemblage*

Initially the focus of the ERG was to provide input into the ongoing development and implementation of post compulsory education and training in the Geelong region. However, by the second half of 2004 the Group were challenging the LLEN: having provided input they wanted to know what was going to be done with their input to improve opportunities for young people. During 2004 SGR LLEN had contracted a local public relations organisation to investigate options for the development of a ‘Jobs for Youth’ program to reverse the youth unemployment figure in the region through the development of appropriate programs and links between education and industry. That investigation looked towards work undertaken by

another LLEN<sup>97</sup> that had established a one-stop shop for youth employment services along with a youth employment media campaign (O'Dowd 2004). The idea of a one-stop shop for youth had also been identified by the Lifelong Learning Pillar of G21.

In August 2004 the findings of the investigation were presented to the ERG meeting. At that meeting presentations were also made by the Wurreker<sup>98</sup> Broker on the seemingly intractable issues surrounding Koorie training; GRVEC also presented information on the DEST initiative *Adopt a School*<sup>99</sup>. Both of these presentations generated discussion along with recognition that whilst important work was being undertaken it was splintered, inadequate to the scope of the problems and did not engage with awareness that the issues were multi-faceted and interrelated. For instance, while employers had been involved in earlier initiatives linking industry with schools they felt only so much could be achieved by their commitment when schools were so hard to connect with given their operational structures remained unchanged. In Geelong, GRVEC, had been asked to support the *Adopt a School* strategy and commented that the initiative 'may have a broader application in the Geelong region and probably needs a new name' (Dana, LLEN committee member, 2004).

Meanwhile, school staff commented that it came down

---

<sup>97</sup> Highlands LLEN, Ballarat.

<sup>98</sup> Wurreker is one of the major Koorie communities in the Geelong region; the other major community are the Wathaurong people.

<sup>99</sup> *Adopt a School* is an initiative of the Australian Industry Group and DEST and forms part of a federal National Skill Shortages Strategy. It 'seeks to develop effective grassroots partnerships between schools and local businesses for the benefit of schools, industry and business' (Australian Industry Group 2004, p.1).

to a resource issue: teachers were under pressure to respond to the diverse needs of the increasing numbers of students remaining in school: the priority for teachers was to work with their senior students and ensure their success in VCE. This was the outcome that parents, and society, still demanded of schools. There was a high level of engagement in the meeting and the issues were widely canvassed, the result of which was that by the end of the meeting it had become clear that a multi-faceted approach was required. This was probably not about collecting information or knowing about best practice; the required response was not one that had the LLEN, or a one-stop shop established by the LLEN, at the centre. Rather, a commitment to youth would be at the centre and all other initiatives would contribute to this commitment. The Jobs 4 Kids campaign was reformatted on the basis of this recognition of complexity. When the ERG reconvened in December 2004 the focus was firmly on partnership from five different and interconnected dimensions: state and federal initiatives, particularly the establishment of an Australian Technical College<sup>100</sup>, integrated with the work of G21, SGR LLEN, GRVEC and Beacon Geelong. All of these dimensions would form an assemblage that would be known as the Jobs 4 Kids Campaign. Before moving to outline that campaign I need to portray the new partner in this assemblage: the Beacon Foundation.

### *Introducing Beacon*

---

<sup>100</sup> The Australian Technical College image is woven later in this Panel.

The Beacon Foundation is a national, non-profit organisation that was initiated in the southernmost Australia state of Tasmania and has since been replicated around Australia. The Foundation initiates innovative projects to address youth unemployment. The implementation of these projects relies on the support of local communities and the employer community at both the local and national level; employers contribute funding, in-kind services and time. In the Geelong region, the Beacon Foundation project that came to the attention of SGR LLEN was the *No Dole*<sup>101</sup> Program. This program within schools had originated in 1995 and involves senior school students making a public commitment by way of a pledge to reject any ambition to go ‘on the dole’ and to pursue further education, training or employment. Businesses are involved in the program through providing opportunities for students to experience workplaces; a series of strategies have been designed to stimulate students’ understanding of the world of work. Importantly, the *No Dole Program* is complemented by another Beacon program, *Real Jobs*, which has its focus on the creation of wholly commercially independent and sustainable jobs. This latter program had not been introduced in Geelong. Two local secondary schools in Geelong, each in a *Neighbourhood Renewal* area, had joined Beacon and introduced the *No Dole Program* and Beacon was keen to expand the program within the Geelong community.

*‘Now they have got quite excited about it and when we started talking about the Jobs 4 Kids Campaign and how they really are an element of that whole thing, Geelong Beacon could really see how that could happen and stopped competing with me. . . . They started to see how much everybody knew about what was going on and rang me one day and said, “Oh*

Up to this point, SGR LLEN had made overtures to the

---

<sup>101</sup> ‘Dole’ is a colloquialism for social support payments for the unemployed.

*those contacts are so helpful, they understood what we want to do and thank you, thank you, thank you.” And then we had the conversation around, “this can’t get out of hand, the employers shouldn’t feel they are being approached by thousands of people” and so on.’*

*But the Executive Officer had reservations. ‘The schools could see that you can’t just get kids signing No Dole pledges and going on to work because of how at-risk these kids are. You need all sorts of things going on that fit into a kind of integrated plan. Now the Beacon Foundation could not understand that, they were attached to this heart-warming No Dole, the media coming and seeing these kids signing up, their parents crying and all of that. Most of the parents were crying because they’d lived on the Dole and they were feeling really offended by the fact they were forcing their kids down this way! Over time this has been a learning exercise for everybody and the battle the Beacon Geelong people were having was getting the*

Beacon Foundation, recognising that there was potential to connect their work with the core business of the LLEN while supporting Beacon’s desire to expand into other schools. This offer had not been taken up: Beacon was resistant to having the Project become part of the LLEN’s regional strategy as it was important to their strategy that they maintain control over school recruitment and selection; they also wanted their programs clearly badged. In contrast, the LLEN strategy involved schools self-identifying and becoming part of the network; the LLEN was however keen to connect with Beacon for a number of reasons. Firstly, it didn’t want employers being targeted by Beacon people for workplace learning opportunities when GRVEC was already unable to meet the current demand for schools offering VCAL. Furthermore, while Beacon couldn’t provide financial resources they could provide access to multi-national employers; they also had political clout and a strong reputation with employers. Furthermore there were concerns about students signing a *No Dole* Pledge in the absence of the complementary Beacon program to create job opportunities in the area, an aspect of work that schools did not have the capacity to undertake without their LLEN. In talking through these issues both parties came to see that the common core business was getting jobs for kids and that the expansion of the *No Dole Project* could contribute to and be managed, not by the LLEN, but within the specific context of the Jobs 4 Kids Campaign. Just as employers had not needed to know about ‘the LLEN’ but had heeded the call to action ‘jobs for kids’ so too the Beacon Foundation did not want ‘the LLEN’ but were willing to attempt to work within the Jobs 4 Kids

*Beacon Foundation's head around that. But when they came down here they saw that everyone in the room was talking about this regional model. We've got multiple pathways that are all part of the Jobs 4 Kids strategy and the No Dole thing is part of that. But it isn't the full story.*

*It is the end of 2004 and the connection between SGR LLEN and the Beacon Foundation is established. The Executive Officer is enthusiastic. 'This is synchronistic, this is just extraordinary. The ERG got to the point of challenging me about "Well, we've given you input. What are you going to do with it?" And I said, "We are going to do a Business Plan." Lie, lie, lie because yes we are going to do a business plan, but I don't know how to do a business plan! I went the following day to the Beacon meeting . . . I took them through the entire kit and caboodle, everyone was so supportive of the model, they all understood it. The CEO of*

Campaign. The Geelong Beacon team became members of the LLEN's Vocational and Applied Learning Working Party which supports the ERG; the LLEN Executive Officer joined the Management Committee of the Geelong Beacon program.

### *Connection and Consequence*

Once the connection had been established between the work of the Beacon Foundation and the work of the ERG the flow began. Most importantly the LLEN immediately gained access to the skills to place the 'concept in the mind' that was the Jobs 4 Kids Campaign into the discourse of industry: a 2005-2007 Business Plan with six strategic priority areas and associated targets<sup>102</sup>. This was a piece of work that the Executive Officer, in providing secretariat services to the ERG, knew had to be undertaken but could not resource. Once the commitment was made to work collaboratively, the Beacon Foundation immediately provided this resource through their network. Access to this Business Plan was also of benefit to the Beacon Foundation. They had not worked in this form of collaboration previously and the Business Plan 'helped them see who they were in this context' (Anne-Marie, Executive Officer, 2004). The six strategic priorities for the period were: build strong partnerships between industry and the education and training sector to meet local employment and skills needs; the *Adopt a School* initiative is included in this priority. The second priority is to expand the range

---

<sup>102</sup> This document was the only 'glossy' document produced by SGR LLEN in 2005.

*Beacon said, "What do you need us to do?" And I said, "We need you to give us access to a business person who will do a business plan for us for the Jobs 4 Kids campaign." He said, "Okay . . . what is the timeline?" How about that for the universe working?'*

*'You were obviously happy with the Jobs 4 Kids launch,' states the Executive Officer's confidant.*

*'Um no I wasn't,' she replies. 'No, I was very unhappy with it. And the reason for that*

of school to work pathways available within the region; initiatives here include the range of structured workplace learning opportunities already underway. Thirdly, a priority interest in improving employability skills and job awareness of Geelong kids; it is here that the *No Dole Program* is included alongside four other initiatives. The fourth priority is to update teachers' awareness of the needs of industry; this includes industry placements for teachers employed by schools involved with Beacon; it also includes opportunities for employers to be 'Principal for a Day.' Fifthly, there is a priority to raise parents' awareness of the value and range of vocational pathways leading to jobs for their children; here the initiatives include industry tours for parents and students and careers sample programs for parents and their children. The final strategic priority is to raise the profile of vocational and applied learning pathways in the region; the initiatives under this priority area include a media campaign for the Jobs 4 Kids strategy, an Employer Recognition Program promoting the achievements of students in workplace learning programs, regional Training Awards and so on. In all the Jobs 4 Kids campaign contained over thirty interrelated initiatives to actively involve industry in the work of SGR LLEN.

15 March 2005 was set down as the date when the Jobs 4 Kids Campaign would be launched. The Beacon Foundation, in conjunction with SGR LLEN, issued a broad cross-section of the community with invitations to a breakfast at which Peter Kirby, whom had chaired the Ministerial Review of Post Compulsory Education and Training Pathways in

*was that not one of the Beacon people mentioned Jobs 4 Kids or the LLEN one single time. Not once. And yet [the LLEN representatives] all very generously put Beacon right up there when they were talking about what we were trying to do in the region.'*

Victoria that had led to the establishment of LLEN, would launch the SGR LLEN Jobs 4 Kids Campaign. The venue was a large room in the Sheraton Hotel in Geelong and it was full to capacity: the ERG members were in attendance as were other representatives from the business community, city councillors, LLEN members, education bureaucrats, the media and so on. The meeting was opened by the SGR LLEN ERG Chair whom then handed to the ERG Deputy Chair. She spoke on the employment and education of young people in the Geelong Region. The meeting was then addressed by the local Beacon representative, the CEO of the Beacon Foundation and the Patron of Beacon Geelong. After breakfast, Peter Kirby gave his address in which he reminded those present that in a 'golden period' in Australia's economy there were at any point in time some 130,000 15-19 year olds seeking work in a context of increasing youth unemployment within the labour market of the risk society. Further, in areas of disadvantage, this challenge was aggravated by a lack of economic and cultural capital. After his keynote address, Mrs Clarke<sup>103</sup>, a local Principal, explained that in her school 60% of parents were not a part of the paid labour market; some of her students would, without work, become the third generation of unemployed in the family. For her students, a frequent goal was simply to find out about work and they would ask her, 'How do I go about that Mrs Clarke?' It was the involvement with Beacon Foundation that enabled her school to respond. Having set the context, the Jobs 4 Kids

---

<sup>103</sup> Here a pseudonym has been used.



*'It is very risky isn't it?' says the Executive Officer's confidant. It's a tiny little aspect, it's one dimension and yet [the Jobs 4 Kids Campaign] has suddenly become the No Dole program.'*

*The Executive Officer sighs. 'Yes and that was the problem with the Beacon people doing what they did in that fashion. And I was watching [our local Principals] and thinking, 'Oh, this is a huge mistake to have let this go in this way.' I was appalled, all of the conversation about the Jobs 4 Kids Campaign and I mean Beacon even helped us with a consultant to put that together and still they didn't refer to it. You know, that blew me away. Um however other people asked me what I thought of it and I said exactly what I've just said to you and they said, "Well you know as members of the Committee of Management we didn't hear it like that." But they were also co-developers of the Jobs 4 Kids Campaign so they probably firmly in their minds knew how it all sat so they didn't hear this as being all Beacon Beacon Beacon.'*

Campaign was officially launched in the final 15 minutes of the program. The formal launch to the Jobs 4 Kids Campaign had been identified as a significant opportunity for the LLEN to foster understanding of its work within the broader Geelong community. And yet in my field notes I have written, 'How does this go? The LLEN is invisible, was this low profile deliberate?' The consequences of the connection with the Beacon Foundation were problematic for the LLEN Executive Officer. On one level, the day was a success and, subsequently, new connections were made between local employers and schools: the Beacon Geelong program was successfully promoted. On the other level, the full Jobs 4 Kids Campaign, one of the central platforms for the LLEN's pursuit of a post compulsory education training and employment sector was rendered invisible to those who did not already have an understanding of it. In fact, the reverse occurred: for some attendees the Jobs 4 Kids Campaign 'was' the *No Dole Program*.

### *Thinking Rhizome*

Deleuze & Guattari (1987) have introduced us to the idea of the rhizome. As described previously, a rhizome accords with its botanical reference; it is a type of stem that expands underground horizontally, sending down roots and pushing up shoots that arise and proliferate not from a network. Within a rhizome there are only lines: dimensional lines of segmentarity and stratification and lines of flight as 'the maximum dimension after which the multiplicity undergoes metamorphosis, changes in

nature' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.21).

Deleuze & Guattari use the term

'deterritorialization' to explain this process of metamorphosis: deterritorialization is, quite literally, the process by which one leaves the territory or moves out of segmentarity and stratification. While deterritorialization can occur, so can 'reterritorialization': a compensation that obstructs or segments the line of flight beyond the territory. Anything can reterritorialize, that is, 'stand for' the lost territory.

We can use these ideas of deterritorialization and reterritorialization to think about the consequences of the connection between the SGR LLEN ERG and the Beacon Foundation. Here, the Jobs 4 Kids Campaign is the line of deterritorialization – a line intended to break away from segmentarity of the range of initiatives in expanding the active involvement of industry in the emerging post compulsory education training and employment sector that was the strategic imperative of SGR LLEN. At the point of the launch the Campaign was reterritorialized: not only captured by the signifier *No Dole Program* but captured by a signifier that, for some, was another example of a deficit approach to youth-at-risk which firmly, and publicly, placed responsibility for avoiding social support payments on the shoulders of youth regardless of the 'social landscapes' of their lives (Ball et al. 2000). Thus the line of flight has been segmented, divided into successive proceedings with the risk that the deterritorialization sinks into a black hole (Deleuze and Guattari 1987).

According to Deleuze and Guattari, there is no way

to know in advance if such a reterritorialization will occur and this is why an approach of ‘alogical consistencies’ is the only way to proceed:

The reason is simple. It is because no one, not even God, can say in advance whether two borderlines will string together or form a fiber, whether a given multiplicity will or will not cross over into another given multiplicity, or even if given heterogeneous elements will enter symbiosis, will form a consistent, or cofunctioning, multiplicity susceptible to transformation. No one can say where the line of flight will pass. . . . We are all too familiar with the dangers of the line of flight, and with its ambiguities. The risks are ever-present, but it is always possible to have the good fortune of avoiding them. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.250)

In this instance, such good fortune did not prevail. For the Executive Officer the decision taken toward the end of 2004 to add Promotions to the core work of the LLEN would become underscored as the means to engage with the dangers of the line of flight and its ambiguities. With the evolution of the Jobs 4 Kids Campaign it had become imperative to find mechanisms to reconnect ‘real employers’ with the SGR LLEN approach of making ‘multiplicities,’ forging lines of intensity which would draw on and build the desire of employers to work towards ‘jobs for kids.’ This perspective was reinforced by the consultant who had worked on the Jobs 4 Kids Campaign Business Plan who declared that ‘this LLEN is a big light hiding under a bushel. And it’s time we lifted the bushel.’ Thus the decision to invest what limited funds were available for promotion in a campaign specifically targeted at industry along with a promotion campaign specifically targeted at the ERG itself. These campaigns would aim to generate a greater

*She continues. 'So I am also saying to other key people what I have just said to you. Because they need to help me manage this now around the message that gets out there. And I've said that I don't care if I never hear "LLEN" but the rallying thing is Jobs 4 Kids and that's what has to control it.'*

understanding of the need for a post compulsory education, training *and employment* sector and a trust about how such a sector could contribute to the creation of jobs for kids through LLEN initiatives. For example, throughout 2004 the Vocational and Applied Learning party worked closely with a local employer who could not grow his business as he could not recruit suitable apprentices. At the same time, the local secondary school could not get apprenticeships for some of its students. By brokering this arrangement throughout 2004 while the employer expanded his business, six students were 'groomed' both academically and vocationally (with the involvement of the employer) to take up full-time apprenticeships in 2005. Importantly, promotion would also focus on maximising the connections with G21 and the economic development strategies of local governments in the region. Yet the question of whether this LLEN, or any LLEN, would be able to forge a sustainable and active engagement of a range of employers in the emerging post compulsory sector continued to be debated leading the Department to ask, 'Will this work? Nothing else has.' At the same time, the LLEN was about to be handed a major opportunity, and a tense challenge, with the announcement by the federal government of its policy to establish 26 Australian Technical Colleges, one in the Geelong region. That is the final loom I wish to weave and it is to that weaving that I now turn my attention.

## One Shocking Piece of Politics<sup>104</sup>

With the post compulsory sector developing now if we were truly being offered a resource by the federal government this thing wouldn't be called a Technical College, it would be called something completely different and it would have been something that the whole region could have created and it would have been another piece to our post compulsory puzzle. But instead they put us up there saying, 'It's either a government school led or industry led' and there is nowhere else to go with it. (Anne-Marie, Executive Officer, 2005)

As I portrayed in the second Panel of this thesis, up until the mid-1980s the Victorian state education system had a 'long and proud tradition' of dual schools: high schools offering an academic curriculum alongside technical schools offering applied curriculum leading to job related skill development (Cairns 2003, p. 2). As schools became more comprehensive in their offerings the dual system was abolished and secondary colleges emerged, often with multiple campuses reflecting the amalgamation of the previously separate entities. These single purpose secondary schools were to offer a broad curriculum however their focus was increasingly academic and their success within an increasingly competitive and marketised education sector measured by way of comparison of VCE results and ENTER scores<sup>105</sup>. As a consequence many students who did not intend progressing to university<sup>106</sup> would not stay to complete Y12, some leaving school when they reached the minimum school leaving age at Y10, with no senior qualification. Over recent years, vocational education and training VET options have been added to the school curriculum. The VET in Schools initiative was a major federal development for schools seeking to enhance certificated opportunities for senior students interested in vocationally-oriented courses<sup>107</sup> (Henry and Grundy 2004) thereby making school more relevant to their aspirations. In Victoria, an

---

<sup>104</sup> This heading is taken from a quote of the LLEN Executive Officer reflecting on effect of the Technical College initiative as it had evolved by June 2005.

<sup>105</sup> Even for those not intending to progress to university it is common knowledge that having an offer of a university place enhances one's chances in the labour market. This is illustrative of Beck's (1992) individualisation of risk.

<sup>106</sup> The percentage of those not intending to progress to university is around 70% (Smart Geelong Region Local Learning and Employment Network Inc 2002).

<sup>107</sup> Henry and Grundy argue the injection of federal funds into VET in Schools in 1997 saw the increasing integration of these courses into the VCE. In Victoria these courses became VCE VET. They argue that this was a mixed blessing. While students now gained dual accreditation for their studies from the then State Training Authority (VLESC post-Kirby) as well as the then Board of Studies (Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority [VCAA] post-Kirby) the integration worked against the ethos of flexibility and responsiveness of these courses which became moulded into a better fit with the dominant academic forms of learning of the senior school certificate.

alternative senior qualification, the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL), has also been implemented to better meet the diverse needs and interests of those students who have been failed by a system focused on university entrance (Teese and Polesel 2003); this and other policy initiatives that I have detailed in this thesis supported the government's target that 90% of young people would successfully complete Y12 or its equivalent by 2010.

Notwithstanding these initiatives, the argument for a reintroduction of technical secondary schools had remained a media issue and formed part of the state Liberal party's unsuccessful platform in the 2002 state election. At the same time, the issue was fuelled across Australia by industry claims of skill shortages. Regardless of differences between state education systems, the federal government took a broad brush to the problem: if the states couldn't respond to the alleged skills shortage crisis then the federal government would 'make sure they do it' (Minister Hardgrave, 2005)<sup>108</sup>. As part of its successful 2004 campaign for federal government re-election, the Australian Liberal Party proposed a budget commitment of \$289m for the establishment of 24 Australian Technical Colleges in regions with a significant industry base, skill shortage issues and high rates of youth unemployment<sup>109</sup>. Geelong was one of six Victorian locations selected for the implementation of the policy which involves provision of a School Based New Apprentice (SBNA) and academic study for the relevant senior school certificate for up to 300 Y11 and Y12 students. Each Australian Technical College, intended to commence operations from 2006, was to specialise in a particular trade and would offer trades from at least four industries including metal and engineering, automotive, building and construction, electrotechnology and commercial cookery. In the area of specialism the Australian Technical College would be a Centre of Excellence (Department of Education Science and Training 2005).

