Diversity Inquiry:

Retuning queer pedagogy in secondary schools through posthuman philosophical inquiry and humour

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Abstract

Poststructural theory has informed my professional practice in secondary schools for over 25 years. Poststructuralism called me to notice that humanism produces a normal-abnormal binary. This constructs a diversity-difference dualism that operates through the New Zealand Curriculum to define diversity only in relation to cultural difference. While such a framing of diversity presents cultural difference positively, as something to be valued, celebrated, and normalised, the emphasis on cultural difference potentially marginalises disability and LGBT+ difference, positioning them as abnormal. My concern that the intelligibility of diversity in secondary schools is being constrained by the dominance of humanism in Western-anglophone pedagogies provides the impetus for my research project since this construction has implications for how secondary schools prepare young people for a diverse world. In my role as a teacher/counsellor, I noticed that disabled and LGBT+ identities are considered more vulnerable and at-risk of harm. Professional practice in schools focusses on meeting learning needs and reducing risk of harm. Curriculum content currently emphasises self-responsibility and social justice discourses that present difference as a serious, moral-ethical concern to develop empathy.

Queer-posthuman pedagogies underpinned by poststructural theory offer an alternative epistemological orientation to difference/diversity that secondary school education in Aotearoa/New Zealand has yet to access in teaching practice. Over two decades, I experimented with forms of facilitation to access posthuman knowledge. This culminated in a collaboration with Philip Patston, a queer-disabled comedian and diversity consultant, to develop a philosophical inquiry process aimed at senior students, called Diversity Inquiry (DIVINQ). The process aims to explore diversity beyond dualisms by employing encounters *with difference* through humour in a Community of Inquiry format. To date, DIVINQ has run in two large Auckland secondary schools.

Through this doctoral study, I set out to investigate how DIVINQ might work as queer-posthuman inquiry. A key focus is how humour-laughter is recruited through a form of trickster co-facilitation to trouble humanist fields of thought. The research project employs a Foucauldian and Deleuzoguattarian conceptual framework that draws on cymatics as a metaphor and metaphors from *The Matrix* film .

The project utilised a practitioner-based autoethnographic approach. Data collection involved interviews with co-facilitators and nine past participants of DIVINQ. Analysis took up posthuman-new-materialist practices of reading data through Foucauldian cues such as discourses and problematisations, and Deleuzoguattarian cues such as assemblages and affects.

Findings show that institutional dividing practices are obscured and limit young peoples' exposure to forms of functional difference/disabilities. Health education draws on bio-medical knowledge that circulates developmental and hygiene discourses. Young people learn to manage risk and take responsibility for their wellbeing. Teaching assemblages employ strategies to negotiate moral taboos of sex-sexuality and construct a safer space to ask questions. These assemblages reinforce ignorance as lack of knowledge and reify normative ideas of sex, gender, and sexuality. In traditional classroom teaching, disciplinary power monitors student behaviour. Humour and laughter, when plugged into such assemblages, function to release tension but also to police social norms.

DIVINQ's rearrangement of objects, use of *The Matrix* film, and playful performances, disturb institutional hierarchies to construct a trickster facilitation position. Philip's lifelong experimentation to resist deficit ideas has developed his posthuman knowledge of difference. His stand-up comedy fine-tuned his trickster approach to facilitation. Philip's rebellious and ironic humour retuned participant encounters with material disability by troubling problematisations of difference. The affective forces of laughter generated by his humour produced an intimate, playfully relaxed environment. In this new space, participants were more comfortable to ask questions and to take risks with ideas. Co-trickster facilitation disturbed rational-reason inquiry skills by initiating thought through affective shocks. The absence of meritocratic measures of success accelerated participants' desire to engage in DIVINQ. As opposed to producing shame, not knowing and confusion were experienced as pleasurable enlivenment.

After finishing school, participants were more open to a broader concept of normal and, subsequently, the notion of difference-as-other resonated with less intensity. Participants developed a greater sensitivity to the positioning effects of language and noticed when their thinking was recaptured by normative, binary ideas. As a result of DIVINQ, participants sought further opportunities to learning through encounters with difference.

This project makes a case for DIVINQ to be regarded as a form of queering-posthuman assemblage. It presents humour as a disturber of discourses and laughter as a material-affective force, both of which construct a space to defamiliarise humanist habits of thought. The thesis discusses aspects of trickster facilitation that manages to retune Communities of Inquiry practices to produce a pedagogical practice of epistemic vulnerability. It examines the lasting effects of DIVINQ, which are discussed in terms of a potential emergent posthuman subjectivity oscillating between human-posthumanist fields, and it considers the ethical implications of these effects.

This project contributes to the field of poststructural informed pedagogical practice in secondary schools. The research offers DIVINQ as an example of a queer-posthuman form of philosophical inquiry by articulating how trickster facilitation can ethically recruit humour to trouble humanism. In the emergent area of future-oriented education, the project offers a reconceptualisation of what it means to work in new partnerships and with a diversity of knowledge.

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Prologue

Diversity Week

In a prefab building at the back of Rata High School, a group of students sit on the worn carpet, threading rainbow beads onto string. I fumble with another bead and realise I have my rainbow colours out of order. I let them slide off the string and begin again. The conversation turns to organising Diversity Week. I throw a question out to the group.

> "So, who could we invite in to speak? Does anyone have any contacts in the community?"

As I search for a red bead, Rachael answers.

> "What about Philip Patston? I can contact him and ask if he would come."

My face breaks into a smile as I remember seeing Philip perform comedy on stage in my first teaching job.

> "That would be great, thanks Rachael. He could bring an interesting and probably humorous perspective. Could you ask him to come during lunchtime and talk to students?"

> "What should I tell him about Diversity Week?"

I reflect on the various celebrations of cultural diversity. I put my rainbow dangle down and respond.

> "You could tell him we are trying make visible and celebrate other forms of diversity. Mainly sexuality and disability and just see what he can do with that."

My dangle is complete. The bell has gone for the end of lunch. Students spill out the door, beads are all over the carpet and disappearing into frayed cracks while rainbow dangles swing from bags.

….. Next day…

Rachael drops by to tell me Philip has agreed to give a talk. I mull over how to advertise the event in the student notices. What might sound interesting enough to entice people to come along?

...Day of the talk….

I make the muddy walk across the field to the prefab. I look back over my shoulder and see a group following and wonder if they are coming to Philip's talk. I hear laughing and giggling, panic strikes me: did my student notice set Philip up to be ridiculed? I start strategising how to respond to any disrespectful comments or behaviour. I compose myself as I walk up the ramp and unlock the door.

"Hi, if you are you here to listen to Philip, go in and find a seat."

From the back gate, Philip navigates the undulating path with Rachael and his golden labrador beside him.

"Hi Philip, I'm Jeannie, thanks for coming and sorry about the state of that footpath."

We shake hands and Philip introduces Dougal, his support dog. The room is full. All the seats are taken. People stand at the back corner and a small group is leaning out the windows yelling at their mates playing touch rugby. There is just enough space for Philip to manoeuvre his chair to the front. A lively din fills the room. The window group laugh together and point at Philip. I'm concerned they are not here to listen to what Philip has to say. I am responsible for creating a welcoming tone. The urge to exercise my teacher-authority voice rises. I resist the option to take up a disciplinary response and decide to draw the attention towards me.

"Thank you all for coming, it's great to see so many people here as part of Diversity Week. As Philip is our guest, it's important that we show respect. So, welcome Philip and we appreciate you sharing your insights today."

Spontaneous applause breaks out and the room settles. Philip introduces himself and Dougal. There are some nervous giggles in response to hearing Philip's voice for the first time. A couple of senior prefects direct an audible 'shhh' to the group.

Philip talks more about himself, and the laughter shifts as he makes a few jokes about his life. I scan the room for signs of disrespect, wary of the potential for mocking. There is still laughter, but it *feels* different. The boys who were leaning out the window five minutes ago are now perched on the windowsill fully focussed on Philip. Philip asks questions; the room is silent. He asks another question, the room breaks into laughter, someone answers, then another student answers. The boys are now leaning forward, elbows on knees, shushing their mates if they whisper. A hand is raised, they are listening, hanging on every utterance.

Raucous laughter breaks out once more. Philip is laughing and the room is buzzing with a new vibe. I check my watch and realise the bell is about to ring. Philip catches my eye and asks me how much time he has left. I gesture ‘two minutes’. The bell goes and collective moans of disappointment ripple through the room. Bodies reluctantly shift and scoop bags. A few students move toward Philip and shake his hand.

> “Thanks Philip, that was great, are you coming back?”
>
> “I wasn’t the best role model when I was here so I’m not sure they will invite me back. But I’d be open to it if you sneak me in the back gate again.”

The student quips back, “that can be arranged”. As I watch the group saunter out the door, an idea begins to take shape.

Chapter 1: Introduction

This doctoral project investigates an emergent form of queer-posthuman practice, known as Diversity Inquiry (DIVINQ). DIVINQ is an experimental form of community of inquiry, based on philosophy for children (Lipman, 1987, 2003, 2017), that works to go beyond traditional pedagogical approaches to disability and sexuality in schools.[1] This thesis argues for the contributions of queer-posthuman knowledges to understandings of disability and LGBT+ difference in Aotearoa/New Zealand secondary schools. It explores the forms these understandings took in the emergent practice of DIVINQ in two Aotearoa/New Zealand secondary schools over 10 years (2008-2017). The study focusses on the use humour and laughter as disruptive forces - discursively (through humour) and materially (through laughter) - to access queer-posthuman concepts.

The project thus works against the dominant humanistic problematisation of disability and LGBT+ that produces vulnerable, at-risk identities by locating the intelligibility of disability in pathologising-deficit discourses (Armstrong, 2003; Brantlinger, 2009; Youdell, 2005; 2006b) and sexuality in morally taboo territory (Allen, 2007a, 2008, 2011). For example, the thesis explores how humour is ethically deployed to disturb those dominant discourses that allow certain "games of truth" (Foucault, 1997b) and problematisations (Foucault, 1984/2014b) that inform and produce practices in secondary schools and beyond. A matter of contestation is the ways disabled students are identified and separated/divided from mainstream through a variety of practices, particularly in the physical organisation of schools which limits young people's encounters with disabled bodies. This project offers an alternative to the pedagogical effects of "needs-based" approaches (Brantlinger, 2006, 2009; Goodley, 2007; Talburt, 2004; Youdell, 2006a, 2006b) for learning about difference.

The project moves across a wide range of fields within educational theory to both map dominant aspects of institutional practices and to explore alternative fields of thought through which difference might/not be encountered. These divergent areas include fields of poststructural-posthuman informed disability theory (Morris, 1991; Overboe, 1999; Shakespeare, 1994; Shildrick, 2002), disability in schools (Armstrong, 2003, Brantlinger, 2009; Goodley, 2007; Youdell, 2006, 2011), traditional philosophical inquiry (Jackson, 2001;

[1] Consistent with University of Waikato policy, this thesis uses APA 6, the system current at the time of initial enrolment.

Kennedy, 2004; Lipman, 1987, 2003, 2017) and their post approaches (Biesta, 2011; Kohan, 2014), sexuality education (Allen, 2011; Fitzpatrick & McGlashan, 2016; Fitzpatrick & Tinning, 2013), narrative therapy (Besley, 2001, 2002; Freedman & Combs, 1996; White & Epston, 1990; Winslade & Monk, 1999), trickster facilitation (Edwards, Hawkins & Sutherland, 2021), and humour theory (Billig, 2005; Morreall, 2009; Rose, 2007).

The contextual landscape for this doctoral project is future-oriented education. Future-oriented education focusses on a concept of knowledge that is active and which works to address wicked problems (Frame, 2008; Gilbert, 2005). Wicked problems are deemed by Jane Gilbert (2005) to be those that are complex and difficult to solve while Bob Frame (2008) defines them as highly complex, uncertain, and value-laden and which span social, political and moral domains. Indeed, diversity is perceived as a wicked problem. In 2012, The New Zealand Council for Educational Research (NZCER) put forward its perspective on future-oriented learning (Bolstad et al., 2012), suggesting an unbundling of education, where educational innovators deconstruct usual practices, structures, and routines and "reassemble them in newer, smarter ways" (p. 2). Rebundling is organised through six key principles. The four principles of relevance to this thesis are: new views of equity, diversity and inclusivity; curriculum that uses knowledge to develop learning capacity; rethinking notions of teachers and learners; and new kinds of partnerships and relationships (Bolstad et al., 2012, pp. 3-6). *How* these principles are taken up in practice depends on the underpinning epistemological framework. Humanism currently dominates the futured-oriented framework and therefore informs the outcomes envisioned in the Aotearoa/New Zealand Curriculum. This thesis explores the possibilities for how these principles might be reoriented through a posthumanist practice and the implications of repositioning-reconceptualising wicked problems of difference.

What is DIVINQ?

DIVINQ is a co-facilitated community of inquiry with at least one facilitator embodying material disability to create an *encounter with difference*. It is set up to attract young people in years 12-13 [ages 16-18] who are interested in taking risks with their thinking about diversity and who are drawn to the idea of having *different* conversations about it. DIVINQ is advertised through student notices as an opportunity to explore a broader definition of diversity, going beyond the more commonly understood or accessible concepts of cultural difference such as race and/or ethnicity. Young people do not need to have a particular form of difference or demonstrate any prior commitment to social justice. DIVINQ operates like an underground

group outside of other extra/co-curricular school activities. Students can invite others to join. A core group of six to eight young people forms the base assemblage (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987), and visitors to the process might dip in and out of meetings. On average, four to six DIVINQ sessions are run across the year, mainly during lunch breaks. Students simply leave if they are uninterested in the style of conversation or if the topic fails to appeal. Our intention as facilitators was to disrupt dominant-disciplined approaches to learning, knowing, and thinking and to reduce the intensity of deficit discourses that locate difference as "other" (Butler, 2006; de Beauvoir, 1997; Spivak, 1985) and "abject" (Kristeva, 1982, 1996). I have found it useful to describe DIVINQ's unique approach through Deborah Britzman's (1995) contention that queer theory "offers education techniques to make sense of and remark upon what it dismisses or cannot bear to know" (p. 154). For example, DIVINQ might take up the study of limits in order to question what makes something such as diversity thinkable and to reframe the concept of ignorance as productive rather than a lack of knowledge. DIVINQ experiments with humour-laughter as *queering techniques* to free up pathologised problematisations of difference by reducing the weight of the deficit discourses that commonly circulate in schools. This research project explores aspects of the specific inquiry practices of DIVINQ that push past "bearable" toward constructing a possibly pleasurable space.

En-lightening conversations

DIVINQ diverges from more familiar education approaches, such as bullying interventions or a programme delivered in progressive steps to teach young people how to be more accepting or tolerant of difference. Of course, these more familiar approaches matter and do make significant positive impacts in schools. Bullying and harassment, for example, is an ongoing problem in secondary schools and LGBT+ (see for example Carroll-Lind, 2009; Monk, 2011; O'Higgins-Norman, Goldrick, & Harrison, 2010; Poteat, Mereish, DiGiovanni, & Koenig, 2011; Tierney, 2012) and disabled students (see for example Carter & Spencer, 2006; Hassanein, 2015; McLaughlin, Byers, & Oliver, 2012; Rose, & Monda-Amaya, 2012) are more likely to experience bullying and harassment. DIVINQ is not a replacement for important pro-social initiatives but works alongside to offer an alternative way of thinking and talking about difference and to move beyond a concept of difference-as-other. It resists notions of developing self-esteem, self-acceptance, or a strong identity and it does not engage in community action or promote particular social justice projects.

The key problem, poststructural-Deleuzian theorist Claire Colebrook (2002) suggests, is the deep entanglement of structuralism, psychoanalysis, and Western capitalism with a language

system that produces difference as other. Structuralism, Colebrook argues, still places primacy of difference within the human subject through identity. The ways of thinking and talking about difference are fixed in a system of signs that represent forms of identity. Secondary schools are situated within these overlapping systems that reproduce familiar pedagogical strategies and which reinforce a concept of difference as other. To disentangle difference from representational ideas and to "think difference differently" (Colebrook, 2002, p. 49), pedagogical practice needs to break from this system that has successfully locked in a concept of abject otherness with respect to LGBT+ and disability. Over the last 25 years, I have experimented with creating a pedagogical space to *disturb difference* (Grosz, 2011) and access discourses to think differently. DIVINQ has been the most satisfying of these experiments in terms of creating a new practice.

DIVINQ warrants attention in the context of future-oriented education (Bolstad, 2012; Bolstad, Gilbert, McDowall, & Ministry of Education, 2012). Future-oriented education is an approach that highlights the need for developing learning opportunities beyond current paradigms and which works with a diversity of *ideas* (Bolstad et al., 2012). Of relevance to this project is the contention that, "[i]t is more difficult to find research evidence about schools engaging with the second set of ideas – education for diversity (of people and ideas/knowledge)" (Bolstad et al., 2012, pp. 86-87). This project investigates DIVINQ as evidence for the "second set of ideas", where queer and posthumanism pedagogy offer access to an alternative paradigm from which to think about, understand, and experience diversity.

A brief summary of the journey towards DIVINQ

DIVINQ emerged out of a long career in secondary school education during which I have explored pedagogical possibilities of poststructural theory. In the roles of both teacher and counsellor, I had noticed that the ideas available to understand difference were informed by the types of knowledge accessible in schools. As a teacher of health and physical education, I was responsible for ensuring young people learnt how to take care of their total well-being/hauora (New Zealand Curriculum, 2007). My experiences led me to notice that little had changed since Tina Besley's (2002) and Sue Middleton's (1998) earlier critiques of curriculum content as being drawn from bio-medical scientific knowledge, that circulates both physical hygiene and mental health hygiene discourses. Both these discourses emphasise minimising risk through individual responsibility. When I moved into the role of school counsellor, the ethical stance of narrative therapy (Besley, 2001, 2002; Winslade & Monk, 1999) called me to notice how

young people were positioned by developmental and psychological discourses. For example, in her historical account of school counselling, Besley (2002) maps the influence of psychology in the construction of adolescence as a time of vulnerability to risk-taking and a lack of self-control over emotions. This construction of vulnerability establishes the role of school counsellors as primarily there to provide guidance to navigate a developmentally turbulent time.

Such discourses not only produce students as vulnerable, but position school counsellors as professionally responsible for reducing risk, through individual and group work. Students are typically identified through wider school systems as at-risk, and programs are put in place to meet perceived needs. Thus, with the best of intentions, I took up pedagogical interventions clustered around concern for potential harm, such as drug use, or anger, and more recently, Gay Straight Alliances. While recognising a need to respond to the effects of bullying, an ethical tension emerged. I became aware that an effect of facilitating needs-based groups could reinforce assumptions that specific identity groups such as LGBT+ were *at risk*, including from the harm of bullying. From this position, I began to consider what I could do differently in a school context. For example, early in my teaching *and* counselling career, I was exposed to the work of narrative therapy-informed school counsellors Dorothea Lewis and Aileen Cheshire who had implemented initiatives with groups of young people who were considered at risk with their learning or whose actions were presenting behavioural concerns to the school community. For example, they initiated projects such as the Journey Programme (Cheshire & Lewis, 1996) that blended with Adventure Based Learning (Cosgriff, 2000) to develop young peoples' strengths. They also established student mediation teams (Cheshire & Lewis, 1998; Cheshire, Lewis, & the Anti-Harassment Team, 2004) that resisted an individual, deficit approach and worked with school leadership teams to take a broader whole-school approach to addressing bullying. During my second year of teaching, I was involved in developing a drug intervention that employed ideas from the Journey Programme, and later as a counsellor, I trained student mediation teams. These initial experiments were opportunities to draw on ideas across divergent fields of practice and to explore the effects of adapting pedagogical processes. Over time, the production of difference in secondary schools began to dominate my concern and drew me toward more experimentation with poststructural theory in practice.

A second concern that grew for me were the ways that humour, in the forms of mocking and teasing, worked as an informal curriculum. In the classroom context, student ridicule of peers targeted difference. For example, homophobic and ableist jokes were commonly deployed to humiliate. Thus reinforcing perceptions of disability and LGBT+ identities as abject-other both

amongst those targeted as different and those produced in this discourse as normal. A normative image of an invulnerable self was similarly monitored. For example, if a student asked a question or got an answer wrong, in any learning context, other students would make jokes and laugh at them. Laughter operated as a form discipline through shame and embarrassment, that intensified a *normalising gaze* (Foucault, 1977/1991) in classroom teaching and learning. Deborah Youdell (2005) argues that school practices circulate and reproduce normalising discourses to produce *intelligible* (Butler, 2006) identity constellations. In my experience, humour and laughter have functioned as circulatory systems to produce normative identity constellations. Humour theorist Michael Billig (2005) identifies the subtle ways humour operates to uphold social norms. Mocking and teasing can operate as forms of discipline or, as Billig (2005) proposes, become like "friendly neighbourhood [police] officers who cheerily maintain order" (p. 238). My disquiet grew with respect to the positioning effects of mocking's so-called friendly policing of normative discourses.

In a health teacher position, a complex contradiction developed regarding the professional responsibility I had to deliver content and maintain a safe learning environment. I could understand that laughing sometimes released uncomfortable tension when teaching sexuality (see for example, Allen, 2014; Quinlivan, 2012) but I could also see the normative disciplining effects of humour-laughter. To borrow from Billig (2005), the officers were out in force. Thus, my relationship with humour was mixed with uncertainty and concern for the potential harm of ridicule. Classroom teaching produced positions that enabled young people to claim they were "only joking" and place the responsibility back on those targeted by mocking and teasing to "take it as a joke". In these more traditional classroom arrangements-assemblages, I struggled to navigate and negotiate the positions available within the complexity of what Billig (2005) refers to as ideological positivism, which typically overlooks the potential harm of humour while promoting its positive qualities. As Billig (2005) proposes, the influence of positive psychology deepens the complexity by supporting a concept of invulnerable selves that then places responsibility on individuals to cultivate a good sense of humour. The truth status of these entangled ideas normalised expectations for young people to laugh off or ignore ridicule. Such expectations were dissonant with my ethical stance to minimise harm. In a classroom teaching position, I struggled to find a comfortable relationship with humour while disciplinary power circulated.

In a counselling context, I experimented with humour to construct a relaxed therapeutic space. The use of humour in counselling has been found to ease tension and develop trust (see for example, Gladding & Drake Wallace, 2016; Goldin et al., 2006). The poststructural stance of narrative therapy called me to explore the positioning effects of language through humour. In my practice, I took up wordplay, using puns and metaphors to externalise (White, 1988/89, 1997, 2007) and resist positioning effects of dominant discourses. For example, I referred to a process of female to male gender transition as "bro-ing up", a play on growing up – or "the closet" that can open to another world [a reference to C. S. Lewis' *Narnia*] to freely explore identity. Such practices enact what might be described by Billig (2005) as rebellious humour, in their focus on systems of power. Rebellious humour shares resonances with narrative therapy's stance of *the person is not the problem, the problem is the problem* (White, 1988/89, 2007). In this way, humour in counselling may take up an ethical stance in enabling the exploration of how the-self is produced, based on what positions are available to young people. Through counselling, my curiosity grew for the pedagogical potential of humour for playfully disturbing problematisations of difference.

Transformative-epiphanic moment: Diversity Week

A consistent idea threaded throughout the New Zealand Curriculum (2007) is valuing and respecting diversity. But in my experience, diversity in education was almost exclusively recognised as cultural diversity, while other forms of difference – disability and sexuality – were not given status in the NZC. My concern echoes cultural anthropologist Thomas Eriksen's (2006) observation that diversity is commonly understood as cultural and is considered politically and morally neutral, whereas difference remains objectionable or questionable. The effect of such a positioning is that "diversity is seen as a good thing, while difference is not. The same people who endorse diversity tend to reject difference" (Eriksen, 2006, p. 16). Of relevance to this project are the encodings of this definition through curriculum that fixed disability and LGBT+ as unintelligible and therefore as not legitimate forms of diversity. As an act of resistance-protest, I initiated an alternative Diversity Week that would have a much broader reach than culture and which might trouble the normalised exclusion of difference from the concept and usual practice of diversity in schools.

A particular epiphanic moment during this alternative week occurred when Philip Patston was invited to speak during lunchtime, to *any* interested students. At that time, Philip had a public profile as a successful stand-up comedian (see for example Patston, 2009a, 2009b, May 25) but

he did not perform stand-up comedy or give an inspirational/motivational talk during that lunchtime session. Instead, what stood out to me during his talk was the assemblage and relational space he produced. I witnessed him skillfully using humour to turn an unsettled audience, who appeared at the time to be laughing *at* his material difference, into a group of young people who accepted an invitation into a dialogical encounter. As his presentation went on, the room pulsated with an intensity I had not experienced with respect to conversations about LGBT+ and disability. It occurred to me at the time that humour and laughter had functioned pedagogically to produce a safe space to ask questions. After his talk, I pondered how a facilitation process might use humour to construct an alternative philosophical inquiry space. Early in my teaching career, I had trained as a facilitator of philosophy for children (Lipman, 1987, 2003, 2017) and I was interested in revisiting the practice of communities of inquiry but this time with a poststructural lens. After Diversity Week, I met with Philip and discussed the idea of collaborating to facilitate an inquiry process that would explore the meanings available to understand difference. From this meeting, we forged an agreement to experiment with a co-facilitated playful approach to group practice to disturb what we both agreed were more commonly available positions: those based on rights and social justice. The act of disturbance we agreed on was a careful use of humour and laughter.

DIVINQ first formed in 2008 with a group of approximately ten Year 13 student leaders at Rata High School (name changed to protect the identity of participants). Rata High is a large, multi-cultural, co-education school. The process used a plain- vanilla (Jackson, 2001; Makaiau, 2012) community of inquiry scaffold of providing a stimulus text and developing questions based on the text to explore/inquire. I discuss in more detail the practices of communities of inquiry in Chapter 6. A key stimulus text used was the cyberpunk film *The Matrix* (Wachowski & Wachowski, 1999). At that time, Philip and I were interested in using the film for the philosophical ideas posed with respect to concepts of reality (see for example Žižek, 2005, 2006). In the 15 years since, the cultural significance of the film has changed. A challenge of this current project is that there is now a number of contestable meanings available (see for example Dignam & Rohlinger, 2019) to those wanting to suggest that the film represent particular philosophical ideas about freedom and choice. I discuss the complex implications of working with *The Matrix* (1999) further in Chapter 2. The DIVINQ group met five times over the year during lunchtimes and engaged in one Saturday workshop. In 2010, I moved to Kōwhai High School (name changed to protect the identity of participants),

a large single-sex school, where I continued to run DIVINQ with Year 12-13 students with Philip and his assistant/employee at the time, Sam Orchard.

DIVINQ: An experimental posthuman philosophical inquiry

I make the claim in this thesis for DIVINQ as a form of posthuman practice that operates through a Deleuzoguattarian concept of assemblage as an arrangement of bodies that comes together for short periods of time and which works between areas of territorialisation and deterritorialisation (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987), ideally to produce something new (Livesay, 2010). This research project explores how, in a *secondary school context*, the DIVINQ process involves: first, *carefully considered* moves to rearrange spaces, bodies, and objects to undiscipline relationships between adults and young people; second, the flow of rebellious humour through the assemblage as a discursive disruptor and laughter as a material, vital, affective force that turns the inquiry assemblage away from a humanist-serious-disciplined field of thought; third, the production of a trickster, co-facilitation relationship which initiates and maintains this turn. My argument for a trickster approach to facilitation resonates with the observation by Edwards, Hawkins and Sutherland (2021) that trickster facilitation forms an in-between/liminal space to traverse morally taboo territory. The thesis proposes that the facilitation of DIVINQ operates to construct such a space by recognising and, more significantly, resisting the pull of reterritorialising-humanist ideas.

As a queer-posthuman *practice*, DIVINQ takes the form of a community of inquiry that diverges from more traditional philosophy for children. Traditional philosophy for children is informed by Western rationalism and has been critiqued by Gert Biesta (2011) and Walter Kohan (2014) as colonising knowledge processes that are then taken for granted as neutral and value free. The colonising tactics these authors identify is a tendency to guide thinking along scientific models of objectivity: "its intentions, its effects, and its pedagogy—is not only based on a particular conception of the human being but also and, from a philosophical point perhaps more problematically, on a *particular truth about the human being* [emphasis added]" (Biesta, 2011, p. 311). This thesis argues for DIVINQ as a pedagogical response to the problematic of the production of truth of the ideal human subject. Biesta (2011) and Kohan (2014) have proposed that inquiries take up a posthuman-Deleuzian concept of exposure/encounter with difference to initiate philosophical thought. Such encounters produce an affective bodily shock that moves thinking into the unknown. On these terms, posthuman philosophical inquiry values uncertainty and hesitancy by turning away from following disciplined thinking skills that seek

common sense and universal truths. This project takes up a resonance with Kohan's (2014) claim that philosophical inquiry need not be abandoned but may be restructured through new practice.

Posthumanism covers a variety of theoretical influences, including technology cybernetics/cyborg, human-animal relationships, and environmental aspects. The movement of posthumanism into pedagogy in schools has clustered around the "cybernetic triangle" of human-animal-machine (Snaza et al., 2014). I acknowledge that traditional philosophical inquiries can mine these connections for rich moral and ethical discussion topics. I take a cautious stance in this project with respect to technological advancements and echo concerns raised by posthuman disability-dishuman educational theorist Dan Goodley (2014) of the potential for ableist discourses to be mobilised through transhumanist ideas. While some discussions in DIVINQ touched on these relationships, I argue in this thesis for DIVINQ as a process that takes up the spirit of what Rosi Braidotti (2013) defines as "high posthumanism". High posthumanism arises from poststructural theory to ask how particular forms of human are excluded from being recognised as *fully* human. This doctoral research project explores DIVINQ as a tantalising encounter with posthumanism, rather than an engagement with more radical materialism of Spinozist theistic monism or Deleuzian immanence. It frames DIVINQ as a practice that creates a space for rethinking the very notion of difference and even the process of thinking itself.

This project contributes to the development of queer and posthuman practice in secondary schools and it offers an example of how this may be taken up outside of specific areas of curriculum. Moreover, it addresses a gap of evidence for queer pedagogical practice in secondary schools. The project builds on contemporary interest in the use of humour in education by exploring the effect of plugging humour-laughter into learning assemblages. In the field of philosophy for children, this project tentatively offers DIVINQ as an example of an anti-method (Kohan, 2014) to traditional communities of inquiry. For narrative therapy counsellors working in schools, this research is an invitation to extend poststructural ethics through posthuman concepts such as assemblages to produce new ways of working.

A semi-fictional introduction to DIVINQ

New Participant

My name is Daniel, I'm in Year 13 at Rata High. My friend James has invited me to do DIVINQ on Saturday. Come Saturday morning, Dad drops me off at school and I text James to ask where we are meeting. As I'm walking through the back gate, I see another mate, Deepak, smacking a hockey ball around on the turf. He runs over and asks why I'm at school.

"I'm here for a diversity workshop."

"Oh wow, that actually sounds quite interesting, who are you doing that with?"

I'm surprised he is interested but I shrug and give the only info I have.

"Some other Year 13s, mostly prefects. But it's pretty much open to anyone in our year. James just invited me, that's all I really know."

Deepak yells out to the guys he was playing with, "Thanks, see you later", and chugs water as we walk toward the classroom. I wonder if he wants to do this workshop with me.

……..

Jeannie, the school counsellor who taught me health, greets us at the door. James is in the room and a couple of other Year 13s. There is another adult there in a wheelchair. I recognise him, and I'm a bit weirded out and think, 'Oh shit, it's the disabled guy who did that lunchtime talk." I'm trying to remember his name but he's coming over to me and I don't know what to say.

"Hi, I'm Philip, it's good to meet you. What's your name?"

Philip reaches out for me to shake his hand. I'm relieved he made the first move. I introduce myself. The nervousness goes away and I ask myself why was I so scared just before. It's cool that Philip is back. He was so funny and I was surprised how much he got me thinking. Philip turns to Deepak who is leaning on his hockey stick.

"Are you here for DIVINQ as well? I'm not sure the hockey stick is necessary though."

Philip has a wry smile on his face. Deepak looks at me. He's just followed me into the room really. I'm about to explain that Deepak was on his way home when Deepak grins.

"Yeah nah, I suppose not. Actually, I was just heading home but Daniel said you were doing this workshop and it sounds kind of interesting."

Jeannie is putting chairs in a circle and hears us talking.

> "We need a few more people today, some can't make it. You are welcome to stay Deepak, we have chocolate biscuits."

She wags a packet of toffee pop biscuits in front us. Deepak has this suspicious, playful look on his face.

> "I have no idea what it's about though. But I'm prepared to stay for the toffee pops."

Jeannie laughs loudly, Philip rolls up.

> "That's how we catch DIVINQ'ers. Chocky bikkies are the best bait."

Jeannie invites us to go to the kitchen and make a Milo or cup of tea. It's a relaxed, excited, and chilled out vibe all at once. Other Year 13s arrive, including a couple from the special needs unit. I've seen them around school. I think one might be in my history class. But I don't really know them. Philip and Jeannie call us in.

……Getting into DIVINQing

We all take a seat in the circle. I sit with James and Deepak. Jeannie gets our attention and begins the session.

> "Welcome to our first ever whole day workshop. We'll do activities to get you thinking and asking questions about diversity. But we're not aiming to debate two sides, getting to a single answer, or uncover the truth. The idea is to become confused at a deeper level."

The whole group laughs as Jeannie feigns a grimace. I'm not sure what she means by not getting to the truth; I like debates and arguing my point of view.

> "If you have no idea where the workshop is going, chances are we don't either. But we will all be lost together. Philip, I think we should just start with *The Matrix*."

I have no idea what *The Matrix* is. Philip gives us a brief plot summary of the movie. Before we begin to watch the movie, Jeannie asks us to notice the kinds of questions the main character, Neo, asks. She pauses the DVD at the end of the scene where Morpheus offers the red and blue pill. We talk about the conversation Morpheus has with Neo, questioning reality. Philip and Jeannie grin at each other.

> "Ready to take them down the rabbit hole?"

We keep watching. The whole room gasps as Neo exits The Matrix. What just happened? Jeannie stops the DVD. Everyone is talking at once.

There are questions on large pieces of paper around the room. We move around and discuss the questions with each other. I'm thinking so many things at once. How do we know what is real? Can we trust what we see? How do my beliefs limit what I 'see'?

We pause for morning tea and keep working. As I walk and read what others have written, I notice people have been thinking similar things to me but wonder how this relates to diversity. Then it clicks and my head explodes with ideas. It's about *our sense of normal,* and what's *real and true*. How we interpret things like diversity and difference. I need more sugar and scribble up some ideas before we sit down again.

……..

After lunch we start using ideas from *The Matrix* in our discussion. I like the idea that what we think of as normal gets 'coded' and we can't always see the coding because we're used to it – like being plugged in. It's great because we are using *The Matrix* to explore how some 'normal' codes are harder to break. Some people are starting to ask some crazy questions.