Two principles were central to the Australian Technical College policy framework: that they be demand driven and community based. As such, on the surface, such

---

<sup>108</sup> This comment is drawn from the community consultation undertaken by the federal Minister for Vocational and Technical Education in March 2005. In this forum the political nature of the initiative was clearly underscored, in particular the industrial relations agenda. The response to the consultation was marked: 'We all gathered together afterwards and people were really really angry and then they just started laughing. They said, "It's a circus . . . we just keep moving"' (Anne-Marie, Executive Officer, 2005).

<sup>109</sup> This was a significant commitment given the federal investment in both education and training had been reducing since 1996.

an approach had potential to accord with post compulsory initiatives underway in Victoria and would certainly contribute to the target for increased retention. However, Technical Colleges were also an example of the federal government's desire to 'interfere in a new way' (Brett, Department staff member, 2005). While education is a state responsibility in Australia over the past two decades the federal government had exerted increasing influence (Cairns 2003). The weaving on this loom portrays what happens when the policy of a Liberal federal government comes into relationship with the policies of a Labor state government in the arena of post compulsory education training and employment.

### *The possibilities of an Australian Technical College*

Briefings commenced in December 2004 on the implications for Victoria of the federal intent to establish the Technical Colleges. For the Department this included undertaking a risk assessment on how the initiative would impact on state initiatives that had already been implemented since the Kirby Report was handed down in 2000 as well as what implications Technical Colleges had for governance, curriculum and finances. For instance, Australian Technical Colleges were to be run by a Board headed by industry. However this model did not align with the Victorian Education Act (1958) for governance of government schools. Furthermore, the federal industrial relations requirement for a Australian Workplace Agreement with performance based salary scales breached the state arrangements and reflected the ideological positions of the respective governments. The federal government made little secret of its intent to use the implementation of Australian Technical Colleges as one instrument to drive its intended reform of Australian industrial arrangements which, from the point of federation at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, have been embedded in a tri-partite arrangement between the state, employers and trade unions.

While the Department in Victoria considered that it was already well ahead in the arena of vocational education with VET in VCE, VCAL and SBNA there was also some argument in Geelong that schools had not gone far enough in conceptualising new models of post compulsory education that placed the needs of users – students and industry - as the driver for curriculum and pedagogy. This is not to say that schools did not respond to these interests but rather that they were constrained both by their existing operational structures and by the remnants of the competitive

culture that had framed their philosophy for at least a century: each of these aspects was reinforced by the funding structures within the Department. The LLEN, at the same time as the Australian Technical Colleges initiative had been launched, was in the first stages of undertaking strategic work with a view to create a context to undermine these existing structures: the first meeting had recently been held to foster a formal post compulsory education and training sector. The Department at the local level had taken this on board and were actively seeking opportunities to foster this image; the Department in Melbourne had also taken a keen interest and was attending meetings. The first aim was to see a single strategic plan for a post compulsory education training and employment sector in the region that all stakeholders would deliver collaboratively. Thus, the timing was ‘perfect’ (Anne-Marie, Executive Officer, 2005). The challenge of devising a Technical College, in the absence of any clear direction from the federal government about what form that might take, was seen as a force to thinking differently about the connections between education and training, employment and skills shortages and what kind of assemblage would best address them:

I actually think this is the best opportunity, we’ve been handed this opportunity on a platter because our current vocational programs are not properly targeted. They are too all-over-the-place. They are too, trying to grab such a huge diversity of students’ interests and all of those things and that is really important but in terms of what we’re trying to achieve linked to regional development and stuff, now we have to say, ‘Okay, here is the role for these industries. We really need to work with these industries and we bloody well have to find out how to work with them.’ It is forcing us to do this, and I think that’s good. (Anne-Marie, Executive Officer, 2005)

However, given the level of activity already occurring in the Victorian context the implementation of the Australian Technical College was likely to be a source of confusion for a public already struggling with an interrelated, acronym-ridden post compulsory sector. Furthermore, LLEN in each of the six Victorian regions proposed for a Technical College had responded differently: one LLEN had done nothing, three had moved to initiate meetings to gain a negotiated regional agreement on how to proceed towards a Technical College, one had resolved to have nothing to do with the process believing ‘if they entered the fray they would be murdered’ (Anne-Marie, Executive Officer, 2005). SGR LLEN resolved to do the opposite, believing the LLEN had to demonstrate leadership ‘because otherwise it is going to fragment everything we have worked so hard to achieve’ (Anne-Marie, Executive Officer, 2005). From the Department’s perspective there was a huge amount of goodwill within the Geelong region to work collaboratively yet it was



noted that goodwill 'isn't the same as agreement' (Kate, LLEN committee member, 2005) – this recognition would be underscored as the process of developing an Expression of Interest to respond to the opportunity played out.

### *The threat of the possibilities*

While the Department grappled with the potential structural consequences of establishing an Australian Technical College the LLEN immediately took the initiative and, using its usual strategy, sent out an e-mail to all its contacts proposing the idea of a facilitated public forum to be held on 4 February 2005. This meeting was open to anyone in the Geelong region who had an interest in the development of a regional Expression of Interest – due on 18 February 2005 - that would meet the requirements of the federal government for a strategic approach to skills shortages whilst meeting the local requirement that the initiative integrate with the array of strategies already in place within Geelong. The facilitation would be undertaken by the G21 Secretariat with supporting attendance of key people from the Department and the federal Department of Education, Science and Training.

While it was vitally important to the LLEN that the Expression of Interest came from a LLEN-initiated and regionally negotiated exercise the Executive Officer was fully aware that the opportunity to implement an Australian Technical College in the region would feed the embers of competition and this was borne out by advice that an independent Expression of Interest had already been submitted to the federal government – an Expression of Interest that involved members of the LLEN. She resolved to confront this head on:

I put that e-mail out to every person and their cat. And I have had a lot of feedback from people saying, 'What a fantastic e-mail. How open you've been. Look at all these people you've kept in the loop.' And I had several from the Principals saying they were really, really keen for a negotiated, regional thing, they all want to be involved. I also said in the e-mail that we were aware that there was another group and that the position was that we were having a public meeting, we were looking for interest in a regional Expression of Interest but of course that did not preclude anyone coming up with alternatives, do that as well. So people said they liked the openness of that – that's why it took five days because I could barely get myself to type that (*laughs*).

For the Executive Officer this pursuit of a regionally negotiated Expression of Interest was unquestionably LLEN core business. Yet within the LLEN this was not recognised at all levels. One of the key protagonists for an independent Expression of Interest was a member of the LLEN Committee of Management; when this was promoted out in the community it was a second member of the

Committee of Management who, although he stood to benefit from backing an independent Expression of Interest, opted to go with the negotiated process as, unless that happened, what might 'be possible' would never be clear. The truth of that was evident from the response to that first e-mail:

The really interesting thing by having everyone involved right from the word go, this is what it has yielded so far. We've got the TAFE saying to me, 'We've got the infrastructure, you can have it. We want to be part of that, use your stuff.' A call . . . , 'Have you considered the Technical College might be set up within the Geelong Technology Precinct? That would so kick start that at Deakin University.' What a brilliant bloody idea. I mean that precinct is set up there for regional development in an international context, I mean just imagine what a college there could look like. The [Local Government representative] rang me up and he said . . . 'We've become really interested in education things since we've been involved with the LLEN. We've got no secondary school but we're going to have a say in this Technical College.' He has contacted the other three Local Government areas and has got them all involved. Now Local Government want a say in a Technical College. How fantastic is that? Just from the e-mail going to everybody. I got a call from someone I'd never heard of from Rural Skills Victoria and I said 'How did you know about the public meeting?' And he said, 'One of the members of your Employer Reference Group sent me your e-mail.' So the Farmers Federation sent this to Rural Skills. So the network is all working, it is absolutely brilliant. (Anne-Marie, Executive Officer, 2005)

The link with G21, as in other initiatives the LLEN was pursuing, was vital and had been pursued by the Executive Officer as soon as the local behind-the-scenes lobbying had become apparent and been responded to with the proposal from the LLEN for a facilitated public forum. She recognised the need to take the heat out of the LLEN's action in taking this initiative; as always the LLEN wanted to be seen as its members, not as the LLEN office. As such, planning for the public forum was undertaken by G21, the Geelong Area Consultative Committee (GACC), Gordon TAFE, Deakin University, the Chamber of Commerce, local schools, Geelong Region Vocational Education Council (GRVEC), the Department and the LLEN. All communications indicated that this range of members was involved; each member was responsible for inviting their sector and the invitation had that individual's name on it.

At the local level the LLEN, as leader of the G21 Lifelong Learning Pillar, had already been working to grow an appreciation within G21 of the need for the Lifelong Learning Pillar and the Economic Development Pillar to work collaboratively thereby linking education, training and employment. The Economic Development Pillar had already taken over the Skills Gap Strategy Work from the LLEN. Thus this section of the Economic Development Pillar had a clear role to play in terms of a Technical College and would bring with them the support

of the G21 Secretariat in negotiating and composing the Expression of Interest and subsequent documents. This connection was productive on more than just the operational level: here was an instance in which the invisibility of the LLEN would be a weakness. G21 already had a relationship with the federal government, which the LLEN didn't have, and would give a respected profile to the Expression of Interest. This same profile and relationship would also more strongly counter any independent Expressions of Interest that were being put together behind closed doors. G21 – fundamentally a collection of local governments– initially adopted the role local government had so often adopted with regard to education and training matters: they could not see their role in this. However, in talking through how a Technical College could impact on the entire G21 region through providing opportunities to strategically link the Skills Gap Strategy, economic development, lifelong learning and the needs of young people, the commitment was made.

### *Opening up to the issues*

In the end 120 members of the public attended the forum. In keeping with the partnership methodology the day involved all those who had been involved in planning the forum. The Regional Director of the Department opened the forum, GACC staff took people through the Discussion Paper issued by the Federal Government. The Executive Officer of the Geelong Manufacturing Council then spoke about skills shortages in the region before G21 staff did a workshop on industry needs and outcomes. Then Deakin University staff presented three possible models, one of which reflected the independent Expression of Interest that had already been submitted by some attendees at the forum:

We kind of used elements of their model so as not to exclude them. We made sure that all of the people who put that up were specifically invited to our forum. We said that we knew about their Expression of Interest. . . . The other Expression of Interest that is going to go forward is the Australian Industry Group is putting forward a proposal that will cover 15 of the 26 sites, Geelong is not on their list at the minute but they are so caught up with what happened down here that they've said that it might well be that they would want to include Geelong in their tender. And that would be quite appropriate too because they are a key body and providing that they go along with the way that we are going to attempt to negotiate this and support that, even if they want to be the lead, well and good, we wouldn't lose anything from something like that.  
(Anne-Marie, Executive Officer, 2005)

This is an inherently rhizomatic approach: a rhizome always has multiple entry ways and any number of connections that could form the multiplicity that would be

the Geelong Region Australian Technical College<sup>110</sup>. However, no matter which entry way was used it had to accord to the principles that had underpinned the work of the LLEN since inception: local negotiation and partnership. There was no resistance within the forum to the idea of a Technical College. However a lot of caution was expressed around how well industry would respond to this potential. The undertaking for industry was significant: not only was the Board to be headed by industry but every one of the 300 students would be undertaking an SBNA. Already the region was struggling to meet the demand from school students for SBNA<sup>111</sup>. As I have already indicated, the involvement of employers in the work of the LLEN had been – and remained – of vital importance and a major challenge, as it was for all LLEN. Furthermore, there was some concern around the industry areas that had been declared by the federal government. In the Greater Geelong region tourism, hospitality and agriculture were all areas of skills shortage that weren't catered for.

Subsequent to the forum – and with the agreement of those attending the forum – the original Planning Group was extended to 17 allowing representation of all sectors. This was an open process: people who wanted to be involved opted in to do the work involved in putting together firstly an Expression of Interest, and then a formal Proposal, under very tight timeframes. Most importantly, one of the key players who had been antagonistic toward the idea of the LLEN and who had been involved in the independent Expression of Interest joined the Planning Group.

We spent two hours talking . . . two days before the Australian Technical College forum. We had a conversation around how our core business in fact puts as at odds with each other and how I have learnt a lot about working with the business community since I've been here and I said I had a really idealised view of what the LLEN needs to do but I also realised that I would have to give some ground on how we worked with companies like his because he had so many resources that I needed to make the LLEN agenda work. And he said he could understand why I needed to work the way that I did but that he couldn't stand it because there was so much talking and so many people and he's a 'doer' and he doesn't want any part of it. And I said that it was my job to manage all the talking and all of that, and that it was his job to help me mobilise the action. (Anne-Marie, Executive Officer, 2005)

---

<sup>110</sup> A fourth model was also proposed – 'something else' (Harrison, LLEN committee member, 2005). Ultimately it was this model that formed the basis of the Expression of Interest.

<sup>111</sup> At the time there were 452 students enrolled in SBNA. As such, the Technical College would create a significant increase in demand that would cut across the current efforts of secondary schools.

This was a major outcome for the day that would have significant implications as the planning for a Technical College progressed. The challenge now was to negotiate and develop an Expression of Interest, followed by a full Proposal and then to act to establish and staff a Technical College ready to enrol its first cohort of students in 2006.

### *Being dragged toward catastrophe*

Deleuze and Guattari are clear about the dangers of 'wildly destratifying':

The BwO is always swinging between the surfaces that stratify it and the plan that sets it free. If you free it with too violent an action, if you blow apart the strata without taking precautions, then instead of drawing the plane you will be killed, plunged into a black hole, or even dragged toward catastrophe. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p. 161)

From February 2005 onwards an extraordinary amount of work needed to be undertaken by a group of people working collaboratively for the first time to envisage a completely new concept for vocational education and training within the remnants of a competitive and diverse education culture. While the Department had declared at the end of 2004 that there was an extraordinary amount of goodwill to draw on in the Geelong region the situation rapidly became tense. A number of rumours began to circulate that one of the government schools had been earmarked by the Department to be 'badged' as the Australian Technical College. This was the antithesis of what the LLEN was trying to achieve: a innovative, locally negotiated model, delivered in partnership. The school in question was one that had been closely involved with the LLEN yet, faced with this opportunity, appeared to have defaulted to a competitive mindset and this breaking away from the norms the Planning Group were working to establish had caused ripples of disquiet:

It is one of my favourite schools. And it's gotten to the TAFE and some other places, it's got people outraged. But at least they've come to tell me about it so I've actually followed up with people in the Department today to see what the status of it was and they said, 'No. Not true. Don't believe it. You will be kept in the loop. We are as much in the dark as you are still. We've got someone in Canberra talking again to them. Believe nothing that you hear, and we wouldn't be prioritising anyone over anybody else. We're aware of what you're trying to do down there.' Very, very mischievous. (Anne-Marie, Executive Officer, 2005)

At the same time, the need to make progress did not abate. By April an Interim Board – reflecting the membership of the post forum Planning Group - had been confirmed and was meeting for three hours every week to develop a detailed Proposal for the federal government. Members of the Interim Board held delegated responsibility for leading eight working groups charged with developing discrete

components of the regional Proposal. The LLEN Executive Officer made herself available to assist any of the groups and to support the Project Manager – a staff member of the ‘former antagonist’ referred to earlier – in holding the project together. Thus the Technical College process exerted pressure that changed relationships within the LLEN. Given the empty space of potential for ‘something else’ former antagonists came to the fore, seemingly recognising an opportunity to break out and contribute in meaningful ways; former supporters became antagonistic seemingly perceiving a threat to their own status as leaders within current approaches to vocational education and training<sup>112</sup>.

This rupture itself created a further opportunity. As required, the Interim Board was lead by industry and had attracted a business leader from a major company based in the northern suburbs of Geelong. He brought with him the cultural capital of this background and, when confronted with the tension, this discourse mediated the discourse of the educationalists:

[He said] ‘I have set in place a process. And the process I have put in place is to say that we can no longer have this Board of people subjected to this on-going debate between the TAFE and the schools and all of that. They need to get together as a group and sort themselves out and bring it back to the Board.’ And he said, ‘I don’t care if the TAFE is perceived to win, or the schools win, whoever comes back to us has to put a cogent argument as to why they would be arguing for one thing over the other. So whatever is able to stand scrutiny is the thing that will get up. They need to trust the process.’ And I said, ‘But they don’t trust one another.’ He said, ‘It is in the process. We just leave it to the process.’ Right so then everybody rings me, and that is the education people, saying, ‘I don’t feel heard. We need to have more discussion at this strategic level.’ And it finally occurred to me that all the ETPIS<sup>113</sup> stuff was playing itself out again at this higher level. We’ve got business leaders and education leaders and no dialogue. I was just ‘Oh it’s happening again, it’s happening again!’ (Anne-Marie, Executive Officer, 2005)

This is not to imply however that this process was unilateral. As this quote indicates, those members of the Board whose backgrounds were in the field of education could not simply adopt an industry process and ‘didn’t feel heard.’ This is the stuttering of a new language that is the hybrid between industry and education: there was no common language despite the linking network that had evolved in earlier initiatives such as ETPIS. According to Deleuze, to break out

---

<sup>112</sup> Although at full capacity – expected to take years to achieve - the Technical College would enrol no more than 300 students, it must be accepted that under the current funding regime the loss of any students would be a lost financial opportunity to established secondary schools. Furthermore, the Australian Technical College would be aiming to enrol only the highest achieving students in each vocational area.

<sup>113</sup> The Education and Training Partnerships with Industry Strategy outlined in the second Panel of this thesis

requires a form of violence – a shock or alienation affect. This is thinking – ‘thinking is inseparable from a violence that problematizes or shakes up *doxa* and gives something new to be thought; and to conceive of it one needs the violence or “strangeness” of what can’t yet be said in the dominant or common language’ (Rajchman 2000, p.10). This Interim Board working at the edge of what was known were still growing their social capital: they had the network, but the norms and trust were insufficient to cope with the ‘violence’ of thinking through the potential provided in designing a concept for an Australian Technical College; the bonding social capital was weakened in the effort to build the external bridging and linking social capital that the project required (Kirkpatrick et al. 2001). Here the role of the Executive Officer and senior staff with the Department was – to draw on the Deleuzian metaphor of the machine – one of acting as an adaptor through which two disparate machines could be coupled sufficiently to hold the connection, enable a stuttering flow and, in that process, to think differently. Thus, while the Chair exerted influence, he in turn was influenced by the educationalists acting through the Executive Officer:

I got back on the phone to the Chair and I said that this was what was going on. So I know pretty much now where everybody is at I just told him all the secrets. And he hates it, he said, ‘Trust the process, Anne-Marie. Trust the process.’ So anyway last night he Chaired the meeting and we got half way through and he could actually see what I had been saying, he could feel it because there was all this unspoken stuff in the room. And he looked at me and then he said to the group, ‘Okay. Alright. This is what we are going. We have got to move on and I can see we are not going to be able to move on until you all declare what your current thinking is.’ And he went around the room. And it surfaced, all this, which was really fantastic. But it also shifted things quite considerably.  
(Anne-Marie, Executive Officer, 2005)

Thus when, as a result of this shift in thinking the model that the Planning Group had put forward in their Expression of Interest – a partnership model with Technical College campuses on three sites around the region at least two of which would be within current school facilities - was replaced by a model in which industry had a central role along with tertiary providers and the LLEN. In this model the role of schools was only to act feeders to the Australian Technical College. In response to this shift of away from the centrality of supply those schools with a high level of commitment to vocational education formed a blockade placing a further model on the table that placed one government school and the local TAFE as dual sites for the Australian Technical College – both offering technical and academic training - and advised that they would only support a model that accorded with this arrangement,

an arrangement that only differed from current arrangements already available in the region in requiring the TAFE – as one of the two sites - to deliver the full academic curriculum, a situation the TAFE had steadfastly refused to entertain.