> "How does fear of difference get programmed into the world?"
> "Why would you want that? Like, who benefits from fear?"
> "What ideas of 'normal' have changed over time or not – why do some forms of difference never get questioned?"

Jeannie gets down on the floor with a big piece of paper. She asks us to use words that describe difference. Philip gets the ball rolling.

> "Here's one: 'age'. Although the age I am might not match how I feel. Sometimes I'm a teenager stuck in the 1980s."

In response, Milton tells us about growing up in another country.

> "I didn't know I had a disability until I moved to New Zealand. Where I'm from they didn't have a word for it."

Some people share their surprise. Philip chimes in.

> "I was a bit the same coz I have a twin brother and I didn't know I was disabled until I was sent to a special-needs school."

Milton, Rachael and Philip talk about the effect of labels on their lives. Philip makes lots of jokes and, somehow, that helps with making things feel not so bad, or scary and actually kind of interesting. Like a nice shock of "Oh, I never thought of that!". I start thinking: where do the meanings of words come from? DIVINQ is like taking the red pill in *The Matrix*. I'm so glad I came today, I'll ask my friend Kai to come DIVINQing next time.

Research questions:

This research is guided by an overarching question: In what ways might the specific inquiry practices of DIVINQ help to describe a posthuman, queer pedagogy? Additions to the original questions are italicised.

1. Do the processes of DIVINQ, which employs posthumanism through philosophical inquiry, disrupt dominant knowledge structures about identity and difference? If so, how is such a disruption experienced by students?

2. Can humour be ethically deployed in such a process to deconstruct taken for granted truths about diversity, identity, and difference? If so, how?

3. What are the aspects of humour employed in the DIVINQ process that make new ideas about identity and difference available to participating students? *How do these aspects of humour create a safe space for inquiry?*

4. What implications might such a pedagogy have on the available positionings around difference and identity for young people in Aotearoa in a variety of settings?

The research project

This study is a practitioner-based autoethnography that employs a poststructural and posthuman theoretical framework. Practitioner-based research involves researching the work [DIVINQ] being done (Etherington, 2017; Lees, 2008; McLeod, 2003). In autoethnography, the "authority for the story begins with the body and memories of the autoethnographic writer *at the scene* [emphasis added] of lived experience" (Gannon, 2006, p. 475). The scene of this project is two Aotearoa/New Zealand secondary schools and DIVINQ. To support a multifaceted story, I also undertook interactive interviews with past participants of DIVINQ

and facilitators. These accounts take up different positions at the scenes of participating and facilitating.

Traditional autoethnographic researchers use self-reflection and writing to explore their personal experience and to connect their story to broader cultural, political, and social meanings and understandings (Ellis, 2004; Pace, 2016). In this thesis, creative pieces of writing connect the story of DIVINQ to the broader context of the entanglement of cultural, political, and social meanings of difference. These semi-fictional accounts highlight material-discursive events as a form of writing at/of the scene to provide contextual detail and contrast pedagogical assemblages. In taking a poststructural stance. the writing-of-self is located in discourse and subjectivity (Britzman, 2000; Clough, 2009; Gannon, 2006; St. Pierre, 2008).

Nine young people who had been part of DIVINQ between 2008 and 2017 joined the research process by participating in small group interviews, both in person and online for participants living outside Aotearoa/New Zealand. Young people were invited to recall DIVINQ and how the process compared and/or contrasted with other pedagogical encounters. Facilitators Philip Patston and Sam Orchard were interviewed twice. The interviews with Philip and Sam also explored their past experiences of school. The interview with Philip focussed on his life and the significant encounters that had developed his posthuman knowledge and his professional relationship with humour. Historical documents, such as planning notes and YouTube videos of Philip's comedy, music videos (Patston, 2012, July 6) and a TEDx talk (TEDx, 2012), were other forms of data. Data were analysed using a new materialist approach of reading through/plugging in to theory (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012), an approach discussed in greater detail in the next chapter.

Outline of the thesis

In chapter 2, I describe the theoretical framework used in this study. There are two overlapping frameworks employed in this project: poststructural-Foucauldian and posthuman-Deleuzian theory. A third conceptual alignment used to ground this project in contemporary education theory are key principles of future-oriented education and its resonance with posthuman pedagogy. This chapter outlined my epistemological awareness, enacting what Koro-Ljungberg, Yendol-Hoppey, Smith, & Hayes, (2009) refer to as "positionings taken with regard to knowledge, truth(s), epistemic conditions, and justifications within particular research projects and the instantiation of methods that signifies the ways in which researchers provide

instances or ‘evidence’ in support of theories, claims, and method choices” (p. 687). Using the field of Cymatics as a metaphor and, drawing on metaphors from the film *The Matrix*, I describe how they support the harmonisation of poststructural-Foucauldian and posthuman-Deleuzian theoretical frameworks.

A review of the literature is undertaken across the following four chapters. In Chapter 3, I introduce the wider socio-cultural-historical-philosophical context of fear of difference. I turn to poststructural queer and disability theorists who have critiqued the problematisations of difference and the roles of social institutions, such as schools, to circulate dominant discourses that normalise abjection.

Chapter 4 maps the epistemological underpinning of pedagogies, discussing how this constructs the idea of needs and gives rise to issues of harm. I outline traditional-humanist oriented pedagogical approaches to difference and examine how these address social injustice. I then discuss queer pedagogy and emergent pedagogies that resonate with poststructural-posthumanism. This chapter identifies philosophical tensions that are constructed in competing fields of thought and their effects on concepts of vulnerability and identity. Foucault’s (1984/2014a) theoretical position with respect to power-knowledge, that “everything is dangerous”, is employed to support the articulation of ethics for which ideas about LGBT+ and disabled become normalised.

In Chapter 5, I explore the complexity of humour in contemporary society (see for example Billig, 2005). This chapter works to bring forward the philosophical and ethical tensions of working with humour in a pedagogical context. I discuss the development of humour theory and how this informs contemporary theory, such as “playful relaxation” (Morreall, 2009) and ironic and reflective humour (Rose, 2007). A significant aspect in relation to co-facilitator Philip Patson’s experiences is contemporary stand-up comedy. The practice of wittification-of-self (Smith, 2018), and the process of forming a dialogical relationship (Brodie, 2014) with an audience, are key ideas for understanding the functioning of humour in assemblages. Chapter 5 sets up the context for the ethical deployment of humour-laughter in DIVINQ.

Chapter 6 turns to my experiences of facilitation and pedagogical contexts that developed my practice. I explore chronologically key encounters that include outdoor education, philosophy for children, teaching health, and school counselling-narrative therapy. This chapter works to map the encounters and professional aporia that provided the basis of DIVINQ’s emergence.

Chapter 7 outlines the post-autoethnographic, practitioner-based approach taken in this research project. I discuss the epistemological tensions of employing a traditional qualitative approach with poststructural and posthuman theory, including the complexity of the ethics of practitioner-based research where multiple relationships across past and present operate. The data generation methods of interactive interviewing and online interviewing are also described. I discuss the analysis of data as a form of assemblage where data is read through Deleuzian and Foucauldian concepts..

Five findings chapters are then organised around Deleuzian assemblages: Chapter 8 and 9 explore territorialised experiences; Chapters 10 and 11 focus on the formation of DIVINQ and its functioning as an assemblage; and Chapter 12 explores the lasting effects of DIVINQ in participants' lives.

Chapter 8 also explores Philip's life and the encounters that supported him to develop a trickster-self, that kept him on the margins while challenging norms (Edwards et al., 2021), and that informed his approach to facilitation. This chapter traces his early life and school experiences, in addition to exploring his account of a lifelong commitment to resist problematisations of difference. A significant focus of the chapter is his relationship with humour in professional contexts: through both stand-up comedy and facilitation assemblages. As alluded to in the Prologue, Philip's desire to explore new facilitation opportunities coincided with our meeting during his first lunchtime presentation, which provided the context for the establishment of DIVINQ.

In Chapter 9, I turn to explore participant accounts of learning outside of DIVINQ. This chapter works to bring in the scene of young people's experiences in territorialised-disciplined classroom spaces. I weave my account of working in schools through and alongside participant recollections of school. This chapter maps the effects of both formal, curriculum-based, and informal pedagogies, including spacialising practices, on the landscape of territorialised learning. It examines which ideas about sexuality and disability were made available and which ones were rendered invisible or inaccessible.

Chapter 10 turns to DIVINQ as an assemblage. The focus of this chapter is on the process of forming DIVINQ through the rearrangement of objects and people to produce a new space. I draw out the nuanced repositioning moves I made to produce a trickster-facilitation relationship. I explore how the film *The Matrix* may be used as a conceptual and relational scaffold, and I

examine the effect of humour-laughter to deterritorialise disciplinary power to construct a playfully relaxed philosophical inquiry.

Chapter 11 expands on the functioning of DIVINQ as a queering-posthuman affective community of inquiry. This chapter includes facilitator and participant accounts to identify the nuanced trickster co-facilitation style that deterritorialised power-knowledge and created access to subjugated knowledges. I focus on the practices that accelerated forces of desire and pleasure, both of which constructed an environment of becoming *epistemically vulnerable* (Logue, 2014). This chapter primarily focusses on the work of the inquiry assemblage to turn away from serious-moral territory and it subsequently explores the ethical dilemmas of returning students back to their regular classes.

Chapter 12 traces participant accounts of the ways DIVINQ reverberated through their lives in the years following school. This chapter explores the ongoing disturbances to concepts of knowledge, truth, normal, difference, and their effects on ways of being/becoming in the world. This chapter demonstrates how a posthuman subjectivity may continue to oscillate between fields of thought. Ethical tensions of providing a community without a transition into other supportive communities are discussed.

The implications of this study are discussed in Chapter 13. I begin by mapping the effects of territorialising knowledge and the ideas made available through school practices. I then argue for DIVINQ as a queer-posthuman philosophical inquiry process and humour-laughter as significant to the deterritorialising-queering functioning of the assemblage. I articulate the style/aspects of DIVINQ's trickster facilitation that produced an "anti-method" (Kohan, 2014) to traditional facilitation. I discuss and argue for the ethical deployment of humour-laughter for producing a playfully relaxed philosophical inquiry, including the potential professional dilemma of creating an affectively-disturbing space in schools. Implications for posthuman subjectivity, and how this may be defined as an ongoing oscillating identity, are considered. I conclude with a discussion of the aporia that emerges from this project before outlining the future research possibilities that arise from thesis.

Chapter 2: Conceptual frameworks

The conceptual framework of this doctoral project has two aspects. The first aspect, which draws on the work of Michel Foucault, involves poststructural theory operating as a base frame to inform the theoretical challenge to humanism. The second aspect, posthuman theory, harmonises with poststructural theory and moves into new epistemological and ontological territory by drawing on the work of Gilles Deleuze. Poststructural and posthuman theory share some territory with respect to offering a form of resistance to humanism. The distinction I make is nuanced with respect to posthumanism's alternative ontology for *thinking difference differently*. That is, while poststructural theory offers a way to deconstruct the effects of humanism and does some reconceptualising, posthuman theory offers a new philosophical orientation to all aspects of life. Therefore, the distinction I make acknowledges the significant contributions of both while respecting their different theoretical offerings. The principles of future oriented education, and questions around how these can resonate with posthumanism through posthuman pedagogy, provide an additional layer of inquiry.

Concepts and the invisible coding of humanism

The language used in this doctoral research project can be found in humanist *and* posthumanist fields of thought. For example, words such as difference, identity, discourse, and agency can change meaning. It is the epistemological underpinning that tunes the accessibility of ideas. This movement between humanist and posthumanist fields is significant for understanding the function of DIVINQ and the concepts used when describing pedagogical practices. As such, the concepts used occupy a both/and position but work to produce different effects. *All* concepts have components that connect ideas *within* fields of thought. "Concepts are centers of vibrations, each in itself and everyone in relation to the others. This is why they all resonate rather than cohere or correspond with each other" (Deleuze, 1994, p. 23). For example, Elizabeth St. Pierre (2017) describes how Descartes' concept of cogito, that is central to thinking the humanist subject, is made up of components such as doubting, thinking and being. Concepts form bridges and populate planes to construct an image of thought (St. Pierre, 2017): the cogito for example, produces bridges to construct an image of mind and a *thinking-self*. This thesis explores the populating of pedagogical planes with such concepts and how this allows for certain images and understandings of difference to be available. To transition pedagogical practice from a humanist field of thought toward a posthumanist vibration requires

careful identification of resonances and potential dissonances. For example, in the context of philosophical inquiry, Nadia Kennedy and David Kennedy (2011) state that concepts are shaped by beliefs about how the world works and, for concepts that have ethical implications, considerations of how the world *should* work (p. 272). This doctoral project investigates transitioning pedagogical practice from a humanist field of thought toward a posthumanist vibration by exploring the resonances and dissonances DIVINQ produces. It theorises DIVINQ within a landscape currently populated with humanist concepts that inform how pedagogy, including philosophical inquiry, *should work* in secondary schools.

Humanism has thus operated as a benign conceptual colonising backdrop of Western anglophone societies. Tony Davies (2008) proposes that humanism is a complex and contestable term as there is no single form of humanism. In this thesis, I use the term humanism to describe a set of common themes that privilege ways of knowing and thinking. These themes emphasise the following: that there is an essential and universally shared human experience; that language is in some sense transparent; that individuals form a stable and coherent self; that reason and its *science* of philosophy can provide an objective and reliable foundation of knowledge; that knowledge acquired from the right use of reason will be *true*; and that by grounding claims to authority in reason, the conflicts between truth knowledge and power can be overcome (Davies, 2008; Flax, 1990; St. Pierre, 2000).

Humanism currently dominates the landscape of meaning available to understand disability and LGBT+ in secondary schools. St. Pierre (2000) argues that humanism itself is not "in error" (p. 478) and therefore the practices, including pedagogy that emerges from humanism, are also not wrong. However, I argue in this thesis that the effects of humanism limit the availability of alternative ideas. Despite this dominance-territorialisation, "humanism, though powerful, produces its own failure with its insistence on setting up boundaries, limits, and grids of regularity and normalcy" (St. Pierre, 2000, p. 479). Poststructural and posthuman theory can identify and explain these failures. This thesis investigates DIVINQ as an emergent practice that supports young people to explore humanism's failures and recognise the grids-boundaries encoding normative ideas of difference.

The Matrix as conceptual metaphor for humanism

To support the exploration of boundaries, limits, and grids that encode difference, I draw on the film *The Matrix* and employ it as a metaphor for the DIVINQ process and for this research project. *The Matrix* is a film that had a profound effect on my thinking about philosophical and

scientific concepts of reality. The rich imagery of the film has influenced DIVINQ's formation, practice, and theorising. My employment of *The Matrix* as a metaphor echoes St. Pierre's (1997) observation that metaphor can be a device to unsettle humanism and the language inherited to reorient experiences and to move toward the unthought (p. 177). *The Matrix* is used metaphorically throughout this thesis to describe the way humanism constructs a convincing, taken-for-granted *real world*, the imperceptible coding that is deconstructed by poststructural theory. Prior to this research project, the film had been used in DIVINQ as an unsettling device to move thinking difference toward the unthought. The metaphor works with the conceptual framework to explore the function of the DIVINQ process through the Deleuzoguattarian concept of assemblages that I introduce in the section on posthuman theory. I now offer a brief plot summary to show how the film *The Matrix* works as a metaphor.

The Matrix (1999) is a cyberpunk-science fiction film written and directed by the Wachowski siblings – Lana and Lily. The main premise is that the "real" world is a simulation, and that this simulation, "The Matrix", is created by machines to maintain control over humanity and to use them as a power source. Humans are plugged in from birth and do not question this version of reality as it appears natural throughout their lives. However, some people, such as the main protagonist Neo, do begin to question "reality" and seek to understand what "The Matrix" is. The only way Neo can understand "The Matrix", however, is to escape or to unplug. In a climactic scene, Morpheus, a guide who helps Neo escape "The Matrix", offers Neo a red pill that will unplug him and a blue pill that leaves Neo to carry on accepting the world as it appears. I put two quotes side by side to demonstrate how the metaphor works as a deconstructive thinking approach as part of the conceptual framework and, later in the DIVINQ process itself.

Morpheus: The Matrix is everywhere. It is all around us. Even now, in this very room. You can see it when you look out your window or when you turn on your television. You can feel it when you go to work, when you go to church, when you pay your taxes. It is the world that has been pulled over your eyes to blind you from the truth. Neo: What truth?	Humanism is the air we breathe, the language we speak, the shape of the homes we live in, the relations we are able to have with others, the politics we practice, the map that locates us on the earth, the futures we can imagine, the limits of our pleasures. Humanism is everywhere, overwhelming in its totality; and, since it is so "natural," it

Morpheus: That you are a slave, Neo. Like everyone else you were born into bondage. Into a prison that you cannot taste or see or touch. *A prison for your mind*.	is difficult to watch it work. (St. Pierre, 2000, p. 478)

Morpheus describes "The Matrix" to Neo as constructing a closed loop version of "the real world" that traps/constrains what people can know and how they can see the world. St. Pierre (2000) identifies the imperceptible pervasiveness of humanism that forms a sense of things being natural. The film plays out and resonates with St. Pierre's description of humanism: the encoding of reality that is taken for granted by people as "the truth". The prison metaphor used in the film defines "The Matrix" as a total form of control imposed over those who are plugged in. Like a prison, the film alludes to the idea that it is possible to escape "The Matrix". This constructs a binary relationship: either someone is *in* the system, are unaware, and have no ability to change things, or they are *out,* but they still have little power to change the deeper-underlying coding. As a metaphor for humanism, "The Matrix" that is described by Morpheus is effectively a system that restricts access to, and the availability of, alternative posthuman ideas/concepts-codes. Pedagogical practices in school serve to keep existing, humanist concepts, ideas, and practices as "normal" and, thus, "the truth". Yet, in the film's notion of "unplugging-red pill" and of being "plugged in-blue pill", there also lies an alternative possibility beyond the simple binary of in-out. That is, the Deleuzoguattarian concepts of zones of territorialisation come into play here, where there is the possibility of shifting between zones, of movement from being "plugged in" as territorialised-reterritorialising to "unplugging" or deterritorialising.

Humanism-structuralism combined encoding

Humanism's relationship with structuralism codes a convincing version of a "real world". Structuralism encodes language to correspond to something in the world (Burr, 1995, 2015; Colebrook, 2002, 2007; St. Pierre, 2000). This means that there is a correspondence between a word and something in the world (Colebrook, 2007; St. Pierre, 2000). The idea that the structure of language determines the lines along which we divide up our experience is at the heart of structuralism (Burr, 2015, p. 58). "If words point to pre-existing things in the world, then language simply names and reflects what it encounters" (St. Pierre, 2000, p. 480). Structuralism relies on the relationship between pre-existing things and language being consistent, however this relationship is arbitrary.

St. Pierre (2000) argues that humanism must keep finding new words, or difference becomes grouped under general descriptions. “In order to keep such shaky categories intact, it is imperative to define the essence of a category as well as the essence of things in the world, the ‘thing itself,’ ‘so they can be matched up’” (St. Pierre, 2000, p. 480). The dividing process privileges some forms of difference over others. In the context of this doctoral project, I explore the effects of the erasure of difference in order to match people up with identity categories. That is, as St. Pierre states, once “differences are erased by identity, people can more easily be slotted into a hierarchy or grid and then manipulated, dismissed, and oppressed” (p. 480). I am interested in how school practices work to erase difference. That is, how pedagogy uses language to define difference and what specific practices are employed that privilege-protect identity categories. Current pedagogical practice in secondary schools is plugged into the ordering-organising of humanism that takes this process for granted and renders it invisible. This has implications for developing new practice, including how principles of future oriented education might operate.

The language coding of humanism forms binary-dualisms. A key effect of binaries on concepts of difference is that one term is defined more clearly on the positive side, where the lesser “other” is given more flexibility (St. Pierre, 2000). For example, sexuality education curriculum content has expanded the range of language and labels for non-heterosexuality (see for example Meyer, 2010) whilst the concept of heterosexuality remains stable, relatively uncontested, and unproblematic. Traditional pedagogical practice draws significantly on representationalism that reinforces binary hierarchies to focus on different-others but which does little to question imposed systems of order.

Another aspect of humanism that informs the philosophical basis of all education is a tendency to view knowledge as uncovering truth and innocent of any wrong or harm. Pedagogy follows this pattern where knowledge is developed sequentially and is intrinsically good. This relationship constructs ignorance as lacking knowledge and bad (Britzman, 2005; Logue, 2014). A common analogy used is knowledge as shining light into the darkness of ignorance. Expert-disciplined knowledge is positioned unquestioningly on the positive side of the dualism where scientific knowledge is privileged as the most “enlightening”. Ignorance can be remedied through accessing accurate-reliable information to get to the objective-rational truth. The goal of education is oriented through this dualistic relationship and is woven into curriculum content

that includes developing critical thinking. The close relationship between structuralism and humanism produces certainty in what I have termed “The Humanist Matrix”.

Poststructural theory: exposing humanism’s default coding

Twentieth-century philosopher-theorist Michel Foucault has significantly influenced contemporary poststructural theory. Poststructural theory troubles humanism’s taken-for-granted conceptual organisation of Western thought (Burr, 1995, 2015; Colebrook, 2007; St. Pierre, 2000). In the field of educational theory, I echo St. Pierre’s (2000) argument that poststructural theory is useful in that it can open up what appears natural. It does this in two ways: it reconceptualises the relationships between language and meaning, and it provides a platform for reconsidering the relationships between knowledge, power, and truth. First, I examine the power-knowledge relationship, including disciplinary power, and I then discuss language and the concept of discourse in poststructural theory.

Secondary schools are positioned in society as knowledge-growing institutions. Foucault (1977/1991) made an argument that “power and knowledge directly imply one another; there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations” (p. 27). Foucault (1980) extended this to describe how power-knowledge and truth are entangled, “[w]e are subjected to the production of truth through power and we cannot possibly exercise power except through the production of truth” (Foucault, 1980, p. 73). This project contends that schools are intensive sites where certain forms of knowledge-power produce 'truth of difference.

Of relevance are the institutional practices that draw on bio-medical and psychological sciences to produce knowledge that constructs deficit and pathologised concepts of LGBT+ (Foucault, 1976) and disabled (Morris, 1991; Overboe, 1999; Shildrick 2002) lives. My interest is the teaching practices that privilege expert knowledge (Foucault, 1980) and concurrently silence or subjugate other forms of knowledge. Foucault (1980) argues that there are two kinds of subjugated knowledges. One constitutes previously established knowledges that have been buried, hidden, disguised, masked, removed, or written out. In this thesis, I assert that posthuman knowledge informed by poststructural theory is one such form of subjugated knowledge in secondary schools. The second involves local, popular, or indigenous knowledges that are marginalised or denied space to perform adequately, such as young, LGBT+ and disabled people’s knowledges. Of significance to this thesis is the pedagogical

context of health education. In Chapter 4, I explore the effects of bio-medical knowledge on the production of what Helen Lenskyj (1990) has described as plumbing and prevention discourses that have dominated health teaching practices over the last three decades. My experience teaching through these forms of knowledge drew my attention to the denial of space for subjugated knowledge to perform.

Poststructural-sexuality education theorists such as Louisa Allen (2004, 2007b, 2008), Kathleen Quinlivan (1996, 2002, 2012) and Katie Fitzpatrick (2015) have called for developing new curriculum content that is more inclusive of body/material difference, that disrupts heteronormativity, and for teaching practice to move beyond fear of sexuality in general. In particular, they propose that sexuality education should draw on a broader range of knowledges including those of young peoples. However, in my experience, classroom teaching practices continue to be captured by a focus on preventing disease and, to call on St. Pierre (2000), has yet to *open up* to poststructuralism's concept of power-knowledge-truth that could trouble discourses of dis-ease. This research explores the entangled effects of disciplinary power with power-knowledge on young people's experiences of surveillance or a normalising gaze (Foucault, 1977/1991) and the production of affective spaces. A common example is the fear of asking questions or being wrong. This project examines how common classroom practices are disrupted in DIVINQ to produce an alternative affective learning space.

With respect to power-knowledge-truth, Foucault (1984/2014a) states that "everything is dangerous" but this does not mean everything is bad. Rather, it is a call to notice there is work to be done and is an ethical stance of what ideas and truths are produced (p. 343). DIVINQ emerged from my ethical stance of noticing the effects of power-knowledge on truths of difference available in secondary schools and working/experimentation to construct alternative pedagogical practice. Heeding Foucault's assertion that everything is dangerous, it is important to clarify my stance. That is, dominant school practices are not inherently bad and I take an ethical position of respect for the professionalism, experience, knowledge, and dedication of colleagues who work from dominant humanist-informed knowledges. However, I have been called to notice as a poststructural practitioner that some school and pedagogical practices have been under investigated for the potential danger of their effects. In particular, these relate to what Foucault (1965/1988) refers to as dividing practices, or the ways society is ordered around difference. Schools are institutions organised by social and spatial dividing practices that begin as soon as young people commence their education. Stephen Madigan (2019) describes the

double move where people of a particular social grouping could be subjected to certain means of objectification such as being seen as disabled and then being physically separated from the social group for exhibiting an identified difference (p. 28). In educational settings such as secondary schools, dividing or spatialising practices are deployed through a variety of techniques that are physical such as special needs units, streaming/ability grouping and gender. I am interested in interrogating the ways dividing/spatialising practices are normalised through techno-meritocratic discourses that then reduce the opportunity to learn from encounters with difference.

In the context of education and poststructural theory, Mary Bryson and Susan De Castell (1993a) stated over 30 years ago that poststructural theory has been perceived "as too difficult, remote, abstract, and irrelevant to the 'practical' work of educational policy and program" (p. 346). My experience of secondary schools echoes Bryson and De Castell's observation and this research tentatively offers DIVINQ as an example of working *practically* with poststructural theory in a secondary school context. This doctoral project is an accounting of processes that can support poststructural-posthuman concepts to become more accessible.

Troubling the relationship with language: decoding structuralism

Poststructural theory disturbs humanism-structuralism's assumption that language describes the world as it is. I am particularly interested in language used in schools and DIVINQ as a practice that invites paying attention to how language does more than describe difference as it is. The concept of discourse in poststructural theory proposes that language gathers itself together according to socially constructed rules and regularities that allow certain statements to be made and not others (St. Pierre 2000, p. 485). Chris Weedon (1987) describes Foucault's concept of discourse as:

> Ways of constituting knowledge, together with the social practices, forms of subjectivity and power relations which inhere in such knowledges and relations between them. Discourses are more than ways of thinking and producing meaning. They constitute the 'nature' of the body, unconscious and conscious mind and emotional life of the subjects they seek to govern. (p. 108)

I turn to the film *The Matrix* as a metaphor to suggest that discourses operate as codes that produce meaning. My interest follows St. Pierre's (2000) observation that "[o]nce a discourse becomes 'normal' and 'natural,' it is difficult to think and act outside it. Within the rules of a discourse, it makes sense to say only certain things. Other statements and other ways of thinking remain unintelligible, *outside the realm of possibility* [emphasis added]" (p. 485). In a secondary school context, the discourses made available and the meanings produced has effects on what ideas about disability and LGBT+ become naturalised-normalised. DIVINQ is explored as a pedagogical space that attempts to interrupt dominant discourses-codes from naturalising binary-othering ideas. In resonance with St. Pierre (2000), DIVINQ might work to denaturalise discourses so that saying certain things about difference no longer make sense; and, to expand of realms of possibility for shifting the intelligibility of difference as other.

The concept of agency changes significantly when considered through a poststructural understanding of discourse. Instead of agency being inherent to the speaking subject – who has intrinsic power to act – language mobilises discourses that continually(re)position people to be (un)able to have a legitimate voice (Davies, 1991; Davies & Harré, 1990; Parker, 1992). Bronwyn Davies (1991) and Ian Parker (1992) argue that discourses call people into positions where they may or may not have a right to speak. I am interested in the effects of disciplinary power and power-knowledge on the positions available in pedagogical assemblages on who has a right to speak. In schools, adult-teacher discourses produce the authority to speak and, concurrently, the power to silence-sanction young people's voices. Teachers are in a position of authority to influence the discourses circulating and, therefore, the ideas that are available to discuss-think within a learning environment. This project explores practices of DIVINQ that disrupt discourses and relational hierarchies to reposition adults and young people.

Discourses also work through institutional systems such as schools. Institutional discourses include the routines and practices that produce a form of culture. This culture has its own voice and speaks through a range of actions addressing issues of concern such as diversity and/or difference. Foucault (1976) explains that an institutional discourse is: "one it employs to address itself, and which circulates amongst those that ensure its function" (Foucault, 1976, p. 28). For example, in the context of sexuality education, Allen (2007a) proposes that institutional discourses produce a sense of coherence and can be seen in the ways schools mobilise particular discursive strategies to manage sexuality. Disability is another practical concern that follows a similar pattern where discourses of inclusivity/exclusivity work through

a variety of strategies to manage unique functioning bodies while circulating internalised discourses of embracing/celebrating diversity.

Troubling identity

Poststructural theory troubles identity so that it is no longer based on a fixed set of characteristics that can be clearly defined. "In poststructural theories, the subject is considered a construction, and identity is presumed to be created in the ongoing effects of relations and in *response to society's codes* [emphasis added]" (St. Pierre, 2000, p. 503). St. Pierre (2000) argues that humanism's desire for coherence has tended to privilege identity over difference. The emphasis in the New Zealand Curriculum (NZC) of young people developing "strong identities" produces an epistemological tension with developing practice that takes up a poststructural-posthuman understanding of identity. To borrow from St. Pierre, I argue for DIVINQ as a practice that troubles coherence to privilege *difference over identity*. If identity is considered a product of discourse and subsequent positioning effects, identity cannot be fixed, found, or coded. Further to this, I propose that the work of pathologising and deficit discourses to stabilise sexuality and disability ends up significantly limiting recoding possibilities. This research project investigates DIVINQ as a potential destabilising practice on the coherence of society's normative codes.

A supporting poststructural concept in the research framework is intelligibility, for which the work of Judith Butler is well known. Butler (2006) has described the process by which identities become coded as intelligible; that is, to make identity stabilised and coherent. Butler argues that normalised identities become validated and recognised through the conceptual alignment of recognisable stable features of a person (see also Davies, 1991). Using sex, gender, and sexuality as an example, Butler (2006) states that:

> The 'coherence' and 'continuity' of 'the person' are not logical or analytic features of personhood, but, rather, socially instituted and maintained norms of intelligibility. Inasmuch as 'identity' is assured through the stabilizing concepts of sex, gender, and sexuality, the very notion of 'the person' is called into question by the cultural emergence of those 'incoherent' or 'discontinuous' gendered beings who appear to be

> persons but who fail to conform to the gendered norms of cultural intelligibility by which persons are defined. (p. 23)

This project critiques the institutional practices that reinforce coherent and continuous concepts of difference to reproduce intelligible/unintelligible identities. My interest has been in developing practices to interrupt coherence-continuity. Youdell (2005) employs Butler's concept of intelligibility to argue that the regularity and consistency of school practices produce constellations that give shape to intelligible identities. Youdell argues that there are limited opportunities for young people to break free as the spaces, routines, and regulations pull normative identities into shape. While Youdell's focus is on individual students acts of resistance to push against grids of intelligibility, I focus on how DIVINQ interrupts repeated and thus normalised, school practices. I bring together Butler's arguments around intelligibility and Youdell's notion of constellations to include the stabilising concept of body function and to explore the gravity-pull of normative body function as a particularly powerful constellating force that normalises fear of disabled difference.

Problematisation and games of truth

Two key Foucauldian concepts that draw together the relationship between power/knowledge/truth and the positioning effects of language-discourses are problematisation and games of truth. Both concepts involve recognising how discourses and practices bring something, such as forms of difference, into play with respect to what is regarded as true or false (Foucault, 1972, 1984/2014b; Marshal, 2007; Peters, 2007).

Problematisation involves how something enters a field of thought and becomes a problem (Foucault, 1984/2014b; Rose, 1998). Where difference is concerned, the process by which certain groups of people become conceptualised as a problem is not arbitrary and occurs through complex institutional workings of power-knowledge. This doctoral project is attuned through a genealogical approach that takes up what James Marshall (2007) describes as the forming of problematisation out of various practices. Foucault (1984/2014b) states with respect to problematisation that "it is a question of a movement of critical analysis in which one tries to see how the different solutions to a problem have been constructed; but also how these different solutions result from a specific form of problemization [*sic*]" (p. 389). I am interested in the practices of schools and how, through organisational aspects and curriculum content, disability and LGBT+ identities become problematised. In addition to the institutional

problematisation of disability and LGBT+ identities, I also critique the solutions offered by schools through curriculum content and organisational aspects, such as dividing-spatialising practices discussed later in this section. That is, how these specific differences are considered a problem has implications for the implementation of the NZC and the development of future-oriented education practices.

I investigate the forms of pedagogical practice that develop in response to the problematisation of adolescence as a developmentally at-risk time. For example, to borrow from Foucault (1984/2014b), I explore the effects of developmental and hygiene discourses on the problematisation of young, and especially disabled young, people as vulnerable and how this problematisation then constructs particular solutions. In Chapter 4, I discuss the strategies and solutions that have emerged from critical and radical pedagogies to address concern arising from the perceived vulnerability of LGBT+ and disabled young people, as well as the institutional structures that problematise their difference. The potential reification of otherness through solutions such as contemporary practices of inclusion, anti-bullying, and other classroom practices are a significant focus. The purpose of mapping forms of pedagogical responses to difference is to identify how/where DIVINQ could be located as an emergent queer-posthuman practice. That is, what disturbances might be made to dominant fields of thought and their effect on the problematisation of LGBT+ and disabled difference.

The Foucauldian concept of games of truth connects through power/knowledge and discourses of science to produce "truth games" (Peters, 2007). A game implies play and Foucault clarifies his use of game: "[w]hen I say 'game,' I mean a set of rules by which truth is produced" (Foucault, 1997b, p. 297). In this research project, secondary schools are considered intensive sites where young people learn the rules of what truth can be played about disability and LGBT+. I explore how various practices circulate games of truth and the rules that can limit alternative truths becoming available. I consider the effects of bio-medical knowledges to construct truths of what is considered normal and, conversely, formulate notions of abnormality. That is, the way in which school practices produce rules by which disability and LGBT+ can be *known* is far from benign and warrants unpacking. I am interested in the relationship between language and discourse that constructs games of truth. Language neither deceives nor reveals but is played through bringing discourses and relations of power into action (Foucault, 1997b). This thesis explores how language can be played in pedagogical contexts. A key focus is the language of humour on the discourses circulated in pedagogical spaces and therefore the truths

able to be played. I argue for DIVINQ as a process that uses certain forms of humour to disrupt rules and to play games *with* truth. In Chapter 5, I discuss the complexities of humour and laughter in the possibilities for disturbing truth and problematisations of difference.