I thought the whole thing was going to fall in a gynormous heap. People were barely talking to each other, it was just awful. And even people, some of the people I'd regard as my colleagues and friends were struggling to look me in the eye at some stages. (Anne-Marie, Executive Officer, 2005)

Thus in the face of an innovation that would reconceptualise their own status as innovators, schools - already acknowledged as being among the most arborescent of structures (Tamboukou and Ball 2002) - formed a block that effectively strengthened that arborescence. This is a fundamental risk of attempts to deterritorialize: the segmentation of converging lines of flight brings a reterritorialization to the benefit of one particular segment and this arrests the 'movement of escape' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p. 509). Thus in this instance the convergence of the lines of flight of industry seeking a more responsive education system, government seeking be seen to respond to claims of skill shortages, LLEN seeking to forge a post compulsory education training and *employment* sector and so on in ways that seemed to favour TAFE, led schools, understandably given their context, to seek to protect their status. This act was a threat to the tenuous connection that existed within the Interim Board: to make connections one needs trust despite the fact that the consequences of a connection may not be readily apparent (Rajchman 2000). Thus the Technical College initiative 'threw down the gauntlet,' for the Executive Officer this challenge of holding the connection together was intense:

[The Department staff member] said to me the other day, 'Stop trying to control things, let it happen.' And I so, so don't want the relationships to disintegrate. I've been saying really vocally now that this is breaking my heart. I said I cannot stand to see three and a half years' work with all you guys fall apart before my very eyes. I can't stand it and I said, 'Can't you see, it is the stupid bloody commonwealth has come in and imposed this upon us and look at what we are doing, look at how we are responding.' So it has come to that where I have been saying that to people. But [she] is right also that whether I speak or I don't speak, this will resolve itself in one fashion or another and we'll likely end up with a Technical College of some kind or another and it will evolve over time into a different shape altogether. (Anne-Marie, Executive Officer, 2005)



*A Technical College manifested by magic!*<sup>114</sup>

As it eventuated, the Proposal submitted to the federal Department of Education included neither of the models that were the subject of the debate. Two factors intersected in causing this shift. In May 2005 the Department in Melbourne, in working through the implications of registering an Australian Technical College within the Victorian system, had come to the conclusion that government schools could not participate within a non-government structure. A group from the Department in Melbourne went to each region to give briefings and table written advice to government school Principals about what they could and could not do in regard to involvement with Australian Technical Colleges. This briefing indicated they were to prioritise government education. The LLEN Executive Officer was present at one of these forums and commented that the Department in Melbourne was suggesting that the locally negotiated partnership model that SGR LLEN had developed – one which accorded with a central tenet of both federal and state strategic agendas<sup>115</sup> – wasn't supportable.

You know this is a very interesting thing that the Department funds LLEN and it funds schools and yet you've got parts of the Department coming in and actually setting us up against each other. This is just outrageous. But they are right when they say also that those sections are there to prioritise government schools and we're an incorporated body that has to consider the interests of all the other sectors. And I can kind of see why it happened as it happened but it also shows how much harder this LLEN work is going to get. You know? This is the first example of how much the politics is going to be involved in all of this. (Anne-Marie, Executive Officer, 2005)

Thus, if Victorian government schools wished to be a component of an Australian Technical College they would have no option but to propose it as a separate faculty within their current facilities. As such, in Victoria the only Australian Technical College Proposal submitted that didn't build on current provision of a government school was that put up by the Geelong region.

Secondly, during the course of the debate the potential of the Geelong Manufacturing Training Centre eventually worked its way to the surface. This facility, on the grounds of the local TAFE but separate from it, was unknown to many members of the Interim Board and appeared to be 'like the perfect solution' (Anne-Marie, Executive Officer, 2005): it enabled all the criteria sought by the

---

<sup>114</sup> This heading is taken from a quote of the Executive Officer from September 2005.

<sup>115</sup> (Connors 2000; Department for Victorian Communities 2003; Department of Education Science and Training 2003; Department of Premier & Cabinet 2001, 2005; Eldridge 2001; Kirby 2000).

federal government, and local stakeholders, to be met. It was non-government and able to be 'badged' by federal government; had a high level of industry endorsement and would enable their governance; made use of existing high quality training facilities; was centrally located and effectively formed an educational precinct close to government schools; was supported by all the key players. However, while some government schools would work collaboratively and assist with the development of the curriculum section of the Proposal others were less forgiving of the shift in focus:

On the day that we had our final Board meeting the Chair thanked everybody, in fact did one more round of, 'Are there any conflicts of interest?' because I insisted that it stay on the agenda the entire time and some of the players used to say to me, 'Anne-Marie, what's your agenda?' and I said, 'Just leave it on the agenda, you've got to keep asking and asking and asking.' So he went along with that. 'Everybody happy?' The Principals grizzled and then he said, 'Well, not happy?' and then industry looked at them and said, 'But this is the way that we're going to go.' So about it no more was said. The meeting closed and the Principals said to me, 'Can we see you outside?' I should have remembered how Principals used to do that to me as a student. . . . And so I went out and they said that I had done a huge disservice to the LLEN by the role that I had played, that is, called a public forum . . . and so had the Regional Office and that they were really unhappy and it was really going to upset the relationship that I had from here on in with the Principals' Group.

And then they said, 'And are you aware that there is another consortium in this region putting in a bid'? . . . And they said, 'Well, because we couldn't get an agreement for the government schools to be written into this model we are going to sign up to the other model.' And I couldn't believe what I was hearing . . . This is the day before the bid goes in, but it is after the last meeting of our group. I went back to the Chair of the group and told him what I had just heard because I felt the Principals were so out of integrity with the process, apart from what they said to me that had me in tears for weeks later. (Anne-Marie, Executive Officer, 2005)

The response of the Chair to this advice was to immediately embargo the Proposal as a commercial-in-confidence document that would only be made available on a limited basis. Ultimately, the Proposal put forward by the LLEN initiated group not only won the bid to become the Geelong Region Australian Technical College; it was applauded as being the best Proposal received in the country. It was unclear whether any other locally initiated bid had ever existed<sup>116</sup>. While the LLEN had accepted, and made explicit from the start, that other Proposals could be pursued there was a significant shift within this LLEN initiated group back to a competitive paradigm. There was suspicion that conflicts of interest were not declared; declared commitments to a collaborative model – even by group members who had

---

<sup>116</sup> The Australian Industry Group withdrew their Expression of Interest, apparently with due regard to the complexities in the Victorian context.

long experience on the LLEN Committee of Management - collapsed when the outcome of that collaboration was not that desired by individual organisations.

In the end what we decided we would have to do is focus on the model that we really wanted. If we were starting from scratch, what do we want? And it simply wouldn't be one that was tinkering with a secondary school; it would be something with its own integrity and all of that. (Anne-Marie, Executive Officer, 2005)

Perhaps worst of all, there was thinly veiled threat not only to the broader agenda of the LLEN but also to the Department whom some Principals, implying they were speaking for all Principals, charged with betrayal: the Departmental representative was unable to attend the final meeting but had telephoned in his advice that the Department was not happy with the final wording of the Proposal as they had wanted a clearer role identified for government schools. However, the Department at the local level respected and accepted the process and looked forward to working collaboratively on the next stage of the process subsequent to hearing the outcome of the Proposal. This message had been shared with the Principals who were present and who heard betrayal in it. Neither the LLEN Executive Officer nor the Departmental staff reacted to this charge believing any action would only enflame the debate. The tension reverberated through to the Regional Office of the Department.

[The Departmental Regional Manager] said, 'All I keep saying to them is what you've been saying to them and that is "You need to hang in there. You need to hang on to the relationships you've formed, not alienate anybody. This thing will play itself out"'. Which it will. And that is the best she's been able to say but apparently they are just not buying it. (Anne-Marie, Executive Officer, 2005)

Meanwhile, with 2005 drawing to a close the legislation for the Australian Technical College still hadn't been passed; this meant there was no money flowing. The money the Interim Board worked with in developing the Proposal, promotional materials, and advertisements for Executive staff and so on came from industry putting money 'in the hat':

Isn't that ridiculous? This is what we're doing. You know? And people . . . are just eating, sleeping Technical College. . . . There are groups of us out there with all these bits of the thing hoping like hell that we're all communicating enough that we're holding the thing together. (Anne-Marie, Executive Officer, 2005)

### *The emerging picture*

The story on this loom must, of course, remain unfinished. Lengths of yarn of every colour and hue lay unwoven, waiting for events to play themselves out at

which time the bobbins will be able to be taken up once more and a further section will appear under my own or some other weaver's fingers. For now, I can only scribble notes on the cartoon to guide that future weaving. Three things seem important to note.

Firstly, despite its risks, tensions and frustrations the Australian Technical College initiative seems like a vital potential for the LLEN at a time when, ready or not, the line of flight must gather momentum, the rhizome must be ruptured, the smooth space of the post compulsory education, training and employment sector must be reached. Secondly, what we are looking for here is a rupture to a new kind of 'thing' which includes schools but no longer places them unquestionably at the centre. However, because of how vested they are in their own journey of innovation – upon which their survival depends - some of the most innovative seemed most unable to be a part of that rupture. One way of reading this would be to say that, despite their demonstrated commitment to vocational education and training and a desire to grasp this federal resource not only to provide expanded opportunities for local students but also for the opportunity it offered to profile vocational education and training as a legitimate pathway for high achievers, when the gauntlet of collaboration was thrown down that very commitment compromised their ability to lengthen the line of flight through to the point of rupture. In the process the LLEN itself was undermined. Yet in the same process, some of those most antagonistic to the LLEN before this opportunity finally found here the potential to engage with the idea of a post compulsory education, training and employment sector.

But people still haven't fully grasped how different this is, you know? They think about old Technical Schools and those old models. They haven't grasped that we are talking about an industry/education partnership here you know and words like 'School Principal' are not appropriate. You know? It is a new paradigm that we're talking about and needs new language you know? And who is going to invent it, it is only going to come out of the blood, sweat and tears that we all put into it as we're trying to get the picture. (Anne-Marie, Executive Officer, 2005)

Finally, I note that despite the massive amount of work undertaken by all of the members of the Planning Group and the Interim Board – work that for all was 'above and beyond' what they thought their work load would involve in 2005 - the opening of the Technical College in Geelong was delayed, rolled back to 2007 by the Board against the wishes of the federal government. In large part this reflected not only the legislative delays but also the amount of work that remained to be done

in conceptualising how this multiplicity would function within the evolving state system. In this, there is an opportunity to avoid the risks of wildly destratifying. However it also provided the opportunity to reflect and, importantly, to reforge relationships in this new eyes-wide-open context: an opportunity to strongly underpin the potential of the Australian Technical College as one linked component of the region's post compulsory education, training and employment sector. It is time to move on, to reflect on this series of looms and to attempt in the fifth Panel a transitory co-ordination of what we have seen, felt, created.

## ***Pause***

Imagine the scene: a room at the offices of the Regional Office of the Department of Education. It is nearing the end of 2004 and around an oval table a group of six players meets for the first time to formally discuss a plan for the development of a post compulsory education, training and employment sector in the region.

‘Well,’ says the Department. ‘We need to remember that joined-government is the policy focus. It’s about maximising the available resources through tri-level reform: at the centre, within schools and across regions. Education is about more than schools, in fact, they are not necessarily even the major players. It is actually about wellbeing, diversity and pedagogy with the lines blurred in whatever way is necessary at any time. I’m struck by the fact that we develop a program for whatever but it is a much more organic response that we need. And that is what makes this exciting.’

The Centre nods. ‘The Department is changing its focus away from a program approach to a focus on what we are trying to achieve in the policy arena.’

‘Well that framework includes health and welfare, it’s recognised that they’re fundamentally important too. But our response can’t be a program - any further development in that direction could be where this gets fraught and loses its flexibility. The sector we’re thinking about is concerned with putting the student at the centre, not the teacher or the institution or the Department,’ reflected the Department.

The Department 2 joins the conversation. ‘Most 15-19 year olds *are* in schools.’

This comment doesn’t go unchallenged by the outsider, ‘But 600 are in ACE.’

‘And it maybe some are in schools who shouldn’t be,’ says the Department. ‘Oh,’ she says – taken aback by her own audacity - ‘that is a bold statement for me!’

They laugh, then the Centre questions, ‘Who holds responsibility when you have multiple sites of delivery?’

‘Well,’ responds the Department 2, ‘That is what the Memorandum of Understanding between ACE and schools that we’ve managed to develop in the region clarifies.’

ACE gets the conversation back to the Centre’s question, ‘Every student is attached to a school so they remain a key player even if they aren’t.’

The Centre considers this then suggests, ‘Whomever interacts with the student most is central and should have the most funding for delivery.’

‘And therein lies the issue,’ says the Department. ‘This has much broader implications – once classes are started the money can’t come out of schools. This whole idea implies prior planning with other providers.’

Department 2 agrees, ‘With the development of this sector schools have to stop seeing the funding as theirs. It means letting go – financially and in our heads – that the school is central.’

The stalker thinks of other threads that contribute to this ‘letting go in the head’ like the Graduate Diploma that not only provides the teachers who can deliver in multiple sites but also offers situated professional development for current teachers.

‘The nomenclature around funding is changing to put the student at the centre,’ offers the Centre. ‘For instance, MIP will be reconceptualised to align with the changes we’re after.’

The Department 2 looks encouraged. 'In the Department we never saw pathway planning in MIP as being just about careers but there is a real lack of perception of that in some schools.'

'I suspect the Departmental guidelines didn't help,' admits the Centre. 'We told them to "do it now" and said that everyone needed one. But back to the core issue: you want to know if the development of a post compulsory sector is occurring in other areas? My answer is yes, I think it is. Some LLEN are ready to articulate a view not about any particular initiative but about systemic change – what you might call a composite view. There is an awareness that VLESC are trying to synthesise a view but this has stalled somewhat. This image that you've come up with locally captures it well. But my question is: what does the Centre do to mandate it?'

'No,' says the Department 2, 'It must come up from the ground, not down by mandate. Some broad principles would be okay, but no more than that.'

ACE agrees, 'If you make a systematic change to the way a system works it becomes a problem.'

The stalker reflects on the words she recently read, 'The perception of [a system] is itself produced by [a system], and thus is just as likely to perpetuate [the system] as to escape it (Hoy 2004, p.4).

The Department 2 considers, 'We need to implement this whole idea as an action research process so we can learn along the way.'

The Department picks up the energy in what is being said. 'What is exciting here is that there isn't a centrally imposed imperative; there is just a groundswell of readiness. We can work either way but if you structure a sound notion you stuff it up. MIP isn't a program, it is a concept. But we call it a program and attach money to it and stuff it up in an instant' she says as she snaps her fingers for emphasis. 'The nice thing here is the timing. There is no central imperative. If you did have a central imperative you'd have everyone churn out a diagram to show their partnerships but nothing would change beyond ticking off that it had been done.'

'But you do have to balance dangers and gains,' cautions the Centre. 'For instance *On Track* tells us that youth would go to TAFE but they can't get a place, TAFE is unresponsive to their needs and so on. One of the things the Centre can do is change its funding requirements. What do you want government to do?'

'Wow,' thinks the stalker. 'So there you go – here is the Centre asking the local network what it would have it do within this critical assemblage.'

ACE is quick to respond, 'It is about validating what is happening here. You need to draw on these learnings and use them to inform policy.'

The Principal, who has sat quietly for most of the discussion thus far, is moved to speak. 'We are at the tip of an iceberg. How do we maintain the momentum for change?'

And the stalker is immediately mindful of the perspective articulated within the teacher interviews, 'I'd just love to have five years of no change . . . I mean every year you've got some guy down there in Melbourne in his ivory tower, who's probably never been in a school, making these changes and it just can't keep going on . . .'

'One really practical thing from the Centre would be to bring everyone together for communication,' says the Department 2.

'I see that as my main business!' says the Department. 'It isn't an interruption to business; if you want change then moving ideas around *is* your main business. And the LLEN is central to this. In this region we endorse the LLEN as being the driving force behind the formation of a sector but with the other LLEN that we also work with that isn't the case.'

'And neither should it be,' thinks the stalker. The assemblage in Geelong is unique and that is what enables that particular connection. The multiplicities that come into connection in other LLEN areas will result in other dynamic and transitory interrelationships.

‘That may be true,’ says Department 2, ‘but teachers are so torn by their obligations.’  
The multiplicity of their roles . . . the demands of performativity.



## The Fifth Panel

### *Weaving the weft – or – a transitory co-ordination . . .*

Poststructuralism suggests that life is the way it is because of accidental and unintended convergences in history; because of the arbitrary desires and passions of individuals; because certain discourses, for no particular reason perhaps, become more important than others; and because anonymous and contingent forms of knowledge have produced practices that can be contested and changed. (St. Pierre 2000, p.493)

In this Panel I wish to converge the weavings of the previous Panels in a transitory co-ordination; one that will reflect not only my own ‘arbitrary desires and passions’ but also the loom that frames this work and provides the sub-text: the ARC Linkage Project. My aim here is not to come to some final conclusion on the truth of SGR LLEN - such an intent would rest uneasily within the approach that I have adopted in thinking about SGR LLEN. Instead I draw on Rajchman’s (2000) notion to conceive of my work as a ‘complicating machine’ based in a logic that is ‘neither deductive nor inductive - it is not even propositional; rather it is the logic for a kind of conceptual art to deal with what is problematic and complicating in what happens to us’(Rajchman 2000, p.52).

This logic enables a focus connection – a philosophy of And rather than Is. Thus here my intent has been to retain – to weave – those stories that augment the number of connections. This principle is evident in *A Thousand Plateaus* (Deleuze and Guattari 1987) a work written by ‘series’ or ‘plateaus’ intended to discourage a sense of unity in favour of an expansive plane in which one passes from one singular point to another, and then connecting to something else again. Affirmation in this context is not to assert or assume – not to construct a ‘true’ case study of SGR LLEN - but to understand the potential of other possibilities through connection and experimentation (Rajchman 2000).

Thus in this fifth Panel I wish to undertake four things. Firstly, to demonstrate connection across the Panels that comprise this case study of SGR LLEN and, in the process, introduce an understanding of the post compulsory education, training and employment sector that became the motivation of SGR LLEN’s strategic agenda to form a body without organs (BwO). I wish to emphasise the potential of that understanding for my research question: to what extent can a governmentally instituted network function as a learning community capable of building community

and thereby improve opportunities for young people in the Geelong region?

Secondly, I wish to undertake the task of cutting off this tapestry. Cutting off is a symbolic event in the creation of a woven tapestry: often surrounded by ceremony, it is the point at which the tapestry is removed from the loom and laid down for finishing. For me it is the point at which I declare this thesis finished even as the case continues. Thirdly and fourthly, I wish to produce two catalogues. The first of these provides an overview of all the activities undertaken by SGR LLEN during the course of my candidature. This first catalogue reflects that the ‘arbitrary desires and passions’ of another weaver would have lead to a different tapestry: in choosing to weave the images I have I wish to yet make visible all that remains unwoven. The second catalogue provides a glossary of acronyms to assist the viewer.

### **A twisted thread of legitimation and ideological commitment**

[The State] operates by stratification; in other words, it forms a vertical, hierarchized aggregate that spans the horizontal lines in a dimension of depth. In retaining given elements, it necessarily cuts off their relations with other elements, which become exterior, it inhibits, slows down, or controls those relations; if the State has a circuit of its own, it is an internal circuit dependent primarily upon resonance, it is a zone of recurrence that isolates itself from the remainder of the network, even if in order to do so it must exert even stricter controls over its relations with that remainder. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.433)

As suggested by the international literature while notions of joined-up government and interagency collaboration are promoted in policy as a relatively simple linear process (Seddon et al. 2005), in actuality the effort more close resembles ‘knotworking’ than networking, ‘a learning process marked by tensions and contradictions’ (Warmington, Daniels, Edwards, Brown, Leadbetter, Martin and Middleton 2004, p.6). There is a central paradox that pervades all LLEN. The ‘reformist’ Labor government elected at the end of 1999 had campaigned on the basis of, and was committed to, fostering greater social cohesion; education, training and employment policy was seen as central to that agenda. Yet, at the same time, like all governments, it must legitimate its actions to the electorate and against the critique of both the Liberal federal government as well the Liberal state opposition government if it is to retain financial control over the state education budget. All governments must retain power to achieve their agenda: during the course of this research I was advised by a public servant that any government in Victoria that did what it needed to do to wash away the remnants of the neo-liberal capitalist discourse of economic competitiveness and individual choice in the realm

of post compulsory education would never be re-elected (Peter, Department staff member, 2004). The discourse of parental choice that institutionalised competition as the primary distributive mechanism of public education was firmly embedded in public discourses and actions of both middle-class and aspirational voters.

In Victoria, government would act to realise their ideological commitment by funding LLEN to build on the organic collaborative networks that already existed and that contributed productively to improving the range and quality of provision for young people. Notably, LLEN were not implemented in a void. Geelong in particular had a long tradition of networking and a strong commitment to innovative approaches to education and training. Yet this tight community that 'looked after its own' (Freya, LLEN committee member, 2003) had not been able to address concerns around early school leaving and youth unemployment. Thus SGR LLEN would be working to 'gear it up to go somewhere else' (Freya, LLEN committee member, 2003) by adopting an action learning methodology that would build community and thereby improve opportunities for young people and this would demand a provocative approach in a context where new approaches were often met with the response 'we don't do things like that here' (Matthew, LLEN committee member, 2005). However, in doing so, in bounding those networks and exposing them to public sector accountability processes, their potential was diminished. This was not a necessary condition. LLEN were established as incorporated associations but this ran counter to the established expectations in the Department:

The difficulty government had was to understand what they had set up was an incorporated body, not another department . . . The bureaucrats treat the LLEN, the Committee of Management and its Executive Officer as one of its own, part of its own bureaucracy and that is understandable but it actually interferes with the work of the Executive Officer. Takes up time, takes up thought, interferes with the Committee of Management's room to move, it also reduces the risk you can take because really you've got to do what government departments have to do which is to implement policy rather than create policy. (Freya, LLEN committee member, 2003)

The accountability and reporting framework privileged measures of performativity – measures necessary to function within the established accountability regime - over the outcomes that reflected the broader policy agenda (Seddon et al. 2005). For example, partnerships were recognised but the measure was the number of partnerships and partnership was defined as those bounded by a Memorandum of Understanding. The relationship work of continually shaping and re-shaping by negotiation and resistances (Shacklock and Smyth 1997); the intensely collaborative

activity and constantly changing combinations of people that characterise knot-working (Warmington et al. 2004); the essential characteristic of ‘the dream of multiplicity . . . that each element ceaselessly varies and alters its distance in relation to the others’ (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.30) were all rendered invisible. This is Deleuzian ‘overcoding’ (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.8): an operation in an empty dimension supplementary to actuality of LLEN. LLEN do not ‘live in a rational, linear world’ however ‘formal thinking’ about planning, which is in turn used for control and accountability both within LLEN and between LLEN and the Department ‘implies that they do’ (Victorian Learning and Employment Skills Commission 2002, p.15).