Queer and disability theorists have called on poststructural theory to unsettle common, taken-for-granted truths about sexuality and disabilities by critiquing the effects of problematisations that produce divisions between those whose identities are rendered normal and those whose identities are rendered abnormal. Educational research has tended to focus on the effects *for* disabled (see for example Armstrong, 2003; Brantlinger, 2009; Youdell, 2006a, 2006b) or LGBT+ young people in schools (see for example Quinlivan & Town, 1999; Quinlivan, 2002; Rasmussen, 2013; Youdell, 2004, 2005, 2006a, 2006b). What has been relatively scarce are studies of pedagogical practices that work *through* poststructural theory to resist the truth status of humanism in secondary schools. An exception to this is queer pedagogy (see for example Britzman, 1995, 2012; Halberstam, 2003; Meyer, 2019), which offers a more specific focus on practice from a poststructural epistemological orientation and, more recently, dishuman studies (Goodley, 2014; Goodley & Runswick-Cole, 2016).

Posthuman theory: recoding and resisting humanism

While poststructural theory offers techniques to decode humanism, posthuman theory offers an alternative ontological orientation. Posthuman theory has its origins in the work of 17th century philosopher, Baruch Spinoza, who challenged humanism's conceptual organisation of the world. Of particular significance is his reimagining of materiality:

> The 'Spinozist legacy' therefore consists in a very active concept of monism, which allowed these modern French philosophers to define matter as vital and self-organizing, thereby producing the staggering combination of 'vitalist materialism'. Because this approach rejects all forms of transcendentalism, it is also known as 'radical immanence'. Monism results in relocating difference outside the dialectical scheme, as a complex process of differing which is framed by both internal and external forces and is based on the centrality of the relation to multiple others. (Braidotti, 2013, pp. 45-46)

Late 20th century posthumanism draws from Spinozist monism and includes poststructural theory to produce an alternative to humanism as the basis of Western philosophical thought (Braidotti, 2013, 2019; Colebrook, 2002). This reconceptualising has significant implications: as Braidotti (2013) proposes, "posthumanism reconfigures identities and humanistic practices in ways that produce *new subjectivities* [emphasis added] and ways of doing things that have yet to be coded into heteronormative and/or disciplinary models" (p. 47). This research project argues for DIVINQ as a process of reconfiguring and explores the effects of inquiry practices on the production of new subjectivities. It employs the onto-epistemological disturbances of French posthuman philosopher Gilles Deleuze as an alternative conceptual landscape for understanding identity and difference. Posthumanism resonates with queer and poststructural theory in their approach to life in engaging complexity, multiplicity, and questions of power. This research focuses on a reconceptualisation of difference, both material and discursive, that resists humanism's deficit dualisms.

Cymatics as conceptual metaphor for posthumanism

Ideas and concepts are constantly moving and are tuned through onto-epistemologies of humanism-posthumanism. In the context of facilitating DIVINQ and as a researcher, I propose that when fields of thought are disturbed, an oscillating mess of ideas results. These oscillations are described through sound imagery and the metaphor of cymatics. Cymatics is the science of making sound visible and is attributed to the work of Hans Jenny (1967/2001). Cymatic experiments involve placing a physical substance, such as sand or liquid, on top of a vibrating membrane to show waveform. This thesis is conceived as such a metaphorical membrane, making visible the affective tonal shifts of pedagogical practice. That is, how the onto-epistemological *keys* through which a field of thought is tuned produces different shapes of intelligible concepts, including identity and difference. Stephan Helmreich (2010) and Douglas Kahn (2020) discuss the growing emergence of sound as a metaphor in social and cultural theory and its alignment with posthuman theory. However, the use of cymatics as a metaphor is complex and not unproblematic. Kahn (2020) argues that "[c]ultural theories of vibration are constructed in a trade between physics (a simple, figurative physics) and figuration, including that common figure of the human body and the means for speaking figuratively" (p. 15). I use sound vocabulary and imagery not as a literal form but as a way of visually representing the relational affects produced through DIVINQ, moving from fields of thought tuned through serious-heavy discourses toward playful-lighter tones. As a metaphor, cymatics dislocates humanism-posthumanism from a binary relationship to describe how the different fields of

thought give shape to ideas such as difference. It alludes to how pedagogy functions to tune fields of thought and, equally, how the specific practices of DIVINQ work to tune into alternative queer-posthuman concepts. The project highlights the effects of disturbing common-normalised images that shape young people's understandings and explores where potential dissonances might scatter images of thought. This research investigates the (un/re)mattering effects of DIVINQ-ing on meanings available to *in-form* young people. Therefore, I intentionally employ terms relating to sound such as key, tone, tune, resonate, reverberate, echo, amplify, vibe, pitch, and hertz to describe affects and intensities.

Contemporary Deleuzian harmonising concepts

The key Deleuzian concepts at work in the conceptual framework of this thesis are assemblage, territorialisation, and deterritorialisation. The concept of assemblage developed by Deleuze and Guattari (1987) derives from the English translation of their concept in French of agencement (arrangement): the processes of arranging, organising, and fitting together. Assemblages are complex constellations of objects, bodies, expressions, qualities, and territories that come together for varying periods of time to ideally create new ways of functioning (Livesay, 2010, p. 18). DIVINQ is explored as an assemblage that comes together for short periods of time as a new way of undertaking philosophical inquiry.

Assemblages work in relation to territorialisation and deterritorialisation and have a horizontal and vertical axis. The horizontal axis deals with "machinic assemblages of bodies, actions and passions and a collective assemblage of enunciation, of acts and statements, of incorporeal transformations of bodies" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 88). For example, In the context of DIVINQ, the horizontal axis involves the arrangement of bodies, objects, rooms, spaces and the conversations taking place in each session. The "vertical axis has both territorial sides, or reterritorialized sides, which stabilize it, and cutting edges of deterritorialization, which carry it away" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 88). In this research project, territorial/reterritorialised sides are the institutional and pedagogical practices that circulate humanist knowledges, discourses, problematisations, and games of truth that construct abject and othered concepts of difference. It explores aspects of humour-laughter as potential "cutting edges" that produce deterritorialisation, and the work of co-facilitation to turn/tip away from traditional pedagogical practices toward queer-posthumanist fields of thought.

Graham Livesay (2010) argues that the territorial aspects of assemblages attends to forces that unmake and make territories:

> The result of a productive assemblage is a new means of expression, a new territorial/spatial organisation, a new institution, a new behaviour, or a new realisation. The assemblage is destined to produce a new reality, by making numerous, *often unexpected, connections* [emphasis added]. (p. 19)

The productive aspects of DIVINQ investigated are the new means of conducting philosophical inquiry where humour and laughter make unexpected connections. St. Pierre (2017) contends that "the goal of philosophy is to experiment with the flows of destratification on the strata and to tip the machinic assemblage toward the plane of immanence, toward pure difference and possibilities for the new" (p. 693). I argue that DIVINQ serves as a form of queer-posthuman philosophical inquiry that experimented humour-laughter and "trickster facilitation" (Edwards et al., 2021) to produce "flows of destratification". Adrian Parr (2010) describes the productive potential of assemblages through deterritorialisation. "In so far as it operates as a line of flight, deterritorialisation indicates the creative potential of an assemblage. So, to deterritorialise is *to free up the fixed relations* [emphasis added] that contain a body all the while exposing it to new organisations" (Parr, 2010, p. 69). Of relevance to this research are the nuanced practices of DIVINQ that attempt to free up fixed institutional relations formed through disciplinary power within schools and to form new partnerships.

Other Deleuzian concepts that tune the theoretical framework of this doctoral thesis to resonate with a posthuman field of thought are encounter, affect, desire and difference. The effects of dividing practices on encounters with difference are particularly significant to this research project. Encounters connect with affect, difference and thought (Deleuze, 1994; Duff, 2013; Semetsky, 2010; Zourabichvili & Aarons, 2012). Deleuze (1994, emphasis in original) argues that "[s]omething in the world forces us to think. This something is an object not of recognition but of a fundamental *encounter*" (p. 139). Instead of thought being a natural disposition, it is shocked and drawn into a search (Zourabichvili & Aarons, 2012). I have been interested in the effect of dividing practices in schools on opportunities for young people to learn through exposure to disability and LGBT+. DIVINQ was an experimental practice of producing encounters, specifically with the material difference of physical disability. As Deleuze (1994) argues, thought "may be grasped in a range of affective tones: wonder, love, hatred, suffering. In whichever tone, its primary characteristic is that it can only be sensed" (p. 139). I make a

case for DIVINQ as an assemblage that provides a space to retune affective tones; that is, from a sense of hatred-suffering or fear-based tones toward wonder-love-joy.

The second aspect of encounter-shock is composure. In the context of pedagogy, Cameron Duff (2013) argues that bodies sense the presence of other bodies and, through this, learn to interact and "compose themselves" (p. 196) in the shock of encounter. Duff emphasises the affectual intensity of encounter that is relevant in a Deleuzian approach to pedagogy. My argument in this thesis is that exposure to LGBT+ and especially disability can provoke strong initial tones in response to abjection. A central focus of this doctoral project is exploring DIVINQ as an assemblage-facilitated composure space. This thread is taken up in Chapter 4, where I discuss aspects of humour-laughter as ethically deployed to support composure.

Affect is entangled with encounters producing thought. François Zourabichvili and Kieran Aarons (2012) argue that the emergence of an idea is not amicable, but implies a discomfort that is different to the dissatisfaction associated with the so-called desire to know (p. 56). However, I propose that a potential epistemological discordance is that affect is commonly understood through psychology discourses in traditional pedagogy. As such, DIVINQ could be read as an affective pedagogical practice bridged by ideas of emotions. Felicity Colman (2010) defines Deleuzian affect as the change, or variation, that occurs when bodies collide or come into contact (p. 11). "Affect is an experiential force or a power source, which, through encounters and mixes with other bodies (organic or inorganic), the affect becomes enveloped by affection, becoming an idea" (Colman, 2010, p. 12). This thesis explores DIVINQ as a site of mixing, wherein the affective shifts produced by the inquiry process opens possibilities for thinking difference differently.

Traditional pedagogy takes up psychoanalytic discourses that make little space for desire as a positive, productive force. Deleuze and Guattari resist and reframe the psychoanalytic concept of desire as an insatiable lack regulated by Oedipal law (Colebrook, 2002; Deleuze & Guattari, 1977/2009; Ross, 2010). While psychoanalysis locates desire within people as an impotent force, Alison Ross (2010) argues that Deleuzoguattarian desire moves desire into the social "to form connections and enhance the power of bodies in their connection" (p. 66). I make a case for DIVINQ as an assemblage that uses humour-laughter to accelerate desire to enhance connections and deterritorialise disciplinary power.

A key focus of this thesis is the concept of difference. Difference understood through a humanist conceptual field forms a comparison as either difference from the same or difference of the same over time (Colebrook, 2002; Deleuze, 1994; Grosz, 2010, 2011; Stagoll, 2010). The main concern posthuman theorists such as Elizabeth Grosz raise with a comparative model is that difference becomes an object of representation through subordination to sameness and in relation to some form of identity. I echo this concern as, in my experience, secondary school education is currently encoded with such an understanding and is governed by practices of subordination that normalises difference as other. Deleuze overturns the traditional Western concept of identity and representation by challenging the model of difference that does not rely on sameness, undermining the philosophy of representation and identity. Grosz (2011) states:

> Deleuze wants to think difference in itself, difference as a process which produces itself. Difference is not a vagueness or indetermination, an imprecision or failure of identity, but is precisely 'the state in which one can speak of determination as such'. (pp. 92-93)

This doctoral project explores DIVINQ as an assemblage that works to deterritorialise comparative difference and move away from notions of "failure of identity" *toward* positive difference – difference-in-itself. Cliff Stagoll (2010, emphasis in original) states that:

> To think in terms of difference-in-itself means to set the concept aside and focus instead on the singular, and the unique circumstances of its production. Awareness of such specific circumstances means that the notion of some 'thing in general' can be set aside in favour of one's experience of *this* thing, here and now. (p. 76)

This thesis investigates practices of DIVINQ that both trouble othering ideas and construct a space to "set the concept aside" and explore circumstances of the production of difference. I discuss the challenges of producing a space to "experience this thing, here and now" in a secondary school. In particular, I examine the lasting reverberations of DIVINQ's troubling of difference on young people's lives beyond school.

Second layer: future oriented resonances with posthuman pedagogy

Principles of future-oriented education deconstruct and reassemble traditional practices, involving acts of unbundling-rebundling (Bolstad et al., 2012). This doctoral project explores the effects of unbundling the philosophical orientation of pedagogy from humanism and views future-orientation as a *reorientation* of epistemological underpinnings. In particular, it sets out to rebundle traditional philosophical inquiry by retuning practice through queer-posthumanism. I explore where DIVINQ might, as a process, fit within the future landscape of newer and *smarter* ways (Bolstad et al., 2012). This includes ethical tensions of working with a poststructural-posthuman onto-epistemological orientation that disturbs *wicked problems* (Frame, 2008; Gilbert, 2005) of difference.

Posthuman pedagogy is an umbrella term to describe a range of critical approaches and resistances to the dominant humanist epistemological orientation that informs all Western education (Biesta, 1998, 2009; Braidotti, 2019; Chapman, 2013; Cole, 2011, 2012; Snaza, 2014; Snaza et al., 2014; Weaver, 2010). Snaza et al. (2014) outline three ways educational practices and thinking can be transformed through posthumanism: first, through a reckoning of the humanist orientation of educational philosophy; second, by reframing relationships with others such as animals and machines; and third, through these first two approaches, by exploring new posthumanist directions in a variety of ways, including pedagogical practice. Missing from the reframing are the ways humanism has also excluded some forms of human from being recognised as fully human. “Humanism’s restricted notion of what counts as the human is one of the keys to understand how we got to a post-human turn at all” (Braidotti, 2013, p. 17). This thesis explores this concern by way of examining the ways pedagogical practices have participated in such restrictions. Although the field of posthuman pedagogy is emerging, the influence of poststructural theory, or what Braidotti (2013) refers to as high posthumanism, has yet to be fully explored in secondary school contexts. This research project is an articulation of how the epistemological orientation of poststructural theory might be moved through assemblages such as DIVINQ to access posthuman knowledge.

Resonances of posthuman knowledge

The effect of DIVINQing on posthuman thinking is described in this thesis through Braidotti’s (2019) principles of defamiliarisation and a desire for adequate understanding. The process of defamiliarisation is “a pedagogical tool to encourage the knowing subjects to disengage themselves from the dominant normative vision of the self they had become accustomed to”

(Braidotti, 2019, p. 81). As a practice, defamiliarising involves decoding power relations and the privilege that is sustained through Eurocentric traditions of thought to make way for new alternatives, such as posthuman knowledge. Braidotti's (2019) suggestion, that "[d]efamiliarisation also entails active processes of becoming that enact in-depth breaks with established patterns of thought and identity formation" (p. 82), aligns with the conceptual framework of this thesis. Given that defamiliarisation includes supporting acts of conceptual disobedience, this project explores DIVINQ as an assemblage that initiates breaks in patterns of thought to produce conceptual disobedience. Braidotti also cautions that the translation of posthuman thinking to public conversations can be challenging and proposes developing communities to sustain projects in the form of transversal assemblages. This research project subsequently identifies some of the difficulties for young people to find such communities.

A desire for adequate understanding calls people "to learn to think differently about what kind of relational subjects 'we' are in the process of becoming, in a multitude of different perspectives" (Braidotti, 2019, p. 77). It also provides people with an increased ability to act and that this is "experienced as joy and the renewed desire to go on knowing more and better" (p. 77). I explore the effect of DIVINQ-ing on young peoples' lives beyond school, in terms of where and how they went on to know more and better. In harmony with Braidotti, St. Pierre (2000) states that "[p]oststructuralism does not allow us to place the blame elsewhere, outside our own daily activities, but demands that we *examine our own complicity* [emphasis added] in the maintenance of social injustice" (p. 484). A posthuman ethical stance that may be developed from DIVINQ is well placed to resonate with a Braidotti's (2019) concept of choice as an awareness of how our actions in the world reproduce or resist the maintenance of social injustice.

DIVINQ was a brief experience that produced some disturbances within fields of thought. However, the conceptual retuning process was not a deep theoretical engagement with posthuman thinking. I make an argument in this thesis for positioning DIVINQ as an entry point of defamiliarisation and desire for adequate understanding. Within the pedagogical landscape, I theoretically locate DIVINQ as an approach to philosophical inquiry in schools that reassembles traditional community of inquiry practices to find frequencies of posthumanist ideas.

Outline of literature review chapters

The literature reviewed covers a broad range of theory and is therefore longer than traditional literature reviews. Chapter 3 introduces poststructural-posthuman theories of disability and LGBT+. This theory sets the theoretical backdrop of DIVINQ's resistance to dominant problematisations of difference. Chapter 4 focusses on pedagogical approaches to difference developed over time and introduces various ways of addressing social injustice. The chapter works to introduce pedagogies that take up poststructural-posthuman ideas and their philosophical differences. A key focus of this chapter is the epistemological tensions that arise when more familiar approaches to inclusion and social justice give way to shifts toward emerging approaches such as DIVINQ. The focus of Chapter 5 is on theories of humour and the influence of these in contemporary society. I focus on common assumptions/dominant discourses that circulate and where schools/education is positioned within the broader context of humour-laughter. I explore contemporary theory through poststructural-posthuman concepts to highlight the ethical aspects considered when developing DIVINQ. This includes stand-up comedy as a significant influence on Philip's relationship with humour-laughter. In these first three chapters, my autoethnographic voice is limited and decontextualised. Chapter 6 is an autoethnographic-practitioner exploration of the professional experiences that influenced my approach to the facilitation of DIVINQ. These have their own history, theory, and context for developing certain approaches to facilitation. This chapter provides specific context for the emergence of DIVINQ, which is the result of trying to work differently in a secondary school environment and finding the limits of working in roles/positions.

Chapter 3: Problematisations of difference

The race

On a warm summer day in February, students and staff spill onto the field for the annual athletics day house relays. The entire school participates, including students from the Tui unit. Hundreds of bodies crowd around the 100m track that has a definite uphill and downhill gradient. A thin rope holds back spectators. As races begin, the rope is tested as people rush to get a better view. Exuberant cheers echo as limbs painted in vibrant colours representing affiliation to a house propel bodies forward.

The next race is for students using wheelchairs. A different buzz ripples through the crowd. I overhear whispered comments.

> "Oh, it isn't over!"
> "I've never seen these students. Do they even go here?"
> "Are they really from the unit or are they just regular students in chairs because some of them don't look disabled."
> "This will be a bit of a laugh, watching the spastics run."

The manual chairs have enthusiastic pushers. Powerchairs get the uphill leg – someone has clearly done their homework on the lay of the land. The starter gun goes, off they race and there is extra energy amongst the spectators, leaning in and encouraging the effort made. The lane lines are barely visible – it is unsurprising when the powerchairs zigzag and nearly crash. Then I see some side-eye going on between racers. I realise they are trying to take each other out, like a demolition derby.

I scan the crowd, some people are laughing, pointing and making disparaging comments.

> "They look like they're drunk."
> "What's up with that arm swing, they could take someone out."

Across the track I see a couple of students mimic the movements and their friends laugh. Some staff try to intervene, suggesting it is part of school spirit that they should be encouraging their peers.

> "Don't you think it's wonderful that the unit gets out and participates? It shows everyone how nothing should get in the way of giving things a go."
> "It's so nice to see them being part of the community, so inspirational."
> "They are just like everyone else today. Just normal kids having fun."

The bell goes, bodies disperse. The sagging boundary rope catches a few out as they trip and stumble on the way to class. As I make my way to the staffroom I overhear a teacher aide pushing a Year 13 student.

"Come on darling, I'd better get you back to the unit."

As I walk, a disquiet moves through me and I ponder the idea of hiding students from the unit away for another year. My thoughts turn to the intention of the event as a form of inclusion but I also see the othering effects it creates. I think back to the relays, the cheers mixed with jeers and laughing, all of which had produced a strange uncomfortable tone. I stand in the kitchen looking out over the track and make coffee. The groundskeepers are taking down the ropes, but clearly an invisible barrier remains that separates and hides difference.

This chapter introduces the problematisations that produce fear-of-difference in a broader social context that then informs practices in schools. I explore the humanist discourses/coding that constructs difference as abject (Kristeva, 1982, 1996) and other (de Beauvoir, 1997; Spivak, 1985). Contemporary philosopher and psychoanalyst Julia Kristeva defines abjection as a reaction of horror and repulsion of visible difference. In psychoanalytical terms, abjection is to cast off that which disturbs. Postcolonial-poststructural theorist Gayatri Spivak argues that colonisation has informed ideas of otherness as "subaltern" minority groups, who are denied citizenship and a voice (Spivak, 1985). Similarly, French philosopher Simone de Beauvoir (1997) has theorised how the sex-gender binary constructs male as the standard of normal-human that positions woman as other and less than. These constructions of difference underpin problematisations of disability and LGBT+ identities and have produced games of truth that inform institutional responses to difference. In schools, discourses of abject-subaltern-otherness circulate fear-rejection of disability and LGBT+ through various practices without necessarily actively excluding. The philosophical undertones of fear are carefully coded through accepted forms of difference. That is, while cultural difference in the form of race-ethnicity can still be a site of rejection, education accepts this difference as a valued form of diversity. Eriksen (2006) proposes that "diversity is seen as a good thing, while difference is not. The same people who endorse diversity tend to reject difference" (p. 16). In this chapter, I describe the specific institutional discourses (Foucault, 1976) that produce invisibility and which silence difference while simultaneously celebrating diversity. The literature reviewed in this chapter take up a poststructural critique of the meaning of difference. This has implications

for the games of truth that are made accessible in pedagogical assemblages, a topic to which I return in Chapter 6.

Disability: difference that matters and matters of difference

Existence has a materiality from which a variety of bodies emerges. Some forms of corporeality produce a fear response that appears natural. Kristeva (1982) explains in psychoanalytical terms how the biological-visceral reactions of horror, such as physical illness, normalises rejection of difference. When bodies enter a meaning making process, language such as "monster", "deformed", and "impaired" can become associated with disability. The human body is therefore a significant site of communicating meanings of difference by affixing normalising markers of acceptable deviation. As Brian Massumi (1993) proposes, each person broadcasts certain characteristics visually and aurally that are then filtered through people's preconceived identity categories (p. 23). The problem with these categories, James Overboe (1999) argues, is that since the physical-material has become the norm for defining identity, disability is devalued. Those with visually readable disability, such as the spectrum of cerebral palsy, come under more scrutiny as their bodies refuse to comply with humanist demands of being under control (Morris, 1991; Overboe, 1999; Shildrick, 2002; Tremain, 2015).

Contemporary poststructural-disability theorist Margrit Shildrick (2002) argues that difference demarcates the borders of concepts pertaining to security, such as "safe" and "unsafe", and who is subject to moral scrutiny and who is not. Disabled bodies are already breaking boundaries and provoke both a recognition and rejection at the same time. Shildrick makes the point that if disability is not contagious as a physical threat, why is there such a cultural deterrent to encounters with disability? Tom Shakespeare (1994) proposes that "disabled people remind non-disabled people of their own vulnerability" (p. 297) and this invokes a sense of fear for becoming-like-this (Shildrick, 2002). Therefore, the *threat* is produced by the image of thought available – one that constructs a life of hardship and vulnerability. Thus, as Jenny Morris (1991) states, people just "*don't want to think* [emphasis added] that this is something which could happen to them" (p. 192). Overboe (1999) similarly argues that the ideal humanist subject comes from an image of thought that values autonomy and invulnerability. The visibility of disabled bodies has a confrontational effect, producing fear of becoming disabled and, subsequently, a loss of autonomy. To protect wider society from the horrors of abject otherness, disabled bodies have tended to be hidden from the public (Morris 1991). Historical practices of hiding disabled bodies can be traced through the development of institutionalised-

clinical dividing practices (see Foucault, 1965/1988). While there has been a move in Western societies away from institutionalising, dividing practices continue to work in contemporary society to restrict the public's exposure to disabled/unique functioning people in everyday encounters – including secondary schools.

Disabled people's lives have thus come under the most invasive forms of control and regulation by non-disabled people (Overboe, 1999). Concepts of normal/abnormal are particularly problematic with respect to disability as they naturalise and hide the workings of power-knowledge that produce abject otherness. Morris (1991) proposes that the use of the word "normal" could be affirmative if it was associated with "common". However, she states that the term "normal" is ascribed with notions of what is considered right and desirable (p. 20). The problematisation of disabled bodies as imperfect and vulnerable allows non-disabled to take up protective actions that is justified by a sense of concern for harm. Morris (1991) argues that "[h]aving put up clear barriers between us and them, non-disabled people further hide their fear and discomfort by turning us into *objects of pity* [emphasis added], comforting themselves by their own kindness and generosity" (p. 192). In my experience, the production of vulnerability draws on moral and ethical discourses that can capture disability under the rhetoric of developing empathy, care, and compassion for others. These values are considered desirable in educational outcomes and have become embedded in guidelines such as the NZC. Schools are intensive sites where clear institutional barriers operate to navigate non-disabled staff and student discomfort while producing disabled young people as objects of pity and regulation.

School regulation and control of disabled bodies: Deployment of deficit discourses

The understanding of disability is largely saturated with dehumanising discourses. An effect of this saturation is that young disabled bodies become objects of concern in schools (Armstrong 2003; Brantlinger, 2004, 2006, 2009; Goodley, 2007; Youdell, 2006b, 2011). Schools are situated in a broader societal context of social and economic discourses that have transformed the aims of education. Neo-liberal and capitalist models view people in terms of perceived productiveness and ability to contribute to society economically. This has a flow on effect for how schools position disabled young people. Ellen Brantlinger (2009) argues that capitalism produces social hierarchy and schools are key sites for reproducing stratification. The dominant model of meritocracy – social capital valued for future exchange is at the core of secondary schooling systems – constructs privilege. The education system places some students on higher

accelerated or lower educational tracks (or streams as they are referred to in Aotearoa/New Zealand). This practice steers those who are placed on lower tracks toward lower expectations, and construct failed identities in the process. Brantlinger makes the point that young people who are assigned disabled identities enter the education system *on lower tracks* that are fixed. Once on lower tracks, young people are guided toward education outcomes that reduce expectations of achievement.

Educational tracks are constructed through an assumption of meeting needs. Felicity Armstrong (2003) and Brantlinger (2009) explain that dividing/spatialising processes normalise and hide the underlying drive of meeting needs. The use of medical language produces labels that contribute to the abnormalising of difference. In schools, the use of diagnostic labels supports the maintenance of boundaries (Armstrong, 2003) and places young people into groups that then lays out set educational tracks. The use of such labels both creates and confirms public identities and assumptions about people's abilities (Booth, 1987): "labels assign particular places to individuals and groups on the basis of these same labels in a circular arrangement of naming and placing. Labelling is culturally produced and usually 'public' and therein lies its power" (Armstrong, 2003, p. 24). Once a deficit label is assigned, it is difficult to remove and this has implications for young peoples' experience of identity formation. Identity formation, according to Diana Fuss (1995), can be both voluntary and involuntary. Young people can accept or reject labels but tend to experience a label positively if it is one that has been chosen. "When identity is voluntary, people experience autonomy and control, however, the imposition of negative identity causes various reactions" (Brantlinger, 2009, p. 404). Brantlinger explains that power relations impact on identity formation and the language used to define difference matters since it informs students' access to affirmative ideas. Another layer of subjection is stereotyping. While not limited to disabled people, Armstrong (2003) argues that labels can be problematic in that stereotypes produced "allows 'the other' to be firmly fixed 'elsewhere', as 'them'; at the same time 'others' can be subjected to the controlling and *civilizing actions* [emphasis added] of those who have been *delegated to assume this task* [emphasis added]" (Armstrong, 2003, p. 24). In schools, teachers and specialist staff are assigned civilising tasks, including counsellors. My encounters with students assigned disabled labels drew my attention to the civilising undercurrent of tasks around their management. These encounters jolted my understanding of the pronounced effects of labels on the intelligibility of disabled students' identities. In particular, the positioning effects deficit-dehumanising discourses had on agency and voice became apparent to me.

A concern Armstrong (2003) raises that resonates with my experience is the modern objectification of disability in schools that can be used as inspiration for non-disabled. Shakespeare (1994) identifies the ways stereotypes produce three main categories of representation: "the tragic but brave invalid", "the sinister cripple" and "the 'supercrip' who has triumphed over tragedy"'. Stereotypes can be seen as placeholders in discourse that form constellations of intelligible identity. Armstrong argues that these images allow disability to be used by non-disabled to imagine disabled peoples' lives in particular ways. In other words, the intelligibility mobilised in schools shapes constellations of what are socially *accessible* and *acceptable* images of thought.

A troubling aspect of constructing an image of inspiration is the idea of "overcoming odds" (Morris, 1991). A small percentage of socially acceptable performances of disability can be used to inspire. For example, I have experienced in a pedagogical context the Paralympics, wherein high performing athletes are a popular image within the constellation of 'supercrip'. Shildrick (2002) similarly warns of the tendency to call on vulnerability and fear of otherness as a way of developing empathy that can be hidden in the metaphor of walking-in-someone else's-shoes. It is not that empathy is bad, but the *danger* (Foucault, 1984/2014a) is a reification of otherness that further encodes the humanist matrix with games of truth that normalise the objectification of disabled bodies on behalf of teaching values of empathy and compassion.

There are currently very few alternative discourses of disability circulating widely within the field of education. Overboe (1999) argues that disabled people are rarely represented as having ordinary lives: they are either super or sub-human. Morris (1991) also observes the tendency to recruit normality to produce rights. The underlying assumption is that disabled people desire to be normal and having rights becomes a way to access the status of "normal". In a curriculum context, the debates around rights as a form of being "normal" has some risks.

A personal protest

I hear the walking frame coming down the corridor. Audible distress accompanies the rhythmic mechanical sound. Rachael appears at the door in tears. Two concerned staff from the unit accompany her. As I usher Rachael into my room, she exclaims.

> "I'm so *over* this place."

Rachael manoeuvres into my small room, I close the door. Rachael is in Year 13 and assigned to the Special Needs Unit. Tears roll down her cheeks.

> "I just want them to see me as a person, not as broken. They speak to me like *I'm a child*. Why does this school say they're proud of diversity when people can't even talk to me because they're too scared?"

A wave of grief and frustration moves through me. Rachael offers me the box of tissues. It is not the first time she has expressed anger at her identity being captured by pathologised ideas. For Rachael, the labels she carries have weighed heavily. Rachael takes another tissue and sighs.

> "At least I get to go to Wellington this weekend – they value my ideas as a youth advisor on disabilities."

The juxtaposition jolts the conversation and sparks an idea in me. I offer my thoughts.

> "It seems crazy that you share your expertise in Wellington, but here, your insights and voice don't seem to be heard. Would you be interested in creating a different kind of diversity conversation here at Rata?"
> "I don't think anything will change. People don't want their ideas challenged."

I chuckle quietly and Rachael grins. The energy shifts as we laugh together. As the heaviness dissipates, there is an opening to make space for the possibility of something else.

> "You might be right, Rachael. Some people are less open to questioning how things are. But what about working with those who might be more open? Didn't someone like Einstein say, 'the definition of insanity is repeating the same thing and expecting a different result?'"

We crack up laughing and Rachael responds.

> "Oh, I'm definitely done with the insanity."

I nod in acknowledgement and start thinking about Rachael's expertise and the untapped knowledge she has. I ask,

> "What could be a first step? Have you got some thoughts on where to start such a project?"

> "Maybe we just need to find the right people."

I nod in agreement and pick up the thread of the idea.

> "Where might we recruit 'right people' – would any of your contacts in Wellington have some ideas? About whether there is *another way* to talk about diversity?"
>
> Rachael's enthusiasm builds: the despair and frustration are still present, but there is a new purpose in her.
>
> "I can ask when I go down. They might have some resources we can use."
> "I'll do some thinking as well. Maybe a 'diversity week' that focusses on different forms of diversity."
>
> The energy in the room is energised with new possibilities. The bell rings and as Rachael leaves, the walker sounds different – echoes of resistance.

Normalisation via access to rights: cautionary warning of ableist discourses

Disability is a potential *wicked* problem in future-oriented education. Disabled bodies can be brought into debates about ethics and morals where ableist discourses can promote eugenics (Morris, 1991) and ideas such as transhumanism (Goodley, 2014) that validate erasure of disability. In the context of health education, senior students are exposed to topics that can mobilise ableist discourses when discussing euthanasia. My point is, that if young people are only exposed to disability through the lens of inspiration or rights, then vulnerability is reinforced as being at-risk-of-harm and is thereby constructed negatively within a humanist field of thought. Fear can be naturalised on behalf of doing "good" things and constellations of intelligible identity become even more weighted with the gravity/heaviness/density of deficit discourses. Pedagogical assemblages that circulate abject, pathologised discourses offer positions of dis-ease as a normalised response. This further legitimises taking action on behalf of "managing" student needs under the broad umbrella of "inclusive education".

Special needs education: units, mainstreaming and inclusive education

Youdell (2006b) states that inclusion and inclusive education are not straightforward concepts and the debates circulating these issues function to produce a normative centre. Certainly, the depth of work in the field of inclusive education cannot be fully explored in this research project. Instead, my focus here is to provide the context for developing DIVINQ at a school that operates a special needs unit.

For historical context, emancipatory ideas of liberal humanism saw schools become sites of compensatory justice where inclusive education became an aspect of an equalising project of

social justice (Kearney, 2009, 2011). Allison Kearney (2009, 2011) traces the development of inclusive education in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Specialist facilities such as the unit at Rata were widely accepted as being in the best interests of all young people. This practice was formed on the basis of a notion that only expertly trained teachers could work with young people with disabilities. Thus, medical models have justified exclusionary practices in the past that later moved to inclusive practices. In Aotearoa/New Zealand, both the Education Act 1989 and the Human Rights Act 1993 section 57 state that it is illegal for schools to deny enrolment on the basis of disability or to treat them less favourably. Over the last three decades, a neo-liberal choice-competition model of education has intensified schools taking up a marketable brand to attract students. Disabled difference is considered a risk to marketability. In navigating an underlying wider socio-cultural fear of contamination, schools have started to take up their legal obligations, and this can produce practices that mask difference. One such practice is the provision of inclusive education and special needs units.

My experience at Rata and the special needs unit drew my attention to the politics of school identities and practices of exclusion-inclusion. Exclusion involves more than just questions of official access and whether student enrolments are accepted or not. Indeed, exclusion can occur within schools and may take covert forms. Kearney (2011) argues that exclusion is often assumed to be counter to inclusion. Exclusion-inclusion forms around ideas of what is considered normal-abnormal and worthy-unworthy. “For example, a student may be experiencing exclusion at school, but those factors that are acting to exclude that student may be so ingrained in the structure and culture of a school that they go unnoticed and unquestioned” (Kearney, 2011, p. 10). As a counsellor, I encountered student experiences of invisible exclusion and began to question the unquestioned institutional culture and internal discourses of inclusion. Echoing Brantlinger (2009), Kearney (2009, 2011) argues that market models of competition have intensified exclusion as schools develop brands and compete for students who add value rather than risk. Thus, while disabled students have the right to attend their local school, systemic forms of resistance produce barriers to attending.

The concept of mainstreaming emerged to help schools adapt to the learning needs of all students and to reduce such barriers. However, the dominant practice of inclusive education, Kearney argues, is to transfer special needs education into regular schools. Classroom teachers, with support from other professionals, take up responsibility for curriculum delivery to students. Kearney (2009, 2011) found that there was ambivalence from principals about the need to

upskill classroom teachers to support disabled students. While principals know the importance of having teachers trained, they were reluctant to follow through on upskilling. Thus, school leadership was a barrier and principals could justify exclusion such as advising "parents of disabled children that their child would be better served at another school" (Kearney, 2011, p. 80). There was support for inclusion in principle – but this was not always taken up in practice. For example, when I started at Kowhai, the school did not have accessible buildings, which *excluded* young people using a wheelchair or other mobility support and was sometimes used as a reason to not enrol a student.

Dan Goodley (2007) proposes that while debates shift across educational landscapes about what is best, disability is always considered an obstacle, an observation that echoes my experience. With respect to serious impairments, Goodley observes that teachers often complain about inconsistent policy and whisper concerns on school grounds about the difficulty of accommodating difference (Goodley, 2007, p. 318). My contention is that a complex dynamic of institutional concern for marketability and increased specialisation of support has produced legitimised positions of avoidance. This plays into an illusion of marketable inclusion but where encounters *with* disability are muted at best in secondary schools. The overall pedagogical effect is a reduced exposure to disabled bodies and an intensification of abject-otherness. Thus, overall disability is managed and moved into specialist areas of expertise and drawn on to develop moral values, but at a distance.

LGBT+ captured in a vulnerable, moral taboo landscape

While LGBT+ as an identity category has not had quite the same institutional regulation, there are similar discourses circulating in schools that produce ideas of vulnerability and being at risk. The effects of these discourses are the production of heteronormativity and the prevalence of homophobia that circulate fear of LGBT+ identities. Schools are sites where practices are permeated by enduring heteronormative discourses (Allen, 2011; Middleton, 1998; Quinlivan, 1996, 2002, 2012; 2019; Rasmussen, 2006, 2013; Youdell, 2005; 2006a). Youdell (2005) posits that the discourses circulating in schools frame what can become intelligible as legitimate identities. Dominant discourses construct the taken-for-granted notion that identities are fixed and stable. However, young people who refuse and resist normative selves disturb grids of intelligibility-normativity. This disturbance creates opportunities to rupture and break free. Youdell (2006a) observes that young people's attempts to break free and find *new spaces* can become shut down by institutional practices. Ideas that are in place around normativity are

difficult to shake by the repetition of the same kinds of environments and encounters in schools that tend to reinscribe set-moves. Youdell suggests that breaking free from reinscription requires changing the environment as well as the reference points that give shape to identity constellations. DIVINQ was an attempt to provide such a space without identifying as a group *for* LGBT+ young people, such as a Gay Straight Alliance (GSA), which can become recruited as part of reinscription with respect to discourses of homophobia.

Homophobia is produced through heteronormative discourses, but it has a different tone. The effects of homophobia in secondary schools are well researched. Evidence suggests that students who do not conform to normative identities are more likely to experience harassment (Cosier, 2009; Fleming, 2012; Henrickson, 2008; Monk, 2011; O'Higgins, 2010; Poteat et al., 2011; Tierney, 2012; Trotter, 2009) and this has effects on their mental health (Lucassen et al., 2012). The response of teachers to homophobia shows a concerning trend toward inaction (Payne, 2009; Van Wormer & McKinney, 2003; Quinlivan, 1996, 2002). This inaction is likely informed by a fear of being seen to promote or support a "deviant" lifestyle. Teacher silence is entangled in concerns for maintaining one's professional identity. In Chapter 6, I return to the context of health education, where heteronormative sexuality discourses and homophobia produce an intensification of uncertainty for responding to difference in classroom teaching assemblages.

Contemporary pedagogical strategies to LGBT+ difference take a similar position to disability with respect to inclusion. Quinlivan (2002) locates Aotearoa/New Zealand schools in the context of neo- liberalism that produces strong discourses of individual responsibility. "While queer youth are being defined as 'at risk' they can be classified as fitting within a deviant model which argues that they 'need help'" (Quinlivan, 2002, p. 25). LGBT+ students must therefore manage risk, including the effects of bullying, by using support services such as counselling. As with the positioning of disabled students as deficient and requiring systemic management, Quinlivan argues that, in the context of LGBT+, discourses of self-management serve the anxiety of institutions which are nervous of being seen to promote queerness:

> I would suggest that the school can claim to be addressing inclusion for lesbian and gay youth in a way that does not affect the marketability of their institution. It enables them

> to portray the school as an environment that endeavors to meet the needs of all students. (Quinlivan, 2002, p. 25)

In this way, both LGBT+ and disability can be addressed through the discourse of "meeting needs" without disturbing the image of the school. Another way schools can take up political activism beyond meeting individual needs are through Gay Straight Alliances (GSAs). GSAs have been found to provide safe-spaces for LGBT+ young people in schools (Day, Fish, Grossman, & Russell, 2020; Fetner & Elafros, 2015; Mayberry, Chenneville, & Currie, 2013; Mayo, 2009; Mayo, 2013; Toomey, Ryan, Diaz, & Russell, 2011). While GSAs do not necessarily reduce homophobia or experiences of bullying, the existence of such groups tend to enable LGBT+ students to feel more supported (Fetner & Elafros, 2015). Cris Mayo (2009) argues that GSAs highlight the political work needed to be done to address broader institutional barriers for reducing homophobia while bringing attention to the ways identity categories can work. In an Aotearoa/New Zealand context, Hayley McGlashan and Fitzpatrick (2017) found that LGBT+ students in Auckland secondary schools were actively challenging stereotypes, but that this also at times produced tensions when being "out" at school. Having worked with GSAs, I acknowledge the value of these groups for a broad spectrum of outcomes, including their activism and aspirations for social justice. In my experience, these types of groups continue to sit at the threshold of institutional identity. For example, I recall some in the community viewed the presence of support groups as promoting queer lifestyles and navigating institutional discourses of uncertainty. DIVINQ was an experiment of moving beyond heteronormative discourses that invited moral panic when discussing LGBT+.

At present, both LGBT+ and disabled identities have been problematised in educational research through a shared focus on risk and vulnerability in the development of pedagogical practice. Disabled students in secondary schools have had little voice in research around the construction of their identities although there is growing interest in tertiary level experiences (see Kendall, 2016; Osborne, 2019). I am interested in how pedagogy might, by disturbing some of the repeated patterns of concern that have become normalised, trouble the normalisation of abject-otherness. It is in this context that I examine an encounters-exposure approach to disability.

Key resonances of this chapter

The problematisations of disability and LGBT+ share common aspects with respect to the dominant discourses constructing difference as abject and other. The fear of disability is deeply entangled in humanism's values of bodily autonomy and invulnerability. Therefore, disabled bodies have their intelligibility captured by deficit and pathologising ideas. The control and regulation of material/bodily difference limits exposure to difference. Thus, in spite of the development of inclusive education, dominant spatialising practices continue to regulate encounters with difference while using stereotypes of vulnerability to draw out moral values. LGBT+ identities are similarly constructed as vulnerable and at risk, but the management of risk is deemed to be the individual's responsibility and includes an expectation that the individual manage the risks themselves. While the formation of support groups such as GSAs can provide opportunities to take action, and to support LGBT+ students, their existence reifies ideas of LGBT+ as other. Institutional and pedagogical assemblages thereby naturalise difference-as-other.

Chapter 4: Pedagogy coding difference

This chapter maps epistemological landscapes to show the territories of knowledge available to make sense of difference. It explores how philosophical fields of thought shape pedagogical practices and the implications of these for developing new practice. Forms of pedagogy develop in relation to ideas about the purpose of education and the needs of society (Goodson & Gill, 2014; Murphy, 1996), including concerns for difference and diversity. In tracing the movement of humanism and its coding of diversity, I seek to decode the documents and statements that shape policy and practice as well as various pedagogical approaches. I explore the pedagogies that emerge from humanist epistemological landscapes and explore how these shape needs-responses to difference. I then move to discuss and explore alternative queer and posthumanist-informed approaches. This serves to contrast the pedagogical landscapes of meaning available and I examine how this informs intelligible practices.

The New Zealand Curriculum – encoding the humanist subject

The vision of the NZC (2007) aims to produce young people who are confident, positive in their own identity, resilient; connected, able to relate well to others; actively engaged, participants in a range of life contexts; life-long learners, and active seekers and creators of knowledge. The vision is further coded by eight principles. I discuss three that are significant to this thesis: cultural diversity, inclusion, and future focus (p. 8).

By defining cultural diversity as race-ethnicity, other forms of diversity are ignored or considered under the principle of inclusion. For example, "[t]he NZC is non-sexist, non-racist, and non-discriminatory; it ensures that students' identities, languages, abilities and talents are recognised and affirmed and that their learning needs are addressed" (p. 9). While sex and race are identified, other forms of difference are not and therefore cannot be included in valuing identity, leaving them, instead, to be taken up in the category of learning needs.

The values expressed state overtly the kinds of people that the Aotearoa/New Zealand education system hopes to produce. Of relevance are the values of diversity, equity, and respect (for self, others, and social justice). The values statements in the NZC define the discourses/codes that govern acceptable difference, "[v]alues are deeply held beliefs about what is important or *desirable* [emphasis added]. They are expressed through the ways people *think and act* [emphasis added]" (p. 10). However, if the meaning of diversity is defined as

predominantly cultural and neutral, then the space left for difference is moved through values of equity which involve fairness through social justice. The values can locate difference as other and undesirable but call on people to act with kindness, empathy, and to fight for rights. For example, according to the NZC, these values have "widespread support because it is by holding these values and acting on them that we are able to live together and thrive" (p. 10). The dominant discourses that produce what it means to "live together" and "thriving" obscures the humanist undertones that problematise disability and LGBT+ as morally questionable (Eriksen, 2006) that then construct ideas about what 'living together' and 'thriving' is in practice.

The key competencies of the NZC include thinking, using language symbols and texts, managing self, relating to others, participating and contributing. Relating to others involves "interacting effectively with a diverse range of people in a variety of contexts" (p. 12). If there are structural exclusions for interacting *with* difference, my question is how can *others* participate and contribute?

Future oriented education: context for developing alternative practice

[2016-ish] – There is a professional development presentation on future-oriented education. Great enthusiasm is expressed for the vision it paints. I'm irked by the discussion around diversity and inclusivity. I hear the words "wicked problems" and flinch. I wonder who could be considered "a wicked problem" and what solutions might be found. As I listen to the principles being discussed, I think about DIVINQ as an alternative vision of rebundling practices. It is time to get serious about theorising what Philip and I have been doing with DIVINQ.

The NZC is renewed and revised regularly. A conceptual blind-spot for future education is the definition of diversity. Bolstad et al. (2012) discuss the implications of a more global community and working with a wide range of beliefs and values, arguing that "21st century citizens need to be educated for diversity – in both the 'people' sense and the 'knowledge/ideas' sense" (p. 25). Thus, in addition to acknowledging a need to move to more organic networked processes where diversity and difference are actively encouraged rather than just tolerated, I propose that a significant limit to engagement is fear of other forms of difference and what constitutes diversity of knowledge/ideas.

Under the principle of "curriculum that uses knowledge to develop learning capacity", young people are equipped to use knowledge in new ways. A key idea is to move knowledge away from a content driven approach to "navigate the constantly shifting networks and flows of knowledge that are a feature of 21st century life" (Bolstad et al., 2012, p. 32). This principle could resonate with posthuman pedagogical practices of unblocking flows of alternative-subjugated knowledge where networks of knowledge recognise the production of ignorance. Constructing pedagogical practice that enables ignorance to become productive are not identified and I discuss pedagogies that mobilise ignorance as another potential flow later in this chapter.

The principle of "rethinking notions of teachers and learners" engages a concept of power sharing with young people. Bolstad et al. (2012, p. 40) argue that there are three transformative concepts: the learner is transformed, the learner transforms the world, and what is considered learning will transform over time. They propose that, to achieve transformative pedagogy, there must be a navigation of various disciplines of knowledge wherein practice moves away from being either teacher driven or student-centred thinking toward knowledge building together (Bolstad et al., 2012, p. 42). While this approach serves to disturb the dualism of teacher-driven/student-centred, it leaves undefined what knowledge is legitimised as valuable and worthy of building. I propose that an *unbuilding* practice such as DIVINQ may be useful as a process that questions what knowledge-ignorance is considered transformative.

The principle of "new kinds of partnerships and relationships" emerges from a concern that schools are siloed from communities and often need access to more expertise. However, *who* is considered part of a community and what partnerships are deemed valuable expertise is not explicitly identified. For example, as discussed in Chapter 3, disabled communities are actively siloed, therefore disabled communities are less likely to have their knowledge recognised or to be valued as experts. Bolstad et al. (2012) propose that in "most formal contemporary learning situations, the 'messiness' of real-world situations is simplified in the development of contrived learning tasks where the answers and outcomes are already known to the teacher" (p. 49). Secondary schools are organised around dividing/spatialising practices that *tidy-up* encounters with difference. "Systems and structures must also be developed in ways that enable, rather than constrain, community connections" (Bolstad et al., 2012, p. 49). This research investigates how DIVINQ might be such an enabling assemblage.

A key problem identified by Bolstad et al. (2012) is that innovative practice often does not go far enough to dislodge old ideas and practices, and that innovation is, in fact, repetition rearranged (p. 61). “If people are genuinely engaged in unpacking and questioning current practice, they are likely to recognise that there is *a need to do things differently* [emphasis added]” (Bolstad et al., 2012, p. 62). A major challenge, however, in doing things differently lies in the current lack of models and examples of different practice. Philip and I shared an interest in doing things differently while avoiding a repackaging of the same. This research project cautiously advocates for DIVINQ as an example of a different model of practice.

Pedagogies of resistance operating in “The Humanist Matrix”

The purpose of this section is to explore how the problematisation of difference informs pedagogical responses. Humanist-informed pedagogical approaches to difference have made significant contributions to improving the lives of marginalised groups. Three of these approaches are radical, critical, and affective pedagogies. These pedagogies are not necessarily wrong nor damaging, but they have effects for the reification of otherness.

Radical pedagogy draws on Lacanian psychoanalysis and seeks empowerment through a grounded identity by focussing on the way identity shapes experience and as the key to social change. Mark Bracher (2006) identifies three aspects of identity work: that a strong identity helps with the development of intelligence and the capacity and motivation to learn; that personal well-being is at stake and, without self-esteem, vulnerability becomes the cause of social problems; and that identity development is a way of solving social problems. Language and signs are significant in that they stabilise and ground identity. Highly valued signifiers or identity-bearing signifiers include concepts such as “intelligent”, “determined”, and “clever” can contradict other signifiers. For example, if females are deemed to be more emotional and thus, presumably, more irrational, being deemed to be intelligent or logical can contradict the gender signifier as gender norms assign these valued signifiers to males. According to Bracher (2006), insults produce doubt in the meanings attached to a signifier, and an underdeveloped, insecure identity produces social issues. Gendered insults often involve questioning the alignment of signifiers of an individual.

Critical pedagogy focusses on the political and social effects of education. Critical pedagogy emphasises issues of social justice and democracy where emancipatory outcomes are preferred (Gadotti, 1996; Giroux, 2002, 2003). Henry Giroux (2002, 2003) cites the need to pay heed to

the ways identity is formed in a postmodern space mediated by technology and highlights the tensions of this with modernist notions of rigid and concrete certainty. Giroux (2002) is critical of modernism in Western enlightenment traditions and how these have informed public schooling to enshrine certainty and standardisation. The outcome is a fear of difference and indeterminacy. Critical pedagogy promotes social action and change in response to diversity. Through critical pedagogy, the concept of activism emerges as the main way to improve conditions for marginalised communities.

In the context of gender and sexual diversity in schools, Elizabeth Meyer (2010) discusses how critical pedagogy has tended to focus on economic structures and has sought to rectify these to address inequality. Thus, in the process of addressing structural inequality, critical pedagogy produces emancipation as its desired outcome. With respect to sexuality education, Sanjakdar et al. (2015) argue that critical approaches support a shift from more conservative approaches to alternative practices where students speak to their own needs, desires, concerns, and sense making of their identities. This would enable discussions to go beyond the risk, reproduction, and prevention of disease discourses that are currently prevalent. For Sanjakdar et al. (2015), dialogue *across* difference to create new knowledge together is the preferred approach, but takes a humanist view that speaking, and voice are authentic. An effect of dominant discourses is that problematisations of disabled and LGBT+ produce legitimised dialogue across difference, where speaking positions become objects of concern in the battle for rights and social justice. Critical pedagogy can thereby operate as an idealised base for working with difference by calling on discourses of vulnerability.

Affective pedagogy positions emotions in opposition to the intellectual work of learning (Hung, 2014). Peter Lang (1998) argues that the emotional aspects of education are often sidelined and defines affective pedagogy as "part of the educational process that concerns itself with attitudes, feelings, beliefs and emotions of students" (p. 5). Thus, affective pedagogy is concerned with the moral, the spiritual, and the values that are developed through learning. Allan Patience (2008) states that affective pedagogy is an integration of intellect and emotion to bring a more balanced perspective as emotions involve assessment of worth. Patience (2008) argues that the aims of affective pedagogy are to resist demanding compliance and obedience so that people have the capacity to naturally develop a sympathy to, and tolerance of, difference as democratic citizenship builds. The assertion by Patience (2008) here is, of course, governed by the

emotion-reason dualism of humanism. I propose that sympathy and tolerance mobilises concern for the vulnerability of others on behalf of values such as compassion.

Summarising humanism's resonances

Radical, critical, and affective pedagogy work to ensure the needs of a civilised society are met and have been effective in highlighting inequality and in meeting a range of needs. These ideas are more readily taken up as they do not fundamentally disrupt The Humanist Matrix. However, difference remains othered and the dualism of mind-body is reified through traditional affective pedagogy. These pedagogies focus on the individual and value the development of a strong identity. They work through territorialised humanist knowledges and produce practices that privilege identity over difference (St. Pierre, 2000). I turn now to discuss alternative pedagogies that emerge from poststructural and posthuman theory. I begin with a discussion of queer pedagogy and move onto posthuman pedagogy before discussing other contemporary pedagogical theories working through poststructural and posthuman theory.

Queer pedagogies working through poststructural and posthuman theory

A space-time diversion

I was an undergraduate student in 1993 mountain biking the hills of Dunedin, crashing into gorse, and grappling with poststructural theory for the first time [and how to extract gorse thistles from my body]. Meanwhile, queer-poststructural theorists were considering thorny aspects of pedagogy:

> It seems imperative to explore and to articulate a set of pedagogical practices that might offer greater opportunities than those currently available to both students and teachers 'of difference' for the construction of, and participation in, democratic, engaging, pleasurable, interesting, generative, and non-violent learning environments. (Bryson & De Castell, 1993b, p. 299)

In my final year of university [still mountain biking, with juggling as a side hobby], Britzman (1995) was arguing about the pedagogical stakes of queer theory for thinking "ethically about what discourses of difference, choice, and visibility mean in classrooms, in pedagogy, and in how education can be thought about" (p. 152). She was also concerned for "structures of disavowal within education, or the refusals – whether curricular, social, or pedagogical – to engage a traumatic perception that produces the subject of difference as a disruption, as the outside to normalcy" (p.

152). Meanwhile, I was tossing a coin as to whether to go to circus school or teachers' college. One year after I started teaching, Luhmann (1998) asked how "normalcy and abnormalcy become assigned subject positions? How can they be subverted? How can the very notion of a unified human subject be parodied and, jointly with other discourses, radically deconstructed into a fluid, permanently shifting, and unintelligible subjectivity?" (p. 145). That year Britzman proposed that:

> When pedagogy meets queer theory and thus becomes concerned with its own structure of intelligibility (…) and when pedagogy engages its own impertinence, the very project of knowledge and its accompanying subject-presumed-to-know become interminable despite the institutional press for closure, tidiness, and certainty. (Britzman, 1998, p. 82)

As I considered a move from teaching to counselling, I took up surfing. Floundering in foam, grappling with reading waves, choosing a board, and frequently wiping out – a metaphor for retraining in narrative therapy. Concurrently, Colebrook (2008) was making waves in queer theory currents by posing questions about the influence of psychotherapy as a potential constraint on its radical queer-posthuman possibilities. She was contending that Deleuzian concepts could move theory beyond a focus on subject of experience: "the true challenge of Deleuze and Guattari's thought lies in its difference from *critical* models, and in its transformation of the ways in which we understand theoretical relations, and relationality in general" (Colebrook, 2008, p. 22, emphasis in original). It would be another decade until I caught that turbulent wave.

Colebrook (2009) asks "[i]s queer theory a reflection on what it means to be queer, or does the concept of queerness change the ways in which we theorise?" (p. 11). In secondary school contexts, the first question is taken up with a focus on the identities and needs of LGBT+ people in schools. I am interested in exploring the second aspect of Colebrook's question with respect to how we theorise pedagogical practice.

Queer theory moves beyond sexuality and the demand for rights to rethink knowledge and pedagogy (Britzman, 1995, 1998, 2012; Bryson & de Castell, 1993a; Colebrook, 2009; Halberstam, 2003; Luhmann, 1998; Shlasko, 2005; Youdell; 2005, 2006a). Queer pedagogy takes up queer theory to reconceptualise identity in terms of identifications and the importance of being in relation to others as one way to shift toward a more ethical pedagogy (Britzman, 1995, 1998, 2012). Britzman (1995) argues that common notions, such as inclusion, is problematic with respect to LGBT+ identity and states that, "[i]n discourses of inclusion there

tends to be only two pedagogical strategies: techniques for attitudinal change and provisions for information" (p. 158). These two strategies are consistently represented in approaches to diversity in schools, particularly through health education, targeted anti-bullying programmes, and individual counselling.

Britzman (1995) suggests that queer theory offers pedagogy three practices. Of relevance to this project are the study of limits and the study of ignorance. "The study of limits" is a problem of where thought stops a problem of thinkability. It begins with the question, "what makes something thinkable?" as opposed to explaining how someone thinks (Britzman, 1995, p. 156). The study of limits looks at where thought can or cannot go; that is, where thought "cannot bear to know" (p. 156). This position resists usual dualistic thinking as it seeks out new and novel places on the borders of thinking. DIVINQ operates somewhere on this border to produce a bearable encounter with thought. Britzman discusses how cultural constructions of intelligibility become known through institutionalised power-knowledge and regimes of truth that control *what is thinkable*. DIVINQ might function to disturb the thinkability of difference by working at the boundary of institutionalised practice.

The study of ignorance views identity as continually constructed in binary dualisms that maintain two subject positions. Education must therefore question how identities are constructed through knowledge made available through pedagogical practice. Rather than see ignorance as a lack of information or knowledge, queer pedagogy offers education the space for ignorance to become productive. Instead of attempting to overcome or correct, for example, by "providing information", ignorance serves as a marker of spaces of knowing. It functions as a way of noticing the discursive fields that allow for difference to be problematised in a particular way. The study of ignorance resonates with the work of Erinn Gilson (1995) and Jennifer Logue (2008, 2014) with respect to developing pedagogies that take up a productive relationship with ignorance and is discussed later in this chapter.

Queer pedagogy in secondary schools: identity and classroom practices

Common approaches in schools to LGBT+ identities are entangled with heteronormative discourses and a general unease of sexuality. Lori Mackintosh (2007) argues that heteronormativity often goes unquestioned, shutting down space for other sexual identities to be present and, as such, excludes these forms of difference. "Too often, explorations of homophobia are an invitation to validate sameness and an opportunity to reify the queer body as other" (Macintosh, 2007, p. 35). A common response is to provide anti-bullying and safe

space initiatives that, as Mackintosh observes and which my experience echoes, are not inherently bad but do little to produce systemic change.

Another layer of pedagogical territory from which it has been difficult to break free involves assumptions around "what to do about ignorance". Luhmann (1998) argues that ignorance is often viewed as a problem of representation and there is an assumption that homophobia is produced because of a lack of exposure to difference. Limited exposure to positive role models for LGBT+ youth is also seen as problematic for the development of self-esteem. The emphasis on normalising LGBT+ identities, according to Luhmann, reduces difference to the same and assimilates into heteronormative concepts. Therefore, pedagogical approaches tend to default back to discourses and practices of inclusion (Britzman, 1995).

The gaze of teachers and adults also operates to construct limits of practice. Susan Talburt (2004) argues that the effects of traditional developmental models of young people offer two subject positions for LGBTI+ youth: as either at-risk or as securely adjusted in their gay/queer identity. Talburt discusses how programmes are developed around these two constructs that maintain queer youth as requiring special support to navigate the dangerous transitional period of adolescence where links to mental health and suicide can be recruited to emphasise risk. These concerns echo mine as a teacher and counsellor and point to the positioning effects of common pedagogical practices, particularly in health education.

Heteronormalising discourses form another limit to queer pedagogy. In a health education context, Quinlivan and Shane Town (1999) found three heteronormalising practices at work: maintaining the silence of sexuality, the pathologising of homosexuality, and the policing of gender boundaries. They suggest three ways queer pedagogy could operate to interrupt heterosexualising and meet the perceived needs of LGBTI+ youth: creating spaces where heterosexuality is deconstructed, abnormalising the normal, and dissolving boundaries through forming alliances and spaces where commonalities are explored. Quinlivan (2012, 2019) found that attempts to provoke conversations and challenge heteronormativity in health classes with the use of popular culture produced complex relational disturbances. She found that in queering gender-sexuality, strong affective responses were produced from students that both troubled discourses and were troubling for teachers to respond to in classroom discussions. In revisiting research done in 2012, Quinlivan (2019), identifies the way silences and the unspoken can also affect tone – such as not responding to a homophobic joke. This suggests that while all young people could benefit from the ideas of difference made available through queer pedagogy, the

ability to hold a safe space for discussion is contentious (see also Weems, 2019). Quinlivan's accounting of teacher silence highlights the complexities of working in such a contested moral landscape. In Chapter 6, I discuss in more detail some of the deep furrows of fear that construct health education assemblages with respect to sexuality education.

Contemporary pedagogies of resistance harmonising with queer pedagogy

Posthuman pedagogy includes forms of practice that disturb the dominant humanist epistemological orientation that inform all Western education. Snaza et al. (2014, emphasis in original) propose that achieving posthuman pedagogy will require "not just new knowledge but engaging in political interactions that produce new ways of thinking about what knowledge, or perhaps more accurately *meaning*, is" (p. 50). This section explores forms of posthuman-pedagogies that take up Deleuzoguattarian and Foucauldian concepts that DIVINQ's assemblage might mobilise to produce a unique inquiry space. The first is Deleuzian affective pedagogy.

Deleuzian affect moves the epistemological concept away from psychology that aligns affect with emotion. Deleuze views learning as a rupture or shock in which a body is opened to forces of difference, desire, and becoming (Cole, 2011; Duff, 2013; Hickey-Moody, 2009; Semetsky, 2013). Duff (2013) argues that "[a]ffective pedagogies position education and learning as intensive processes of affective and material production, in which forces, sensations and intensities are transmitted between bodies in ways that transform their distinctive capacities" (p. 194). Anna Hickey-Moody (2009) similarly and more simply states that "[a]ffect is the concept of taking something on, of changing in relation to an experience or encounter" (p. 273). Inna Semetsky (2013) proposes that "[t]he creative, transformative, and evaluative element embedded in experiential learning defies the reductive approach to education as merely formal schooling" (p. 84). As discussed in Chapter 3, dividing practices of schools tend to dampen such intensive affective encounters from happening and much teaching and learning is based on repetition. DIVINQ was a way to break free of repetition and experiment with an affective learning space.

A Deleuzian practice of affective pedagogy uses encounters with bodies to produce thought. This form of thought fundamentally resists Cartesianism's version of cogito. Bodies sense the presence of other bodies, and through this experience, learn to interact and compose themselves in the shock of encounter. The world is constantly producing signs, of which "problems" are one form. In DIVINQ, disabled bodies and gender-queerness were key signs called on to

stimulate inquiry by exploring the problem-problematisation of difference. For Deleuzian-affective pedagogy, solving these problems is experimental and experiential rather than a recognition of ideas. The process of becoming sensitive to signs is that which begins the process of making meaning out of experience. Duff (2013) argues that it is Deleuze's ethics of signs and events that brings forward the meaning making process. The process requires subjects to become more conscious of signs and events, such that they may accelerate or harness the forces that become available within them. "It is a question of sensing signs and events in order to extend the array of bodies and entities that one may enter in relations with, and thus affect and be affected by" (Duff, 2013, p. 197). I propose that DIVINQ promotes a process that intensifies the sensitivity of participants towards signs of difference.

A challenge to overcome when discussing topics such as sexuality and gender identity is the current uncertainty about how to ensure young people are safe, respected, and included. For decades, anxiety has pervaded questions about how to work with sexuality in schools. Thirty years ago, Bryson and De Castell (1993b) proposed that while there is no such thing as safe pedagogy, it can be made safer. They state the need to both explore and articulate a set of practices that might offer more opportunities than those *currently* available to both students and teachers of difference (p. 299). Fast-forward a few decades, Lisa Weems (2019) argues that the concept of safe spaces in schools is contestable, particularly for young LGBT+ people of colour. Weems states that "in the case of educational spaces that are presumed or designed to promote equity, inclusion, and/or social justice, the space of the classroom is itself a contested object" (p. 95). In thinking of pedagogy through assemblages, she proposes that what can happen in a classroom environment depends on the affective space:

> If school is imagined to feel like home, one may approach the classroom space quite differently than if school is imagined to feel like prison. Whereas the former conjures emotions such as care and openness toward others, the latter invokes feelings of fear, anger, or perhaps resentment. (Weems, 2019, pp. 96-97)

In my experience, a prison-like experience for young people was more common and I wanted to create a more home-like learning space. A concept of safe spaces has implications for constructing any learning assemblage, including DIVINQ. The organisation of spaces and relationships effects the functioning of an assemblage, "the particular positioning (of identities)

within discursive fields that enables and constrains what can and can [sic] [cannot] be stated or enacted" (Weems, 2019, p. 98). Weems' concept of producing *safer* spaces through assemblages is useful for considering the dynamics of pedagogical relationships where disability and LGBT+ bodies and discourses of difference position people. In exploring DIVINQ as a potential queering-posthuman assemblage, I pay attention to enabling and constraining practices. In particular, I focus on the dynamics of facilitation and the function of humour-laughter to disturb discursive fields. One identity group often missing from discussions of difference are those with unique function [disabilities].

Goodley (2007) critiques pedagogies that claim social justice outcomes where disability is excluded. He argues that while critical pedagogy cites a need to value marginalised identities (see Giroux, 2002, 2003), disability is contained by the politics of deficit models that maintain pathologising discourses and exclusionary practices. More significantly, he proposes that identity categories such as culture, gender, and sexuality are explored for meaning and for questioning the socially just nature of pedagogy; however, disability remains off limits. He argues for investing socially-just-pedagogy with concepts from poststructural and postmodern theory. Goodley identifies six opportunities for socially just pedagogies through a Deleuzoguattarian approach. I discuss four of these ideas that are relevant to developing new practice. The first is moving beyond binary descriptions, through bodies as emergent and becoming. The second idea is that desire is productive and, therefore, disabled students are also productive. When labels and diagnostic language give way to new ways of making meaning, identities are no longer knowable. The third idea involves the erasure of the subject, wherein the 'I' erodes the individual. Finally, the fourth idea pertains to moving away from caring about the individual and their needs to that of caring about becomings. I contend that DIVINQ may be a way to take up Goodley's vision through an ongoing interrogation of the knowledges through which bodies and identities can be understood. DIVINQ's practice of taking an explicit stand against simple notions of inclusion and rights resonate with questions of social justice. I turn now to discuss Logue's (2014) concept of a pedagogy of epistemic vulnerability.

Pedagogy has concerned itself with the development of knowledge with ignorance ignored or placed in a subordinate position as lack of enlightenment. Thus, the process of *producing* ignorance is largely ignored. Logue (2014) argues that "ignorance is no mere lack of knowledge as is commonly assumed, but is rather actively sought after, consciously produced, strategically deployed, ferociously consumed, and carefully maintained" (p. 53). Ignorance of difference is

particularly problematic for pedagogy claiming to respect peoples' identities. Logue turns to theories of ignorance as both produced and productive (see Britzman, 1995; Gilson, 2011; McGoey, 2012; Proctor, 2008). Where humanism constructs an ideal invulnerable subject, Logue (2014) turns to ignorance and explores possibilities for developing a pedagogy-of-epistemic-vulnerability.

Logue (2014) discusses three types of ignorance that pertain to developing a pedagogy of epistemic vulnerability: strategic unknowns and sequestered knowledges, disciplinarity, and transferred ignorance. "Strategic unknowns and sequestered knowledges" work through power-knowledge-truth. Linsey McGoey (2012) argues ignorance can be harnessed as a resource, enabling knowledge to be deflected, obscured, concealed, or magnified in a way that increases the scope of what remains unintelligible (p. 1). Logue (2014) identifies how this occurs when knowledge is considered threatening or dangerous. These are "carefully constructed forms of not knowing that are used to protect power. They are deployed, either consciously or not, because those in privileged positions do not want us to know or do not themselves want to know" (Logue, 2014, p. 55). According to Logue (2014), sexuality is a particular area that is prone to strategic unknowns through sequestered knowledge. She argues that forms of expert knowledges can be mobilised to construct ignorance and impacts on dominant and subordinated groups by enabling people to deny awareness of things that are deemed not in their interests. Her following words resonate with this project: "[d]isciplined knowledge fails to recognize epistemes grounded on different conceptions of the world and ways of knowing, and thus, *othered others cannot be recognized as such, they cannot speak and cannot be heard* [emphasis added]" (Logue, 2014, p. 58). Disciplined knowledges saturate pedagogical assemblages and have not yet made space for epistemes grounded in subjugated knowledges that include posthumanism. Constructing positions to speak and to be heard requires careful consideration of how to bring the voices of othered-others through pedagogical assemblages.

"Disciplinarity" occurs when there is a denial of vulnerability and serves to uphold a normative image of the masterful humanist subject. Gilson (2011) argues that ignorance of vulnerability entails the pursuit of invulnerability and, therefore, that invulnerability is a form of ignorance (p. 309). Gilson problematises vulnerability through the concept of the human condition that is mobilised through ideas of harm, well-being, and risk. Vulnerability as the potential for being harmed or at risk is entangled with rights. Rights protect one's interests insofar as one is a

vulnerable party, and deprivation of these rights increases vulnerability. Rights are considered good by providing a balance to injustice. Likewise, the pursuit of equality remedies injustice, which can be understood as the unjust distribution of vulnerability. This forms a normative code of (re)producing the project of civilized society through reducing vulnerability and providing protections. I concur with Gilson's argument that a normative concept/coding of vulnerability as risk of harm and danger remains both under interrogated and overdetermined in certain groups such as disabled and LGBT+. Rights are neither wrong nor bad; the danger lies in the increasing assumption and naturalisation of the notion that vulnerability equates to weakness. It is this view of vulnerability from which the pedagogical practice of DIVINQ seeks to escape.