With LLEN now funded for a final three years, the gauntlet is truly down. In 2002 the potential in LLEN was endorsed along with an acknowledgement that LLEN were still ‘learning how to do their business’ (Victorian Learning and Employment Skills Commission 2002, p.i); in 2005 this could no longer be argued. For instance, SGR LLEN initially focused its work firmly on understanding, promoting and streamlining the provision of vocational education and training. Three years later this focus remained but was recognised as only one component of the strategic agenda which was to change the *context* of vocational education and training through the creation of a post compulsory education training and employment sector. LLEN have now staked their respective localised claims on how they will do their business and, it would seem, for government to fully release their potential it must follow through on the implications of its policy for its efforts to ‘control’ LLEN. This finding echoes those in the United Kingdom where substantial research showed the limited degree to which government is prepared to follow through on the implications of ‘joining-up’ (Geddes 2003). Thus this is a learning challenge for the Department: conceiving of a new language for the governance of LLEN, one developed in the process of situated learning within the LLEN-rhizome that *includes* the Centre. As my opening quote suggests, the practices of government suggest it does not conceptualise itself as part of the LLEN; indeed ‘the centre is not in the middle . . . but on top, because the only way it can recombine what it isolates is through subordination’ (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.433). Such a shift in conceptualisation would allow something new to be thought about accountability with the aim of changing the practice of governance and its performative rationale

with its poorly disguised ‘control freakery’ (McCarthy et al. 2004, p.20) in this context.

This will have consequences for other contexts. As Deleuze and Guattari assert

bureaucracy proceed by tracings; they can begin to burgeon nonetheless throwing out rhizome stems . . . An intensive trait starts working for itself, a . . . play of images shakes loose, challenging the hegemony of the signifier.’ (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.15)

Deterritorialization occurs through the *loss* of the characteristics of the previous plane rather than through the acquisition of systems or processes; it is through loss that one progresses and picks up speed (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.48). This Deleuzian perspective would suggest an approach that rests uneasily with that imposed on LLEN as good self-governance with its structures, processes and procedures which risk breaking the rhizome through shutting down desire (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.14) rather than unleashing desire and removing the barriers to its flow (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.161). Given their now clear perspective on how and why they will pursue their strategic objectives it would seem there is opportunity for SGR LLEN to not only avoid Foucault’s ‘main danger’ by refusing to account for itself in a performative manner (Ball 2000, p.18) but also to deliver on LLEN’s suggested potential to improve governance (Robinson and Keating 2005).

### **A thread of One-or-multiplicity**

Thus, when there is no unity in the thing, there is at least unity and identity in the word. . . . The proper name can be nothing more than an extreme case of the common noun, containing its already domesticated multiplicity within itself and linking it to a being or object posited as unique. This jeopardizes, on the side of words and things both, the relation of the proper name as an intensity to the multiplicity it instantaneously apprehends. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.27-8)

SGR LLEN is many things to many people; questions of the LLEN’s operation and governance cannot be considered without considering what it actually *is*: where the boundary of SGR LLEN lies. From the outset SGR LLEN’s Committee of Management saw its strength being in its unbounded Working Party structure, a structure that was complemented by a number of issued-based sub-groups and an action research methodology. This structure differed from that adopted by other LLEN who opted for a bounded operation by investing in staffing and/or capital items; it allowed members from a diverse range of agencies and organisations to become involved in the opportunity to debate, design and deliver LLEN objectives.

It also enabled spontaneous communication within the LLEN as all Committee of Management and LLEN members were involved in or led multiple Working Parties. It was an organisational arrangement that sat uneasily with the Department in Melbourne who were uncomfortable with the lack of structure and the extent of budget committed to projects. This discomfort was one factor in close interest taken by the Department in the financial management of SGR LLEN.

This tension between an understanding of a LLEN as a bounded entity that ‘should do something’ and an understanding of a LLEN as an unbounded opportunity in which ‘we do something’ resulted in differing understandings of roles, responsibilities and achievements. Notwithstanding the unanimous agreement for the Working Party structure at the local level, there was no shared understanding regarding the boundary of ‘the LLEN.’ Some stakeholders, even those most closely involved in the governance of the LLEN, conceptualised the LLEN Office as ‘the LLEN’: a clearly bounded entity whose task it was to build new, and strengthen existing, links between its member organisations. These stakeholders were troubled by the lack of a clear organisational entity that was recognised and valued by stakeholders in the evolving post compulsory education, training and employment sector, by the lack of industry involvement in its governance and, when facing their own performative pressures, on more than one occasion blamed inadequacies in ‘the LLEN’ as the reason for those failures or disputed whether ‘the LLEN’ could take credit for achievements. As such, when the comment was made that ‘the LLEN didn’t do anything’ this was not a self-referential comment on any level: that is, ‘we didn’t do anything’. It implied that the LLEN was almost another level of bureaucracy that should act, a perspective at odds with the LLEN policy and guidelines (Department of Education Employment and Training 2001).

Other stakeholders, including the Chair and the Executive Officer, conceptualised the LLEN in a more ‘acentred’ way, one in which the boundaries were porous. In such a conceptualisation individuals and structures were interchangeable as circumstances demanded. In this way SGR LLEN would model its ambition to be ‘an opportunity to act’ (Matthew, LLEN committee member, 2005) or ‘only an idea with 20 volunteers trying to make it real’ (Freya, LLEN committee member, 2003) rather than ‘an entity that would act.’ Thus, while there was an entity comprising the LLEN Office with whom the Department contracted and which the LLEN Committee of Management governed this was no more than one part of the

multiplicity alongside the other parts. Thus local industry, the Field Officer, local government, the LLEN staff, local education providers, schools, youth agencies and so on were all parts of a multiplicity that was ‘the LLEN.’ As I have suggested, the Department itself – a Deleuzian pseudo-multiplicity: molar, extensive, divisible, organisable and conscious – needed to recognise its position as part of the rhizomatic LLEN multiplicity – molecular, intensive, libidinal, unconscious - *if* the LLEN was to realise its full potential. Thus the need for, at minimum, a recognition of the interpenetration of these multiplicities. In contrast, government opted for a hierarchy – leaving LLEN opposed to, answerable to, reporting to and so on. In the process government distanced itself and radically reduced the power of the networks. The Executive Officer explains these contrasting perspectives by drawing on a discussion in a Working Party:

They said, ‘Are you going to write all that down?’ and I said, ‘Well why wouldn’t I?’ And they said, ‘Because this organisation did it.’ And I said, ‘Yes, I am going to claim it as an outcome . . . because it is part of the delivery on the LLEN agenda.’ Now this is our most active Working Party that somehow thought I was taking liberties on the things I was saying. But where else does it fit but here? This is what we’ve said we were going to do. You are all the people who sit here. Of course I am going to claim these outcomes (*laughs*). You know, it kind of pulled me up a little bit to think, ‘Oh goodness, they’ve forgotten again . . . that they are the LLEN.’

The role undertaken by the bounded LLEN has not only been to dust disorder - in the process building the unbounded LLEN - but also to make these weak links more visible given their central importance both to the functioning of the network and to perceptions of the success of the network in *both* arenas of accountability: government and the community. This was vital: while Committee of Management members held a responsibility to communicate with their constituent groups for some categories this constituent group was so dispersed it was not possible to reach them through the bonded network. This has implications for how LLEN should be understood and by consequence governed:

The more an assemblage opens and multiplies connections and draws a plane of consistency . . . the closer it is to the living abstract machine. But it strays from it to the extent that it replaces creative connections with conjunctions causing blockages . . . organizations forming strata . . . reterritorializations forming black holes . . . and conversions into lines of death. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.513)

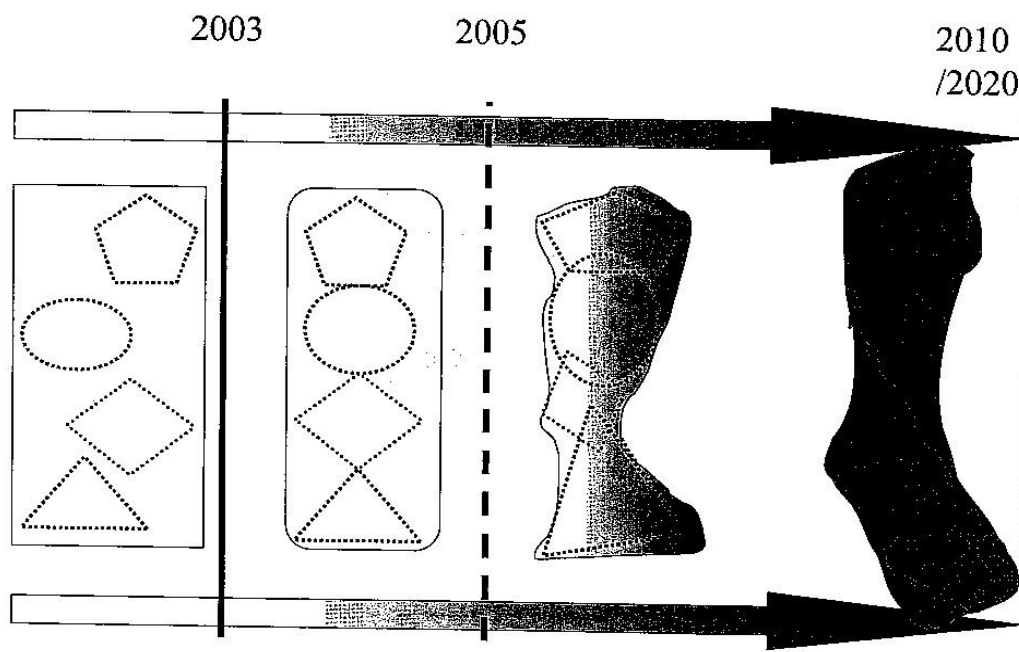
This discussion suggests two things. Firstly, there are implications for those who involve themselves in *either* LLEN including a recognition that the composition of the LLEN must continue to evolve with its members moving to different points –

sometimes in the core membership, sometimes at the periphery which is the greatest point of connection (Wenger 1998a) - what is in the network, and where in the network it is, must be what is useful and necessary for its existence (Urry 2003, p.9). This is an essential rhizomatic characteristic: each element ceaselessly varies and alters its distance in relation to the others (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.30). At the same time, it offers a different perspective to questions of the cost of network membership. Commentators have noted that the demands for volunteer time are one of the most vulnerable points of community networks (Seddon et al. 2005; Tett 2005). If, however, we conceptualise the LLEN as multiplicity – as an *opportunity* – then this cost becomes balanced by gain:

A couple of Principals have said to me, ‘We’re only volunteers after all and you’re asking us to do governance’ and stuff like that. But when I think about why I emphasise the zone of mutual benefit it is because I’ve got this idea of interdependence and that is that people work with the LLEN because they’ve got something to take and something to give and that in all their interactions they are furthering their own organisation’s core business as well as making a contribution. In that sense, they have a professional obligation to be part of the thing. So it is kind of like, if you are going to talk about it as voluntary you are not going to be putting in what I want. What I need you to put in, right? We need to rethink what this is all about and if you’re going to think about yourself as a volunteer you’re going to think you’re being asked to do too much and all of that sort of stuff. If you think about yourself as putting something in and getting something out and we’re all maximising our impact, that is a different way to think about it and you’d be dying to come to the Working Party. (Anne-Marie, Executive Officer, 2005)

Secondly, SGR LLEN is best understood, governed and measured on the basis that it is a ‘small world’: *both* orderly and random, *both* a bounded and unbounded entity. Or as Deleuze would offer: And rather than Is. Thus the bounded LLEN Office and Committee of Management is no more than a (necessary from a perspective of legitimation) knot of arborescence in a (necessary from a perspective of innovation) unbounded rhizome. Here I wish to emphasise that such a perspective fully accords with the intent of the Department as conveyed to SGR LLEN. Figure 3 presents an image provided by the Department in 2004: to me the ‘target’ image is highly evocative of the BwO; not a thing, but a way of being, ‘a body populated by multiplicities’ (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.30).





**Figure 3: Conceptualisation of LLEN Development by the Departmental Field Officer, 2004**

*One* component of this BwO is a floating ‘thing’ sufficient for government to legally enter into a Performance Agreement with – the incorporated association that is SGR LLEN - thus ensuring its fiscal responsibilities; its boundaries are clearly defined. Yet the achievement of that Performance Agreement occurs within the opportunity, the BwO that is the unbounded LLEN.

### **A thread that flows**

All we are saying is that . . . the totality of all BwOs can be obtained on the plane of consistency only by means of an abstract machine capable of covering and even creating it, by assemblages capable of plugging into desire, of effectively taking charge of desires, of assuring their continuous connections and transversal tie-ins. Otherwise, the BwOs of the plane will remain separated by genus, marginalized, reduced to means of bordering, while on the ‘other plane’ the emptied or cancerous doubles will triumph. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.166)

The preceding section broadens our ability to consider the potential of networks as strategies of educational reform and community capacity building. If the intent, as I have suggested, is to make a BwO that will be evidenced by the establishment of a post compulsory education training and employment sector then its success would be measured in terms of flow: not only the extent to which bridging and

linking networks are formed across the formerly separate education, training and employment sectors but more the extent to which information, processes and people flow backwards and forwards through these networks. As Deleuze reminds us there are two phases to the BwO: the first is its fabrication, the second is to create movement over it (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.152). It is this movement that is the key to sustainability for LLEN: multiplicities are distinct in the way they continue - always starting in the middle rather than moving from beginning to end.

Networks are open structures, able to expand without limits, integrating new nodes as long as they are able to communicate within the network, namely as long as they share the same communication codes (for examples, values or performance goals). A network-based social structure is a highly dynamic, open system, susceptible to innovating without threatening its balance. (Castells 2000, pp.501-2)

Our society is dominated by flows and there are material supports of such flows that make possible their simultaneous articulation (Castells 2000, p.441). Some LLEN members suggested the inability of SGR LLEN to maximise flow reflected on-going problems in manipulating the SGR LLEN website which resulted in a lost opportunity to move accurate information on the LLEN and knowledge that had come from action research into the community. From the start VLESC had understood that the knowledge transfer was only the initial stage of what LLEN were expected to achieve; their key achievements would rest on the 'linchpin' of the community building that came from creating of learning communities and knowledge creation (Victorian Learning and Employment Skills Commission 2002, p.ii). Community building is a means of developing social capital but the extent of this social capital is dependent not only on a network of connections with a volume of capital but also on ability to effectively mobilize those connections. It is difficult to question the suggestion that there was a lost opportunity in this the failure to resolve the problems encountered with the SGR LLEN website: social capital *demands* the exchange of ideas and information (Coleman 1988). Within a network on-line technologies provide opportunities to facilitate the exchange of ideas and information in ways that would exponentially increase the rate of exchange that could occur through the efforts of the Executive Officer and Committee of Management alone. Whilst recognising the risks of this limitation, and ultimately accepting the often articulated desire of members of both Working Parties and the Committee of Management to invest some of the limited funds of the LLEN into resolving the issues, the Executive Officer never accepted fully this as a priority. If SGR LLEN had access to sufficient economic capital this wouldn't

have been an issue; given limited economic capital the resolution of the issues around the website would have been achieved at the cost of the loss of something else and from the Executive Officer's perspective the use of on-line technologies beyond, for instance, a shift to e-newsletters from 2006 would never contribute to partnership development and knowledge creation – work that was inherently face to face - and that was where her focus would remain.

On another dimension while Promotions became the vital force from 2005 the Executive Officer would ask, 'How do you promote the smoothing of things?' For example, while schools might declare they didn't know anything about the LLEN's work or may not be aware of the involvement of their school, they may well have experienced that there was less resistance when they went about their work within their school network, that there was a greater understanding of other parts of the multiplicity, that there was an enhanced level of trust: that they could 'live smooth' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.482) despite the arborescence of their space. The LLEN works *between* points that include schools, education providers and other agencies working for and with young people; each of these points is in itself a multiplicity and has different, and often competitive, commercial interests, hence the focus on *learning* how to work collaboratively in these in-between spaces. Thus school networks may be primarily 'learning Networks'; LLEN must be primarily 'Learning networks.' *Between* things is not a fixed relationship or a place but more a 'direction, a transversal movement that sweeps one *and* the other away, a stream without beginning or end that undermines its banks and picks up speed in the middle (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.25). This undermining process is often necessarily imperceptible: allowing flows that escape the capture of dominant discourses (Roy 2003, p.31): much of the work of the LLEN-rhizome would be metaphorically underground with the outcomes of the work becoming manifest within the organisations that comprise the post compulsory education training and employment sector doing whatever it is they are funded to do.

Flows are not unidirectional, that is, they do not flow from something active to something inert. Rather in the process of connection, flows unpredictably change all they connect; a single connection can accelerate into dynamics that lead to total change: a Deleuzian 'becoming.' This can create profound discomfort in arborescent structures such as schools accustomed to working within clearly defined places, predictable structures and processes for pre-determined outcomes as well as

for parents whose own experience of education and the transition to employment was far less uncertain. Thus, for instance, while we can in some schools witness VCAL students ‘voting with their feet’ in moving away from the VCE in rapidly increasing numbers there is resistance to this rupture and a blocking of the desire in the wider constraints including cultural capital and market forces that continue to steer students into certain choices (Crump and Stanley 2005, p.13) and to force schools to ensure their financial survival by attracting more students through succeeding in the competitive, and very public, rankings in VCE and ENTER scores.

As such, one finds a different LLEN depending on which entry point one uses but the entry point is not ‘irretrievable’: smooth spaces become striated and striated spaces become smooth and increase their power to deterritorialize (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.480) . I have witnessed this process on multiple occasions. For instance, within the Employer Reference Group the Jobs 4 Kids campaign was the line of deterritorialization – a line intended to break away from segmentarity of the range of initiatives in expanding the active involvement of industry in the emerging post compulsory education training and employment sector that was the strategic imperative of SGR LLEN. At the point of the launch the Campaign was reterritorialized: caught by the signifier *No Dole Program* and in the process lost flow. The reversal and re-reversal of such attempts to connect things and maintain a smooth space indicates the activity that occurs at the boundary. While the SGR LLEN Executive Officer explained the ultimate outcome of this exercise as ‘her luck holding’ a Deleuzian perspective would suggest this is an instance where the multiplicity is defined by a borderline that was drawn and occupied by her and, in occupying that space, she was perceptive of the opportunity to find a way to make connection as well as being receptive to the reality that all multiplicities are transient and temporary, evolving to be what they need to be. Similarly within the work to establish the Australian Technical College some of the most trenchant critics of the LLEN found a smooth space in which to engage; at the same point some of those that had experienced the smooth space rapidly stratified and, in the process, alienated themselves from desire.

### **A futuristic thread**

Far from reducing the multiplicities’ number of dimensions to two, the *plane of consistency* cuts across them all, intersects them in order to bring into

coexistence any number of multiplicities, with any number of dimensions. The plane of consistency is the intersection of all concrete forms. Therefore all becomings are written like sorcerers' drawings on this plane of consistency, which is the ultimate Door providing a way out for them. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.251)

Toward the end of 2005 LLEN funding was extended for a further three years, albeit at a lower level than that they had subsequently received. Thus their funded existence was confirmed until the end of 2008, beyond that there would be no further government support: the Department expected that while LLEN would not exist, the partnerships they had established would sustain and in these partnerships would reside sustainability of the achievements of LLEN. This research does not support this aspiration: not only are partnerships fluid and transitory but it is in this fluidity that their potential lays. Partnerships do not *need* to sustain; it is the project that is the basis of the partnership that must sustain (Kaplan 2003). Or, in Deleuzian terms, it is the desire and the flow of desire that must sustain.

For the Executive Officer in 2005 the situation was one of 'the big picture, compelling and all as it is, coming right up against the reality of "who is going to do this work?"' For 2006 to 2008 the LLEN Office would focus strategically with funding sufficient to open the doors, employ one Executive Officer and one Administration Officer and undertake the management of *On Track Connect*. At the same time, the LLEN influence was expanded through for the first time being written into the accountability documents of other state government departments. However there was an impending sense of lost potential in the air: an awareness of what SGR LLEN was poised to achieve in the in-between space at a time when the simultaneous desirability and impossibility of post compulsory institutional reform was acknowledged by others (Brennan and Zipin 2005; Zipin 2005).

The strategic agenda for SGR LLEN during 2006-2008 was confirmed as the development of a sustainable post compulsory education, training and employment sector to better meet the needs of 15-19 year olds. This sector would result from the assemblage of the projects undertaken by the LLEN network; fundamental to it were the core projects including the development and implementation of the Graduate Diploma of Education (Applied Learning); the evolution of the Employer Reference Group to link employment into the existing education and training sector; the intertwining with G21 to support economic growth and the commitment to lifelong learning; the establishment of the Australian Technical College; the development of memoranda of understanding between ACFE and schools.

Simultaneously the drive for a post compulsory sector had been taken up by the Department both locally and had for some time been ‘talked about’ at the Centre. This had not gone without comment: would recognition by and support from government for the development of a post compulsory education training and employment sector as a ‘thing’ rather than a way of being result in an attempt to control it and, once again, render the deterritorialization negative?

The continually reducing funds government committed to LLEN formed, once again, a multi-ply thread of both challenge and opportunity. LLEN never assumed the power of funding that Kirby had suggested in his Review (Kirby 2000). While some LLEN argued that this had been to their detriment and had eroded their authority (Seddon et al. 2005) the consensus within SGR LLEN was that they were richer for it: the LLEN connects other machines and in the process enables *existing* resources to flow. In their first years the project funding held by SGR made life ‘difficult’ as the motivations to engage with the LLEN were murky. On the one hand it made some draw away from the LLEN believing – as the LLEN itself experienced – that ‘if you fund our project you will therefore interfere in what is done with those funds.’ On the other hand some were motivated to become involved ‘because you have funds, not because we believe we have to work together to for the good of young people.’ Now LLEN had been left with their resource primarily being their ability to bring new partners together: the final three years’ funding allows no project funds at all.

The question is, ‘Do we really need more resources or do we need people to think through using the resources better?’ Because I work hard, but all those people that I work with all work as hard as I do because we are all equally committed. At the end of the day, I hope these meetings that we’re having on the post compulsory sector are going to see . . . a single strategic plan for the post compulsory education training and employment sector in this region. Not an ACFE plan, not a LLEN plan, not a DE&T plan, a post compulsory education training and employment sector strategic plan that all of us will deliver. That is what I see happening and I reckon that this opportunity with the Technical College, while we are trying to nut out at an abstract level what this will look like we have got to ground it in what the possibilities are for this set of other things that we are doing in this region. The timing is perfect. (Anne-Marie, Executive Officer, 2005)

Thus the shift here to thinking rhizomatically. A specific example serves to illustrate this. In YPAP, the school would always accept enrolments from pregnant and parenting teenagers wishing to re-engage with formal education. However these students often did not ‘fit’ the school: their life experiences as parents exceeded the curriculum offerings of the school context yet at the same time for some the absence

from school for an extended period of time left them unable to cope academically at VCE level. However once enrolled they were forced into the ‘violence of identity’ (Roy 2003, p.106): they had to be ‘justified’ in their attendance and in achieving according to the norms which prevail for students in senior secondary schools and against which the school would be judged: within arborescent educational structures the school acts as a cemented wall - they had to be either in or out, they could not be both in-and-out. Rather than seeking more resources for the school to manage their ‘difference’ a rhizomatic response would enable the student to both be-and-not-be at school: enrolled in the YPAP but receiving their ‘education’ wherever that best be: in the school or in an alternative education or moving between the two.

However, a caveat is required here: such a shift assumes a level of economic capital in the unbounded network sufficient to undertake projects as well as a level of social capital in the unbounded network sufficient to risk working collaboratively. This is a bold assumption given the continuing rationalization of government programs. However in considering the entire LLEN agenda, the close connection in Geelong between the federal LCP and state LLEN was a major source of opportunity. By 2006 with a major injection of federal funds into the region<sup>117</sup> through, but not limited to, the expansion of the role of the LCP this potential had become a reality with the LCP working within the LLEN Strategic Plan and represented on every LLEN Working Party. Notably, this arrangement which at a federal level was identified as the only model that seemed workable had never been the subject of a formal partnership agreement. Rather it rested in the informal partnership that had been developed over time since the formation of SGR LLEN; a formation that the LCP had contested strongly five years earlier.

For SGR LLEN the commitment remained to pursue an action research methodology and this too was not funding dependent, rather it was argued by the Executive Officer to be ‘a matter of mindset.’ While this is correct it left unresolved the question of capacity. Most of the action research that had been undertaken would be categorised as practical action research which left contextual

---

<sup>117</sup> This included eight initiatives in careers advice, 11 initiatives in VET, three initiatives in transition support, seven initiatives in resource provision (mostly web-based), and two initiatives specifically focusing on indigenous transition. The initiatives intersect with 11 state initiatives in the arena of post compulsory education (including LLEN).

constraints unproblematised; some could not be categorised as action research at all. At the same time, this thesis underscores the need for an increasing focus on how to foster an *emancipatory* action research methodology within SGR LLEN; one that rests within an emancipatory knowledge-constitutive interest (Habermas 1972) and enhances the ability to work against performativity rather than remaining within its constraints. Thus the removal of project funds did result in a loss of ability to invest in either professional development for LLEN members around action research itself or to promote the potential unleashed by action research through publication. Each of these is inherently problematic. The former loss weakened the ‘triangle’ of action, research and training (Lewin 1946, p.42); research indicates that unsupported networks fall back into using knowledge based in past practice (Stokes and Tyler 2001). The latter loss lessened the ability to capture and transfer knowledge that had been gained in practice; while the Executive Officer would argue that reports were not required I have already argued the position that writing is in itself a powerful source of the reflection that is central to the action research. Thus – as was the intent – economic capital is increasingly being replaced by social capital. However, social capital alone is not a sufficient condition for community development (Flora et al. 1997); a point reinforced in this research. In the 2002 LLEN Evaluation the need was identified for further research to

Properly map the emerging inter-agency networks concerned with building social capital at every level of government; their agenda and resource priorities; the character of their interface with one another; and the infrastructure required to support regional social and economic development . . .

Investigate current strategies for regulating public activities . . . in order to determine a regulatory matrix which provides appropriate guarantees in relation to probity but which also encourages responsiveness and innovation within LLENs. (Victorian Learning and Employment Skills Commission 2002, p.iv)

The importance of this further research and subsequent action cannot be overemphasised in considering sustainability ‘beyond LLEN.’ In a context of performativity a policy that implements networks and provides funding is only one part of the machinic activity, quality assurance and performance indicators are the pedals of the machine; audit, review, evaluations and so on are the tools that calibrate the machine (Blackmore 2004, p.22). In the absence of change to these ‘pedals and tools’ the development of social capital will be undermined through limiting the opportunities for LLEN members to build the norms and trust required



for a whole-of-government whole-of-community post compulsory education training and employment sector that functions as a plane of consistency to be realised. Putnam (1993, p.5) stresses ‘social capital is not a substitute for effective public policy but rather a prerequisite for it and, in part, a consequence of it’; indeed government policy potentially undermines development of social capital through limiting people’s opportunities to build links (Pollitt 2002). While Pollitt was referring to opportunities for individuals to build links with both their specific, that is familial, and generalised networks we can equally see this limitation in play in the context of performativity that sits around the LLEN-rhizome. The Executive Officer, the Field Officer, the member organisations, the Committee of Management, schools, government departments are constrained by, or waste energy on, governance structures and material circumstances that limit their ability to respond and innovate. This results in a negative deterritorialization.

Hence the extraordinary potential of the Victorian legislative review that commenced in 2005. This review will consider the Education Act 1958, Teaching Service Act 1981, Vocational Education and Training Act 1990, Adult, Community and Further Education Act 1991, Tertiary Education Act 1993, Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority Act 2000, Victorian Qualifications Authority Act 2000 and Victorian Teaching Authority Act 2001<sup>118</sup>. The Department had already completed a technical analysis of existing legislation which identified areas of legislation that were ‘obsolete, repetitive, obscure, contradictory or unnecessarily obstructive to the delivery of contemporary education and training’ (Department of Education & Training 2005, p.4). However, this can only go so far as this new post compulsory sector itself connects with other state sectors, as well as with federal legislature and other non-government contexts all of which potentially re-territorialize. For instance, YPAP demonstrated the need for childcare legislation and policy to be fluid enough to accommodate childcare delivered in contexts such as schools. This is dangerous ground: the federal Liberal overhaul of Workplace Relations Legislation which Australian Technical Colleges were tied to and which was promoted to Australians as an essential mechanisms to create jobs for young

---

<sup>118</sup> A number of other miscellaneous Acts were also being considered as well as the Community Services Act 1970 which refers to the responsibility of parents to ensure that children of school age attend school. A concurrent review of school governance was also being undertaken and the findings of an earlier review of the legislation concerning registration of non-government schools would also be considered in the Review.

people was highly contested, to the extent that all state legislatures were considering or pursuing legal challenges to its passage.

Notwithstanding the potential to form the post compulsory education training and employment sector the final removal of any form of funding to LLEN beyond 2008 has implications. The sector is forming through the boundary work of exceptional individuals into whose hands the network has been 'able to focus its volume of social capital . . . power incommensurate with the agent's personal contribution' (Bourdieu 1986, p.251). In the context of the SGR LLEN this agent is primarily, but not exclusively, the Executive Officer. Other boundary agents have significantly influenced the creation of the conditions of flow through the network, not least certain exceptional individuals leading ACFE and GRVEC. These women acted as boundary agents forging a connection and flows of communication across boundaries; acting as a form of adaptor between machines as the BwO has been forming. The sustainability of the work of the LLEN beyond the existence of a recognised 'full-time' boundary agent is completely dependent on the achievement of a plane of consistency. By not providing any resources beyond 2008 the government would force the network into the 'hard conversations' (Anne-Marie, Executive Officer, 2005): if it wished to continue to have an organisational base the network would need to draw on its own resources. The absence of government would free SGR LLEN from the performativity within the Department; it would also remove the ability of the LLEN to help the Department to learn about releasing the potential of its own policies.

The absence of a LLEN may be of no consequence: a fully formed and flowing post compulsory education training and employment sector coupled with the realisation of new approaches to governance for the organisations within the sector would bring us to the plane of consistency – holding together its divergent elements through a state of intensity that derives from the commitment to working for young people rather than any intrinsic similarity or extrinsic force. LLEN were to improve opportunities for young people through community building: would community building spontaneously continue in the absence of any builder? It is through a 'meticulous relation with the strata that one succeeds in freeing lines of flight, causing conjugated flows to pass and escape and bring forth continuous intensities for a BwO' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.161): who would orchestrate this 'meticulous relation' in the absence of the bounded LLEN?

## ***February 2006: Cutting-off***

### **Leaving the field**

My last journal entry was 15 December 2004. Five days later Berend and I flew home to New Zealand to spend Christmas with my family. I returned knowing I wanted to focus on writing and, in that process, my reflections have become a part of my daily construction at this keyboard. But the data generation went on and on; my field notes continued as I continued my observations at Committee of Management meetings and my conversations with the Executive Officer. In part this reflected that we are always in the middle: while one of my hands kept trying to tidy up and weave in the additional threads that continually appeared around me the other hand would unpick sections woven earlier that now demanded a different hue of emphasis. There was always another piece of the story; always another intersection that demanded attention.

On another level my difficulty in making an 'end' in this middle also reflects the sub-text of this research: the ARC Linkage Project that emphasised the opportunity for my doctoral experience to occur within a social learning system. In other work I have argued that a doctoral pedagogy of situated learning responds to the challenge faced by the academic 'master' in the poststructural context (Kamp 2004). My candidature involved me in multiple communities of practice: each of these can be understood as a multiplicity: in the assemblages that occur through their 'cofunctioning by contagion' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.242) my becoming-academic has occurred. However, by the time we entered our third year I had *become* the relationship between the academic team and the industry partner in the Project. My learning with both the Executive Officer and the Deakin University project team was experienced as a community of practice: each community gaining coherence from its mutual engagement, joint enterprise and shared repertoire. Each community had borderlines. These borderlines were the multiplicity's farthest dimensions, unchanged until a dimension was added or subtracted. This is what Deleuze and Guattari refer to as 'intension' (1987, p.245) and Wenger refers to as 'close' or 'generative' tension (Wenger 2000, p.9): at the borderline competency and experience diverge and 'foreign' competence becomes part of the interaction. This increases the tension between competency and experience and opens space for learning to occur. In this instance the boundary between the LLEN community and

the Deakin University community became significant in unproductive ways. Joint enterprise, mutual engagement and shared repertoire involve negotiations that reflect the complexities of practice, within the Linkage Project this negotiation between the industry partner and the Deakin University team eventually ceased and with it the norms and trust largely collapsed. The initial collectively developed understanding of what the community was about eroded and, given the significance of the consequences for me of this breakdown, it deepened the ‘certain psychological cost’ borne by all ethnographic researchers (Ball 1982).

Wenger suggests that identity – including academic identity – extends in space, crossing local, national and global communities of practice; an experience of multimembership, ‘an intersection of many relationships that you hold into the experience of being a person, at once one and multiple’ (2000, p.17-18). It also extends in time:

It is a trajectory in progress that includes where you have been and where you are going, your history and your aspirations. It brings the past and the future into the experience of the present. Apprentices in traditional apprenticeship, for instance, are not just learning skills, they are exposed to possible futures. (Wenger 2000, p.17)

These trajectories are my academic-becoming: the lines of flight that have lead to my own possible futures. The multiple communities of practice that have framed my candidature provide multiple borderlines, those areas that offer the richest learning opportunities for both me and the communities of practice in which I am involved: my Linkage Project team; the academic and community committees I have been and remain involved in; my family; my community of friends within the academic community and our women’s PhD network. This brings me back to my recognition of the ‘complex and dynamic intercrossing of forces, intensities, discourses, desires, accidents, idiosyncrasies, and relations of power’ (Roy 2003, p.1). For me, the practices that define these communities and my competence within them have been at least, if not more, implicit than explicit: they involve connection, embodiment, certain looks and off-hand comments, tactile moments, laughter. This is because even when a community of practice must conform to external mandate – such as the requirements of doctoral candidature – it is the community, and not the mandate, that produces the practice. I have been privileged to learn my practice within each of these communities and I regret having to say goodbye.

As people who have conducted ethnographic research are well aware, it is not only 'getting in' to the field that is demanding, but also 'getting out' of it; deep emotions are involved in the process, and leaving the field causes sorrow and ambivalent feelings of loss. (Lahelma 2002, p.369)

## **Taping in the whiskers**

I have come to accept that the research rhizome does not end yet I have reached the edges of my doctoral loom and it is time to cut off the tapestry and lay it down for finishing. Cutting-off is the point at which the whole work is finally seen:

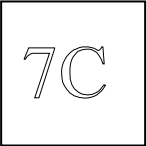
Only when we cut the tapestry off the loom and lay it face-up on the floor do we get to see the whole work. Then we stand silent and look at what we have made. That moment is like eating fresh spring radishes after months of old turnips. Sometimes when the patron won't pay up front and the dyers, the wool and silk merchants, the gilt wire sellers begin demanding payments I can't make, or when . . . the soup gets thinner – on those days only knowing that one day the moment of silence will come keeps me working. (Chevalier 2003, p.72-3)



My supervisors are in attendance each holding a pair of scissors: before they hand them to me to snip the warp threads they judge whether the completed work will correspond with the cartoon they provided me three years' ago. My research partner is also in attendance, she assures me of the beauty of the tapestry and my skill as a weaver. At the same time I am keenly aware of her sense of vulnerability in knowing the finished work will now become available for all to see; it makes me mindful that my manners must still be good, my ethics still strict (Stake 1998). Regardless, she continues to provide me with new threads that would weave beautiful images. I mentally note them, already I can visualise a series of smaller works.

My supervisor hands me the scissors and, grasping them firmly as I take a deep breath, I cut the warp threads. With the help of my colleagues at Deakin we lay the tapestry down and I begin my new role as conservator, taping in the whiskers of thread that reach disobediently beyond the weaving. I hem the tapestry, preparing it for packaging and transporting to my examiners who will consider its worth. The back of the tapestry will always look untidy but I rejoice in that; it is an on-going reminder of the way in which research proceeds: taking threads up, chopping them bluntly off when we have finished with the piece we use to portray whatever it is we wish to portray, taping in the whiskers and binding the edges to give the appearance that the work is less raggedy than the image would suggest.

While this tapestry has reached the limits of the loom I remain surrounded by yarn collected along the way: colours I admired but have not been able to incorporate in any obvious way into these Panels. Most likely they do appear, a single strand wound on a multi-stranded bobbin where the colour needed to be dappled, but for the most part are rendered invisible in these final Panels. I provide a list of those yarns in Catalogue 1 to ensure the range of weaving worked by SGR LLEN is not overlooked. For now, it remains only to certify the pedigree of this tapestry and lay down my hands.

### Certifying the pedigree

	<b>A Study of the Geelong Local Learning and Employment Network</b>	
	Woven at:	Deakin University, Faculty of Education
Tapestry No:	100152512	Artists: ARC Linkage Partnership Team
Date:	2003-2006	Weaver: Annelies Kamp
Size:	95,626 words	
DO NOT FOLD TAPESTRY, THIS CAUSES DAMAGE. ROLL ONLY.		
ROLL IN THIS DIRECTION ONLY		

## Catalogue 1: the weavings

	Activity	Facilitation
	Governance and Strategic Planning (ongoing)	Executive Officer/ COM
2001 - 2002	Initial networking for Young Parents' Access Project: collaborative project between senior secondary college, government agencies, Deakin University and the community to assist pregnant and parenting teenagers wish to remain in, or re-enter, secondary school (ongoing Project)	Executive Officer
	Outsourcing for provision of structured workplace learning opportunities for local secondary schools	Executive Officer
	Youth Voice Project: action research in partnership with the <i>Streets Ahead Community Capacity Building Project</i> and <i>Neighbourhood Renewal</i> to work with young people in researching and confronting employment, education and training barriers (ongoing Project)	Youth Voice WP
	Head Start: action research supporting young mothers to re-engage in community life and to make a successful transition to on-going education, training and employment	Professional and Partnership Development WP
	Options for Work Education: action research project involving TAFE, Job Pathways Program and schools to support 'at risk' students in Y9/10	Professional and Partnership Development WP
	Enterprise Curriculum Project: action research project focussed on enterprise learning opportunities for Y9 students	Professional and Partnership Development WP
	Re-engagement Through Linkages: action research project that involved the introduction of a youth worker within a secondary school environment	Professional and Partnership Development WP
	Outdoor Education Reconnection Project: action research project involving collaboration between ACE provides and TAFE to bring together young people and develop individual and group skills in outdoor activities	Professional and Partnership Development WP
	Expansion of the <i>School Based New Apprenticeships Project</i> (ongoing Project)	Vocational Education WP
	VET Tasters in desktop publishing, retail, engineering, agriculture, construction and community services	Vocational Education WP

2002- 2003	Development and Implementation of the Vocational Education Project (ongoing Project)	Vocational Education WP
	Expansion of VET into wine and aqua-culture (ongoing Project)	Vocational Education WP
	Implementation of the State-wide government initiative VCAL (ongoing Project)	VCAL Reference Group
	Publication of the Environmental Scan: baseline data on the education, employment, training and social support needs, issues and participation patterns of 15-24 year olds in the SGR LLEN region (ongoing Project)	Environmental Scan WP
	Establishment of on-line searchable Employment Services Database (ongoing Project)	Employment Issues WP
	Career Planning Project: a partnership project involving an employment agency and secondary school in exploring career planning options and the development of job skills for VCAL participants	Employment Issues WP
	Pathways Project: Research and planning to develop a coordinated transition and support service for early school leavers	Pathways WP
	Facilitation of G21 Lifelong Learning Pillar (ongoing Project) including network to network collaboration with SGN	Communications Strategy WP/ Executive Officer
	ARC Linkage Project Research (ongoing Project)	Executive Officer/COM
	Annual LLEN Conference (ongoing Project)	Executive Officer
	Publication of the SGR LLEN Newsletters (ongoing Project)	Communications Strategy WP
	Formation of Skills Gap Strategy Group and hosting of Future Forum workshop focused on skills and skill gaps (subsequently moved into G21 Economic Development Pillar)	Executive Officer
	Participation in Geelong Careers Expo (ongoing Project)	Employment Issues WP
	Education and Training Partnerships with Industry Strategy: included an audit of partnerships with industry, coordination of VCAL work placements and a series of studies designed to enhance the employability of young people	Employment Issues WP



Employerability Project: a project to provide Tourism and Hospitality employers with leadership skills to enhance the quality of work placements for learners (ongoing Project)	Employment Issues WP
Commissioning of the Labor Market Data Report	Employment Issues WP
Implementation of State-wide government initiative <i>Managed Individual Pathways</i> (ongoing Project)	MIP WP
Development of Transition Support Pack	MIP WP
Moving On: action research project at a secondary college that offered opportunities in applied learning for Y9 students	Partnership and Professional Development WP
Mentoring: action research project connecting local volunteers with young people	Professional and Partnership Development WP
Head Start: action research supporting young mothers to re-engage in community life and to make a successful transition to on-going education, training and employment	Professional and Partnership Development WP
Out There: action research adventure-based project focussed on success experiences and the development of cooperation, communication, risk taking, group spirit and problem solving	Professional and Partnership Development WP
Enhancing <i>Managed Individual Pathways</i> : action research project to explore the potential of partnerships between local service providers and education	Professional and Partnership Development WP
Staff Release to Other Sectors Project: a professional development opportunity for staff in the post compulsory sector to work in a part of the sector other than their own (ongoing Project)	Professional and Partnership Development WP
Hosting of the VLESC/LLEN Forum: canvassing strategic responses	Professional and Partnership Development WP
Implementation and Evaluation of State-wide government initiative <i>On Track Connect</i> (ongoing Project); Capacity Appraisal for <i>On Track Connect</i> 2004	Transition and Support WP
Case study of VCAL implementation	VCAL Reference Group

Development of Work Readiness Skills Development Course	VCAL Reference Group
Literacy Professional Development for VCAL Teachers	VCAL Reference Group
Strengthening cooperation between VET Clusters	Vocational Education WP
Development and implementation of VET Attrition Survey	Vocational Education WP
Vocational Pathways Marketing Campaign: including information flyers, annual information nights and industry focus days (ongoing Project)	Vocational Education WP
Publication of VET Calendar of Events	Vocational Education WP
VET Tasters in aquaculture, viticulture, horticulture, mechanical trades, building and construction	Vocational Education WP
VET Tasters for Girls in engineering	Vocational Education WP
Development of OH&S Program for students undertaking work experience, or workplace learning related to VCAL or VCE studies	Vocational Education WP
Research partnership with GRVEC and Deakin University's RIPVET to investigate student attitudes to VET and workplace learning.	Vocational Education WP
Implementation of <i>School Based New Apprenticeships</i> strategy and appointment of three Cluster Coordinators (ongoing Project)	Vocational Education WP
2004 <sup>119</sup> Establishment of Employer Reference Group (ongoing Project)	Executive Officer/ Employment Issues WP
Expansion of Vocational Pathways information night to include session for Koori students and parents held at Wathaurong Aboriginal Cooperative (ongoing Project)	Vocational Education WP
Where to Next? : an open day hosted at Deakin University and bringing 20 agencies together to support Y12 students in pathway planning (ongoing Project)	Retention and Transition Support WP
Launch of the Jobs 4 Kids Campaign (ongoing	Vocational and

---

<sup>119</sup> In 2004 SGR LLEN moved to reporting activities by calendar year.