A concept of vulnerability as susceptibility to harm also enables people to disavow their own, maintaining the position of difference as otherness in the process. The other aspect is the reification of the ideal human subject:

> The denial of vulnerability can be understood to be motivated by the desire—conscious or not—to maintain a certain kind of subjectivity privileged in capitalist socioeconomic systems, namely, that of the prototypical, arrogantly self-sufficient, independent, invulnerable master subject. Invulnerability is a central feature of masterful subjectivity because it solidifies a sense of control, indeed, an illusion of control. (Gilson, 2011, p. 312)

This version of invulnerability closes off curiosity and interest in the potential for vulnerability to be deemed productive. This has been one of the significant challenges of working in schools and one of the key forces behind my desire to develop new practice such as DIVINQ. Gilson moves vulnerability through Deleuzian affect to produce a more positive and productive concept. She states that "vulnerability is a basic kind of openness to being affected and affecting in both positive and negative ways, which can take diverse forms in different social situations" (Gilson, 2011, p. 310). Gilson suggests this positive concept shifts away from associating vulnerability with particular groups of people or circumstances that require intervention.

"Transferred ignorance" is a simple concept of people overestimating their knowledge. Logue (2014) argues that "we view ourselves (and our closed communities) as epistemically superior, as more knowledgeable than we actually are, which carries with it a feeling of false superiority and a sense of having power over others" (p. 59). More significantly, and with respect to this project, Logue proposes that assumptions about groups are reproduced and naturalised without question.

DIVINQ: a practice producing epistemic vulnerability?

Plato's cave is an analogy frequently called on to describe the relationship between knowledge and ignorance. Logue (2014) advocates for a way "out of the cave" by both engaging outside communities, through the encounter with other knowers and ways of knowing and finding ways to admit epistemic vulnerability:

> When the prisoner encounters the light outside of the cave, a painful adjustment in his perceptual proclivities proves necessary. Perhaps in *his encounter with the community outside* [emphasis added], the shadows cast upon the wall of the cave became less daunting; the opacity of their form in the dark was perhaps revealed in *noting the projections that played key roles in shaping them* [emphasis added]. (Logue, 2014, p. 60)

DIVINQ calls together communities to engage and explore projections/coding shaping images of thought. There is a need to foster critical communities, Logue argues, to tap into forms of knowledge and ignorance that push against disciplined ignorance and sequestered knowledges. DIVINQ could be a form of critical community where:

> In recognizing the limits of our knowledge, the impossibility of invulnerability, and the contradictory roles ignorance and knowledge play in forces of domination and emancipation, we can *open ourselves up* [emphasis added] to exciting new forms of pleasure in creating social relations of reciprocity and solidarity. (Logue, 2014, p. 61)

How to open young people to productive possibilities of ignorance and vulnerability requires a disruption of the normalised meanings of invulnerability. DIVINQ works in this space through the use of encounters mediated through humour and laughter. I discuss this in the following section, but I first examine the concept of epiphanic pedagogy which also resonates with the approach of DIVINQ.

Over my years of teaching, I have frequently heard students complain "we have done this before, this is so boring". Robert Cole (2011) argues that the common approach to learning is knowledge building with repetition of content. Cole considers the aspects of contemporary learning, such as relentless assessment and outcome driven curriculum, produce boredom and fatigue, that effects both students and teachers, echoing my experience. "Boredom backgrounds much of what we do in education, and therefore sits in the unconscious as a hidden plane of interaction, projection and domination; it is a vampire locked into our vitality and feeding off the life-forms" (Cole, 2011, p. 42). Cole draws on Deleuzian encounters as affective pedagogy and suggests that epiphanic experiences can revitalise learning. Epiphanies offer a way out as shocks that generate a rupture in routine and bring about the unexpected. Cole argues that Deleuzian philosophies should not be applied timidly to education as the point is to disrupt and be provocative to escape the mundane. "Deleuzian teaching and learning practice therefore contains a turbulent, yet creative base that often sets values and beliefs against themselves through epiphanies" (Cole, 2011, p. 60). DIVINQ's use of humour and laughter as a form of turbulent provocation and anti-vampire practice is explored in this thesis.

Summary of contemporary pedagogies

Pedagogies informed by poststructural-posthumanist ideas share a commitment to disturbing the underlying humanist field of thought that produces a concept of difference as abject and other. Forms of pedagogical practice that emerge work to disrupt dualistic concepts such as knowledge-ignorance and vulnerable-invulnerable. Value encounters *with difference* serve to produce learning as an affective shock that emerges from, and draws on, subjugated knowledge. Queer-posthumanist pedagogies take a position that knowledge and ignorance produce each other and recognise that both are productive. In unsettling knowledge from a privileged/positive/invulnerable position, vulnerability is reconceived as open to being affected. To construct such a disturbance, DIVINQ deploys humour and laughter.

Chapter 5: Resonances of humour and laugher

This chapter explores diverse theories of humour and laughter in both a broader societal context and in schools. The purpose is to provide context for working with humour-laughter in schools and the effects of disciplinary power and normative gaze on ideas of what is acceptable as professional practice with respect to the behavioural expectations of teachers and students. That is, where humour-laughter might disturb the image of good teaching-learning. I begin with tracing the development of humour theory through a humanist field of thought to demonstrate how this has informed common, taken for granted ideas of humour and laughter. I explore contemporary theory and move this theory through Foucauldian and Deleuzian concepts to draw out the pedagogical effects of humour-laughter that take-up queer-posthuman tones. A key aspect of humour-laughter examined in this chapter is the functioning of stand-up comedy assemblages in contemporary society. I investigate how stand-up comedy sets up a relationship between a comedian and audience to function as a laughing assemblage. This provides context for Philip's diverse facilitation experience and encounter with the ethical dilemmas of performing stand-up comedy. I discuss comedians as trickers and identify the qualities of comedy-tricksters that are relevant to the facilitation of DIVINQ. A key aspect of this chapter is identifying the complexities of using humour-laughter in various assemblages.

Decoding humanism's relationship with humour-laughter

Humour is currently understood as a uniquely human social phenomenon (Billig, 2005; Douglas, 1968; Gordon, 2010; Morreall, 1983, 2009, 2014) that may produce laughter. Through a humanist lens, humour is in a dialectical relationship with seriousness (Billig, 2005). Western philosophical ideas construct humour and laughter as counter to reason and rationality (Billig, 2005; Critchley, 2002; Douglas, 1968; Lippitt, 1994; McDonald, 2012; Morreall, 1983, 2009, 2014). As such, humour and laughter have traditionally been viewed with caution as to their value in civilised society. This has implications for humour being employed in pedagogical practices. Mordechai Gordon (2010) discusses Frederick Nietzsche's break with this tradition. Nietzsche argued that lightness of spirit was a way through the gloomy morality of Western philosophical traditions. Similarly, Joris Vlieghe (2014) discusses the vitalist movement that views laughter as life affirming with implications for its potential through pedagogy. The positive life affirming view has struggled against the deeper coding of

humanism that constructs humour and laughter as unproductive and irrelevant to thinking and learning.

Theories of humour are drawn across diverse fields of philosophy, psychology, sociology, and anthropology (Smutz, n.d.), with three dominant ideas developing over time. Two of these, incongruity and relief, inform contemporary theories of humour. Incongruity involves a violation of expectations or a surprise (Billig, 2005; Critchley, 2002; Lippitt, 1994). Emmanuel Kant likened humour to a form of play by setting up intentional expectations then frustrating them: "The core of humor is that we adopt a playful attitude toward something incongruous and we enjoy it" (Morreall, 2014, p. 126). Contemporary humour theorist John Morreall (2008) argues that the incongruity of humour undermines rationality and is therefore a form of conceptual anarchy. It is the undermining of serious reasoned-rational thought and conceptual anarchism that I am interested in exploring as a potential queering-posthumanism technique. Relief theory is attributed to Sigmund Freud, who viewed humour and laughter as the release of excess nervous mental energy that is used to patrol regular polite ways of being. Since then, relief theory and incongruity have been reworked by contemporary humour theorists and I join this endeavour by examining the positioning effects of language-discourse through Foucauldian-poststructural concepts of power-knowledge surveillance. This rearticulation is important for understanding the work humour and laughter might achieve through DIVINQ. I begin with a discussion of locating humour in the current context of society.

Billig (2005) problematises the modern context of humour with respect to the effects of ideological positivism and positive psychology. He argues that ideological positivism overemphasises positive productive pleasure in ways that overlook and minimise the negative. Humour, according to Billig, has become almost unquestionable in its value where being unable to take a joke is seen as a personal flaw. The rise of positive psychology in the West has embraced laughter and humour as unquestionably positive. I suggest that this has intensified some of the complex-competing discourses about humour circulating in society. When seen through the lens of late-advanced capitalism, this intensification has implications for discourses of humour in ways that contribute to the production of the ideal humanist subject. Billig describes how positive psychology recruits humour and laughter as positive emotions to help people ride out uncertainty. Humour has thus come to be understood as about how to keep a strong sense of self in a constantly shifting world of uncertainty. Equally, identity involves discourses of how to *be* in the world, not just what actions are done. People then have

a “duty to become a positive person, no matter what sort of identities they are creating for themselves” (Billig, 2005, p. 31). This idea resonates with Foucault’s (1997a) argument that a Western philosophical underpinning of ethics, promotes the idea that people have a duty to work on themselves. The emphasis on individualism normalises notions that one is personally responsible for maintaining a positive mind set and is, in fact, ethically obliged to cultivate a good sense of humour.

Humanist discourses, however, can shield people from accountability for the potential harm humour can produce. The problematisation of humour as intrinsically good, positions people within discourses of personal growth and self-development to take any humour in their stride. This sets up assumptions about the value of humour in pedagogical settings. If learning to “take a joke” is normalised and even encouraged, then young people and teachers are caught in an ethical dilemma in situations where being bullied is conflated with “taking a joke”. On the terms of positioning theory, those who express discomfort or who contemplate speaking up about bullying may subsequently face accusations that they lack a sense of humour and cannot take a joke Humour and laughter are thus always entangled in relations of power.

Disciplining & Rebellious Humour

All humour, according to Billig (2005), involves ridicule, but humour also creates social order through the paradox of discipline and rebellion.

> Disciplinary humour mocks those who break social rules, and thus can be seen to aid the maintenance of those rules. Rebellious humour mocks the social rules, and, in its turn, can be seen to challenge, or rebel against, the rules. (Billig, 2005, p. 182)

The relationship between discipline and rebellion may be reconceptualised in terms of territorialising-disciplinary and deterritorialising-rebellious movements.

The concept of disciplinary humour resonates with Foucault’s (1977/1991) theories of power and the normative gaze where people learn to monitor their own behaviour according to the social rules that code what is acceptable or normal. Billig (2005) argues that everyday codes of behaviour are protected by the practice of embarrassment. Schools are sites where practices of surveillance and the normalising gaze monitor transgressions. Billig (2005) suggests that humour acts to police boundaries through the deployment of ridicule. Humour and laughter

are forms of induction to social order where the rules are learned informally. This is particularly relevant for school settings. The threat of ridicule and shame operates as a form of surveillance. In learning contexts, Geraldine Oades-Sese, Tara Ann Matthews, and Michael Lewis (2014) argue that shame can have significant effects on learning, and that laughter from peers is often shame inducing. As Billig (2005) succinctly states "if meaning is to be socially policed, then mockery and laughter are the friendly neighbourhood officers who cheerily maintain order (…) and sometimes wield their truncheons with punishing effects" (p. 238). Humour can thus operate as an informal pedagogy that enforces normative expectations whereby the fear of ridicule has the effect of policing behaviour. As a classroom teacher, I have witnessed the punishing effects of shame induced laughter. DIVINQ was constructed to reduce the punishing effects of ridicule. Thus, the form of humour I hoped DIVINQ would circulate was a form of rebellious humour.

Rebellious humour pushes against rules disrupting normative ideas. This can be as simple as puns, a form of incongruity that involves breaking the codes of language. Irony similarly operates as a moment of transcendence (Billig, 2005). Rebellious humour is not better than disciplinary humour nor is it necessarily a binary relationship opposite. Billig argues that bigotry can work to mock the seriousness of tolerance and reason, framing itself as a freedom from the constraints of standards of rationality, where a more liberal perspective is viewed as too serious. Rebellious humour, on the other hand, focusses on systems of power and is of relevance to the DIVINQ process.

A poststructural view of rebellious humour could reconceptualise humour as mobilising discourses in a meaning making process. The key difference between disciplining and rebellious humour are the positioning effects of the discourses called into play. While disciplinary humour tends to be more conservative and rebellious more radical (Billig, 2005), this could reinforce a binary. I employ a Foucauldian-Deleuzian re-conceptualisation that addresses what is problematised, where games-of-truth are played with humour. Where disciplinary humour upholds dominant power-knowledge discourses and normalisation as acts of (re)territorialising to reinforce difference as other and to fix intelligible identities in place, rebellious humour operates to deterritorialise by disrupting systems of knowing, bringing forward subjugated discourses to disturb truths and question problematisations of difference. It is important to acknowledge that young people participating in a process such as DIVINQ

have their own experiences of humour's disciplining effects through various learning assemblages in schools and in other social contexts.

Ethics of humour: the good, the bad and the interesting

Morreall (2009) discusses the complex landscape of moral objections, virtues, and the ethics of humour. A negative aspect of humour is that it involves disengaging momentarily from caring. He argues that although there may not be someone present who suffers directly from humiliation, "humor can promote insensitivity, callousness, or cruelty toward those being laughed about" (p. 104). A common assumption I have come across is that so long as someone is part of an identity group, they can make jokes about that group. David Benatar (2014) cautions about contextual assumptions regarding *who* is delivering the humour. It is not automatically more ethical for someone of a particular identity group to make jokes about that group as harm is still caused. That is, regardless of the subject position of the person telling the joke, the dominant discourses (re)produce ideas of difference that reinforce fear of others/otherness. Thus, alongside Billig's concern regarding ideological positivism, in a social context, people must decide how to respond and position themselves in the moment a joke is made. People either side with humiliation or resist the position call made. The potential harmful result of disengagement becomes irresponsibility as when someone "laughs it off", compassion is blocked, and this can promote prejudice (Morreall, 2009). An example is the mocking and teasing that occurs in school settings.

Benatar (2014) argues that positive aspects of humour are often overlooked: humour "can puncture pretentiousness, and lighten mood" (p. 14), particularly for topics that generate moral concern. This overlooked aspect resonates with my interest in puncturing problematisations of difference. Similarly, Billig (2005) argues that humour can be a way to process painful or embarrassing situations of the past. When telling a story to generate laughter from others, the shame experienced at the time is reprocessed. In the retelling, the recipients of the story and storyteller become observers of the past (Billig, 2005, p. 232). The pain of the past is transformed and laughter, rather than being part of this pain, becomes a pleasure of subversion. Through their laughter, the audience validates the speaker by serving as a form of revenge against the ridicule of embarrassment. The power shifts back to the teller and the current audience and "how we disrupted the social interaction" (p. 234). Contemporary stand-up comedy uses a form of wittification of self (Smith, 2018) that often calls on such personal

stories. This process resonates with narrative therapy's re-storying (White, 2007; White & Epston, 1990) where the retelling constructs new meaning.

Morreall (2009) suggests that humour can also have positive ethics, which include developing intellectual and moral virtues such as having an open mind, being open to new experiences, and fostering divergent and creative thinking. It is these positive discourses that contemporary pedagogical theory takes up in its reconsideration of the value of humour in learning relationships. Morreall's theory of humour as playful relaxation provides a theoretical scaffold for how DIVINQ's assemblage potentially functions.

Humour and laughter producing playful relaxation

Morreall (2009) reworks Robert Latta's Theory L (see Latta, 1998/2011) to theorise humour as playful relaxation. There are four parts to Morreall's theory of humour: people experience a cognitive shift or a rapid change in perceptions or thoughts; a playful mode rather than a serious mode is experienced as people disengage from conceptual and practical concerns; instead of responding to the cognitive shift with shock, confusion, puzzlement, fear, anger, or other negative emotions, there is enjoyment; and, pleasure from the cognitive shift is expressed in laughter, which signals to others that they can relax and play too. I turn to explore these four aspects through both Foucauldian and Deleuzian concepts to articulate the positional effects and relational affects DIVINQ might put to work as a form of playful relaxation assemblage.

Cognitive Shift - as discursive reposition

In the language of stand-up comedy, Morreall (2009) states that a cognitive shift involves a set-up and a punch (p. 50). The set-up is produced by background patterns of thoughts and attitudes, or what he describes as being in serious mode. With a Foucauldian view, the set-up is constructed through dominant discourses that problematise difference and construct games of truth. In a pedagogical context such as DIVINQ, the set-up includes background expectations of polite behaviour toward adult facilitators and moral taboos of discussing sexuality and disability. Thus, the serious mode is an intensive affective landscape of uncertainty. The punch occurs when something produces a sudden change in thoughts or expectations. This can be reconsidered as a rapid shift in discursive fields that dislocates meaning momentarily. In everyday use of humour, Morreall (2009) argues that the mental background is already in place before the stimulus, and the whole stimulus serves as the punch.

That is, the territorialised landscape that produces shared understanding of meaning constructs the set-up.

Language in comedy and everyday humour is commonly exploited to construct the shift-punch. "A more common technique is to make the audience suddenly change their interpretation of a word, phrase, or story to *a very different interpretation* [emphasis added]" (Morreall, 2009, p. 50). Poststructural theory has a different relationship with language as every utterance – verbal and non-verbal – brings discourses into play. The sudden change can be thought of as competing or contradictory meanings that arise out of the positioning effects of discourses. As discursive fields are disrupted, new positions become increasingly available as people are exposed to more alternative meanings.

Play mode

Morreall (2009) explains that most humour is about problems and people have a number of ways of taking up a playful attitude rather than reacting with cognitive or practical concern (p. 53). A challenge of using humour in a pedagogical context is making position calls about problems/problematisations that clearly invite people to *drop practical concern*. If practical concern is dropped, the cognitive shift produces puzzlement, or being at a loss of what to do. Morreall describes a range of responses to puzzlement, varying from momentary disorientation to experiencing a sense of threat. Ultimately, puzzlement is a form of confusion. Sidney D'Mello and Arthur Graesser (2014) explain that confusion occurs "when individuals encounter incongruence in the form of impasses, anomalies, contradictions, disruptions of goals, extreme novelty that cannot be comprehended, and interruptions of organized sequences of actions" (p. 290). While this definition emerges from psychology, confusion can be reconceptualised as an effect of disturbances to fields of thought or where discourses compete for meaning. The definition resonates with the Deleuzian concept of encounters that produce an affective shock.

The enjoyment: pleasure and affect of shifts

During the act of laughter, practical concern is momentarily reduced and the body experiences pleasure. The ability to take a break from the work of thought makes space for the imagination. Humour is social, exhilarating, and liberating (Morreall, 2009). Willibald Ruch (1993) describes exhilaration as a psychological affect and physiological effect of humour. Ruch defines exhilaration as more than a mood or emotion – it is a form of enlivenment and excitement. Exhilaration is a short and intensive energised state of being, the feeling of which

is “pleasurable, relaxed excitation” (Ruch, 1993, p. 609). This definition resonates with posthuman theory and proposes that affect and desire are accelerated as intensities to produce the enjoyable effects.

The laughter: material effects

The last part of Morreall’s concept of playful relaxation involves the production of laughter. Laughter is a physical, bodily response that can be induced in a variety of ways such as tickling (see McDonald, 2012). More recently, there has been growing interest in the physical-material effects of laughter on well-being. In the field of mental health research, Jong Eun Yim (2016) found that laughter produces a range of bio-physiological chemicals such as dopamine and endorphins that reduce stress and lift mood. When an individual laughs alongside others, the relationship in that moment shifts as laughter sends a message of safety and conveys a sense of connection, that we are all safe together and enjoying this. In the context of pedagogy and DIVINQ, I am interested in the possibility of laughter functioning as a signal of safety as well as the pleasurable body effects it generates. That said, the ethical deployment of humour to facilitate a shared encounter with dropping practical concern when discussing difference is complex. Humour theory that critiques humanism offers some alternative supporting concepts to consider alongside Morreall’s model.

Alternative theories: laughter as an insurrectory and equalising force

The 19th century philosopher Friedrick Nietzsche observed that what made life burdensome and gloomy is the uncritical attachment to ways of being and the automatic adherence to the social and cultural conventions that we inherit (Gordon, 2010). Thus, when we laugh, especially at ourselves and our imagined failures or vulnerability, “we also begin to question the Spirit of Gravity — those morals that have been handed down to us by tradition, which we typically take for granted” (Gordon, 2010, p. 740). In a school context, I had observed the capturing of difference by such a spirit of gravity. This gravity informed pedagogical practice continued to hand down cultural conventions that took for granted the normalisation of morality discourses. It also tended to produce serious conversational spaces. Given this, I sought to construct DIVINQ as a space that resists reproducing heavy morality by inviting an alternative: a spirit of playful-lightness.

In a school context, Vlieghe (2014) argues that laughter is more of a challenge than humour to teacher authority, as it is viewed as a form of insurrection that is often met with discipline.

The insurrectory power of laughter can disrupt hierarchies by returning people to a state of pure matter-materiality. That is, in laughing, "regulation of our 'being together' according to well-defined identities and clearly distinguished roles is cancelled out. Normally, similarities and differences regarding identity and social position define the scope, inherent possibilities and depth of the relationship we have with others" (Vlieghe, 2014, p. 157). In being caught in a moment of excessive bodily laughter together, traditional hierarchical organisation as the basis of a community drops away, Vlieghe (2014, emphasis in original) states that laughing together is:

> An experience during which we are collectively taken by rhythmical and anonymous spasms and therefore relate to one another only insofar as *we are flesh*, and more precisely *fully flesh*. At such a moment of immanent life-affirmation, it makes no sense to understand communal life in terms of either differences or similarities in position or identity. (p. 158)

In a traditional hierarchical space such as a school, surrendering to a moment of unadulterated laughter disturbs learning as a disciplined activity that requires control over the body. Therefore, laughing together rebels against humanism's cogito. When adults and young people laugh together, the positioning effects of discourses are collapsed in that moment. In particular, the influence of the surveillance-normative gaze is suspended. According to Vlieghe (2014), this has implications for pedagogy. That is, communal laughter challenges authority and exposes its uncomfortable tension with discipline. Vlieghe argues that "[s]uch corporeal laughter may create a fundamental transformation of individual and collective life, and thus the possibility of something new and unforeseeable is opened" (p. 159). I am interested in exploring how the DIVINQ assemblage might call on this return to materiality to produce an encounter with positive vulnerability by ethically deploying humour to produce a transformative inquiry space.

Considerations for the "ethical deployment" of humour in DIVINQ

Humour and laughter are socially and culturally complex, but also provide opportunities for relationships to develop. Philip Rose (2007) proposes that humour plays a significant role in the politics of identity by enabling one to connect with others. Humour works by forming a common space, where those who understand and "get it" feel a sense of being on the same

page. Humour, as Rose states, is a way of testing the waters by mapping social boundaries, enabling it to function as a form of short-hand (p. 5). That is, humour can be seen as mobilising discourses that make position calls. People then recognise what calls are being made and accept or reject the subject positions on offer. Rose summarises these short-hand codes into three types. Sustaining or validating humour constructs a valid space and a sense of shared "rightness" of social norms, such as with sexist, racist, or homophobic jokes [and ableist]. Reactionary or defensive humour occurs when a threat is perceived, and humour is used to demean or ridicule that threat with essentialising and naturalising attacks. This sets about the re-establishment of the status quo or, as I suggest, reterritorialising and re-positioning. Both sustaining-validating and reactionary-defensive humour resonate with Billig's (2005) concept of disciplinary humour as these tend to be more conservative and protect normative ideas. In my experience, classroom bullying often took these two forms of humour. In contrast, ironic and reflective humour have the power to awaken a reflective attitude and to disclose what Rose describes as "novel horizons" by jolting people out of common sense. Ironic and reflective humour have potential ethical qualities for disrupting fear-based assumptions of difference.

Simon Critchley (2002) similarly argues that jokes produce this shock through the process of creating distance from "common sense" as a form of "uncommon sense" (p. 5). Critchley states that jokes are incredibly powerful in that they light up the common features of the world in a more practical way, offering "practical abstractions, socially embedded philosophising" (p. 87). In this way, ironic-reflective humour can operate as a posthuman process of defamiliarisation by producing breaks in what Braidotti (2019) describes as habits of thought. In DIVINQ, I sought to tune into ironic and reflective humour to construct an encounter with uncommon thought to produce a queering inquiry/study of limits.

Comedy: Tricksters as problematisers of difference

According to Morreall (2009), comedy and philosophy share eight commonalities: they are conversational; they reflect on everyday experiences, especially the puzzling aspects; they ask questions about these experiences; they detach from those experiences while exploring them; they seek out new perspectives and surprising thoughts, relish cognitive shifts; they think critically by paying careful attention to language and the meaning of words; they do not defer to authority in regard to controversy; and they are counterfactual and create multiple possibilities through thought experiments. That said, not all comedy is deeply thought provoking nor do they all rely on, as Rose (2007) argues, a shared understanding

around the politics of identity. The work of comedians from a trickster position supports comedic assemblages to access the philosophical aspects of humour.

Simon Weaver and Raúl Mora (2016) state that "comedy and humour can offer reinterpretations of social order that may disturb that order" (p. 480) and tricksters are such disturbers. Tricksters are often outsiders and cross boundaries. They are often brokers of anti-structure, speaking to the centre from the periphery in a bid to transform taken-for-granted systems of power relations. "Such marginality is a characteristic of many creative figures and much creativity" (Weaver & Mora, 2016, p. 481). Philip is such a creative figure who has professional trickster experience as a stand-up comedian.

Stand-up comedy is a form of entertainment employing playful language and humour to produce laugher (Brodie 2014; McDonald, 2012; Morreall, 2009; Smith, 2018; Weaver & Mora, 2016). Daniel Smith (2018) discusses contemporary stand-up comedy as a form of excavation of the self that is less reliant on one-liner jokes and works more as a form of wittification of self and a personal that can be peddled. Ian Brodie (2014) defines stand-up comedy as "a form of talk. It implies a context that allows for reaction, participation, and engagement on the part of those to whom the stand-up comedian is speaking" (p. 5). Brodie discusses the unique relationship stand-up comedians form with audiences. It is dialogical, even though it is more or less one-sided. While similar to more personal encounters of wittification, the professional aspect creates a distance. This distance is key to the functioning of stand-up assemblages.

Stand-up works through the assumption of a generalised shared world view. I propose that the normative codes of dominant discourses and games of truth creating a dialogue produces what is considered "shared". Several relational moves are made that navigate the landscape of shared understanding. Brodie argues that through dialogue, the comedian must negotiate a claim of incongruity with the audience, as well as what is the appropriate response. Commonly held assumptions are put to work through incongruity as assumptions are mined for comedic effect. There is a risk, however, to the intensity of the jolt. "The more the assumption is exposed as incongruous, the more the reaction elicited can be terror or grief instead of laughter" (Brodie, 2014, p. 6). According to Brodie, most incongruity sits in a zone of what is considered acceptable. Brodie explains that the stand-up comedian is in a position of re-affirming his or her right to be the one to reveal this incongruity: he or she is not making an outsider's

pronouncement or judgment but can speak as a member of this particular group. For example, Brodie (2014) makes the point that:

> If stand-up comedy is play, there is nevertheless a deepness to the play, as the collaboration with the audience can just as easily fail as succeed, and this failure is an assault on not only his or her status as a performer but as an intimate. (p. 6)

The very livelihood of a comedian relies on their ability to keep audiences comfortably uncomfortable. The stand-up assemblage therefore tends to operate within socially acceptable and normative spaces. The production of laughter is a significant part of the professional comedic contract:

> The audience expects to laugh, and the comedian has a *professional obligation to effect that laughter* [emphasis added]. Conversely, if the stand-up comedian is interpreted as funny, he or she has a right to hear laughter in response and the audience has the obligation to laugh. (Brodie, 2014, p. 217)

The comedic contract thus privileges the bodily experience of laughter. So long as laughter is elicited, the comedic contract is fulfilled. This is where an ethical tension emerges as contemporary comedic material often draws on harmful, denigrating ridicule to elicit laughter (Benko, 2020; Pérez, 2013; Quirk, 2015; Schuster, 2020).

Humour in schools: discordant undertones

Humour's binary relationship with seriousness has produced an uncomfortable fit with the aims of education and the disciplinary structures of schools (Allen, 2014; Blackmore, 2011; Gordon, 2010; Morreall, 2014; Stopsky, 1992; Strong, 2013; Vlieghe, 2014). Humour and laughter act against order, disrupt, distract, and have been linked to a lack of discipline and self-control. Humour in the classroom has therefore traditionally been viewed as unprofessional for teachers to use as it disrupts the hierarchy of authority needed to maintain control. However, there is a contemporary shift in recognising the pedagogical potential of humour.

More recently, research has identified ways humour can support student engagement in classrooms, in positive thinking, and in the development of self-esteem (Blackmore, 2011; Garner, 2006; Gordon, 2010; Morreall, 2014). As schools in the 21st century seek to break down traditional perceptions of teachers as distant and aloof, teachers are increasingly encouraged to use humour as a way of *humanising* themselves and create more trusting and open relationships with students (Blackmore, 2011; Morreall, 2014). For example, Ashley Blackmore (2011) argues that humour in classrooms creates a more relaxed intimate environment, reducing anxiety and stress and allowing students to know the teacher as a person. In a future focussed vision of rethinking relationships, humour represents a potential way to construct different spaces and relationships.

More specifically in an Aotearoa/New Zealand health education context, Allen (2014) argues that sexual humour is common when topics related to sex are discussed. My experience resonates with Allen's observation that "[t]he 'sexual' is humour's preferred resource in sexuality education" (p. 388). In a culturally diverse co-educational context, Allen found gendered differences in the use of humour: boys used sexual humour to subvert teacher authority and reinforce heteronormativity. The use of humour by girls was less overtly confrontational to teacher authority. Regardless of gender, sexual humour is entangled with cultural values-norms that work with prohibitions of discussing sexuality. Allen's (2014) findings echo my experience of teaching sexuality and some of my uncertainty with the positioning effects of humiliation. Allen argues that sexuality and the risk-averse environment of schools are not a great match. The social construction of sexuality as a controversial issue and the combination with humour is somewhat precarious for schools to reconcile. Allen suggests that schools have a general concern about the effects sexual humour might have on the school's reputation since sexual-sexuality jokes could be taken the wrong way. The safest course of action is for teachers to avoid jokes about sex altogether. Due to anxieties around the potential negative outcomes that may arise, the productive pedagogical aspects of humour are therefore less developed.

Allen suggests humour in sexuality education should be considered "beyond the confines of something that is only 'risky', 'inappropriate', 'negative', 'empowering' and/or 'subordinating'" (Allen, 2014, p. 388). This call to develop the productive pedagogical aspects of humour in relation to opening up concepts of difference resonates with the approach of DIVINQ. DIVINQ takes up Allen's invitation to rethink humour through queer paradigms that

resist negative positions that have prevailed to date. A process that takes up a positive ethical deployment of humour as a form of queering pedagogy is well placed to do more with the philosophical potential of humour.

A summary of key humour theories

All humour is a form of ridicule and, thus, humour has a complex, contested value in contemporary society. Traditional theories have positioned humour-laughter in a binary relationship with mind/reason-body/emotion. Hence, humour-laughter have not been considered appropriate for educational settings. At the same time, contemporary Western societal discourses of ideological positivism and positive psychology are inviting people to develop a "sense of humour" as a form of work on self. This framework of intelligibility, however, has the potential to ignore the negative effects of humour. In schools, the employment of humour by teachers in classroom learning may take the form of jokes that target individual difference [disciplining] as a form of disciplinary power to police social norms and identities. While comedy and philosophy share commonalities, the function of stand-up comedy assemblages is to produce laughter. Contemporary comedy involves wittification of self and negotiating dialogical spaces with audiences to traverse socially acceptable taboos. Thus, stand-up comedy works in an ethical tension with the potential to reinforce stereotypes. My experience of humour-laughter in schools and Philip's in comedy, informed our co-facilitation relationship of DIVINQ. Two contemporary theories that have developed from traditional incongruity and relief theories are humour as playful relaxation (Morreall, 2009) and humour as social connection through irony and reflection (Rose, 2007). Humour produces a shock/jolt where serious meaning/discourses are disturbed. The positioning effects of humour jolt ideas out of "common sense" where practical concern is dropped, people experience pleasurable affects and laugh together, signalling safety together. Laughter is also rebellious for momentarily disturbing hierarchies. The process of humour as playful relaxation through deploying ironic and reflective humour offers a scaffold for DIVINQ's ethical use of rebellious humour.

Chapter 6: Key encounters

This chapter traces the key professional encounters that have contributed to the development of my thinking and practice of facilitation. Four significant pedagogical sites are explored: working in the field of outdoor education, teaching health, facilitating philosophy for children, and working as a school counsellor. Roger Schwarz (2016) states that "[a]t its core, facilitation is simply a way of thinking and working with groups that increases the chance that they'll perform well, develop strong working relationships, and maintain or improve members' well-being" (p. 4). Of relevance to this chapter are various aspects of facilitation that developed my understanding of performing well. I explore the encounters that influenced my ideas with respect to the development of "strong working relationships". The flow of this chapter follows chronologically through my career to scaffold the emergence of new ways of working with poststructural-posthuman theory over time. This includes the impasses and aporia of pedagogical practices. DIVINQ was a journey of experimentation with becoming a trickster facilitator. I begin with a brief account of adventure-based learning as this was an encounter that required skills beyond classroom pedagogical practices which then stimulated my desire to seek alternative ways of working with groups of people.

Facilitating adventure-based learning

When I started teaching in 1997, I was employed as a health and physical education teacher with experience in adventure-based learning (ABL). Adventure-based learning involves learners engaging in adventurous activities where reflection on that experience is used for learning (Cosgriff, 2000; Sutherland & Legge, 2016). ABL draws significantly from John Dewey's ideas of experiential learning (Itin, 1997, 1999; Miettinen, 2000). The ABL process exposed me to a unique relationship with group facilitation and specific questioning skills that followed David Kolb's experiential-learning-cycle (Kolb, 1984) of questioning to make sense of an encounter with risk. Simon Priest (1990/1999) defines risk as the potential to lose something of value, be this physical, mental, or social (p. 116). Risk can be further broken down into real and perceived, with the idea that skilled facilitators minimise the chances of someone being seriously harmed even as those participating still encounter the fear and adrenaline rush of "I am so high, what if I fall?". The process uses team-building activities to bring groups together and to foster trust. There was often tension and uncertainty in these early stages. The early stages of forming a DIVINQ community produced a similar tension of

uncertainty. I first noticed the pedagogical potential of humour for constructing a playfully relaxed space when I was facilitating ABL. In the context of outdoor education, Johan Hovelynck and Luk Peeters (2003) found that humour worked best when it was spontaneously produced and not planned. My experience facilitating ABL echoes their observation, particularly as I witnessed firsthand that some strategic set-up jokes for activities did not always resonate with groups. Given that each group was a unique assemblage, as a facilitator, I would have to think on my feet and adapt. My experiences of working with various forms of risk to bring people into an encounter with vulnerability developed my awareness of the responsibility facilitators have: to create an environment where people can extend themselves. While the activities were a form of provocation, holding a space for people to reflect required just as much attention. To echo Schwarz (2016), the core of ABL facilitation was looking after the well-being of people so they could perform as a group.