Project)	Applied Learning WP
Review of <i>School Based New Apprenticeships</i> strategy	Vocational and Applied Learning WP
Development of the Graduate Diploma of Education (Applied Learning) (ongoing Project)	Executive Officer/Deakin University Executive Officer
Negotiation of Regional Memorandum of Understanding between ACE and the Department (ongoing Project)	
VCAL Partnership Pilot Project: a school/ACE partnership project to monitor and evaluate the development of a partnership between a local secondary school and a number of ACE agencies	Executive Officer/ BSW ACFE
LLEN Leadership Course: a partnership with Wathaurong Indigenous Cooperative involving a ten week course drawing on the performing arts to support participants identifying and pursuing a vocational pathway	Executive Officer
Bob White Electrix Project: partnership with LCP and a local recruitment agency to develop an apprenticeship recruitment and selection strategy with a small manufacturing employer and local secondary school (ongoing Project)	Vocational and Applied Learning WP
Establishment of OHS Video Lending Library at the Department in partnership with Alcoa Aluminium (ongoing Project)	Vocational and Applied Learning WP
Life Skills and Pathways Mentoring: action research project for boys aged 15-17	Professional and Partnership Development WP
Assessment of Barriers for Early School Leaders in Transition to TAFE: action research project	Professional and Partnership Development WP
Review of Y9 Curriculum Interventions: action research project	Professional and Partnership Development WP
Absenteeism: action research project focused on absenteeism and interventions with families	Professional and Partnership Development WP
VCAL: action research project focused on modification of an early school leavers program	Professional and Partnership Development WP
Early Intervention for Y9 boys: action research project using studies in the automotive industry	Professional and Partnership Development WP
Transition for Youth with Disabilities: action	Professional and

2005

research project for youth with disability moving into open employment	Partnership Development WP
Refugee Youth: action research project using a video project on cultural diversity for reengagement of refugee youth	Professional and Partnership Development WP
Koori Partnership Project: a four stage project including research, information sessions for Koori parents and young people, and integrated agency planning (ongoing Project)	Executive Officer/ Community Steering Group
Establishment of Literacy Australia Network Advisory Group: a project to build a professional network to support teachers working with young people operating at an initial literacy level	Executive Officer
Negotiation of Regional Memorandum of Understanding between ACE and the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria: a partnership project to integrate Catholic schools in the region into the ACE/schools MOU Partnership (ongoing Project)	Executive Officer
First cohort of students complete the Graduate Diploma of Education (Applied Learning) (ongoing Project)	All WP/ Deakin University
Development of Expression of Interest, Proposal for Geelong Region Australian Technical College (ongoing Project)	Executive Officer
Implementation of Beacon Projects within Jobs 4 Kids Campaign (ongoing Project)	Vocational and Applied Learning WP
Industry/Education Links Program: Framework and Action Plan focused on students in Y7-10 (ongoing Project)	Vocational and Applied Learning WP
Transporting Your Future: a pilot project with the transport industry to deliver <i>School Based New Apprenticeships</i>	Vocational and Applied Learning WP
Careers in Manufacturing: pilot partnership involving 435 Y9/10 students with LCP and the Geelong Manufacturing Council	Vocational and Applied Learning WP
Regional Data Project: establishment of a database to integrate the range of local datasets that record targeted outcomes and destinations of 15-19 year olds (ongoing Project)	Deakin University
Publication of the learning from action research	Professional and

projects to date (ongoing Project)	Partnership Development WP
The DAL Project: action research project training young people with special needs in the hospitality industry	Professional and Partnership Development WP
Under the Hood: action research project involving an automotive training project and three secondary colleges	Professional and Partnership Development WP
SWEET: action research project to develop integrated curriculum for VCAL	Professional and Partnership Development WP
What's Stopping Us?: action research project around the implementation of a new model of training for young people attending alternative training	Professional and Partnership Development WP
Mission Possible: action research project partnership to build self esteem, confidence and motivation for employment in young men	Professional and Partnership Development WP
The Grovedale College Y9 Program: action research project using applied learning to enhance retention and engagement	Professional and Partnership Development WP
The Entrée and Finishing Courses: two action research projects between industry partners and GBN in, firstly, bridging young people without qualifications into the tourism and hospitality industries and, secondly, developing the careers of young people with qualifications	Professional and Partnership Development WP

## ***Catalogue 2: list of acronyms***

ACE	Adult and Community Education
AEU	Australian Education Union
AIG	Australian Industry Group
ALTE	Applied Learning and Teaching Experience
ANTA	Australian National Training Authority
BAYSA	Barwon Adolescent Youth Services Association
BSW ACFE	Barwon South Western Region Adult, Community and Further Education
BwO	Body without Organs
CEO	Catholic Education Office
CFG	Committee for Geelong
COGG	City of Greater Geelong
COM	Committee of Management
CREATE	A Not-For-Profit community training and service provider
DAL	Dial a Lunch
DE&T	Victorian Department of Education and Training
DEST	Federal Department of Education, Science and Training
DEWR	Federal Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
DHS	Department of Human Services
DVC	Department for Victorian Communities
ENTER	Equivalent National Tertiary Entrance Ranking
ETPIS	Education and Training in Partnership with Industry Strategy
FACS	Federal Department of Families and Community Services
G21	Group representing Geelong in achieving its Goals for the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century
GACC	Geelong Area Consultative Committee
GATE	Geelong Adult Training and Education
GBN	Geelong Business Network
GDAL	Graduate Diploma of Education (Applied Learning)
GRVEC	Geelong Region Vocational Education Council
J4K	Jobs for Kids Campaign
LCP	Federal Local Community Partnership
LLEN	Local Learning and Employment Network
NAC	National Apprenticeship Co-ordinator
OHS	Occupational Health and Safety
OTTE	DE&T Office of Training and Tertiary Education
RIPVET	Research Institute for Professional and Vocational Education and Training
RICA	Federal Regional Industry Careers Advisors
SBNA	School Based New Apprenticeships
SGR LLEN	Smart Geelong Region Local Learning and Employment Network
SWEET	Success with Education, Employment and Training
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
VASP	Victorian Association of Secondary Principals
VCAA	Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority
VCAL	Victorian Certificate in Applied Learning
VCE	Victorian Certificate in Education
VET	Vocational Education and Training
VIT	Victorian Institute of Teaching
VLESC	Victorian Learning and Employment Skills Commission
VQA	Victorian Qualifications Authority
YPAP	Young Parents' Access Project

## References

- 'Skills Shortages' 8 March 2005, *The 7.30 Report*, ABC Television, Melbourne, Australia (television program).
- Adelman, G., Jenkins, D. & Kemmis, S. 1976, 'Rethinking case study: Notes from the second Cambridge conference', *Cambridge Journal of Education*, vol. 6, no. 3, pp. 139-50.
- Adult Community and Further Education Board 2004, *New funding arrangements - Learning Towns*, in *Executive Memorandum No. 2004/46* Adult, Community and Further Education Board, Melbourne.
- Alvermann, D. E. 2000, 'Researching libraries, literacies, and lives: A rhizoanalysis', in St Pierre, E. A. & Pillow, W. (Eds.), *Working The Ruins. Feminist Poststructural Theory and Methods in Education*, Routledge, New York, pp. 114-29.
- Angwin, J., Blackmore, J., Harrison, L., Hodder, P. & Shacklock, G. 2001, *Geelong Pathways Project*, Deakin Centre for Education and Change, Deakin University, Geelong.
- Angwin, J., Harrison, L., Kamp, A. & Shacklock, G. 2004, *The Young Parents' Access Project*, Deakin University, Geelong.
- Angwin, J. & Schulz, C. 2004, *Environmental Scan*, Environmental Overview, Smart Geelong Region Local Learning and Employment Network, Geelong.
- Anon 2005, 'Broad forecasts an increase in standards for Geelong battlers', *The Geelong Independent*, April 29, p. 5.
- Argyris, C. 1992/1994, *On Organizational Learning*, Blackwell, Oxford.
- Atkinson, E. 2003, 'Education, postmodernism and the organisation of consent', in Satterthwaite, J., Atkinson, E. & Gale, K. (Eds.), *Discourse, Power and Resistance. Challenging the Rhetoric of Contemporary Education*, Trentham Books, Stoke on Trent, pp. 3-12.
- Australian Bureau of Statistics 2001, 'Census 2001', <<http://www.abs.gov.au/>> (accessed 11 May 2004)
- Australian Bureau of Statistics 18 March 2005, 'Population up in Capital City fringes and the coast', <<http://www.abs.gov.au/Ausstats/abs@.nsf/0/56d4546cba3d58e2ca256e5400711592?OpenDocument>> (accessed 3 June 2005)
- Australian Bureau of Statistics 2004, *Measuring Social Capital. An Australian Framework and Indicators*, Australian Bureau of Statistics,, Canberra.
- Australian Industry Group 2004, *Adopt A School. Industry and Schools Working Together in Partnership*, Australian Industry Group with funding from the Department of Education, Science and Training.
- Avis, J. 1997, 'Globalisation, the learner and post-compulsory education: policy fictions', *Research in Post-Compulsory Education*, vol. 2, no. 3, pp. 241-48.
- Ball, S. J. 1982, 'Participant observation as a method of research', in Ball, S. (Ed.) *The Conduct of Field Work*, Deakin University, Melbourne.

- Ball, S. J. 2000, 'Performativities and fabrications in the education economy: Towards the performative society?' *Australian Educational Researcher*, vol. 27, no. 2, pp. 1-23.
- Ball, S. J., Maguire, M. & Macrae, S. 2000, *Choice, Pathways and Transitions Post-16. New Youth, New Economies in the Global City*, Studies in Inclusive Education, Slee, R., Routledge Falmer, London.
- Barer-Stein, T. 1987, 'Learning as a process of experiencing the unfamiliar', *Studies in the Education of Adults*, vol. 19, no. 2, pp. 87-108.
- Bauman, Z. 1992, *Intimations of Postmodernity*, Routledge, London.
- Beavis, A. 2006, *On Track. Students Choosing A Career. An Investigation Of Educational and Vocational Plans of Learning for Life Students.*, The Smith Family, Sydney.
- Beck, U. 1992, *Risk Society. Towards a New Modernity. Theory, Culture & Society*, Sage, London.
- Bessant, J. 2002, 'Risk and nostalgia: the problem of education and youth unemployment in Australia - a case study', *Journal of Education and Work*, vol. 15, no. 1, pp. 31-51.
- Bishop, S. 2003, 'Building a vision to a shared future', *Geelong Advertiser*, Saturday 3 May, p. 6-7.
- Blackmore, J. 1999, 'Self-managing schools: Their regressive and progressive potential', *Curriculum Perspectives*, vol. 19, no. 1, pp. 68-75.
- Blackmore, J. 2000, 'Restructuring relations' between the state, family, work and education in globalising economies', *The Australian Educational Researcher*, vol. 27, no. 3, pp. 17-36.
- Blackmore, J. 2002, *Learning networks as new educational spaces and strategies of educational reform in response to risk and independence*, Paper presented at ECER Conference, Lisbon.
- Blackmore, J. 2004, 'Passion, professionalism & performativity. Gender and social justice in education', *Redress*, vol. 13, no. 3, pp. 21-31.
- Blackmore, J. 2005, 'Risk, success and the single student': teacher and student perceptions, Paper presented at Australian Association for Research in Education, Australian Association for Research in Education, Sydney.
- Blumenfeld-Jones, D. & Barone, T. E. 1997, 'Interrupting the sign: The aesthetics of research texts', in Jipson, J. A. & Paley, N. (Eds.), *Daredevil Research*, Peter Lang, New York, pp. 83-107.
- Bonell, C. 2004, 'Why is teenage pregnancy conceptualised as a social problem? A review of quantitative research from the USA and UK', *Culture, Health and Sexuality*, vol. 6, no. 3, pp. 255-272.
- Boshier, R. 1997, *Edgar Faure after 25 years: Down but not out*, Paper presented at Lifelong Learning: Reality, Rhetoric & Public Policy Conference, University of Surrey, Surrey.
- Bourdieu, P. 1986, 'The forms of capital', in Richardson, J. G. (Ed.) *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, Greenwood Press, New York, pp. 241-60.



- Bourdieu, P. 1990, *In Other Words: Essays Towards A Reflexive Sociology*, Polity Press, Cambridge.
- Bourdieu, P. 1999, *The Weight of the World: Social Suffering in Contemporary Society*, Polity Press, Cambridge.
- Brennan, M. & Zipin, L. 2005, *Generations of Social Justice in Australian Schools?*, Paper presented at Australian Association for Research in Education, AARE, Sydney.
- Brindis, C. & Philliber, S. 1998, 'Room to grow. Improving services for pregnant and parenting teenagers in school settings', *Education and Urban Society*, vol. 30, no. 2, pp. 242 - 60.
- Britzman, D. 2000, 'The question of belief: Writing post-structural ethnography', in St. Pierre, E. A. & Pillow, W. (Eds.), *Working the Ruins. Feminist Poststructural Theory and Methods in Education*, Routledge, New York, pp. 27-40.
- Brown, L., Henry, C., Henry, J. & McTaggart, R. 1982, 'Action research: Notes on the National Seminar', *Classroom Action Research Network Bulletin*, vol., no. 5, pp. 1-16.
- Brown, P. & Lauder, H. 2004, 'Education, globalization and economic development', in Ball, S. (Ed.) *The RoutledgeFalmer Reader in Sociology of Education*, RoutledgeFalmer, London, pp. 47-71.
- Bryman, A. 2001, *Social Research Methods*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Buchanan, M. 2002, *Small World*, Weidenfeld Nicolson, London.
- Bunning, C. 1997, 'Placing Action Learning and Action Research in Context', in Mumford, A. (Ed.) *Action Learning at Work*, Gower, Aldershot, UK.
- Burt, R. S. 2000, 'The network structure of social capital', in Sutton, R. I. & Staw, B. M. (Eds.), *Research in Organizational Behavior*, JAI Press, Greenwich, CT.
- Butler, J. 1999, *Gender Trouble*, Routledge, London.
- Cairns, L. 2003, *Post compulsory school/workplace vocational education and training initiative*, Paper presented at American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting, Chicago.
- Carmichael, L. 1992, *The Australian Vocational Certificate Training System*, Report of the Employment and Skills Formation Council, National Board of Employment, Education and Training, Canberra.
- Carr, W. & Kemmis, S. 1986, *Becoming Critical: Education, Knowledge and Action Research*, Deakin University and Falmer Press, Geelong.
- Castel, R. 1991, 'From dangerousness to risk', in Burchell, G., Gordon, C. & Miller, P. (Eds.), *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, University Press, Oxford.
- Castells, M. 2000, *The Rise of the Network Society*, The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture, 3, 2 ed., Blackwell, Oxford.
- Cavaye, J. 2001, *Social capital: The concept, the context*, Paper presented at Social Capital Symposium, Community Service and Research Centre at University of Queensland, Brisbane.

- Cavaye, J. 2004, *Social Capital: A Commentary on Issues, Understanding and Measurement*, Hot Topics Paper, Observatory PASCAL, Melbourne.  
<<http://www.obs-pascal.com/re/ppts/2004/Cavaye.html>>
- Cherryholmes, C. 1988, *Power and Criticism: Poststructural Investigations in Education*, Teachers College Press, New York.
- Cherryholmes, C. 1993, 'Reading research', *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, vol. 25, no. 1, pp. 1-32.
- Chevalier, T. 2003, *The Lady and the Unicorn*, HarperCollins, London.
- Chudacoff, H. P. 1989, *How Old Are You? Age Consciousness in American Culture*, Princeton University Press, Princeton.
- Cohen, D. & Prusak, L. 2001, *In Good Company. How Social Capital Makes Organizations Work*, Harvard Business School, Boston.
- Colebrook, C. 2002, *Understanding Deleuze*, Cultural Studies, Fensham, R. & Threadgold, T., Allen & Unwin, Crows Nest, NSW.
- Coleman, J. 1988, 'Social capital in the creation of human capital', *American Journal of Sociology*, vol. 94, pp. Supplement S95-120.
- Coleman, J. 1994, *Foundations of Social Theory*, Belknap, Cambridge, Mass.
- Collins, M. 1997, *Lifelong learning: Critical retrospective and future prospects*, Paper presented at Lifelong Learning: Reality, Rhetoric & Public Policy, University of Surrey, Surrey.
- Connors, L. 2000, *Public Education: The Next Generation*, Ministerial Report, Department of Education, Employment and Training, Melbourne.
- Considine, M. 2002, *Joined at the lip? What does network research tell us about governance?*, Paper presented at Knowledge, Networks and Joined-Up Government International Conference, Melbourne.
- Constantine, M. & Larsen, J. L. 1972, *Beyond Craft: The Art Fabric*, Van Nostrand Reinhold, New York.
- Cope, B. & Kalantzis, M. 1997, *Productive Diversity*, Pluto Press, Annandale, NSW.
- Craig, M. & Fowler, S. 2003, *The role of local networks in developing social capital and empowering young people*, Paper presented at Connections That Count International Conference, University of Strathclyde, Glasgow.
- Crook, S. 1999, 'Ordering risks', in Lupton, D. (Ed.) *Risk and Sociocultural Theory*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Crump, S. & Stanley, G. 2005, *Integrating VET into the senior school: research findings on linear and non-linear pathways as a policy paradox*, Paper presented at Australian Association for Research in Education, AARE, Sydney.
- Dasgupta, P. 2000, 'Economic progress and the idea of social capital', in Dasgupta, P. & Serageldin, I. (Eds.), *Social Capital: A Multifaceted Perspective*, World Bank, Washington DC.
- Davis, B. 2000, *Engaging Minds: Learning and Teaching In a Complex World*, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Mahwah, NJ.

- De Jong, L. & Cottrell, B. H. 1999, 'Designing infant child care programs to meet the needs of children born to teenage parents', *Young Children*, vol. 54, no. 1, pp. 37-45.
- Deakin University Faculty of Education 2005a, *Graduate Diploma of Education (Applied Learning) Course Guide*, Deakin University, Geelong.
- Deakin University Faculty of Education 2005b, *Graduate Diploma of Education (Applied Learning) Applied Learning Teaching Experience Handbook*, Deakin University, Geelong.
- Deleuze, G. & Guattari, F. 1983, *Anti-Oedipus. Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, 2, The Athlone Press, London.
- Deleuze, G. & Guattari, F. 1987, *A Thousand Plateaus. Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, 2, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis.
- Delors, J. 1996, *Learning: The Treasure Within*, Report of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century, UNESCO, Paris.
- Denzin, N. K. 1994, 'The lessons James Joyce teaches us', *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, vol. 7, no. 4, pp. 295-308.
- Denzin, N. K. & Lincoln, Y. S. 1998, 'Introduction: Entering the field of qualitative research', in Denzin, N. K. & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.), *Strategies of Qualitative Enquiry*, Sage, Thousand Oaks, pp. 1-34.
- Department for Victorian Communities 24 September, 'Community Building Victoria - The Community Building Initiative', <<http://www.dvc.gov.au>> (accessed 24 September 2003)
- Department of Education & Training 2003, *Blueprint for Government Schools. Future Directions for Education in the Victorian Government School System*, Department of Education & Training, Melbourne.
- Department of Education & Training 2004a, *Future Directions for Adult Community Education in Victoria*, Policy Document, Department of Education & Training, Melbourne.
- Department of Education & Training 2004b, 'Students support On Track', *Success: Showcasing Excellence in Vocational Education and Training*, vol. 4, no. 1, pp. 15.
- Department of Education & Training 2005, *Review of Education & Training Legislation*, Discussion Paper, Office of Strategy & Review, Department of Education & Training, Melbourne.
- Department of Education & Training 2005a, *Department of Education Presentation*, Paper presented at ARC Linkage Project Seminar, Geelong.
- Department of Education & Training 2005b, *Schools As Community Facilities*, School Resources Division and Strategic Policy and Planning Division Department of Education & Training, Melbourne.
- Department of Education Employment and Training 2000, *Local Learning & Employment Networks: Membership*, Department of Education & Training, Melbourne.
- Department of Education Employment and Training 2001, *A Guide for Local Learning and Employment Networks*, Implementation Guide Version 1, Department of Education, Employment and Training, Melbourne.

- Department of Education Science and Training 2003, *Career and Transition Services Framework*, Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs, Canberra.
- Department of Education Science and Training 26 March 2004, 'Lifelong Learning: An Annotated Bibliography',  
<[http://www.dest.gov.au/highered/eippubs/eip03\\_15/default.htm](http://www.dest.gov.au/highered/eippubs/eip03_15/default.htm)> (accessed 26 July 2004)
- Department of Education Science and Training 2005, *Australian Technical Colleges*, Discussion Paper, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra.
- Department of Premier & Cabinet 2001, *Growing Victoria Together. Innovative State. Caring Communities*, Department of Premier & Cabinet, Melbourne.
- Department of Premier & Cabinet 2005, *A Fairer Victoria. Creating Opportunity and Addressing Disadvantage*, Department of Premier & Cabinet, Melbourne. <<http://www.dpc.vic.gov.au>>
- Dewey, J. 1910, *How We Think*, Heath, New York.
- Dewey, J. 1926, *The Sources of a Science of Education*, Liveright, New York.
- Directorate of School Education 1995, *Professional Recognition for Teachers Handbook*, Directorate of School Education, Melbourne.
- Dwyer, P. & Wyn, J. 2001, *Youth, Education and Risk. Facing the Future*, Routledge Falmer, London.
- Ecclestone, K. & Field, J. 2001, *Promoting social capital in a 'risk society': a new approach to emancipatory learning or a new moral authoritarianism?*, Paper presented at European Conference of Educational Research, University of Lille, Lille.
- Edwards, R. 1995, 'Behind the banner. Whither the learning society?' *Adults Learning*, vol. 1, pp. 187-9.
- Edwards, R. & Boreham, N. 2003, 'The centre cannot hold: complexity and difference in European Union policy towards a learning society', *Journal of Education Policy*, vol. 18, no. 4, pp. 407-21.
- Edwards, R. & Usher, R. 1999, 'A society of Signs? Mediating a learning society', *British Journal of Education Studies*, vol. 47, no. 3, pp. 261-74.
- Edwards, R. & Usher, R. 2001, 'Lifelong learning: A Postmodern condition of education?' *Adult Education Quarterly*, vol. 51, no. 4, pp. 273-87.
- Eldridge, D. 2001, *Footprints to the Future*, Youth Pathways Action Plan Taskforce Report, Department of Prime Minister & Cabinet, Canberra.
- Elliott, J. 1996, *Quality assurance, the educational standards debate, and the commodification of educational research*, Paper presented at British Educational Research Association, University of Lancaster, Lancaster.
- Erikson, E. 1980, *Identity and the Life Cycle*, Norton, New York.
- Fabian, J. 1991, 'Of dogs alive, birds dead, and time to tell a story', in Bender, J. & Wellbery, D. E. (Eds.), *Chronotypes: The Construction of Time*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, CA, pp. 185-204.
- Farago, P. 2003, 'Number One', *Geelong Independent*, 14 November, p. 1.

- Field, J. 2000, 'Governing the ungovernable. Why lifelong learning policies promise so much yet deliver so little', *Educational Management & Administration*, vol. 28, no. 3, pp. 249-62.
- Fine, B. 1999, *The political economist's tale: Or, if globalisation, (welfare) state versus market and social capital are the answers, do we have the right questions?*, Paper presented at Civilising the State: Civil Society, Policy and State Transformation Conference, Deakin University, Melbourne.
- Finn, B. 1991, *Young People's Participation in Post Compulsory Education and Training*, Report of the Australian Council Review Committee, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra.
- Flora, C., Flora, J. & Wade, K. 1996, 'Measuring success and empowerment', in Walzer, N. (Ed.) *Community Strategic Visioning Programs*, Praeger, London.
- Flora, J., Sharp, J., Flora, C. & Newlon, B. 1997, 'Entrepreneurial social infrastructure and locally initiated economic development in the non-metropolitan United States', *Sociological Quarterly*, vol. 38, no. 4, pp. 623-45.
- Flyvbjerg, B. 2001, *Making Social Science Matter: Why Social Science Fails and How It Can Succeed Again*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Foucault, M. 1972, *The Archeology of Knowledge*, Tavistock, London.
- Foucault, M. 1973, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, Vintage Books, New York.
- Foucault, M. 1974, *The Archeology of Knowledge*, Tavistock, Canada.
- Foucault, M. 1977, *Discipline and Punish*, Penguin Press, London.
- Foucault, M. 1980, *A History of Sexuality*, Vintage, New York.
- Foucault, M. 1983, 'The subject and power', in Dreyfus, H. L. & Rabinow, P. (Eds.), *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, pp. 208 - 226.
- Foucault, M. 1984, *The History of Sexuality: The Use of Pleasure*, 3, Vintage, New York.
- Foucault, M. 1991a, 'Governmentality', in Burchell, G., Gordon, C. & Miller, P. (Eds.), *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, pp. 87-104.
- Freebody, P. 2003, 'Conducting and analysing interviews', *Qualitative Research in Education: Interaction and Practice*, Sage, London, pp. 132-73.
- Furlong, A. & Kelly, P. 2005, 'The Brazilianisation of Youth Transitions in Australia and the UK?' *Australian Journal of Social Issues*, vol. 40, no. 2, pp. 207-25.
- Furstenberg, F. F., Brooks-Gunn, J. & Morgan, S. P. 1987, *Adolescent Mothers in Later Life*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Geddes, M. 2003, *Limits to Local Governance: Recent Experience in the United Kingdom*, Paper presented at Partnerships, Community and Local Governance: International Perspectives and Australian Experiences, Centre for Public Policy, University of Melbourne, Melbourne.

- Geelong Business Network 2004, *Establishing the Geelong Region Employer Reference Group*, Education Industry Partnerships Project Report, Geelong Business Network, Geelong.
- Geelong Regional Alliance n.d., *Our Region Your Future*, Strategic Plan, Geelong Regional Alliance, Geelong.
- Gewirtz, S., Ball, S. J. & Bowe, R. 1995, *Markets, Choice and Equity in Education*, Open University Press, Buckingham.
- Giddens, A. 1999a, 'Globalisation',  
<[http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/static/events/reith\\_99/default.htm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/static/events/reith_99/default.htm)>  
(accessed 25 February 2005)
- Giddens, A. 1999b, 'Risk',  
<[http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/static/events/reith\\_99/default.htm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/static/events/reith_99/default.htm)>  
(accessed 25 February 2005)
- Giddens, A. & Hutton, W. 2001, 'In conversation', in Hutton, W. & Giddens, A. (Eds.), *On the Edge, Living with Global Capitalism*, Vintage, London, pp. 1-51.
- Glastra, F. J., Hake, B. J. & Schedler, P. E. 2004, 'Lifelong learning as transitional learning', *Adult Education Quarterly*, vol. 54, no. 4, pp. 291-307.
- Gough, N. 1994, 'Narration, reflection, diffraction: Aspects of fiction in educational inquiry', *Australian Educational Researcher*, vol. 21, no. 3, pp. 47-76.
- Gough, N. 2004, 'RhizomANTically Becoming-Cyborg: Performing posthuman pedagogies', *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, vol. 36, no. 3, pp. 253-65.
- Granovetter, M. 1973, 'The strength of weak ties', *American Journal of Sociology*, vol. 78, pp. 1360-80.
- Green, B. & Bigum, C. 1993, 'Aliens in the classroom', *Australian Journal of Education*, vol. 37, pp. 119-41.
- Guile, D. & Young, M. 1999, 'Beyond the institution of apprenticeship: towards a social theory of learning as the production of knowledge', in Ainley, P. & Rainbird, H. (Eds.), *Apprenticeship: Towards a New Paradigm of Learning*, Kogan Paul, London.
- Habermas, J. 1972, *Knowledge and Human Interests*, Heinemann Educational, London.
- Hacking, I. 1991, 'How should we do the history of statistics', in Burchell, G., Gordon, C. & Miller, P. (Eds.), *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago.
- Hanks, W. F. 1991, 'Foreward', in Lave, J. & Wenger, E. (Eds.), *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp. 13-24.
- Harrison, R., Reeve, F., Hanson, A. & Clarke, J. (Eds.) 2002, *Supporting Lifelong Learning: Perspectives on Learning*, Routledge Falmer, London.
- Hatton, E. J. 1988/2000, 'Teachers' Work as Bricolage: Implications for Teacher Education', in Ball, S. J. (Ed.) *Sociology of Education. Major Themes.*, Vol. 3: Institutions and Processes, Routledge-Falmer, London, pp. 1361-84.

- Henry, J. & Grundy, S. 2004, *Blurring the Boundaries in Education: Towards a More Seamless System of Post-Compulsory Education*, Australian Council of Deans of Education, Melbourne.
- Henry, M., Lingard, B., Rizvi, F. & Taylor, S. 2001, *The OECD, Globalisation and Policy Making in Education*, Series in Higher Education, Pergamon/Elsevier, Oxford.
- Hill, M. 2003, *A Sustainable State: Built From the Bottom Up. Partnerships, Community and Local Governance: International Perspectives and Australian Experiences*, University of Melbourne Centre for Public Policy, Melbourne.
- Hodkinson, P. 2004, 'Research as a form of work: expertise, community and methodological objectivity', *British Educational Research Journal*, vol. 30, no. 1, pp. 9-26.
- Hodkinson, P. & Hodkinson, H. 2003, 'Individuals, communities of practice and the policy context: schoolteachers' learning in their workplace', *Studies in Continuing Education*, vol. 25, pp. 3-21.
- Hollway, W. & Jefferson, T. 2002, 'Producing data with defended subjects', *Doing Qualitative Research Differently: Free Association, Narrative and the Interview Method*, Sage, London, pp. 26-54.
- Honan, E. 2001, *(Im)Plausibilities: A Rhizo-textual Analysis of the Queensland English Syllabus*, PhD Thesis, Education, James Cook University, Townsville.
- Hooley, N. 2005, 'Participatory action research and the struggle for legitimation', *The Australian Educational Researcher*, vol. 32, no. 1, pp. 67-82.
- Hoy, D. C. 2004, *Critical Resistance. From Poststructuralism to Post-Critique*, MIT Press, Massachusetts.
- Hutton, W. & Giddens, A. (Eds.) 2001, *On the Edge. Living with Global Capitalism*, Vintage, London.
- I & J Management Services 2000, *Learning Networks Trial Evaluation*, Office of Post Compulsory Education, Training and Employment, Melbourne.
- Jarvis, P. 1987, *Adult Learning in the Social Context*, Croom Helm, London.
- Jarvis, P. 2004, 'Globalisation, the learning society and comparative education', in Ball, S. (Ed.) *The RoutledgeFalmer Reader in Sociology of Education*, RoutledgeFalmer, London, pp. 72-86.
- Jarvis, P., Holford, J. & Griffith, C. 1998, *The Theory and Practice of Learning*, Kogan Page, London.
- Jeffrey, B. & Woods, P. 1998, *Testing Teachers: The Effect of School Inspections on Primary Teachers*, Falmer Press, London.
- Jorgensen, D. 1989, 'Participant observation: A methodology for human studies', in Bickman, L. & Rog, D. J. (Eds.), *Applied Social Research Methods Series*, Vol. 32, Sage, London.
- Kamp, A. 2003, 'Mature women and the New Zealand Qualifications Framework. Realising the potential of recognising prior learning', *International Education Journal*, vol. 4, no. 1, pp. 17-23.



- Kamp, A. 2004, *The disembodied apprentice: reflections on a doctoral exchange*, Paper presented at Australian Association for Research in Education Conference, Australian Association for Research in Education, Melbourne.
- Kaplan, K. 2003, 'The purist's partnership: debunking the terminology of partnerships', in Stott, L. (Ed.) *Partnership Matters. Current Issues in Cross-Sector Collaboration*, The Copenhagen Centre, Copenhagen, pp. 31-5.
- Karmel, T. 2004, *Australia's Approach to Lifelong Learning*, UNESCO International Expert Meeting Paper, NCVER, Bonn.
- Keating, J. & Robinson, L. 2003, *Networks and LLENs: Policy and Practice*, ARC Project Occasional Paper No 1, University of Melbourne Centre for Post Compulsory Education and Lifelong Learning, Melbourne.
- Kelly, D. M. 2000a, *Pregnant with Meaning. Teen Mothers and the Politics of Inclusive Schooling*, Adolescent Cultures, School & Society, DeVitis, J. L. & Irwin-DeVitis, L., Peter Lang, New York.
- Kelly, D. M. 2000b, 'Stigma Stories: Four Discourses About Teen Mothers, Welfare, and Poverty', *Youth and Society*, vol. 7, no. 4, pp. 421-49.
- Kelly, P. 1999, 'Wild and tame zones. Regulating the transitions of youth at risk', *Journal of Youth Studies*, vol. 2, no. 2, pp. 193 - 211.
- Kelly, P. 2000b, 'The dangerousness of youth -at-risk: The possibilities of surveillance and intervention in uncertain times', *Journal of Adolescence*, vol. 23, pp. 463-76.
- Kelly, P. 2003, 'Growing up as risky business? Risks, surveillance and the institutionalized mistrust of youth', *Journal of Youth Studies*, vol. 6, no. 2, pp. 165-80.
- Kemmis, S. 1996, 'Emancipatory aspirations in a postmodern era', in Zuber-Skerritt, O. (Ed.) *New Directions in Action Research*, Falmer Press, London.
- Kemmis, S. & McTaggart, R. 1988a, *The Action Research Reader*, 3rd ed., Deakin University Press, Geelong.
- Kemmis, S. & McTaggart, R. 1988b, *The Action Research Planner*, 3rd ed., Deakin University Press, Geelong.
- Kickert, W. J. M., Klijn, E. H. & Koppenjan, J. F. M. (Eds.) 1997, *Managing Complex Networks. Strategies for the Public Sector*, Sage, London.
- Kidger, J. 2004, 'You realise it could happen to you': the benefits to pupils of young mothers delivering school sex education', *Sex Education*, vol. 4, no. 2, pp. 185-97.
- Kilpatrick, S., Bell, R. & Falk, I. 1998, *Groups of Groups: The Role of Group Learning in Building Social Capital*, Paper presented at AVETRA, University of Technology, Sydney, Sydney.
- Kilpatrick, S., Field, J. & Falk, I. 2001, *Social Capital: An Analytical Tool for Exploring Lifelong Learning and Community Development*, Discussion Paper, Centre for Research and Learning in Regional Australia, University of Tasmania, Launceston, TAS.
- Kirby Implementation Team n.d., 'Response to Kirby Report - Overview of the Government's Response to the Kirby Report',



<<http://www.deet.vic.gov.au/postcomp/govresponse.htm>> (accessed 2 March 2002)

- Kirby, P. 2000, *Ministerial Review of Post Compulsory Education and Training Pathways in Victoria*, Ministerial Report, Department of Education, Employment and Training, Melbourne.
- Kirkpatrick, S., Field, J. & Falk, I. 2001, *Social Capital: An Analytical tool for Exploring Lifelong Learning and Community Development*, CRLRA Discussion Paper, Centre for Research and Learning in Regional Australia, Launceston.
- Kolb, D. A. 1984, *Experiential Learning. Experience as The Source of Learning and Development*, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ.
- Kvale, S. 1996, 'Interviewing as research', in Kvale, S. (Ed.) *Interviews: An Introduction to Qualitative Research*, Sage, Thousand Oaks, California, pp. 3-16.
- Lahelma, E. 2002, 'School is for meeting friends: secondary school as lived and remembered', *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, vol. 23, no. 3, pp. 367-81.
- Landes, D. 1983, *Revolution in Time: Clocks and the Making of the Modern World*, Belknap Press, Cambridge MA.
- Lapadat, J. C. & Lindsay, A. C. 1999, 'Transcription in research and practice: From standardization of technique to interpretive positionings', *Qualitative Inquiry*, vol. 5, no. 1, pp. 64-87.
- Lather, P. 1986, 'Issues of validity in openly ideological research: Between a rock and a soft place', *Interchange*, vol. 17, no. 4, pp. 63-84.
- Lather, P. 1992, 'Critical frames in educational research: Feminist and post-structural perspectives', *Theory into Practice*, vol. 31, no. 2, pp. 87-99.
- Lather, P. 1993, 'Fertile obsession: Validity after poststructuralism', *Sociological Quarterly*, vol. 34, pp. 673-93.
- Lather, P. 2000, 'Drawing the line at angels: Working the runins of feminist ethnography', in St Pierre, E. A. & Pillow, W. (Eds.), *Working the Ruins. Feminist Poststructural Theory and Methods in Education*, Routledge, New York.
- Lave, J. & Wenger, E. 1991, *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Lee, A. 1992, 'Poststructuralism and educational research: some categories and issues', *Issues in Educational Research*, vol. 2, no. 1, pp. 1-12.
- Lesko, N. 2001, *Act your Age! A Cultural Construction of Adolescence*, Critical Social Thought, Apple, M., Routledge Falmer, New York.
- Levi-Strauss, C. 1974, *The Savage Mind*, 2nd ed., Weidenfeld and Nicholson, London.
- Levitas, R. 1998, *The Inclusive Society? Social Exclusion and New Labour*, Macmillan, London.
- Lewin, K. 1946, 'Action research and minority problems', *Journal of Social Issues*, vol. 2, pp. 34-46.

- Lewin, K. 1952, 'Group decision and social change', in Swanson, G. E., Newcomb, T. M. & Hartley, E. L. (Eds.), *Readings in Social Psychology*, Henry Holt, New York, pp. 459-73.
- Lewis, M. 2003, *The dynamics, implications and effects of knowledge creation in professional learning communities: three case studies*, Ph.D Thesis, Faculty of Education, University of Southern Queensland, Brisbane.
- Lieberman, A. & Grolnick, M. 1998, 'Education reform networks: Changes in the form of reform', in Hargreaves, A. (Ed.) *International Handbook of Educational Change*, Kluwer Academic Publishers, London.
- Lincoln, Y. S. & Guba, E. 1985, *Naturalistic Inquiry*, Sage, Beverley Hills.
- Long, M. 2005, *Setting the Pace*, Dusseldorp Skills Forum, Melbourne.
- Luker, K. 1996, *Dubious Conceptions: The Politics of Teenage Pregnancy*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA.
- Luttrell, W. 2003, *Pregnant Bodies, Fertile Minds: Gender, Race, and the Schooling of Pregnant Teens*, Routledge, New York.
- Lyotard, J. F. 1984, *The Postmodern Condition: A report on knowledge*, Manchester University Press, Manchester.
- MacLure, M. 2003, 'Fabricating the self: metaphors of method in life-history interviews', *Discourse in Educational and Social Research*, Open University Press, Buckingham, pp. 119-32.
- Mansfield, N. 2000, *Subjectivity: Theories of The Self From Freud to Haraway*, Cultural Studies, Fensham, R., Threadgold, T. & Tulloch, J., New York University Press, New York.
- Marginson, S. 1993, *Education and Public Policy in Australia*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Marsick, V. J. & Watkins, K. E. 1990, 'Toward a theory of informal and incidental learning', in Marsick, V. J. & Watkins, K. E. (Eds.), *Informal and Incidental Learning in the Workplace*, Routledge, London, pp. 12-34.
- Massumi, B. 1987, 'Translator's Forward', *A Thousand Plateaus. Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, Vol. 2, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, pp. ix-xv.
- Mayer, E. 1992, *Employment Related Key Competencies. A Proposal for Consultation*, Mayer Committee, Melbourne.
- McCarthy, H., Miller, P. & Skidmore, P. 2004, 'Introduction', in McCarthy, H., Miller, P. & Skidmore, P. (Eds.), *Network Logic. Who Governs in an Interconnected World?*, DEMOS, London, pp. 9-22.
- McClenaghan, P. 2000, 'Social capital: exploring the theoretical foundations of community development education', *British Educational Research Journal*, vol. 26, no. 5, pp. 565-82.
- McMillan, J. & Marks, G. N. 2003, *School Leavers in Australia: Profiles and Pathways*, Australian Council for Educational Research, Melbourne.
- McTaggart, R. 1991, *Action Research. A Short Modern History*, Deakin University, Geelong.