Health teaching

I taught health for nine years as a classroom teacher and counsellor and I have some colourful memories of teaching sex and sexuality. Over time, I noticed the effects that disciplinary power, the normative gaze, and legitimised expert knowledge had on the territory pedagogical assemblages claimed as relevant, meaningful learning. I discuss two key aspects: the curriculum content that informs sexuality education, and the pedagogical practices and their positioning effects. I then turn to look specifically at the way sexuality is covered and how LGBT+ identities are constructed through health teaching. I begin with a brief historical account of the types of pedagogical practices which have since dominated health education.

Poststructural educational theorists trace the historical development of schools and their function as disciplining the body of young people through various practices including uniforms, single sex education, and sexuality education following hygiene discourses from the early 20th century (Allen, 2011; Besley, 2002; Fitzpatrick & Tinning, 2013, Middleton, 1998; Rofes, 2005). Health education curriculum content emerges out of wider societal health concerns. Fitzpatrick and Richard Tinning (2013) discuss the links between the identification of public health issues, the gathering of evidence, and the development of solutions to address these identified problems. They propose that these links form a cycle that places schools at the centre of concern for risk and safety, even as schools are also responsible for health and wellbeing. More specifically "[s]chools and classrooms are sites of micro-politics in that they are spaces where *particular* forms of knowledge and ways of understanding health are formally

legitimated" (Fitzpatrick & Tinning, 2013, p. 4, emphasis in original). My experiences of teaching health drew my awareness to the power-knowledge and effects of micro-politics that shaped classroom practices. Over time, I became troubled by the formal legitimising of bio-medical science that constrained my ability to work with subjugated knowledge.

Territorialised Plumbing and Prevention practices

The year I began teaching, sexuality education became a specific topic in the health curriculum in Aotearoa/New Zealand. The overall learning outcome across a variety of topics was for students to know how human bodies worked and, in particular, how to look after them. The course content for sex-sexuality at Year 9-10 was almost exclusively focused on biological function. Lenskyj (1990) discusses the significant influence of hygiene discourses from the early 20th century on sexuality education. Lenskyj coined the phrase "plumbing and prevention" to describe the emphasis on teaching reproductive anatomy and physiology with the aim of preventing disease and teen pregnancy. As Lenskyj argues, this emphasis has dominated pedagogical approaches to sex and sexuality into the 21st century. I recall, for example, my lesson plans filled with reproductive system diagrams and professional development on sexually transmitted infections and forms of contraception. Regardless of my growth in experience as a teacher, the topic of sex-sexuality *always* challenged my facilitation skills.

A major chord striking a tone in this thesis is that schools are generally uncomfortable with the presence of any sexuality (Allen, 2007a, 2011). Allen (2007a) states that "[i]n the case of the school's 'official school culture' around sexuality, the 'practical tendency' is typically the regulation of students' sexual identities in ways that do not disrupt the academic purpose of schooling" (p. 223). Middleton (1998) identifies the regulation of bodies through gendered uniforms and single sex schools in an attempt to neutralise the presence of sexuality as part of this practical regulatory tendency. Sexuality and desire are coded by humanism as a problematic distraction from learning and thus need to be carefully managed. One of the effects I encountered of attempting to mute all material and discursive traces of sexuality while trying to teach about it was an intensification of the normative gaze watching for transgressions.

Discourses in dissonance: amplifying "sex" while trying to dampen sexuality tones

When teaching about sex, sexual language is used. In her aptly titled paper "They Think You Shouldn't be Having Sex Anyway", Allen (2008) argues that, in general, schools struggle with the idea of young people as sexual. An effect of trying not to imply any sexual content while using sexual language is competing discourses that produce discomfort. It is no surprise that

Allen identifies humour and laughter as ways to release this tension for both students and teachers (Allen, 2011; 2014). However, there are some complexities with the use of humour in sex education, and I return to this point later.

The problematising of youth as a developmentally at-risk stage (Allen, 2007a, 2008, 2011; Fitzpatrick & Tinning, 2013; Sanjakdar et al., 2015; Talburt, 2004), is another significant practice of problematisation that territorialises health education. Such discourses clamour to construct youth as a time of great upheaval, with plenty of sexual urges and being prone to risk taking. Young people are positioned through the concept of ignorance as lacking the appropriate knowledge to manage risks – including sex. In this context, Allen (2008) found that teaching content tended to repeat "plumbing and prevention", regardless of the age of students. Although young people were less interested in this repetition, techno-rational discourses of the curriculum support repetition as students move into senior school. These techno-rational discourses, Fitzpatrick and Tinning (2013) argue, promote risk management strategies that dominate teaching content and includes aspects of mental health. Thus, classroom assemblages tended to take up a more serious tone. For example, coverage of issues such as drugs, alcohol, nutrition, and smoking/vaping all adopted a similar approach where students were effectively cautioned about the dangers associated with them and to take responsibility for themselves. Sex-sexuality education followed such risk-management positioning effects, intensified by social-cultural taboos regarding sex-sexuality, especially with respect to LGBT+.

Allen (2011) traces how undertones of shame related to sexual desire are maintained through discourses of morality that has limited the progression of pedagogical practice beyond heteronormative plumbing and prevention discourses. Decades earlier, Lenskyj (1990) argued that parents and teachers "have reluctantly accepted the fact that a significant proportion of adolescents are heterosexually active, there is usually strong community reaction to the realization that lesbian and homosexual adolescents are also interested in dating and sexual relationships" (p. 223). This sets up a contemporary landscape for conversations about sexuality that includes disabled bodies beyond expressions of concern for vulnerability (see for example Allan, 1999). I turn now to discuss the discordant effects of teaching sexuality that are constructed through the dense discursive fields that I have just described.

In teaching health, I felt the effects of dominant discourses that produced a *gravity* of concern. The risk management of teaching health was far more challenging than facilitating outdoor

education experiences. For example, it seemed less risky to do a trust-fall where a person falls back off a height and is caught by others than to run a class discussion on sexually transmitted infections. Teaching sexuality, according to Allen (2011), demands more than what is usually expected of teachers in other curriculum areas. She states that "[t]he socially constituted nature of sexuality as 'private', 'sensitive' and 'dangerous' demands a teacher who is comfortable with a highly controversial subject as well as their own sexual identity" (Allen, 2011, p. 109). The problematisation of sexuality as private and dangerous precariously positions teachers, in particular the language they use. Unlike managing the risk of a trust-fall, the vulnerability of falling into discussions that cross into personal territory was uncomfortable. My experience resonates with Allen's observation that the level of vulnerability for teachers when discussing sexuality is high as there is the potential for personal questions to be asked. Even answering non-personal questions invites the teacher to take up a position with regard to their personal beliefs. Allen (2011), Lenskyj (1990) and Eric Rofes (2005) discuss the anxiety for LGBT+ teachers in schools is intensified by the general publics' fear of the presence of LGBT+ teachers who could 'turn kids gay'. Thus, the intensity of surveillance and disciplinary power amplify the uncertainty and tension in traditional health education classroom assemblages and can produce harm through the mobilisation of heteronormative/homophobic discourses. Thereby, the function of humour in such an arrangement has powerful positioning effects.

Humour & Laughter: Establishing and policing (hetero)normative territory

In my experience, sexuality education inevitably constructs an intensive state of "unrelaxation" (Morreall, 2009) that humour-laughter can release. I recall even a rogue pun could send a class into raucous laughter. However, the effects of humour-laughter are complex by being both a relief of the awkward tension (Allen, 2014) and potentially reinforcing heteronormativity through homophobic jokes (Allen, 2011). There is often reluctance from teachers to address homophobic jokes for fear of being labelled as LGBT+ or outed if they were, thus maintaining heteronormativity discourses in the classroom (Lenskyj, 1990). Homophobic jokes establish heterosexuality as normal whether they are addressed or not. As discussed in Chapter 5, Allen (2014) argues that humour has potential to relieve some of the awkward tension when teaching sex-sexuality. My point is calling on social function (Rose, 2007) in classroom teaching, teachers have an ability to negotiate a space to confidently manage the positioning effects of discourses produced by humour – the disciplining effects (Billig, 2005). That is, while teachers are under the gaze of professional standards and institutionalised risk aversion strategies, an undertone of ideological positivism (Billig, 2005) encourages people to laugh off any potential

harm. In a classroom context, young people continually navigate intelligible identity discourses while making social connections and humour-laughter constructs intelligible identities. Therefore, while the horizontal function of sexuality education assemblages make room for humour to potentially relieve tension, it can also enforce normative constellations of identity.

Philosophy for children

I'm newly trained in facilitating communities of inquiry. The concept of "Gently Socratic" Inquiry has reinvigorated my passion for teaching.

The Deputy Principal (DP) who introduced me to Philosophy for Children has selected a group of Year 10 boys to participate in a Community of Inquiry that I will run. I stare into my instant coffee and start planning. The school has bought a class set of Thinking Stories. These are simple moral dilemmas aimed at younger students.

……..The first session….

I put desks in a circle and place a book on each one. Strips of paper for questions and pens are ready for the discussion. The boys wander in and look at the configuration of desks. Confusion and caution cross each of their faces. Gesturing to the desks, I respond:

> "Sit anywhere in the circle."

The unfamiliarity of the activity and the presence of the DP intensify their nervousness as bodies slide awkwardly into chairs. The DP does a quick welcome and explains why they have been chosen. She leaves and a collective exhale moves through the room.

> "Okay, open your book, everyone will read a section out loud. Read as much or little as you want to."

Some struggle reading aloud. I send out lots of encouragement. But there is a restlessness. The story hasn't captured their interest. The room feels flat and disconnected. There is a familiarity to this energy, I need to change it up. I clap my hands and say with exaggerated enthusiasm.

> "Great work everyone, I want you to pair up and write down some questions about the story. There are no right or wrong questions."

I relax into the familiar energised facilitation tone. The boys ask for clarification.

> "What sort of questions? Like 'why is this story so boring?' Is that a question?"

We all laugh. It's an opening and I run with it.

"It's not exactly the most exciting story, but there was quite a lot going on. It's called a 'Thinking Story' for a reason."

"Yeah, well *I think* I hate the story."

The push back is not unexpected. I'm irked but focus on facilitating the process.

"Can you write down what you hate about it or what part as a question?"

I give a couple of examples, but they don't really care about the story and neither do I. An idea jolts me and I raise my eyebrows in a mock challenge. I dive into my bag and pull out a bag of lollipops I had been saving for another class.

"If you write down two questions about the story you get a lollipop."

The bribery does enough to re-engage them. I distribute the lollipops and wrappings are ripped off. There are a few moments of discussion that seem to go well then the bell goes. It hasn't been a complete disaster. I put the furniture back into rows and pick up wrappers. I place the books back in the box. I can't use these again. I wonder if *The Matrix* film could work as an alternative stimulus text.

….Next session…

I roll in the video player, and ask if they have seen *The Matrix*. No one has. From the opening scene they are glued to the screen. I stop the video after half an hour. Groans ripple through the room.

"Just let us watch the next bit."

I feign disappointment. The group reciprocates with mock protesting. I furrow my eyebrows and prepare to negotiate.

"Let's compromise. Each pair must write down two questions before we watch the next bit."

Conversations hum, pens scribble. They hand questions to me, and I write them on the blackboard. I push play, silence settles in the room as Neo exits the matrix. We watch the next 15 minutes then I stop it again; the bell is about to go. I try squeezing out some more inquiry.

"What questions do you have now?"

Guys grab bags and call out questions as they run for the door. One lingers a moment.

"Are we going to watch the rest next time?"

I turn from the black board. His pensive expression surprises me.

"Yes absolutely, the rest of the movie has some interesting ideas."

He turns as he leaves with a big grin.

"I never thought watching an action movie could make me think."

My encounter with Philosophy for Children came early in my teaching career in the late 1990's and was very brief, consisting of training and facilitating a few inquiries. At the time, I worked with pre-written texts: "Thinking Stories" (Cam, 1998). The training in running communities of inquiry resonated with the ordered process of Adventure-Based Learning, but deviated in terms of the questioning process. Put simply, the Community of Inquiry process involves participants sitting in a circle, engaging with a stimulus text that includes moral-ethical dilemmas, generating questions based on the text, and exploring the questions in a democratic process. This section provides theoretical context for DIVINQ's development as a form of Community of Inquiry.

Philosophy for Children is a form of pedagogical practice developed by Matthew Lipman in the 1970's. Concerned with students' struggles in reasoning and their lack of interest in schooling, Lipman created a process to develop moral values, questioning ethics and concepts of identity (Biesta, 2011; Cam, 2014; Hannam, & Echeverria, 2009; Kohan, 2011, 2014; Lipman, 1987, 2003, 2017; Välitalo, Juuso, & Sutinen, 2016). My initial training followed Lipman's original process and DIVINQ borrows from the emergent-divergent practices of philosophy *with* children. There are some common aspects to philosophy for/with children.

Philosophy for/with children works with a concept of "Gently Socratic" Inquiry that focusses on questioning skills (Jackson, 2001; Lipman, 1987, 2003, 2017; Sharpe, 2017; Sutcliffe, 2017). Thomas Jackson (2001) argues that Socratic approaches share a dialogical process wherein the "gentle" places emphasis on listening and moves away from counter arguing toward understanding. When I look back, I can appreciate how this introduction to gentle questioning

resonates with practices of narrative therapy. The process of "Gently Socratic" Inquiry is oriented through thinking skills that resonate with the aims of the NZC (2007) of developing

critical thinking. “Gently Socratic inquiry is more than a conversation or sharing of ideas within a group. It is characterized by an intellectual rigour that *certain cognitive tools* [emphasis added] can facilitate” (Jackson, 2001, p. 9). The rigour and tools that scaffold inquiries serve to guide conversations, but they do not steer toward a specific outcome. Jackson (2001) states that although there is no rush to get anywhere, conversations should get somewhere by scratching beneath the surface. The thinking tools for scratching include reasoning rather than opinions, finding what is true and factual, and giving examples. The key idea is that the more young people participate in the inquiry process, the more adept they become at digging with *tools of reasoning*.

To produce a gentle tone, the inquiry process has clear guidelines to ensure everyone is able to speak, be heard, and that all ideas are valued. Patricia Hannam and Eugenio Echeverria (2009) state that the process “seeks to nurture the values essential for the well-being of a sustainable democracy. These will include respect, acceptance of difference, and the willingness to compromise to build a shared response to a problem” (p. 42). While the concept of accepting different ideas and points of view is valued, the idea of building a shared response to a problem hides the process of problematisation from which a response might be developed.

Reason and emotion are in opposition within a Western philosophical framework. Emotional responses are therefore carefully managed in traditional inquiries. Lipman (2017) argues that while there can be excitement and other strong emotions during discussions, these become part of the analysis aspects of the process (p. 5). Similarly, Hannam and Echeverria (2009) posit that there is a place for emotions within an inquiry process, but they caution against it being a focus or an end point. For topics that might generate emotional responses, they propose that “thinking clearly” involves a call to reason as a way through. Emotions and strong affective forces are therefore *dampened* to avoid what Biesta (2011) argues is the perceived contamination of the pure process of reasoning. Humour and laughter are acceptable if turned toward accepting personal failures. Roger Sutcliffe (2017) claims humour as a disposition to accept personal fallibility. This idea resonates with what Billig (2005) describes as ideological positivism-positive psychology. Thus, traditional inquiry processes work to reduce strong affective encounters or move emotional responses back through reasoning processes. This has implications for how topics of difference can become rationalised through moral and ethical discourses.

Navigating shame of ignorance: encounters with questions

The skill of questioning is a key skill to navigate landscapes of meaning in philosophical inquiries. Jana Lone (2011) observes that children lose confidence to ask questions as they move through the education system and are subjected to the disciplinary responses of teachers. In the process, they learn that having a question means "there is something they should have already grasped but have not" (p. 79). In taking a poststructural stance, I propose that fear to ask questions is a positioning effect of disciplinary power and developmental discourses, both of which construct knowing as good [not asking questions] and ignorance as bad. To ask a question risks exposure of one's ignorance. Lone explains that, in a classroom context, asking a question is a public declaration of ignorance with a potential for embarrassment or shame and, so, young people stop asking. I suggest that to *ask* is a position call that invites the normative gaze to judge lack of knowledge. For example, when I was teaching, one of the fastest ways to get a class to stop talking was to ask a question. Oades-Sese et al. (2014) discuss the significant responsibility teachers have to respond in ways to minimise the effect of shame on young peoples' experience of school. For example, when ignorance might be exposed by a question, there is a possibility that laughter produces shame. One of the intended outcomes of inquiries is to reclaim confidence to ask questions and reinvigorate curiosity (Lone, 2011). When I witnessed Philip create a space for students to be confidently curious, I recognised the background effects of surveillance-embarrassment that often closed down classroom discussions.

Facilitation: when a guide isn't a guide, but is still guiding

Facilitators act as conversational guides to achieve good thinking by restraining their own input or ideas while working to encourage groups to eventually self-manage the dialogical process (Hannam & Echeverria, 2019; Jackson, 2001; Kennedy, 2004; Lipman, 1987, 2007; Makaiau, 2015; Sharpe, 2017). This does not mean they do not guide the process. Kennedy (2004) defines facilitation as a set of backgrounding skills oriented around three ideas: a position of ignorance, bridging, and triggering.

A "position of ignorance" is related to the way facilitators apply backgrounding technical knowledge to an inquiry. Kennedy (2004) argues that each group is unique, dynamic, and unpredictable. Facilitation is about navigating the relationships and ideas that emerge spontaneously without needing to control the outcome. Ignorance is made mobile in Kennedy's (2004) description by acknowledging that "there are no fixed rules for what can or cannot be

part of Community of Inquiry curriculum or pedagogy. The facilitator understands each group as a particular constellation of individuals who form a pattern that will never be repeated" (p. 755). This idea resonates strongly with narrative therapy's "not knowing" stance of suspending assumptions and paying attention to the colonising effects of dominant discourses that promote the approach of staying curious and which values uncertainty.

Facilitators think of the Community of Inquiry as not a place to receive knowledge communicated to people, but as the process from "which that knowledge will emerge − and the vehicle through which it will be selected and articulated" (Kennedy, 2004, p. 757). As a bridge, the facilitator has the power to filter what is considered a valid text for an inquiry. A point of potential difference with DIVINQ is the idea that facilitators work to move conversations from a psychological to a logical place. A facilitator uses their skills to tune into dialogue and use "*hermeneutical* [emphasis added] practices of restatement, clarification, summarization, and drawing of implications and projection of consequences" (Kennedy, 2004, p. 578). Here I propose the DIVINQ process has dissonance with the psychological underpinnings of preferred bridging practices. Paying attention to where the dialogue is going is of paramount importance:

> The facilitator who is paying attention to the emergent whole is always looking for the boundaries, markers, and larger pieces of the argument, and to their junctures, seams, shifts, and transformations. Above all, he or she is paying attention to the elements of the structure that are in contradiction, for it is these elements that represent its transformational potential. (Kennedy, 2004, p. 578)

Within a queer-posthuman process, backgrounding bridging skills may be attuned to how language marks boundaries of power-knowledge-truth and may seek to map the discourses that produce contradictions in the meanings available. Anyone can trigger a transformative moment and this is not predictable. A discussion can get stuck and not seem to move. The difference with other classroom practices is that facilitators are part of the group:

> What distinguishes Community of Inquiry as a pedagogical form is that the facilitator, because he or she cannot take a position outside the group or system, shares every effect

> and vicissitude with every other group member. Any movement he or she initiates or enables within the system will affect him or her as much as any other. (Kennedy, 2004, p. 762)

This is not necessarily negative, but the implication is that a position is constructed that requires careful navigation with respect to power. A working assumption with traditional inquiries is that as students become more skilled themselves, the group takes over the key responsibility for running the inquiry as a form of autofacilitation. DIVINQ's facilitation worked with humour as a form of trigger. However, because the inquiry was seeking to disturb reason-rational forms of inquiry the process did not seek autofacilitation.

"Big P" and "Little p" philosophical inquiry

It is prudent to identify where DIVINQ might land in the landscape of traditions of philosophical inquiry. Amber Makaiau and Chad Miller (2012) state that "Big P philosophy" refers to the traditional understanding of philosophy as an academic specialisation and it emphasises mastering techniques of thought and includes preserving these as they are (p. 9). Philosophical work is done through the prescribed canonical texts produced by recognised-revered [male] philosophers. "Little p philosophy", in contrast, is a form of philosophy that draws on what is considered the natural curiosity of children, most notably, through their desire and confidence to ask questions. The main emphasis of "Little p philosophy" is to draw on one's personal experience of the world and to move away from abstract philosophical ideas. Confusion and perplexity are expected, but these may be resolved through reflection (Makaiau & Miller, 2012, p. 10). DIVINQ aims to sit more in the "little p" camp and resists turning toward "big P" practices, such as producing repetition of canonical philosophical ideas. The big-little binary assumes the big is the end point or desirable direction to which thinking should develop. Another strong territorialising concept that is potentially disrupted by DIVINQ is truth.

Traditional philosophy for children is a search for the truth. Susanne Gardner (2017) argues that by drawing on multiple perspectives, questions, and dialogue, the inquiry process becomes a way to move toward objective rationality and the truth of things. Gardner states that without a way to measure if points of view are better or worse, there is little point to inquiries. "If a Community of Inquiry is genuinely about 'inquiry', then one must believe that such inquiry will result in a movement toward truth" (Gardner, 2017, p. 114). A poststructural position is in dissonance with such a definition. Thus, a queer-posthuman informed philosophical inquiry is

likely to be encountered as unintelligible or even disturbing to those who adhere to Lipman's original vision and process. Several theorists challenge philosophy for children's humanist coding that have resonances with queer and posthuman pedagogy.

Unplugging philosophical thinking from humanism

All philosophical inquiry is informed by ideas about what it means to "be human" (Biesta, 1998, 2011; Semetsky, 2006, 2013; Vansieleghem, 2005). Gert Biesta (2011) argues that:

> When we look at the educational use of philosophy from this angle it becomes clear that the whole 'project'—in its intentions, its effects, and its pedagogy—is not only based on a particular conception of the human being but also and, from a philosophical point perhaps more problematically, on a *particular truth about the human being* [emphasis added]. (p. 311)

Biesta's critique strikes a chord with my desire to develop an inquiry process that turned away from humanism's project of dehumanising some forms of being human. Sceptical of the colonising processes of scientific knowledge, Biesta argues that the body, affect, and desire are seen as contaminating the pure philosophical process. Biesta (2011) argues that philosophy is now deployed as a technique of doing work on oneself to acquire correct thinking and this has implications for *correct ideas* about diversity.

Nancy Vansieleghem (2005) similarly argues that humanism sets up the problematic of how to think differently. Vansieleghem (2005) states that this is "because it is determined in advance by a specific kind of thinking and acting in accordance with roles that we are expected to fulfil: namely, being autonomous, critical, creative and communicative citizens. Other possibilities are excluded" (p. 20). Thus, the philosophical dialogue tends to depend on the quality of questions. The Socratic process is part of the constraining aspect by producing a model of thought. In order to escape, "it should not place so much emphasis on the search for methodological and theoretical unity, but should seek instead a space where the question of meaning can arise" (Vansieleghem, 2005, p. 31). I am interested in the potential of DIVINQ as an assemblage that accesses poststructural-posthuman ideas and where humour breaks constraints of a Socratic model of thought to produce a space to question the meaning of difference.

When I considered using a Community of Inquiry scaffold, my biggest concern was to avoid inquiries that traced dominant Western concepts of philosophy, including what thinking is. I was wary of objective-rational approaches that would likely steer disability and LGBT+ toward ethical territory by drawing on scientific-medical-moral discourses. Biesta (2011) calls for pedagogy that resists instrumentalisation of philosophy and to break away from critical thinking that models a scientific approach, suggesting that:

> A pedagogy focusing on exposure and interruption is a pedagogy that may bring about hesitation, an experience of not knowing, an experience that makes us stop rather than that it rushes us into the pseudo-security of questions, hypothesis, reasons, examples, distinctions, connections, implications, intentions, criteria, and consistency. (p. 317)

I am interested in the effect of DIVINQ as a pedagogy that employs encounters with difference to produce exposure and interruption to produce discordance with dominant humanist ideas. On a similar note, Walter Kohan (2014) turns to Deleuze and argues that there is a tendency to seek modes of thought that emphasise common sense or totalising truths about the world. This has significance with respect to ideas of diversity and pedagogical practice. According to Kohan, Deleuze problematises practices of traditional philosophy that, in continuing to uphold conventional understandings of thought, become dogmatic as they turn common sense into normative assumptions that go unquestioned. DIVINQ's use of humour as a technique to expose normative assumptions and to trouble common sense is a key focus of this thesis.

Deleuze (1995) makes the point that philosophy is "not a question of intellectual understanding…but of intensity, resonance, musical harmony" (p. 86). Any form of inquiry process emerging from Deleuzian thought should bring this vibratory tone with it. In line with Deleuzian affective pedagogy, Kohan (2014) argues that encounters cannot be anticipated or planned for since they take us out of the familiar and into the unknown and uncertain. A Deleuzian approach to philosophical thought is in dissonance with traditional pedagogy where outcomes and encounters are carefully planned for. A Deleuzian approach is particularly troubling for topics that risk touching on taboo subjects such as sexuality and for encounters that might invite shock-uncertainty such as disability.

Kohan (2014) turns to Foucault's (see Foucault, 1972, 1980) ideas of the development of the subject through social processes that normalise ways of thinking and what appears natural. If things appear the same, they become part of "nature" and fixed (Kohan, 2014, p. 50). Education is one of the main processes by which particular ideas of diversity become fixed. Kohan notes the challenge of keeping people open to questioning the nature things and remaining dissatisfied with current answers. He argues that philosophy can support children and young people to become more conscious of a naturalising process. This raises the question of how adults enable or disable *unfixing*. Kohan (2014) suggests that if children are able to question the ways things become naturalised:

> Then, philosophy can help children to constitute a *more free subjectivity that can think more complexly* [emphasis added] about the ideas, beliefs, and values that underline our practices and institutions. Understood in this way, the practice of philosophy is an excellent opportunity for children to think about what they are and what they could be. (p. 51)

My interest in working with philosophical inquiry echoes these questions of the naturalising practices of humanist approaches that work to stabilise thinking and subjectivity. A challenge for contemporary philosophical inquiry is the disciplinary aspects of schools and their practices of teaching and knowing that make claims to truth (Biesta, 2011; Kohan, 2011, 2014). I am concerned with destabilising the normative discourses that construct grids of intelligibility that simplify or predetermine ways of thinking about difference. I am also interested in exploring philosophical inquiry as an assemblage that *plays* games of truth to free up subjectivity. To echo Kohan (2014), the opportunity for young people to think differently about what they are is where DIVINQ works. Kohan (2014) argues that to do this, philosophy needs to escape method through a form of anti-method (p. 92). I turn now to outline aspects of traditional inquiry practices and I examine how DIVINQ's reassembling of these practices serves to produce a possible anti-method.

DIVINQ: Reassembling a "plain vanilla" inquiry process

DIVINQ took up some of the structural processes of traditional Communities of Inquiry, such as employing a circle formation (Jackson, 2001; Lipman, 1987). Although we sometimes sat

on the floor or, at times, at tables in a square, the overall shape was circular. According to Jackson (2001), the circle format is ideal as it disrupts traditional classroom dynamics. People can tune into the tone of conversations and see others' reactions. The main inquiry scaffold worked with a "Plain Vanilla" process (Jackson, 2001; Makaiau, 2015). Plain Vanilla is a simplified structure involving the following: a stimulus "text" (over time, this included online-digital media such as YouTube), and questions developed by young people in response to the stimulus text. Once these questions are collated on a board, students vote where to start, and a discussion ensues, covering the questions on the board. In DIVINQ, the step of developing questions included the facilitators. After questions were collated, DIVINQ's process radically departed from the ordered, well managed discussions of the plain vanilla approach. This project explores how DIVINQ added 'rainbow sprinkles and chopped nuts' to the plain vanilla approach to produce a queering-posthumanist turn. My encounter with narrative therapy was a significant influence on the development of the anti-method ethic of DIVINQ.

Counselling-Narrative therapy: encounter with poststructural-practice

I entered counselling training in 2001 and chose to work in the broad field of narrative therapy as it is informed by poststructural theory and social constructionism. Narrative therapy moves beyond the limitations of the scientific structural basis of psychological sciences (Besley, 2001, 2002; Drewery & Winslade, 1997; Freedman & Combs, 1996; Guilfoyle, 2014; White, 1991, 1997; White & Epston, 1990) and questions the status of "expert/erudite knowledge" (Foucault, 1980) that privilege scientific discourses of normality. Michael White (1997) describes a triumvirate of interrelated assumptions in humanism that influences most counselling practice. Firstly, there is "the will to truth"' which questions who we are as subjects – our being, essence, or human nature. Secondly, there is the "repressive hypothesis", which holds that repression conceals or obscures our true or essential nature. This repression purportedly inhibits our growth or self-actualisation and so induces illness because our authentic needs and desires are frustrated. Thirdly, there is the "emancipation narrative" that seeks to liberate the self from repression. The concept of "counselling" is formed through discourses that address problematisations that construct these assumptions influences the perceived purpose of therapy, including school counselling.

White and David Epston (1990) discuss the four key moves to resist the humanist triumvirate. Challenging the techniques of power and resurrecting subjugated knowledges are two aspects that stirred my desire to bring ideas from narrative therapy and move through pedagogical

practice in schools, including DIVINQ. My thinking about what an alternative inquiry process might do differently was informed by my having developed a sensitivity to language and the positioning effects of power-knowledge on discourses mobilised in pedagogical contexts. A significant practice that I was interested in developing was externalising conversations. The process of externalising conversations shifts the focus from the internal and from essentialising practices and instead objectifies the problem (Madigan, 2019; White, 1997, 2007). "Externalizing conversations relocates problems inside the relational and interactional context of culture and discourse, normativity, structural inequalities and so on, and removes the primary site of problems from being privatized inside the decontextualized client body" (Madigan, 2019, p. 16). As a facilitator, I embarked on externalising practices to focus the inquiry on problematisations of difference and to explore games of truth. Re-storying involves a process of drawing on subjugated knowledge through externalising conversations to resist and construct alternative, more hopeful selves (Drewery & Winslade, 1997; White, 1995, 2007). In DIVINQ, the discussions and questions were a collective re-storying, particularly with respect to the use of humour-laughter to hold problems lightly (Freeman, Epston, & Lobovits, 1997).

School counselling: Mapping effects of humanist codes available

I had been in a school counselling position for four years before initiating DIVINQ. During this time, I was transitioning out of full-time teaching and working in other facilitation roles, such as running anti-bullying workshops and grief and loss programmes. School counselling in Aotearoa/New Zealand developed post World War II out of concerns about the moral decline in youths, a rise in delinquency, and the growth in application of developmental psychology to education (Besley, 2002; Marshall, 2007; Middleton, 1998). In response to these concerns, pedagogical practices began to emphasise responsibility for self-care. Counselling became a form of technology for addressing these problematisations. Despite its disciplining origins, Kathie Crocket, Elmarie Kotzé, and Mira Peter (2015) argue that young people in Aotearoa/New Zealand have had access to counsellors in schools in times of trouble. They state that, through opportunities to talk, school counselling supports young people in identity formation and the importance of having a quality skilled listener should not be underestimated (p. 40). "Troubled times" are often produced by young people's frustration with problematisations of difference – particularly intelligibility of difference. Karis Knight, Kerry Gibson, and Claire Cartwright (2018) have similarly found that young people appreciate the space counselling provides as a break from other disciplining aspects and describe it as like a

refuge. Indeed, DIVINQ could be seen as an extension-expansion of a refuge, that is, a site for young people to take a break from disciplined learning practices, and for counsellors, to take refuge from being positioned by institutional power.

Besley (2001, 2002) argues that narrative therapy fits well with education as it addresses power and can influence the school community by contributing to the development of policy. The poststructural underpinnings of narrative therapy resist psychology discourses commonly reproduced in traditional school counselling that normalise popular notions of success and identity. Besley identifies how deficit theories drive and feed expert knowledge in schools, forming a self-fulfilling feedback loop that creates models of understanding which ultimately keep power-knowledge invisible in schools. I had felt trapped within this cycle: to draw on a line and metaphor from *The Matrix* (1999), it was these concerns that became "a splinter in my mind driving me mad". To make use of the skills, knowledge, and ideas available to me, I knew there had to be a way to break out of the institutional feedback loops.

Ethical turn: deploying skills beyond counselling

The ethical qualities of the ideas that underpin narrative therapy also served as a starting point for DIVINQ. John Winslade and Gerald Monk (1999) propose that "[n]arrative therapy is more than just a new set of skills or techniques. It involves the interlocking nature of theory, ethics and skills because it is partly a consistent ethical stance, which in turn embodies a philosophical framework" (p. 21). The idea of moving beyond the technical skills of practice to the "ethical stance" was an undertone behind my desire for developing DIVINQ. Winslade and Monk (1999) describe five ways narrative therapy can support ethical practices in schools. I discuss three that are relevant to pedagogical practices such as DIVINQ: avoiding totalising, focussing on changing power relations, and rethinking curriculum through narrative therapy.

The strategy of avoiding totalising involves an awareness of how ways of speaking can construct fixed ideas about people and how these are often based on deficit discourses. This means taking caution with labels and challenging pathologising language in any context. The ethic encourages respectful ways of speaking and, by extension, asking questions. A supporting practice is the use of externalising language and conversations. Given that power relations are significant in schools, a focus on changing these relations requires a consideration of young people as knowledgeable and respect for their expertise. In DIVINQ, this ethic orients the inquiry process which is built on recognising young people as knowledgeable and takes steps to scaffold externalise problematisations of difference.

While not strictly part of the school curriculum, DIVINQ is situated precariously as a pedagogical space where knowledge is considered "as a cultural product rather than as absolute reality" (Winslade & Monk, 1999, p. 118). It resonates with queer-posthuman pedagogy in the taking up of: "questioning a particular narrow range of rational thinking as the one way to establish truth would be opened up for young people to think about. Power relations as they are expressed in discourse would *become subjects of study* [emphasis added]" (Winslade & Monk, 1999, p. 118). Indeed, this assertion describes the core curriculum of DIVINQ. With respect to assessment, Winslade and Monk (1999) argue that evaluation "would not focus in a judgmental way so strenuously on the individual, but would serve purposes of *appreciating and elaborating conversations and communities* [emphasis added]" (p. 118). The core business of a Community of Inquiry is appreciating and elaborating conversations.