- McTaggart, R. 1993, 'Action research: Issues in theory and practice', *Annual Review of Health Social Sciences*, vol. 3, pp. 19-45.
- Milgram, S. 1967, 'The small-world problem', *Psychology Today*, vol. 1, pp. 60-67.
- Milne-Home, J., Power, A. & Dennis, B. 1996, *Pregnant Futures: barriers to employment, education and training amongst pregnant and parenting adolescents*, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra.
- Minister of Education and Training 2003, *Minister's Challenge to LLENs*, Paper presented at Inaugural LLEN / VLESC Conference, Melbourne.
- Ministerial Council on Education Employment Training and Youth Affairs 1999, *The Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-First Century*, MCEETYA, Canberra.
- Ministerial Council on Education Employment Training and Youth Affairs 2004, *Career and Transition Services Framework*, Ministerial Report, Department of Education, Science and Training, Canberra.
- Mitchell, J., Henry, J. & Young, S. 2001, *A New Model of Workbased Learning in the VET Sector*, Australian National Training Authority, Melbourne.
- Morris, R. 2001, *Learning Communities. A Review of the Literature.*, Unpublished Manuscript, UTS, Sydney.
- Morris, R. u.d., *Learning Communities. A Review of the Literature.*, Unpublished Manuscript, UTS, Sydney.
- Mukherjee, D. 1997, *Regional inequalities - Income, occupation and education: Mapping the geographic locations of high income, high status occupation and outcomes from education*, Australian Centre for Equity through Education, Sydney.
- Mulgan, G. 2004, 'Connexity revisited', in McCarthy, H., Miller, P. & Skidmore, P. (Eds.), *Network Logic. Who Governs in an Interconnected World?*, DEMOS, London, pp. 49-62.
- Mumford, A. 1997, 'Action research as a vehicle for learning', in Mumford, A. (Ed.) *Action Learning at Work*, Gower, Aldershot, UK.
- O'Dowd, S. 2004, *Jobs for Youth. Explore the Geelong Region's Untapped Potential*, Research Paper, The Communicators, Geelong.
- OECD 2001, *Devolution and Globalisation. Implications for Local Decision-Makers*, OECD, Paris.
- OECD 2003, *Networks of Innovation. Towards New Models for Managing Schools and Systems*, OECD, Paris.
- Office of Housing 2002, *Neighbourhood Renewal. Growing Victoria Together*, State of Victoria, Melbourne.
- Osofsky, J. D., Osofsky, H. J. & Diamond, M. O. 1998, 'The transition to parenthood: special tasks and risk factors for adolescent parents', in Michaels, G. Y. & Goldberg, W. A. (Eds.), *The Transition to Parenthood. Current Theory and Research*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp. 209-34.
- Patton, M. 1990, *Qualitative evaluation and research methods*, 2nd ed., Sage, Newbury Park, CA.

- Peart, D. 2005, *Geelong Manufacturing Council*, Paper presented at Australian Technical Colleges Public Forum, Geelong.
- Perryman, J. 2006, 'Panoptic performativity and school inspection regimes: disciplinary mechanisms and life under special measures', *Journal of Education Policy*, vol. 21, no. 2, pp. 147-62.
- Piaget, J. 1983, 'Piaget's Theory', in Mussen, P. H. (Ed.) *Handbook of Child Psychology*, Vol. 1, 4th Edition. Wiley, New York.
- Pierre, J. (Ed.) 2000, *Debating Governance, Authority, Steering, and Democracy*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Pierre, J. & Peters, G., B 2000, *Governance, Politics and the State*, St Martin's Press, New York.
- Pillow, W. 2003, 'Confession, catharsis, or cure? Rethinking the uses of reflexivity as methodological power in qualitative research', *Qualitative Studies in Education*, vol. 16, no. 2, pp. 175-96.
- Pillow, W. 2004, *Unfit Subjects: Educational Policy and the Teen Mother*, Routledge Falmer, New York.
- Polit, D. 1992, 'Barriers to Self-Sufficiency and Avenues to Success Among Teenage Mothers', <<http://aspe.hhs.gov/hsp/isp/tpd/indepth/index.htm>> (accessed 25 June 2003)
- Pollitt, M. 2002, 'The economics of trust, norms and networks', *Business Ethics: A European Review*, vol. 11, no. 2, pp. 119-28.
- Power, A. 1998, *Collaborative Research and Social Justice: Feminism, Collectivity and the Politics of Difference*, University of Sydney, Sydney.
- Putnam, R. D. 1993, 'The prosperous community. Social capital and public life.' *The American Prospect*, vol. 4, no. 13, pp. 1-6. <<http://www.prospect.org/print/V4/13/putnam-r.html>>
- Rabinow, P. (Ed.) 1984, *The Foucault Reader*, Penguin, London.
- Rajchman, J. 2000, *The Deleuze Connections*, The MIT Press, Cambridge, MA.
- Reay, D. 2004, 'It's all becoming a habitus': beyond the habitual use of habitus in educational research', *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, vol. 25, no. 4, pp. 431-44.
- Revans, R. 1983, *The ABC of Action Learning*, Chartwell-Bratt Bromley, Kent UK.
- Rhodes, R. 1997, *Understanding Governance: Policy Networks, Governance, Reflexivity and Accountability*, Open University Press, Philadelphia.
- Richardson, L. 1994, 'Writing: a method of inquiry', in Denzin, N. K. & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA, pp. 516-529.
- Richardson, L. 2001, 'Getting personal: writing-stories', *Qualitative Studies in Education*, vol. 14, no. 1, pp. 33-38.
- Riessman, C. K. 2001, 'Analysis of personal narratives', in Gubrium, J. F. & Holstein, J. A. (Eds.), *Handbook of Interviewing*, Vol. 1, Sage, London, pp. 1-15.

NEED TO GET THIS OUT AND CONFIRM.

- Robinson, L. & Keating, J. 2004, *What Can LLENs Achieve? A Preliminary Exploration of Their Impact*, ARC Linkage Project Occasional Paper No 2, The University of Melbourne Centre for Post Compulsory Education and Lifelong Learning, Melbourne.
- Robinson, L. & Keating, J. 2005, *Networks and Governance: The case of LLENs in Victoria.*, ARC Linkage Project Occasional Paper No 3, The University of Melbourne Centre for Post Compulsory Education and Lifelong Learning, Melbourne.
- Robottom, I. & Colquhoun, D. 1992, 'Participatory research, environmental health education and the politics of method', *Health Education Research: Theory & Practice*, vol. 7, no. 4, pp. 457-69.
- Rose, N. & Millar, P. 1992, 'Political power beyond the state: problematics of government', *Journal of Sociology*, vol. 43, pp. 173-205.
- Rose, N. & Miller, P. 1992, 'Political power behind the state: problematics of government', *British Journal of Sociology*, vol. 43, no. 173-205.
- Roy, K. 2003, *Teachers in Nomadic Spaces: Deleuze and Curriculum*, Complicated Conversation, Pinar, F., Peter Lang, New York.
- Ryan, M. 1989, *Politics and Culture: Working Hypotheses for a Post-revolutionary Society*, Macmillan, London.
- Sanguinetti, J. 1999, *Within and Against Performativity. Discursive Engagement in Adult Literacy and Basic Education*, PhD Thesis, Faculty of Education, Deakin University, Melbourne.
- Scheurich, J. J. 1995, 'Research interviewing', *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, vol. 8, no. 3, pp. 239-52.
- Scheurich, J. J. 1997, *Research Method in the Postmodern*, Qualitative Studies Series, Goodson, I. F. & Scurich, J. J., Falmer Press, London.
- Schon, D. A. 1983, *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action*, Basic Books, New York.
- Schuller, T. & Field, J. 1998, 'Social capital, human capital, and the learning society', *International Journal of University Adult Education*, <<http://www.lib.unb.ca/Texts/JUAE/Schuller.html>> (accessed 6 April 2002)
- Seddon, T., Clemans, A. & Billett, S. 2005, 'Social partnerships: Practices, paradoxes and prospects of Local Learning Networks', *The Australian Educational Researcher*, vol. 32, no. 1, pp. 25-48.
- Semetsky, I. 2004, 'Experiencing Deleuze', *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, vol. 36, no. 3, pp. 227-31.
- Senge, P. M. 1990, *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization*, Doubleday, New York.
- Shacklock, G. 1998, 'Fast capitalist educational change: personally resisting the images of school reform', *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, vol. 19, no. 1, pp. 75-88.
- Shacklock, G. 2004, *Networking as social practice*, Paper presented at Australian Association of Research in Education Conference, AARE, Melbourne.

- Shacklock, G. & Smyth, J. 1997, *Re-conceptualising Collaborative Educational Research: Moral Decisions, Relational Forces, and Cultural Articulation*, Flinders University, Adelaide.
- Simons, H. 1982, 'Conversation piece: The practice of interviewing in case study research', in Adelman, C. (Ed.) *Uttering, Muttering: Collecting, Using and Reporting Talk for Social and Educational Research*, Grant McIntyre, London, pp. 27-50.
- Smart Geelong Network n.d., *Smart Geelong Smart Future*, Information Brochure, Smart Geelong Network, Geelong.
- Smart Geelong Region Local Learning and Employment Network Inc 2002, *Annual Report 2001 - 2002*, Smart Geelong Region Local Learning and Employment Network, Geelong.
- Smart Geelong Region Local Learning and Employment Network Inc n.d., *Action Research Resource*, Smart Geelong Region Local Learning and Employment Network, Geelong.
- Smith, A. 1995, *Casing the joint: Case study methodology in organisational research*, Paper presented at Research and Practice: Building the Links VET Research Conference, Office of Training and Further Education, Melbourne.
- Smith, L. M. 1978, 'An evolving logic of participant observation, educational ethnography and other case studies', in Shulman, L. (Ed.) *Review of Research in Education*, Vol. 6, American Education Research Association, Washington DC, pp. 316-76.
- Snelling, L. 2003, *It Takes A Village To Raise A Child*, Victorian Local Governance Association, Melbourne.
- Social Exclusion Unit 1999, *Teenage Pregnancy*, The Stationery Office, London.
- Sparkes, A. C. 2002, *Telling Tales in sport and Physical Activity. A Qualitative Journey*, Human Kinetics, Leeds.
- St Clair, R. 1998, 'On the commonplace: Reclaiming community in adult education', *Adult Education Quarterly*, vol. 49, no. 1, pp. 5-15.
- St. Pierre, E. A. 1997, 'Circling the text: nomadic writing practices (exploratory writing as research technique)', *Qualitative Inquiry*, vol. 3, no. 4, pp. 403-18.
- St. Pierre, E. A. 2000, 'Poststructural feminism in education: An overview', *Qualitative Studies in Education*, vol. 13, no. 5, pp. 477-515.
- St. Pierre, E. A. 2004, 'Deleuzian Concepts for Education: The subject undone', *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, vol. 36, no. 3, pp. 283-96.
- Stake, R. 1978, 'The case study method in social inquiry', *Educational Research*, vol. 7, pp. 5-8.
- Stake, R. 1995, *The Art of Case Study Research*, Sage, Thousand Oaks, California.
- Stake, R. 1998, 'Case studies', in Denzin, N. K. & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.), *Strategies for Qualitative Enquiry*, Sage, New York, pp. 86 - 109.
- Stenhouse, L. 1982, 'The problem of standards in illuminative research', in Stenhouse, L. (Ed.) *Perspectives on Case Study*, Vol. 2, Deakin University, Melbourne, pp. 1-9.

- Stephenson, K. 2004, 'Towards a theory of government', in McCarthy, H., Miller, P. & Skidmore, P. (Eds.), *Network Logic. Who Governs in an Interconnected World?*, DEMOS, London, pp. 35-48.
- Stoker, G. 2000, 'Urban political science and the challenge of urban governance', in Pierre, J. (Ed.) *Debating Governance. Authority, Steering, and Democracy.*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Stokes, H. & Tyler, D. 2001, *Planning the Future. The Evaluation of Phase One of the Pathways Project in Victoria*, Department of Education, Employment and Training, Melbourne.
- Stone, W. & Hughes, J. 2002, *Social Capital. Empirical Meaning and Measurement Validity*, Research Paper No. 27, Australian Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne.
- Strain, M. 2000a, 'Editorial', *Educational Management & Administration*, vol. 28, no. 3, pp. 243-48.
- Strain, M. 2000b, 'Schools in a learning society. New purposes and modalities of learning in late modern society', *Educational Management & Administration*, vol. 28, no. 3, pp. 281-98.
- Strategic Economic Solutions 2003, *Labour Market Profile of the Smart Geelong Local Learning and Employment Network*, Commissioned Report, Strategic Economic Solutions, Geelong.
- Strathern 2000, *Audit Cultures. Anthropological Studies in Accountability*, Routledge, London.
- Stronach, I. & MacLure, M. 1997, *Educational Research Undone: The Postmodern Embrace*, Open University Press, Buckingham.
- Swadener, B. B. 1995, 'Children and families 'at promise'; deconstructing the discourse of risk', in Swadener, B. B. & Lubeck, S. (Eds.), *Children and Families 'At Promise': Deconstructing the Discourse of Risk*, State University of New York, New York, pp. 17-49.
- Sykes, J. B. (Ed.) 1976, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English*, Oxford University Press, London.
- Tait, G. 1995, 'Shaping the 'at-risk youth': risk, governmentality and the Finn Report', *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, vol. 16, no. 1, pp. 123-34.
- Tamboukou, M. & Ball, S. 2002, 'Nomadic subjects, young black women in the UK', *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, vol. 23, no. 3.
- te Riele, K. 2004, 'Youth transitions in Australia: Challenging assumptions of linearity and choice', *Journal of Youth Studies*, vol. 7, no. 3, pp. 243-257.
- te Riele, K. 2006, 'Youth at risk: further marginalizing the marginalized?' *Journal of Education Policy*, vol. 21, no. 2, pp. 129-46.
- Teese, R. & Polesel, J. 2003, *Undemocratic Schooling: Equity and Quality in Mass Secondary Education in Australia*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne.
- Tett, L. 2005, 'Partnerships, community groups and social inclusion', *Studies in Continuing Education*, vol. 27, no. 1, pp. 1-15.

- The Editors 2003, 'Glocalisation and the learning city', *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, vol. 22, no. 5, pp. 443-44.
- Thomson, P. 1999, *Towards a just future: schools working in partnership with neighbourhoods made poor*, Paper presented at Reforming Learning, Curriculum and Pedagogy: Innovative Visions for the Next Century, UNESCO, Bangkok.
- Tregenza, K. 2002, *Environmental Scan*, Environmental Overview, Smart Geelong Local Learning and Employment Network, Geelong.
- Tripp, D. 1983, 'Co-authorship and negotiation: The interview as Act of Creation', *Interchange*, vol. 14, no. 3, pp. 32-45.
- Tripp, D. 1984, *Action research and professional development*, Discussion Paper for Australian College of Education Project, Murdoch University, Perth.
- Tuijnman, A. 2002, 'Themes and questions for a research agenda on lifelong learning', in Edwards, R., Miller, N., Small, N. & Tait, A. (Eds.), *Supporting Lifelong Learning: Making Policy Work*, Vol. 3, Routledge Falmer, London, pp. 7-29.
- Urry, J. 2003, *Global Complexity*, Polity Press/Blackwell Publishing, Cambridge.
- Usher, R. 1997b, 'Telling a story about research as story-telling: Postmodern approaches to social research.' in McKenzie, G., Powell, J. & Usher, R. (Eds.), *Understanding Social Research: Perspectives on Methodology and Practice*, Falmer Press, London, pp. 27-41.
- Usher, R., Bryant, I. & Johnston, R. 1997a, 'Reconfiguring the 'other': self, and experience in adult learning', in Usher, R., Bryant, I. & Johnson, R. (Eds.), *Learning Beyond the Limits: Adult Education and the Postmodern Challenge*, London, Routledge.
- Vaughan, K. 2004, 'Total Eclipse of the Heart? Theoretical and ethical implications of doing post-structural ethnographic research', *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, vol. 25, no. 3, pp. 389-403.
- Vaughan, K. 2005, 'The pathways framework meets consumer culture: Young people, careers and commitment', *Journal of Youth Studies*, vol. 8, no. 2, pp. 173-86.
- Victorian Learning and Employment Skills Commission 2002, *Evaluation of the Local Learning and Employment Networks*, Evaluation, Department of Education & Training for the Victorian Learning and Employment Skills Commission, Melbourne.
- Victorian Learning and Employment Skills Commission 2003a, *Making A Difference - Local Learning and Employment Networks*, Impact Report, Department of Education & Training for the Victorian Learning and Employment Skills Commission, Melbourne.
- Victorian Learning and Employment Skills Commission 2003b, *Towards a Post Compulsory Framework for Education and Training (Young People 15-24)*, VLESC Consultation Paper, Department of Education & Training, Melbourne.



- Victorian Learning and Employment Skills Commission 2003c, *2004 VLESC/LLEN Performance Agreement Discussion Paper*, Discussion Paper, Victorian Learning and Employment Skills Commission, Melbourne.
- Victorian Learning and Employment Skills Commission 2004, *Guidelines for On Track Connect 2004*, Department of Education & Training, Melbourne.
- Victorian Qualifications Authority 2003, *The Credit Matrix: Building Bridges Between Qualifications*, Consultation Paper, Victorian Qualifications Authority, East Melbourne.
- Victorian Tapestry Workshop 2003, *Victorian Tapestry Workshop: An Information Guide*, Victorian Tapestry Workshop, Melbourne.
- Vinson, T. 2004, *Community Adversity and Resilience: The Distribution of Social Disadvantage in Victoria and New South Wales and the Mediating Role of Social Cohesion*, Report from The Ignatius Centre for Social Policy and Research, Jesuit Social Services, Melbourne.
- Vygotsky, L. S. 1978, *Mind in Society*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge.
- Walker, R. 1980, 'The conduct of educational case studies: Ethics, theory and procedures', in Dockrell, W. B. & D, H. (Eds.), *Rethinking Educational Research*, Hodder & Stoughton, London, pp. 30-63.
- Warmington, P., Daniels, H., Edwards, A., Brown, S., Leadbetter, J., Martin, D. & Middleton, D. 2004, *Interagency collaboration: a review of the literature*, Project Report, University of Birmingham, Birmingham.
- Watts, D. & Strogatz, S. 1998, 'Collective dynamics of 'small-world' networks', *Nature*, vol. 393, pp. 440-442.
- Weatherley, R. A. 1991, 'Comprehensive services for pregnant and parenting adolescents: Historical and political considerations', *Evaluation and Program Planning*, vol. 14, pp. 17-25.
- Webster, F. 1995, *Theories of the Information Society*, Routledge, London.
- Wenger, E. 1998a, *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning and Identity*, Learning in Doing: Social, Cognitive, and Computational Perspectives, Pea, R., Seely Brown, J. & Hawkins, J., Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Wenger, E. 2000, 'Communities of practice and social learning systems', *Organizational Articles*, vol. 7, no. 2, pp. 225-246.
- Wenger, E., McDermott, R. & Snyder, W. 2002, *Cultivating Communities of Practice: A Guide to Managing Knowledge*, Harvard Business School Press, Boston.
- Wittel, A. 2001, 'Toward a network sociality', *Theory, Culture and Society*, vol. 18, no. 6, pp. 51-76.
- Wolcott, H. F. 1992, 'Posturing in qualitative enquiry', in LeCompte, M. D. & Milroy, W. L. (Eds.), *The Handbook of Qualitative Research in Education*, Academic Press, San Diego, pp. 3 - 52.
- Wolcott, H. F. 1994, *Transforming qualitative data*, Sage, London.
- Wong, S. 2001, *Learning Towns - Making the Difference: How Does the World Look Different as a Result of the Victorian Learning Towns?*, Adult

Community and Further Education Division Department of Education  
Employment and Training, Melbourne.

- Wong, S. 2002, *Learning Cities: Building 21st Century Communities Through Lifelong Learning*, Report on Travelling Scholarship, Geelong Adult Training and Education, Geelong.
- Woolcock, M. 2001, 'The place of social capital in understanding social and economic outcomes', *Isuma: Canadian Journal of Policy Research*, vol. 2, no. 1, pp. 11-7.
- World Bank 1998, *The Initiative on Defining, Monitoring and Measuring Social Capital*, The World Bank Social Development Family Environmentally and Socially Sustainable Development Network, Washington DC.
- Wyn, J. 2003, *The challenge of shaping education for the 2000s: A perspective from youth research*, Paper presented at Inaugural Lecture, Melbourne University, Melbourne.
- Wyn, J. & Dwyer, P. 1999, 'New directions in research on youth in transition', *Journal of Youth Studies*, vol. 2, pp. 5-21.
- Yeatman, A. 1994, *Postmodern Revisionings of the Political*, Routledge, London.
- Young, M. & Spours, K. 1997, 'Unifying academic and vocational learning and the idea of a learning society', *Journal of Educational Policy*, vol. 12, no. 6, pp. 527-37.
- Zeegers, M. 2002, *A Mercantilist Cinderella: Deakin University and the Distance Education Student in the Postmodern World*, PhD Thesis, Faculty of Education, Deakin University, Geelong.
- Zipin, L. 2005, *The Pedagogical Challenge: Facing the Aporetic Madness of Social Justice*, Paper presented at Australian Association for Research in Education, AARE, Sydney.
- Zuber-Skerritt, O. (Ed.) 1996, *New Directions in Action Research*, Falmer Press, London.