While narrative therapy practice was a way to work with poststructural theory and resist humanism's triumvirate, an ongoing effect of institutional power positioned me with adult-expert authority, occupying the role of a serious professional. Humour was one way I experimented with repositioning myself in counselling conversations. The use of humour in a counselling context can have positive effects for forming relationships (see Goldin et al., 2006). I used humour to shift the awkwardness and construct a conversational space to resist the effects of problematisations. To borrow from Freeman, Epston, and Lobovits (1997), DIVINQ was another way to work with humour and to take a playful approach to serious problematisations of difference. In DIVINQ, I explored the rebellious-philosophical qualities of humour as an emergent trickster facilitator.

Trickster facilitation: a possible anti-method approach to DIVINQ

DIVINQ's co-facilitation drew on the experiences Philip had in stand-up comedy (as discussed in Chapter 5) and my work in schools. The harmonising aspect to our approach was the careful tuning of becoming a trickster-team. In the context of educational leadership training, Edwards et al. (2021) explore the complex dynamics involved in facilitation and describe how the trickster archetype negotiates complex power relations involved in working with groups of people in a learning context. They discuss two aspects that are relevant to the facilitation of DIVINQ: producing liminal spaces and aspects of taking up a trickster relationship.

Regardless of context, Edwards et al. (2021) argue that facilitators "are embedded in dynamics of desire and a process of seduction or 'leading astray'" (p. 544). To construct dynamics that

would lead to thinking astray from territorialised-normalised ideas of difference, care was taken with every step of the assemblage. We sought to trouble the dynamics of disciplinary power in order to recruit desire. Edwards et al. (2021) state that facilitation relationships are about producing liminality, a set of moments in-between, and is a transformative process. In this project, I explore the construction of DIVINQ's transformative process and nuanced moves of facilitation that produced a safer space to think and discuss difference differently. A risk of working in liminal spaces is that people may experience being "cast adrift from social conventions and may encounter moments of precariousness, doubt and uncertainty" (Edwards et al., p. 545). Given that my hope with DIVINQ was to disturb ideas by leaving/turning away from conventional-normative territorialised ideas and to encourage doubt-uncertainty, the risks were high for participants. As part of the risk-management, humour-laughter was ethically deployed to support participants to enjoy a sense of vulnerability as part of the transformation.

In Chapter 5, I explored tricksters in the context of comedy as this was an aspect of Philip's professional experience of becoming a trickster. However, tricksters are not limited to comedic roles. Edwards et al. (2021) propose that tricksters tend to be unpredictable, irrepressible figures who, through their relationship with others, bring about change. They are complex characters who teach cultural skills and, through their antics as pranksters, bring new knowledge about the world. In this thesis, n*ew* knowledge includes subjugated knowledge. I explore the facilitation relationship we formed with young people and the antics that supported us to assume a trickster position. While tricksters have the capacity to break rules and violate taboos, they must also remain marginal and peripheral, always in-between. I am interested in the aspects of co-facilitation that produced an in-between relationship. The trickster is therefore typified as a destructive influence and culture hero "a breaker and (re)maker of worlds and world views" (Edwards et al., 2021, p. 547). These qualities inform the anti-method facilitation of DIVINQ to violate taboos and bring about new queer-posthuman knowledge. I propose that pranking expectations of normal teaching-facilitation practice was less "destructive" and more playfully disturbing. One of the ways tricksters may work is throwing shocks to provoke an encounter with thought, not just for the sake of shocking (Edwards et al., p. 551). I propose the practice of throwing shocks is similar to producing encounters where surprise and novelty is experienced.

Tricksters are permanently liminal, in-between figures. Liminality in DIVINQ might occur in the oscillation between deterritorialising practices and endeavours to resist reterritorialising. In

this way, the gap-space is continually worked at with each conversational move as discourses are brought into discussions. Edwards et al. (2021) argue that "[t]ricksters can be instigators and 'tactical users' of liminality in order to confer new understandings or world views onto liminal subjects" (p. 547). I propose that the co-facilitation of DIVINQ is less about conferring onto and more a *joining with* through a liminal space where the forming of an assemblage encouraged a 'decoding' of assumptions as a form of defamiliarisation (Braidotti, 2019). The tactical production of liminality by Philip and me through our co-facilitation of DIVINQ may be repositioning moves that shifted the different subject positions we had respectively occupied when we first came together.

A map of my professional journey

My professional journey has exposed me to a range of facilitation practices. My engagement with adventure-based learning led to a focus on constructing encounters with uncertainty and with managing risk. In this context, humour had supported groups to come together quickly and relieved tension. My experience of teaching health drew my attention to how biomedical-science power/knowledges problematise sexuality and circulate discourses (for example, developmental and plumbing and prevention discourses) that emphasise self-responsibility to manage risks. Health teaching has a complex relationship with humour as jokes typically police normative notions of gender and sexuality. In this context, humour-laughter can be both a shaming force and a means of relieving tension. My training in philosophy for/with children introduced me to the "Gently Socratic" Inquiry approach which emphasises rational-reasoned thinking tools. In this framework, emotions are ultimately positioned as unhelpful, even as humour can be used to support one becoming vulnerable with one's ideas. Deleuzian and Foucauldian ideas of exposure and denaturalising inquiries have the potential to produce an anti-method to traditional inquiries and provide a basis for DIVINQ's approach, as does a basic plain-vanilla scaffold. Narrative therapy's philosophical alignment with poststructural theory supports and ethic care for noticing the effects of dominant power-knowledge on problematisations of young people. Trickster facilitation constructs an in-between space through prankster antics to bring about new ways of thinking.

Chapter 7: Gathering accounts

In this chapter, I describe the research process that draws on the traditional qualitative research method of autoethnography in the form of practitioner-based-research and I outline how I moved these practices through poststructural-posthuman epistemologies. St. Pierre (2016) states that "we will be unable to think the posthuman and to invent posthuman research practices as long as we continue to employ conventional empirical research methodologies grounded in the cogito whose purpose is knowledge production" (p. 34). Guided by St. Pierre to construct a consistent epistemological approach (Koro-Ljungberg et al., 2009), I have reconceived the autoethnographic-practitioner research process through the Deleuzoguattarian (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) concept of assemblages. The research methodology reassembles autoethnographic and practitioner research practices to produce a form of "explicit and disruptive" (Gannon, 2006) autoethnography.

The common aspect of all autoethnography, Susan Gannon (2006) argues, is that the "authority for the story begins with the body and memories of the autoethnographic writer *at the scene* [emphasis added] of lived experience" (p. 475). The authority for the story of DIVINQ begins with my lived experiences of working with difference in secondary schools through multiple practitioner positions of teacher-counsellor-facilitator. However, the dominant epistemological landscape of traditional autoethnography (Britzman, 2000; Clough, 2000, 2009; Jackson & Mazzei, 2012; St. Pierre, 2008) and practitioner research (Etherington, 2017; Lees, 2008; McLeod, 2003) is grounded in humanist concepts of the individual-autonomous self that privileges personal experience as true, real, and authentic. Poststructural and posthuman theories trouble this view of self and therefore require that this thesis attend to complex positioning effects of epistemological frameworks. In this chapter, I describe the nuanced ethical practices that informed each phase of the project.

Autoethnography and practitioner-research: shared resonances

Autoethnography is a qualitative research method in which the researcher uses self-reflection and writing to explore their personal experience and connects their story to broader cultural, political, and social meanings and understandings (Adams, Jones, & Ellis, 2014; Anderson, 2006; Chang, Ngunjiri, & Hernandez, 2012; De Freitas & Paton, 2009; Ellis, 2004; Gannon, 2006; Gergen, 2014; Hughes, 2008; Marx, Pennington, & Chang, 2017; Muncey, 2010; Pace, 2016). In this research project, I have reflected on my professional experiences in secondary

schools to articulate the development of DIVINQ in the context of the politics and social meaning of difference in schools. Heewon Chang, Faith Ngunjin, and Kathy-Ann Henandez (2012) argue that autoethnography can be distinguished from other genres of self-narrative, such as memoir and autobiography, by the way it "transcends mere narration of self to engage in *cultural analysis and interpretation* [emphasis added]" (p. 43). Influenced by Chang et al. (2012), I articulate the analysis and interpretation of DIVINQ as a particular culture of pedagogy. A key aspect of autoethnographic research Chang et al. (2012) and Steven Pace (2016) highlight is the centring of personal experience and the critical aspect of providing new insight or ideas about social and cultural contexts, such as pedagogical practice. I draw on the personal experiences of young people and facilitators that provide new insight to the effects of school practices and DIVINQ on the cultural context of understanding difference.

Critical and analytical autoethnography share some resonances with poststructural/human research. Sherry Marx, Julie Pennington and Heewon Chang (2017) state that critical autoethnography highlights power and privilege in relationships and in educational research and they demonstrate how it links with other traditions, including critical identity theories. I have taken a poststructural critical position that highlights the effects of power-knowledge through pedagogical assemblages and I show how these produce concepts of identity and difference. Similarly, Leon Anderson (2006) argues that analytic autoethnography is not content with capturing and representing individual life or social phenomena and focusses less on the evocative individual story and more on the broader context. Guided by Anderson, I propose that individual stories of difference provide insight to the broader context of pedagogical practice and the workings of DIVINQ. "The definitive feature of analytic autoethnography is this value-added quality of not only *truthfully rendering* [emphasis added] the social world under investigation but also *transcending* [emphasis added] that world through broader generalization" (Anderson, 2006, p. 388). I take this "definitive feature" through poststructuralism to disturb the rendering of truth by moving through games of truth (Foucault, 1997b) in the social context of difference in secondary schools and move transcendence through Deleuzoguattarian assemblage as a process of deterritorialising traditional school practices. In doing this, I hope to broaden the generalisation of how pedagogical practices such as DIVINQ might disturb traditional approaches to diversity.

Adams et al. (2014) state that autoethnographers engage in a range of actions: foregrounding personal experience, illustrating sense-making processes, using and showing reflexivity,

illustrating insider knowledge of a cultural phenomenon/experience, describing and critiquing cultural norms, experiences, and practices, and seeking responses from audiences. These aspects resonate with practitioner-based research. Practitioner research is "research carried out by practitioners for the purpose of advancing their own practice" (McLeod, 1999, p. 8). In resonance with McLeod, my interest is the advancement of facilitation-pedagogical practices. Both education and counselling research lend themselves to practitioner research where the researcher is involved in the work [DIVINQ] that is being researched. In a counselling-therapeutic context, Kim Etherington (1996, 2007, 2017), John McLeod (1999, 2003) and John Lees (2008) argue that the skills of counselling align well with practitioner-based research, in particular, the interpersonal skills involved in interviewing, maintaining professional boundaries, and reflexivity as an ongoing ethic of care of attending to relational power in research. Thus, practitioner research resonates with autoethnography through the practice of doing the work and thinking about it.

Post-research dissonances with traditional autoethnography

During the research process, I was simultaneously entangled with counselling work, facilitating DIVINQ, and becoming a researcher. Thus, to bring DIVINQ and myself into a research assemblage required continual reflexivity. Steve Mann (2016) and Wanda Pillow (2013) suggest reflexivity is a complex term that is sometimes used to describe self-reflection. Mann (2016) distinguishes between reflection and reflexivity by describing the latter as "narrower in focus and more centred on self-awareness" (p. 16). However, this definition assumes this self is a coherent, stable, fixed identity. Poststructural reflexivity involves an awareness of the power implicit in the process of doing research, that is, an ongoing intentionality to make explicit how power/knowledge always operates in relationships (Gannon & Davies, 2007; Lather, 2004, 2006, 2007; Pillow, 2003; St. Pierre, 2008). Therefore, I took up what Pillow (2003) describes as a "reflexivity of discomfort" where "the problematics of reflexivity calls for a positioning of reflexivity not as clarity, honesty, or humility, but as practices of confounding disruptions – at times even a failure of our language and practices" (Pillow, 2003, p. 192). To call on Pillow, reflexivity involved an ongoing practice of careful attention to the discomfort and sensitivity regarding what was being produced throughout the various research assemblages: from the initial research design, recruitment of participants, data collection to the analysis and writing of findings. An example of this is noticing the effects of uncertainty and confusion, especially where my entanglement with DIVINQ at times produced a failure to recognise assumptions I was making as an insider researcher. Like Pillow, Etherington (2007)

argues that while reflexivity is usually applied to ensure the quality of research in terms of validity and recognising the limits of research, reflexivity should be applied across the span of research and extend to the ethics of research practices themselves. Thus, I have threaded ethical considerations throughout this chapter.

I used the process of reflexivity to attend to concepts of speaking and voice:

> It should not be surprising that researchers who employ poststructural theories find problematic a research methodology that privileges *voice* as the truest, most authentic data and/or evidence; after all, voice is part of the humanist discursive and material formation poststructuralism works against. (St. Pierre, 2008, p. 319, emphasis in original)

Guided by St. Pierre, I move autoethnography's problematic of voice through poststructural theory to take up a concept of self-voice that is produced in the positioning effects of discourses. This includes the specific effects of the material-spatial arrangements of interview assemblages. With respect to participant voice in research, Britzman (2000) and Patricia Clough (2009) argue that when sharing personal experience, accounts are located in discourse and multiplicities of subjectivity. For example, research participants spoke from various subjectivities of difference such as disability, culture, age, gender, and sexuality. They were also positioned through multiple relationships with me as a facilitator of DIVINQ and/or counsellor-teacher, their school-institutional experiences as students, and encounter with my research. Although they produced rich accounts, these entangled positions required ongoing reflexivity of writing.

Writing of "self" as multiplicity of subjectivity

Gannon (2006) states that "[i]n autoethnography, the subject and object of research collapse into the body/thoughts/feelings of the (auto)ethnographer located in his or her particular space and time" (p. 475). The subject and object collapsed in this thesis is DIVINQ. An explicit and disruptive autoethnography represents and troubles a concept of self (Gannon, 2006, p. 477). Gannon, drawing on Foucault, discusses how autoethnography echoes long-held Western traditions of writing the self and how writing is entangled with ethical acts of self-production (p. 478). "Writing the self produces transformation of the self and, potentially, of the world in local and particular contexts" (Gannon, 2006, p. 479). Influenced by Gannon, I used journal

writing in the initial stages of my research journey to process and transform my professional identity to become a researcher. As an ethical act later in the research process, I approached writing as a means of practising reflexivity by noticing the effects of institutional practices and how DIVINQ transformed approaches to diversity. Thus, writing myself required "a constant practice of reflexive attention to the past, present, and future moments of subjectification within complex and contradictory discursive arenas" (Gannon, 2006, p. 480). In practice, this involved moving the focus away from traditional self-disclosure writing practices that privilege voice as a form of authenticity (see also Clough, 2009; Jackson & Mazzei, 2012; St, Pierre, 2008). Gannon proposes that autoethnography might take up writing practices that, rather than disclosing a truth of the inner self, displace, disassemble, and move into the social (p. 480). Throughout this "reporting assemblage" (Fox & Alldred, 2015), I use pieces of creative writing to displace and reassemble multiple space-time selves at various scenes throughout my career. These autoethnographic accounts give voice to the multiplicity of professional experiences by reconstructing pedagogical scenes to draw attention to the various epistemological territories being claimed. In these semi-fictionalised stories, I use irony as an explicit and disruptive trickster technique to bring to life encounters and the effects of pedagogical assemblages. In a research context, Erica McWilliam (2000) proposes that irony requires knowing how something works – such as secondary schools and dominant-normative practices. I take up McWilliam's idea that irony troubles ideas and keeps them in play. I employ irony to demonstrate the positioning effects of discourses and the tonal effects of pedagogical assemblages. I turn now to the data collection↔analysis assemblages and weave through ethical considerations.

Participant recruitment assemblages

I invited young people who were involved with DIVINQ (referred to as DIVINQers in this thesis) between 2008-2017 to participate in this research. The main method of contact I used was the online social network created through DIVINQ. I also had contact with some participants through a closed Facebook group associated with Kōwhai DIVINQers. This was a space where Philip and I had been posting ideas about diversity to keep young people engaged with DIVINQ ideas. Social media brought the research to participants in an informal-social context while also maintaining professional boundaries. That is, I did not have a personal connection to any former student members of DIVINQ. As I straddled teacher professional

standards, counsellor, and researcher ethics, these entangled identities guided my decision to exclude former students from my personal online social network.

Although I considered inviting young people who were engaged in DIVINQ at the time of the research, I decided to include only past participants who had also left secondary school. In my consideration, I was mindful to mitigate as much as possible of what Etherington (1996, 2007), McLeod (1999, 2003), and Sabi Redwood (2008) identify as the power implicit in a research relationship. For example, McLeod (1999) outlines two key dilemmas for counsellors doing research: to not compromise beneficence and the effect of dual roles. By focussing on past DIVINQ participants, I reduced the positioning effect of dual roles, especially where I might also have a counselling relationship with young people that could compromise beneficence.

I took up what Redwood (2008) describes as a feminist reading of ethical practice that resonates with poststructural theory by disturbing the underlying assumption of rational autonomous self and turning toward an ethic of care for relationships through compassion and nurturance. A key aspect of this stance that resonates with his project is to move away from a dualistic relationship that positions participants as vulnerable and at risk of exploitation by powerful researchers (Redwood, 2008, p. 118). "Concepts like receptivity, relatedness, and responsiveness become more important than rights, norms, rules, and ideals" (Redwood, 2008, p. 130). The taking up of these ethical values did not dismiss power-positioning but allowed for the formal process to become flexible. For example, some of my invitations included a FaceTime call or an in-person conversation to check potential participants' understanding of the focus of the research and to accommodate different needs.

Young people who had expressed an interest to participate were sent an information sheet (see Appendix A) that explained the themes of the research project. The information sheet was designed to provide transparency about the focus of the project and to help orient potential participants into a research relationship with me. I sent a consent form (see Appendix B) with the information sheet that formalised the research position. Redwood (2008) explains that processes of gaining consent in traditional research are based on assumptions of autonomy and tend to emphasise participants being free of coercion, ensuring adequate information is provided with signing a contractual agreement signalling an independent-rational decision to participate. For example, in my attempt to use what Redwood (2008) describes as "clear unambiguous language" (p. 122), I took the ethical stance of initiating a new subject position in a research assemblage. The letter invited young people to take up a new position that was

different from the previous relationship of counsellor-facilitator-teacher. These practices position some participants as more vulnerable, such as disabled people, and at risk of harm from the research process. Guided by Redwood, the formal process of providing information and gaining consent functioned through recruitment assemblage to call young people into an agentic position, where vulnerability was considered being open to being affected. Given the close connection formed through DIVINQ, I was mindful of my counsellor identity that, as McLeod (1999) states, can situate participants (who had a prior counselling relationship with me) to feel obligated to say "yes" just because I [the counsellor] had asked. It was therefore important to offer multiple opportunities to *deobligate* and withdraw from the research.

Nine ex-DIVINQers took up the invitation to participate (see Appendix E). Pseudonyms for the schools involved are Rata and Kōwhai: three participants were from Rata (a large co-educational school where DIVINQ started) and six were from Kōwhai (a large single-sex school). Kōwhai participants had only recently left secondary school and, for Rata participants, it had been ten years since they had been involved in DIVINQ. Thus, the experiences of those at Rata traces the development of the very first DIVINQ and some of the significant relationships that created a rupture point. I also interviewed the co-facilitators, Philip and Sam together. At the time of the research interviews, Sam worked with Philip and co-facilitated Kōwhai DIVINQ sessions. At the time of the research, I was in regular contact with them as we were facilitating DIVINQ together at Kōwhai.

Interview assemblages: collapsing space-time-relationships

The main method of data generation I used was small group interviews, which were conducted separately for participants and facilitators. Interviews are commonly used in qualitative research as they potentially generate in-depth information that draw on personal experiences (Mann, 2016, p. 2). I employed a form of interactive interviewing (Adams et al., 2015) where researchers and participants share stories in the context of their relationship [secondary schools and DIVINQ], through a semi-structured (McLeod, 1999) format. St. Pierre (2008) cautions about privileging spoken over written voice and suggests that "presence and other related concepts of qualitative inquiry – for example, voice, interview, narrative, experience – cannot secure validity, the truth" (St. Pierre, 2008, p. 223). To call on St. Pierre, the purpose of interviews was not to provide a personal *true* account of DIVINQ but to draw out a description of the process through various viewpoints.

A key consideration for the structure of the interview assemblages was to produce useful data. I was mindful of balancing a focussed-productive research space with a potential for participants to encounter a group reunion effect. In sending out the questions prior to interviews taking place, my aim was to form a scaffolded focus with some flexibility. Informed by a relational ethic of care for well-being, I decided to arrange interview groups to be aligned with the DIVINQ community of which participants had been a part. This was to build on familial connections of DIVINQ to construct a relaxed, comfortable space. My initial proposal was to conduct in-person interviews with groups of three to four. However, group size varied between one and four, depending on time-availability and physical accessibility. To support accessibility with participants residing in Australia and the United States of America, I negotiated the timing of synchronous online interviews (Crichton & Kinash, 2003; O'Connor & Madge, 2017). I conducted two individual interviews – one in person and one via Skype to accommodate unique circumstances that had prevented people joining a group context. At Philip's request, I conducted the two facilitator interviews at his private residence. Thus, each interview assemblage constructed varying affective encounters, and this had effects for the types of conversation that ensued and on the data produced.

During the first few minutes of the interviews, I worked to set the scene of the research and construct an interview setting that would work for the combination of participants. I drew on my experience and counselling skills to open the conversational space through careful attention to language, tentativeness, and curiosity. The interviews moved through the themes of what participants recalled of their learning about difference with a focus on the effects of humour-laughter. A key focus of interviews was to compare and/or contrast with their experience of DIVINQ. Etherington (1996) describes an ethic of care regarding the location and scheduling of interviews for the well-being of participants and researchers, including maintaining time boundaries. Heeding Etherington, I gave careful consideration to the effect of the physical space for interviews and wanted to bring people into a safe-space to remember their school and their DIVINQ experiences.

Two group interviews took place at Kōwhai in my workspace/office, and this was close to the room where DIVINQ was run. For Kōwhai participants, returning to the site of DIVINQ evoked memories of doing DIVINQ, pulling the conversation at times toward a reunion tone. Thus, it was important not to rush into the interview and make space and time for a flow of a/effects of being back at school. This stretched time-boundaries (Etherington, 1996) as the

length of interviews varied, depending on the number of participants and cascading affective surges/intensities: oscillating between light-humorous and heavy-serious tones, that, at times, disturbed the flow and focus of conversations. Generally, the interview lengths varied between 45 minutes and 1.5 hours. A table of interviews is available in Appendix (E). I took time immediately after each interview to reflexively write/process the interview, including debriefing with my supervisors.

My DIVINQ and counselling relationships with young people influenced the relational tone of the interviewing process. This created some challenges for effectively tuning into research interviews as past-present relationships competed and produced oscillations between familial-playful-DIVINQing reconnection, serious-researcher, and counsellor. It was my task as researcher to attend to the positioning fluctuations of the interview and I often went back to the questions to re-establish a researcher position, while trying to keep the conversation warm and friendly. Thus, there was potential for different needs flooding the interview space producing affective intensities that disturbed people's remembering and/or ability to share their thoughts. In recognition of interview assemblages potentially limiting people's voice(s), I provided another opportunity for participants to speak into the research. I emailed participants after the interview and invited them to share any additional ideas or thoughts via written or other forms such as a recording (see Appendix A). This invitation acknowledged the possibility of experiencing the interview assemblage as constraining thought and the limits of my ability to effectively tune everyone into a comfortable position. Although no participants took up the invitation to respond, this was an ethical act of receptivity and responsiveness.

Navigating a researcher position with friends

In my ethics proposal, I discus the complexity of interviewing Philip and Sam as our work-friendship is/was entangled with the research. Autoethnography supports a form of relational ethics of "friendship as method" (Adams et al., 2015) that was particularly relevant given the close friendship we share(d). Adams et al. (2015) discuss five key points of friendship as method, one of which is prioritising the relationship, including being there for participants and not making inappropriate demands on them. To this point, I was in continual communication with Philip and Sam to ensure the timing of interviews worked for their other professional commitments. Another key point was to nurture the relationship by whatever means appropriate and, as a researcher, this meant being willing to change patterns of interaction. For example, a significant consideration was ensuring the interviews were separated from our

DIVINQ work and social connection. The sending out of the information sheet (see Appendix C) and consent form (see Appendix D) were part of the process for forming a separation. A third point by Adams et al. (2015) relates to addressing possible conflicts in the relationship and the research process/project explicitly. In relation to this, I discussed with Philip and Sam how the focus of the research was on the DIVINQ process and my intention to explore the pedagogical aspects in the thesis to which they would be contributing. The fourth point requires acknowledging issues of confidentiality, loyalty, and critique in ways that meet both the demands of the friendship and the demands of research. I tried to be transparent with Philip and Sam in letting them know that they would be identified in the research as my co-facilitators. The desire to take DIVINQ to more secondary school settings was a shared idea we continued to critique and negotiate while the research was conducted. I noticed after the first interview that our friendship produced comfort and familiarity that, while pleasurable, had toned down my researcher voice. I acknowledged this with Philip and Sam and arranged a second interview. This provided an opportunity for me to take a stronger researcher-questioning position and resist sliding into reminiscing with my friends. The fifth point raised by Adams et al. (2015) is to maintain friendship after the research is complete or no longer possible. Our friendship connection through DIVINQ and the research process has flowed with changes in our lives.

Transcribing interviews: transitional assemblages

I audio recoded and transcribed interviews. I used the process of transcription as a transitional assemblage that merged with aspects of the analysis. To maintain confidentiality, I chose pseudonyms for past students and schools. The transcriptions were verbatim, and I included pauses with bracketed affective markers where laughter appeared in the conversation. In traditional qualitative research, this might suggest an attempt at retaining and reproducing a humanist approach to transcription (St. Pierre, 2008) of ensuring the true and authentic voice was captured. In taking transcribing as connecting with data production assemblage, the function of paying attention to spaces and other auditory data was to find a way to remember the affective qualities of the conversation rather than seeking to create a representation of truth. I sent participants the interview transcript to review and provide an opportunity to withdraw or amend comments. The process of transcription was a way of coming into the analysis assemblage with a text that could be read for meaning and affect. As such, it was more ready to be plugged into the theory (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012) of the analysis machine. Additional data generation came from viewing Philip's comedy (Patston, 2009a; Patston, 2009b, May 25), music video (Patston, 2012, July 6), and TEDx (TEDx Talks, 2012) talk. I also reviewed

documents such as DIVINQ planning session notes. Reviewing these additional data produced pleasure and remembering brought forward affective intensities of encounters. As part of the data-collection assemblage, these moments stimulated some of the writing pieces and supported analysis of interviews by working creatively with data.

Analysis assemblages: unforced plug ins by finding theoretical resonances

The analysis of data is guided by posthuman/new materialist research practices, including the idea of "plugging data and theory into one another" (Jackson & Mazzei 2012, p. vii). Alecia Jackson and Lisa Mazzei (2012) borrow the term "plugging in" from Deleuze and Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus* (1988):

> Plugging in to produce something new is a constant, continuous process of making and unmaking. An assemblage isn't a thing – it is the *process* of making and unmaking the thing. It is the process of arranging, organising, fitting together. So to see it at work, we have to ask not only how things are connected, but also what territory is claimed in that connection. (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, p. 1 emphasis in original)

The analysis assemblage functioned to produce findings. Given that meaning depends and is contingent on what theorists and concepts are used, the poststructural-Foucauldian concepts I used mapped the territory of what is claimed in the analysis. As a specific example, Foucauldian concepts "produce schematic cues" (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, p. 1) such as problematisation and games of truth claiming power-knowledge/positioning effects of pedagogical practices. Jackson and Mazzei outline the steps that require three particular moves: putting philosophical concepts to work; being deliberate and transparent about what analytical questions are being made possible through a specific concept; and working data chunks repeatedly. This process moves away from the usual practice of coding themes (St. Pierre, 2008). The process I took was to read each transcript and make notes beside that which identified the Deleuzoguattarian and Foucauldian concepts and other theory I was plugging into to make tentative claims to queer-posthuman pedagogical territory. In this way, I have used analysis as a concept/conceptual practice (St. Pierre, 2016), moving, as Jackson and Mazzei (2012) suggest, to asking not what something means but what it does and what are its effects.

Foucauldian plug-ins: decoding The Humanist Matrix

The reading of data through Foucauldian schematic cues decodes The Humanist Matrix and the recoding effects of DIVINQ's practices. Discourse and discursive fields function as an entry point for language to connect with subjectivity and positioning. I read for problematisations of difference that are produced through institutional practices and games of truth able to be played through various pedagogical assemblages. That is, I am attuned to the effects of power-knowledge on the circulation of dominant discourses of difference and the positioning effects of disciplinary power through the normative gaze. Of significance is the schematic cue of knowledge-ignorance that includes Britzman's (1995) study of limits and study of ignorance. I plug into power-knowledge to explore the effect of retuning epistemological fields and identify what ideas about diversity are made accessible. In the analysis of data, I called on my experience of working with poststructural theory as a narrative therapist to notice the effects of discourses such as positioning theory, agency, and voice (Davies, 1990; Davies & Harré, 1991; Parker, 1992) to identify shifts in power relationships in pedagogical assemblages. This included the positioning moves of humour and laughter in the context of both classroom teaching and DIVINQ. Simply put, I was interested in not what humour is, but what it *does.*

Deleuzoguattarian plug-ins: tracing affective-tonal shifts

I plugged into Deleuzoguattarian concepts to describe DIVINQ's function as a posthuman-deterritorialising practice and the material-energetic aspect of this research. In particular, I focussed on the following concepts: intensities as affects that operate on and through people to produce effects; deterritorialisation as a process of un-coding habitual relations, experiences, and usages of language; and the process of becoming, as the moment through a unique event produces experimentation and change (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012). Significantly, where deterritorialisation happens, there is also reterritorialisation and I have read for movements in both directions. Thus, an overarching Deleuzoguattarian schematic cue throughout this thesis is that of assemblages. The process of plugging into assemblages identifies directionality of practice and where intensities, becomings, and desires might produce something new and/or move toward normalising-territorialised practices and ideas. Encounters and affect cue in the affective aspects of DIVINQ and the bodily/materiality of bodies. The affects produced by humour-laughter through different assemblages are a key Deleuzoguattarian cue, and in particular, with respect to the creation of an alternative, queering-posthuman form of thinking-inquiry space.

"Poststructural autoethnography would emphasize discontinuities, search for disjunctures and jarring moments" (Gannon, 2006, p. 480). Influenced by Gannon's statement, my analysis of the data enabled the dissonances as well as resonances to be explored for meaning. This was assisted by a "reflexivity of discomfort" (Pillow, 2003) to remain cautious about the assumptions being made through my interpretation of the data.

Outline of findings chapters

The findings chapters of this thesis are arranged in three parts. The first part includes Chapters 8 and 9 that focus on the influences on DIVINQ's emergence. Chapters 10 and 11 form the second part and discuss the practice of DIVINQ. The third part explores how DIVINQ reverberated in young people's lives after they had left secondary school.

In Chapters 8 and 9, I explore territorialised experiences, beginning with Philip's life encounters and his relationship with humour that informed his trickster approach to facilitation. This chapter is a parallel account to my experiences in schools and maps the social and institutional practices that influenced and troubled Philip's thinking about disability. In Chapter 9, I turn to participant accounts of learning about difference from a student position. My accounts of working in schools from professional positions are woven through to draw out the effects of power-knowledge on problematisations and games of truth circulated in schools. A key focus of this chapter is the formal curriculum content in health education and the effects of informal pedagogies, including spatialising practices on the intelligibility of LGBT+ and functional difference. The work of this chapter is to map the institutional territorialisation of abject-otherness discourses and examine how these produce dominant-normalised pedagogical responses to difference in schools as the effects of humour-laughter through disciplinary power.

Although separated, Chapters 10 and 11 should be considered as entangled with each other. In these chapters, I focus on the forming and functioning of DIVINQ as a community of inquiry assemblage. Chapter 10 explores the process of *forming* DIVINQ, in particular, the rearranging of objects and people on the production of an alternative pedagogical space. A key aspect is the various repositioning moves I made to produce a trickster-facilitation relationship. This includes the use of the film *The Matrix* (Wachowski & Wachowski, 1999) as both a conceptual and relational scaffold and the effects of humour-laughter through DIVINQ on deterritorialising disciplinary power. I explore how the construction of a new assemblage supported a playfully relaxed philosophical inquiry. Chapter 11 expands on the *functioning* of

DIVINQ as a queering-posthuman affective community of inquiry. This chapter includes facilitator and participant accounts to identify the nuanced trickster co-facilitation style of DIVINQ. I focus on the practices that deterritorialised dominant power-knowledges and accelerated forces of desire to produce an inquiry that supported becoming *epistemically vulnerable* (Logue, 2014). That is, I examine how the inquiry assemblage turned away from disciplined learning and serious-moral-taboo territory.

In Chapter 12, I explore DIVINQ's effects on participants' lives with respect to their concepts of knowledge, truth, normal, and the intelligibility of difference. The chapter explores how a posthuman subjectivity might remain oscillating between fields of thought and the ethical tensions that come with providing an encounter with queer-posthuman ideas at secondary school.

The DIVINQ spark

Jeannie sips coffee and reflects on Philip's lunchtime talk. She considers how it was different to other guest-speakers she had seen. Through comedic-like engagement, Philip had done something with the chaotic-disruptive energy. His humour had calmed the space and invited students to become part of the conversation. She recalls the interventions she has tried over the years: anti-bullying workshops, counselling, at-risk programmes with adventure components, teaching health. All had their place but seemed to be responding to a specific need or problem.

It strikes Jeannie that Philip's playful questioning was like a gently Socratic approach. It was *the way* he used humour that interests her. She wonders what co-facilitating a Community of Inquiry *with* Philip could look like. She emails Philip to see if he is open to a debrief and hopes he might be interested in working together on an inquiry process that explores difference.

……..

A few days later Jeannie arrives at Philip's place. She shares her observation about the shift of energy in the room and how his humour seemed to help get students thinking. Philip talks about his experiences of how fear is recognisable through nervous laughter.

> "I'm used to people being a bit nervous when they meet me. I think humour is a good way to break the ice sometimes."
>
> "I noticed that when that group were really restless, you reached out to them and made it ok to be uncomfortable."
>
> "Yeah – I think too often everyone is trying to hide their discomfort or mask it. I mean how many of those students would have met someone like me?"

As Jeannie and Philip discuss the lunchtime workshop, Philip discloses some observations of other facilitation work he has done.

> "When I was doing stand-up I had to make people laugh. But when I facilitate diversity workshops, especially ones on disability, no-one wants to laugh."

> "Well, in a school, you're supposed to have everyone take it seriously and *not* laugh. I just want to figure out how to do both."

Jeannie and Philip laugh. Philip cocks his head and sighs.

> "I'm over being stuck with social justice and human rights stuff that gets so serious and everyone is angry, fighting about who has more, or less rights. I want people to think more deeply, like really *break out* of all those normalised codes. It's like being stuck in The Matrix. Have you seen *The Matrix*?"

Jeannie nearly falls off her seat and splutters a response.

> "Yes! It's one of my favourite movies. I was just thinking about it when you mentioned codes. It really got me into questioning how do we come to know what is real."

> "I like the idea of not being able to see differently until you unplug. It's a great metaphor for being stuck in a world that only lets you see things a certain way."
> "But people need to be *ready* to unplug. Not everyone wants to see things differently. I've wondered about running a group with students that unplugs from some of those ways of talking and thinking about diversity."

The metaphor of The Matrix fills the room as a possible way to explore an alternative conversation about difference. Jeannie asks Philip a question.

> "Have you heard of Philosophy for Children?"
> "No, I haven't, but it sounds interesting?"

Jeannie describes the "Gently Socratic" Inquiry approach and her first experience of using *The Matrix* film as a stimulus text. Philip picks up on the idea and they muse about who to invite. Jeannie suggests that senior students might work as a pilot group.

> "I'll advertise to the prefect team at Rata and see if they know of friends who might be *ready to unplug*. We can figure out what to call it later."

Chapter 8: Philip becoming a trickster

DIVINQ would not exist without Philip. He had a life-long relationship with wittification practices that was significant to DIVINQ's development. This chapter articulates the knowledges, skills, and abilities Philip contributed to DIVINQ's emergence. I orient this chapter around the autoethnographic scene (Gannon, 2006) of my encounter with Philip's lunch time talk (Prologue) and the emergence of DIVINQ.

During the lunchtime talk, I had witnessed Philip's unique conversational style as he redirected laughter away from a trajectory where difference could become the object of ridicule. He produced a relaxed space that invited young people to laugh, think, and ask questions. I was left with the burning question: how did he do that? The aim of this chapter is to answer the question I had back then, of *how,* by exploring the important aspects of Philip's life that developed his trickster abilities through experimentations with humour in different contexts.

In this chapter, the Deleuzoguattarian concept of assemblages (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) is applied to analyse aspects of Philip's work as a comedian and facilitator. The first part of this chapter is an exploration of Philip's account of wittification of self (Smith, 2018) as a stand-up comedian, and his experience of professional comedy as a specific form of assemblage. I draw attention to the ethical limits of humour Philip encountered. I then return to explore Philip's account of the effect of childhood experiences of becoming different. I analyse these on the terms of dividing practices and their effects on identity.

I then turn to Philip's later work as a facilitator and his attempts to use humour to disturb discourses of difference. A focus of this chapter is an exploration of how Philip developed the posthumanist ideas that supported his practice as a facilitator of change. It explores how he drew on subjugated knowledges throughout his life, including how and when these were or were not allowed space to perform, such as through the assemblages of stand-up comedy and facilitating groups.

When I look back, humour was the noticeable difference between Philip and me, in our experiences of facilitation. It was not that I had never used humour; however, in a school context, there were some uncomfortable tensions that I explore in Chapter 9. At the time of the lunchtime talk, I recognised that Philip was able to do more with humour in a spontaneous pedagogical context. The shock for me then, was a sense that school was *my territory*. It was

quite a jolt to my professional identity, in witnessing a pedagogical assemblage forming that engaged young people respectfully, with so much laughter still in the room. More than this, young people were *thinking about difference.*

A note on the style of this chapter: an ironic retelling

In this chapter, I report how Philip took up a wittification position in retelling childhood encounters when we met for the research conversation. His approach resonates with Billig's (2005) concept of laughing about it later, where the humorous retelling of uncomfortable events [the research interview] positions recipients of the story as an audience who become observers of the past. Sam and I were the audience at the time of the research interview, but we also joined with Philip to bounce the conversation back through our shared friendship and stories. At times we witnessed and subverted the pain of the past through laughing together.

My relationship with Philip now spans over a decade. Thus, the research interviews fell into a rather casual conversation, relying on our insider knowledge and friendship. Through the autoethnographic re-telling, I reposition myself as authoring a story of Philip's developing his use of humour.

Lightening up: encounter with stand-up comedy

Before comedy, Philip worked in a government position that had a social justice focus. I was interested to understand why he transitioned from work into stand-up comedy as public service work and stand-up seemed worlds apart. Philip described the affective intensities that drew him toward stand-up comedy, thus resisting dominant career development discourses:

> Philip: I was working in [governmental department]. I was really bored [Jeannie and Sam chuckle]. Everything was so serious, and I wanted a creative outlet.

While respecting the significance of the work of this agency, Sam and I knew from our insider experiences of working with Philip that he takes his responsibility for influencing change seriously/professionally, and we laughed when Philip ironicised boredom. The work he undertook in this senior government position produced professional practices and processes of order, rationality, law, and rights. Thus, Philip reported that he recognised he was captured in a field of seriousness and sought opportunities to work creatively. Productive forces of desire (Colebrook, 2002, 2010; Deleuze & Guattari, 1977/2009) called Philip to explore alternative affective spaces.

In the background of our research interview, Philip discussed exploring a variety of creative outlets before he came upon a stand-up comedy course. He did not outline the details of the course itself, but described the transition from workshopping for his own personal development to performing stand-up comedy:

> Philip: At the end of the course, we were invited up to the comedy club to do a gig. After, the guy who ran the club comes on stage and says, 'You were really good – do you want to come back next week?'

Philip recounted that his performance at the end of the course was met with enthusiasm by the owner. The purpose of stand-up comedy is entertainment as evidenced in the production of laughter (Brodie, 2014), and contemporary stand-up draws on wittification of self (Smith, 2018). The invitation from the comedy club owner for Philip to return was a confirmation Philip had successfully wittified himself as gay and disabled: the audience laughed, and this was evidence of their enjoyment of his performance. More significantly, the call to return indicated Philip had the ability to successfully subvert discourses that produce fear of disability.

When I look back, it was this ability that I had witnessed at work during that lunch time talk. When I compared my own relationship with humour with Philip's apparent ease, I judged that my facilitation practice was alienated from humour. At that time, when we first met, I judged that I took myself far too seriously and that I was not as equipped as Philip to use humour in a pedagogical context.

There was more to Philip's journey through stand-up, however, and these were experiences that I had not heard him talk about in our other conversations over the years. His initial reason for participating in these stand-up comedy workshops was to break boredom and seriousness. Philip described how he became swept up in the comedy industry:

> Philip: It went from open mic nights to professional nights where we got paid. Then I met the director of Pulp Comedy who said, 'We'd like you on the show' and it just kind of happened. It wasn't something that I chose at all. It was just something that had this impetus of its own and I just kept saying 'yes'.

Philip recounted how public validation drew him into stand-up comedy performance and the momentum of success offered him more opportunities to perform. He went from relative anonymity to public figure in the 1990s, to local celebrity. I recall him performing at the first

school I worked in and laughing along with the audience of students. As he became more successful, his identity as a performer became further entangled with the expectations of professional comedy, identified by Brodie (2014) and by Smith (2018) as to entertain and produce laughter. There were implications for Philip's ability to use humour *beyond* the production of laughter.

Reterritorialising: from creative outlet to comedy as work

Philip shared the Billy T award for comedy in 1999 with some big names such as Jermaine Clement and Taika Waititi. As part of this research study, I have viewed YouTube clips of Philip performing comedy in the 1990s. They offer a contrast with his later use of humour in contexts such as his TEDx (2012). His onstage presence and engagement with the audience appears easy in the 1990s clips and again I wondered why he had stopped performing stand-up comedy when he was so accomplished:

> Jeannie: Was there a point where you stopped saying yes?
>
> Philip: I remember I was at a conference, and I did a set of stand up, in this really awkward conference situation. I was thinking 'I don't want to do this anymore, I don't even think I'm funny.'

Philip recounted the conference performance as a turning point where he questioned his relationship with performing comedy. He doubted his desire to keep wittifying himself for audiences to laugh. Stand-up, according to Smith (2018), relies on the relationship a comedian has with themselves as humorous. Thus, once Philip became unsure if his humour was funny, the relationship with himself as a professional changed. Smith (2018) argues that modern stand-up comedy draws on the wittification of self and the commodification of this self or, as Smith says, "a persona which can be peddled" (p. 35). Philip had encountered a possible ethical dilemma with what he was peddling:

> Jeannie: What was the part of comedy that was not ok for you in the end?
>
> Philip: I just got sick of talking shit for laughs.

Philip was over his comedic contractual position, where what he said only mattered if people laughed. He described in simple terms the aporia of the ethics of ridicule that is constructed in stand-up assemblages. Contemporary stand-up draws on what Billig (2005) describes as ideological positivism of humour in Western societies. In this territory, cultivating a good

sense of humour is normalised and stand-up comedy becomes a site for such cultivation. Humour's potential for harm can therefore be overlooked in favour of a presumed innate goodness of laughter. Philip was positioned in this contemporary context.

As I understand the story Philip tells, it appears that the ethical line of comedy is significant. All comedy navigates an ethical line with ridicule (Benko, 2020; Pérez, 2013; Shuster, 2020). Of importance to stand-up comedy is a relational contract that, as Brodie (2014) states, has very clear expectations of the outcomes. In Brodie's terms, the audience expects to laugh, and Philip was obliged to produce laughter. Thus, Philip's statement about becoming "sick of talking shit for laughs" could suggest the assemblage was unable to function and, therefore, the stand-up contract could no longer be fulfilled. The relational positioning set up in the assemblage between him and the audience pushed the ethical dilemma that became an aporia in his career and professional identity. Thus, Philip's experience of fatigue was an affective outcome of fulfilling a contract that was becoming increasingly less satisfying. The excavation of self (Smith, 2018) that performing stand-up required, had a cost to his relationship with himself.

While there was an end point to his career in stand-up comedy, there was a significant period between Philip being swept up in the initial workshop and calling time on his comedy career. Philip discussed the complexity of the relationship between humour and laughter in the performance of stand-up:

> Philip: It doesn't matter *what* you say, if your gag dies, you say some things to rescue it back.

Philip was expected to keep the audience laughing, as his credibility as a comedian was *always* on the line when he performed. If the audience did not laugh, this was immediate evidence of failure. The ability to say anything for laughs was a positioning effect produced through the relational contract. Thus, while part of the entertainment-performance assemblage, Philip was *obligated* to get people laughing. This constructed an ethical dilemma. If in "rescuing", ridicule turned to targeting individuals, humour had the potential to harm: either directly, or indirectly (Benatar, 2014; Morreall, 2009). Philip's experience of stand-up is an ironic inverse to my experience of teaching, where I needed to rescue seriousness back from laughter. That is, I was positioned in classroom assemblages to rescue focus and discipline from the potential chaos of laughter. The affective aspects further complicated Philip's relationship with stand-up:

> Philip: There is almost an addictive thing about comedy because the only thing that matters is getting a laugh. When you're doing a really good gig and people are laughing, it's easy – you're adlibbing and playing with the crowd. There is this dopamine, oxytocin or endorphins, a neurochemical thing.

When a gig was going well, Philip described experiencing pleasure in performing. If he successfully negotiated a shared understanding with the audience (Brodie, 2014), a form of reciprocated play was produced. Philip recounted experiencing pleasurable bodily-material effects that he attributed to bio-physiological responses, a phenomenon discussed by Ruch, (1993) and Yim (2016). I have seen live stand-up performances and recall feeling the electric buzz flowing through the audience. Philip's recollection of playing with the crowd reminded me of his style of co-facilitating DIVINQ where he made similar moves of adlibbing and playing with ideas to generate a playful engagement. In the context of comedy, Brodie (2014) argues that the comedian initiates/sets the dialogical territory, and this responsibility is generally one way, even if the audience responds. The difference between facilitating DIVINQ and stand-up was *who* guided the dialogical space, something that is explored in the following findings chapters.

Two aspects matter to laughter producing an exhilarating experience: construction of a *safe* relational space and the bodily effects of laugher (Ruch, 1993; Yim, 2016; Vlieghe, 2014). The language of humour disturbed discourses of difference and affective forces of laughter signalled an agreement that it was safe to laugh. This invited the audience to join with Philip and a dialogical encounter was mutually reciprocated, as evidenced by adlibbing. Laughter flowed and produced excited relaxation, in the form of exhilaration. Philip enjoyed the affects and he desired more, increasingly becoming *hooked* on performing.

Testing the limits of the stand-up assemblage

In his comedy, Philip often played on his unique difference of material embodiment and queer identity. In developing new content, there was complex meanings of abject-other difference to negotiate that was highlighted to him by others in the industry.

> Philip: I remember someone saying to me 'If you go out there and do comedy to try and educate people it won't work, people will smell a rat' [Jeannie chuckles].

Philip was warned about breaking the rules of the comedic contract. Comedy makes use of the perceived distance the audience has with the comedian. The warning identifies that the key

function of humour in a stand-up assemblage is to keep people amused and laughing. Comedy requires disengaging the audience from thinking too deeply (Brodie, 2014; Morreall, 2009). Thus, to "smell a rat" personified any wittification of difference that called the audience into a thinking-serious position.

I laughed in irony at the contradiction with my experience of humour in teaching. Humour's traditionally uncomfortable fit with education meant that if I as a teacher had tried to joke around with students, young people and parents would also "smell a rat". In contrast with Philip's experience in stand-up, when I was training as a teacher, I recall being told to not smile before Easter, as an example of the professional expectation to produce seriousness.

Philip reflected on how his comedy played with fields of thought and problematisations of difference. He analysed that his style had risked producing an engagement with seriousness. Morreall (2009) states that if people experience anger, fear, shock, this cancels out the ability to experience amusement. In Morreall's terms, to smell a rat metaphorically described the potential for discordant affect to be produced as a shock or discomfort:

> Philip: 'They'll feel duped because they came to see a comedian and they are getting a diversity workshop'.

The warning implies Philip's humour was flirting dangerously with discursive tones of engaging the audience with thought, disturbing the functioning of the laughing assemblage. He was being called out on the positioning effects of humour and his responsibility to elicit laughter. If humour challenges audiences' deeply held beliefs and values, then irritation, fear, or anger could take over the experience. Thus, Philip's reputation as a comedian was on the line where discourses of difference produced a very narrow space of negotiation of a shared understanding. This constructed another ethical dilemma and Philip described the impact on what he chose to use as material for his routine:

> Philip: So, I *deliberately* didn't go out there to make a political statement.

Philip worked to make sure there was no ambiguity about his humour. He took care to ensure the audience could not mis-read his jokes as serious. As Brodie (2014) argues, stand-up generally involves culturally acceptable incongruity that is less shocking. However, disabled bodies are read as abject and shocking by non-disabled (Massumi, 1993; Morris, 1991; Overboe, 1999; Shakespeare, 1994; Shildrick, 2002). Therefore, in a comedy context,

dominant problematisations of disability *and* being gay constructed the incongruity *beyond* the acceptable. Philip could not hide the political statement his body made: his materiality produced an encounter with difference. As soon as he went on stage, his body spoke to the audience before he could share his comedy. Philip had to carefully negotiate agreed incongruity in a space where fear of difference was naturalised and politicised. "The more the assumption is exposed as incongruous, the more the reaction elicited can be terror or grief instead of laughter" (Brodie, 2014, p. 6). Thus, Philip's use of humour needed to be finely tuned to continually depoliticise his identity so that the incongruity would be read as acceptable.

Early life encounters with difference

Philip began experimenting with his identity early in his life. In this section, I explore some of the context of Philip developing his ideas about difference. Philip grew up alongside his twin brother. His early life experiences produced a number of encounters with difference. Philip performed a retelling of this part of his life as a TEDx (2012) talk, The Label Libel. In trickster presenter mode, Philip draws from this past performance to identify the labelling and dividing practices that gave rise to his later questioning of their usefulness. The research interview became another opportunity to draw on this storied wittification.

Becoming different: twin discourses at work

Philip recalled, in the interview, that his relationship as a twin was the site of his first encounter with a concept of difference as other. Philip recounted how sharing spaces with his brother informed his identity:

> Philip: My image of myself was based on my twin brother. We'd always been to the same Kindies [Kindergartens] and Play Centres. So, I never actually had my identity around being disabled or having CP, it just didn't exist.

Twinship is entangled with discourses of *sameness*, troubling the notion of individual identity particularly in contemporary Western societies (Ncube, 2017, 2018). As a very young child, Philip's bodily materiality disturbed the dominant discourses of being identical to his brother. However, in the absence of a concept of being *different to* his twin, Philip was affirmed in his sense of likeness. He explained how his understanding of difference changed when he started school:

> Philip: My earliest recollection is going to a school for kids with CP [cerebral palsy] when I was four and a half, and if 'what the fuck' had been a thing back then [Jeannie and Sam chuckling in recognition of the line from the TEDx talk], I would have said "What the fuck".

Philip wittified the affective shock his younger self had experienced at the time [what the fuck] to ironicise the effects of intensive focus on his body as a site of demarcation. At the time [1970s], dominant medical discourses of disability and liberal humanist educational ideas informed specialised schools for disabled young people (Kearney, 2009, 2011). The idea of meeting learning needs legitimised and normalised dividing/spatialising practices at the time to provide all children with access to education. While the intended *good* of the decision is not in question, I draw attention to *the effects* of school as a dividing practice on Philip's understanding of himself as different *from* his brother. For Philip, the act of being separated based on his bodily difference from his twin produced an encounter with becoming *othered*:

> Philip: Suddenly I was in this school with all these kids who couldn't walk and couldn't talk.

Philip recounted a sense of shock his younger self experienced of encountering bodies that appeared to function differently to his. This is not a critique of the difficult decision his parents likely made at the time, based on what knowledge and discourses had informed what was considered appropriate and the best way to meet his educational needs (Armstrong, 2003; Brantlinger, 2004, 2006, 2009; Goodley, 2007; Kearney, 2009, 2011). However, physical disabilities such as cerebral palsy have come under the most intensive regulation (Morris, 1991; Overboe, 1999; Shildrick, 2002) and Philip had his identity captured by such regulatory practices. The image Philip had of himself as different *from* his brother was likely amplified by being placed on the fringes of education, away from what Youdell (2006b) suggests is the normative centre. He wittingly described the effect on his identity as a younger person:

> Philip: I remember a real identity crisis even at that age. I thought, "What am I doing here, why am I with all these kids, who am I and why am I different"?

Philip recounted a sense of confusion his younger self experienced at the time and questioning the meaning of his perceived difference. Thus, while Philip had not fundamentally changed, his identity had become defined by his body function and an imposed disability label. Labels have the power to assign people to places (Armstrong, 2003; Booth, 1987) and this has

significant effects. In terms of identity positions, who he was *to others* had changed. The naming of cerebral palsy/disability and being placed in a separate school exposed Philip to the practice of his body/materiality that constructed his identity as different *from* his brother.

Repositioning identity: disturbing encounters with difference

Philip reported that, eventually, he moved into mainstream education. He discussed navigating social relationships and becoming more aware of the fear of disability:

> Philip: I remember being aware that if I was going to make friends and not be bullied, that I would need to make the first step.

Philip recognised from a young age the importance of initiating and changing the encounter with how his identity was read:

> Philip: I was always aware of going up to people and saying, “Hi, my name’s Philip”.

As a child, Philip had used a simple but effective initiation by way of introducing himself. I wish to point out Philip’s skill and courage in making the first move. Introducing himself was a recognisable social practice that produced a disturbance to swirling discourses of otherness. Thus, he called into the field of thought the possibility of being intelligible to classmates as just another kid. He understood that other children might hesitate and be unsure when they met him:

> Philip: I realised that if I don’t make the first interaction, people were more likely to sort of freeze up, stand back. If I go up and say ‘Hi, how’s it going?’, they have to respond.

The social practice of introductions was a way to disrupt fear of difference that might position his peers to mis-recognise him. The Deleuzian concept of encounters involves two parts: the shock, as described by Philip of his peers potentially freezing, and then the composure. Philip’s early life experiences of making friends provided opportunities to experiment with practices of composure. Thus, “Hi, how’s it going?” was an effective position call for his peers to recognise as a conversational move and to respond. Philip learned early in his life how to ease the relational space of composure by calling his peers into a familiar and recognisable friendship position.

Philip went on to discuss high school [he attended Rata] and his expanded experimentation with shaping his identity at high school:

> Philip: At around fifteen it became really important for me to be noticed by something that wasn't my impairment or my function.

As a young person [who used a wheelchair], Philip continued to notice that his identity to others was fixed on material function. Again, he wanted to break free from his body defining who he might be to other people. Bodies are read first for *limited* meaning (Massumi, 1993; Overboe, 1999). He was pushing against the abnormalised margins that the normative centre pushed his identity toward. School environments are intensive sites of normalisation that produce constellations of intelligible identities (Youdell, 2005). If intelligibility is a process of constituting identity through coherence and continuity of discourses (Butler, 2006), then Philip understood how the materiality of disability and dominant deficit discourses produced his identity to others.

Further, as part of intensive normalisation practices, schools often employ uniforms to achieve [gendered] *sameness*. For Philip, wearing a uniform not only failed to hide his body, it potentially accentuated his material difference. He described how he used his body as a site of resistance:

> Philip: So, I started dying my hair. Making my appearance *more* obvious than the fact I was disabled.

Philip strategically manipulated his visible difference to draw attention away from disability. By making something else about him *matter* more than perceived dysfunction, he was shaking off his assigned label, by slapping a brighter one over the top. As Youdell (2005) suggests, intelligible identities are shaped by discourses that are not fixed or solid and can change. This movement creates opportunities to rupture and break free. Philip was *playing* in this movable space, by unsettling what appeared a solid and fixed disabled identity. When I look back, dying one's hair was/is a common way to resist uniformity and conformity. There was more of a trickster move in Philip's decision to dye his hair.

An emergent trickster: disturbing constellations of intelligibility

Philip had many years learning his identity was likely reduced to appearance. The exaggeration of *other difference* was a strategic play of becoming intelligible. Philip read and refused the

positioning actions of pathologising discourses that attempted to totalise his identity as disabled. His hair colour playfully provoked an invitation for people to notice a more common and shared form of difference. Dying his hair provided an alternative material object to matter in the encounter. Thus, while the wheelchair might offer up "disabled", his dyed hair diverted attention and invited alternative discourses into the social-relational space:

> Philip: So, people would go 'Oooh, wow, I like your hair', you know, and that was a way into a conversation.

Philip wanted people to notice he was different and dyed hair constructed a conversational entry point. If, as Shildrick (2002) argues, difference marks the borders of safe and unsafe identities, then hair colour was a socially *accessible* difference that produced alternative discourses of intelligibility. Thus, hair colour created a border crossing and an opportunity to be seen as someone safe to approach. Philip reflected on other relational effects:

> Philip: It also made people realise that I *wanted* people to notice I was dying my hair.

Philip considered how his intent to modify his appearance could speak to people. He suggested others might instantly recognise this decision to dye his hair as a legitimate practice of body alteration. Again, I want to draw attention to the skill of Philip's teenaged self to recognise the power of manipulating matter to affect how his identity was produced in the moment. Recalling that disabled bodies are objects of concern in schools (Armstrong 2003; Brantlinger, 2009; Goodley, 2007; Youdell, 2006b, 2011), I suggest that Philip was toying with shifting the focus of *how* he might become the object of concern.

Hair dying in schools breaks the uniform rules. The intentionality of Philip's decision to dye his hair also repositioned him in a form of double encounter, depending on *who* was noticing. First, it provoked an encounter with Philip as socially aware of relational effects. Others might recognise Philip taking an agentic position (Davies, 1991; Parker, 1992), making decisions about his body autonomy, intentionally becoming different rather than simply accepting an imposed label. Second, in a school context, disciplinary power polices uniform codes and there are implications for hair dying. By breaking the uniform rules, he resisted taking up an expectation of compliance. In taking a risk to be disciplined, he signalled to his peers *he was not vulnerable*. Thus, as he became subject to the same rules as everyone, the intelligible performance of a disabled young person was disrupted. Philip provided another example of disturbing discourses of difference:

> Philip: I remember wearing a badge at school saying, 'How dare you assume I'm heterosexual'. I wasn't *out* then. [What] I was saying was 'How dare you *assume* I'm heterosexual'.

Philip described playfully provoking, daring people to read his sexuality. It is important to locate Philip's comment in the context of secondary schools across time, where the presence of *any* sexuality was disturbing (see Allen, 2011). The badge provoked a *triple* encounter. First, to consider Philip as a sexual being in a school context directly challenged the institutional practice of denying the sexual subjectivity of young people, and the institutional erasure of evidence of all sexuality in schools. Second, the wording of the badge overtly challenged prevailing heteronormative discourses. Wearing the badge was a subtle yet powerful form of resistance through the positioning effects of language. The irony of Philip not being out at that stage highlights his ability to attune to the social context and seek out places of resistance. Third, wider society disavows sexuality of disabled bodies (Shildrick, 2004, 2007), meaning Philip was doubly denied access to identify with *any* sexuality. In actively claiming both an awareness of his sexuality *and* that this might not be heterosexual, he amplified the discursive contradictions to produce a dissonance of intelligibility. My point here is that Philip wearing the badge was an emergent trickster skill to become both intelligible and unintelligible.

Navigating institutional practices and "meeting needs"

Some of Philip's emerging trickster skills were made possible through dividing practices themselves. His experience of mainstreaming coincided with emergent practices around the early 1980's. Philip proposed that what he experienced was a different encounter with mainstreaming:

> Philip: When I was at school, mainstreaming was so new, I don't think teachers knew *what* to do. So, they didn't do anything and that was much less intrusive than what happens now actually.

New pedagogical assemblages of mainstreaming were still forming the specific arrangements of *how* to mainstream. Philip reflected that an effect of teacher ignorance was productive in that he experienced more agency. At that time, the underpinning principle of inclusive education had, according to Kearney (2009, 2011), not yet become entangled in Aotearoa/New Zealand secondary schools with a more formal institutionalisation of expert knowledge and specialised practices. Philip described how he set up his own process of informing teachers what he needed:

> Philip: I would go up and introduce myself to my teachers at the beginning of each year and say, "I have to use a typewriter and it's going to drive you mad for two weeks and then you won't notice and if I need anything I'll *ask* and if I don't ask, don't worry about me" - and that was as far as it went.

Philip put himself forward as having the expertise to meet his needs and shared his ideas of what would support his learning. In the context of the time [teachers perhaps not having access to training in mainstreaming practices], Philip's local/subjugated knowledge (Foucault, 1980) was able to perform and claim an expert position. Philip reassured teachers he knew what he was doing, thereby resisting a position of object of concern. In a similar repositioning move to dying his hair, he turned a potentially uncomfortable interaction with a teacher into an alternative encounter with difference. This time, the typewriter became the object disturbing the production of needs in the pedagogical assemblage.

Philip had ironised a concept of needs that unsettled the problematisation of his body's physical performance. The typewriter became just another tool that had effects on other people. His playful disclosure of the potential distraction created an opportunity to call the teacher into a position of responsibility to manage the annoyance of others at the typewriter's clicking noises. His wittification disturbed dependence discourses that produced Philip as both different *and the same* as other students. Like his peers, he was an autonomous, independent student who might distract others.

Disrupting facilitation practices: encounters with identity politics

Philip's development as a trickster, through both stand-up comedy and earlier life experiences, informed other aspects of his professional life. The emergence of DIVINQ coincided with Philip's ongoing work of facilitating workshops that had a focus on difference and diversity. In this third section, I explore some of the impasses and aporia Philip reported having encountered as a facilitator of diversity and leadership. Philip described an impasse he noticed in work with diversity:

> Philip: What I find really frustrating about mainstream diversity stuff is that it's always about the group of people.

Philip was encountering the same problem I was experiencing in schools. His frustration echoed my own around how, as Bryson and De Castell (1993a) propose, identity politics

becomes a focus on rights and social justice discourses. In his work outside of schools, Philip noticed how activism produced adversarial positions:

> Philip: The thing I see is that if you look at activism and civil rights, it's always an argument 'You're wrong, I'm right'.

Philip observed rights approaches limited arguments to two sides and if one side of the binary was right, the other side had to be wrong. Gilson (2011) argues that that the idea of rights is deeply entangled in humanism through an image of vulnerability as being at risk of harm. Human rights are then seen as "good" by providing balance to injustice; and the unequal distribution of vulnerability is remedied through the concept of equality (p. 309). Thus, the innate goodness of rights can obscure the dualistic positioning that constructs adversarial arguments – people are positioned as either right or wrong. I asked Philip what the effects were of this approach:

> Philip: It just creates blame and shame.

Philip described his experience of rights that produced negative effects as people attacked and/or defended their perspectives. The activism approach produced limited subject positions for people to take up. Just as I had observed with bullying and needs discourses in schools, rights discourses and social activism practices are intended to ensure better outcomes for people, by deploying vulnerability as a concept of being harmed. Thus, set moves of rights activism constructed and maintained a right/wrong dualism that invited positions of blame-shame. His encounters with identity politics became a productive site for exploring identity:

> Philip: I was more interested in the sort of paradox of diversity. Because of my own identity of being a disabled gay white man and noticing that I was discounted as a white man, because I was disabled and gay. When I was in a group of Māori gay disabled women feminists I was discounted because I was a white man. So, for me, activism was actually silencing people and not about creating new conversations.

Philip turned his curiosity to the effects of the erasure of difference that constructed binary positions. He observed that his diversity was produced in what St. Pierre (2000) refers to as shaky identity categories that used difference to slot people into grids of intelligibility. Philip noticed an effect of gridded hierarchies on his ability to speak, that depended on who was in

the room. His experience of being silenced was on the terms of positioning theory (Davies, 1991; Parker, 1992), an effect of not being offered a legitimate subject position to speak. In St. Pierre's (2000) terms, he could be dismissed by others. Philip had a desire to jolt the conversational moves out of a repetition of binary rights-equality discourses that tended to keep identity categories in place. The emergence of DIVINQ came from our shared desire to leave such binary coding.

Facilitating through fear of difference: the obvious taboo of disability

Over the years, I had observed "diversity" deployed as a common buzzword, particularly in education. However, diversity is almost always defined in relation to culture that, as Eriksen (2006) argues, produces and captures the concept of diversity as cultural difference that is considered politically and morally neutral. I invited Philip to share why he thought it was still difficult to openly discuss disability in the context of diversity work. He reflected on the complexity of discussing disability when trying to workshop diversity:

> Philip: It's [disability] the minority group that you can join at any time without making conscious choice. That's why people are so scared of it. It can happen at any moment, any time at any point of their lives, and people are *aware* of it, but they can't come to grips with it. Because there is such negative stigma around it.

A key challenge Philip identified was the general fear of becoming disabled that was unspoken but which sat in the background when he was facilitating. He observed that the *meaning* of becoming a disabled minority was weighted with deficit ideas. The possibility of not having control over a sudden change of one's body function was unbearable for people to consider. Dominant discourses produce schools of thought that Morris (1991), Shakespeare, (1994) and Shildrick (2002) have argued present "becoming disabled" as a life of suffering and hardship since Western concepts construct the ideal body as one that is autonomous. Invulnerability, Gilson (2011) argues, "is a central feature of masterful subjectivity because it solidifies a sense of control, indeed, an illusion of control" (p. 312). Therefore, the idea of becoming disabled is associated with loss of autonomy [control] and the intensification of vulnerability, as a concept of being at risk of harm. Morris (1991) states that disabled bodies tend to be hidden from the public. When Philip facilitated diversity workshops, his body *publicised* disability. This produced an encounter with vulnerability by reminding participants of *the possibility* of becoming disabled.

To echo Colebrook (2002), Philip was committed to *thinking* difference differently and experimented with facilitation to disturb problematisations that, as I suggest, took up trickster qualities. In the context of leadership facilitation, Edwards et al. (2021) propose that trickster facilitators are involved in processes that break rules, push taboos, and bring about new knowledge. For example, to provoke thinking, Philip had developed the practice of thought experiments to explore and disturb games of truth that produce disability as tragedy:

> Philip: I've done workshops and I've said, 'Imagine you have a baby and there's something wrong or something *different*'.

Philip reported having made a trickster move of throwing a shock (Edwards et al., 2021) by calling on the dominant image of disability as pathology. I imagine for some people this provocation might have been quite disturbing. The workshop was like stand-up as a dialogical space where Philip constructed a relational tension based on normative expectations. Philip had called on the evocative image of a baby, where dominant discourses produced and *intensified* the object of vulnerability. The territorialised landscape normalised "imagining" as troubling:

> Philip: 'Why wouldn't you just see that as *diversity*?'.

Philip threw a shock that questioned territorialised deficit concepts of disability. His thought experiment disturbed games of truth that normalised disability as abject-other and offered an alternative position of culturally accepted difference: diversity. This position resisted naturalisation of an image that disability is a life of struggle. Thus, his question *doubly* violated the taboo territory: first, through a refusal to claim discourses that legitimise dehumanisation, and second, by daring to question the truth status of disability-as-tragedy. For the workshop participants, discourses that had offered a legitimised position to experience loss and grief were disturbed. Philip described the effects of this sudden shock:

> Philip: I've had people *shout* at me "How dare you compare that?". People are outraged for that to be bought to their attention.

Philip's prankster shock was so disorienting that composure was not possible. Thus, hostility was an affective outcome of becoming unexpectantly lost. Anger and protest reclaimed normative truth. A risk of trickster facilitation, Edwards et al. (2021) propose, is that people experience uncertainty from being cast adrift from social conventions. Philip's facilitation had

cast people adrift from the social convention of disability as tragedy. Subjugated discourses jolted the conceptual field *too far* from familiar and safe moral territory. However, Philip explained how he had developed reorienting concepts for thinking in this new territory:

> Philip: You know it's quite ok to say, 'I hope my child my baby is normal'. That's why I've come up with terms like 'dysfunction phobia'.

His concept of dysfunction phobia offered an alternative to provoke people to consider games of truth that naturalises abhorrence as the response to disability. As part of trickster facilitation, Philip was, to draw on Edwards et al. (2021), both breaking and remaking views of difference that had been otherwise taken for granted. To call on Braidotti (2019), this move was a form of posthuman defamiliarisation that produced radical *conceptual disobedience* and which breaks established patterns of thought. In creating new language, Philip created both a break and support for access to alternative discourses and the possibility of new meaning and intelligibility of disability. Concepts bring with them an entire field of thought (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994; St. Pierre, 2017). While leading people astray, Philip worked hard to ensure new language was available to orient and navigate them toward new understanding through an alternative field of thought with a different tone. When I met Philip, I noticed this playful, disruptive tone that worked to disturb othering problematisations and games of truth. This became a shared resonance that drew our work together.

The work of this chapter

Philip's lifelong experiences influenced the development of a trickster approach to facilitation that was nuanced and sensitive to the fear of difference. From a young age, his unique body function produced encounters with discourses of disability as abject (Kristeva, 1982; 1996) that naturalised fear and which subjected Philip to controlling practices. Institutional dividing practices had affixed labels and had become a site of experimentation with disturbing dehumanising discourses and problematisations. At school, Philip explored ways to initiate humanising through playing with materiality of difference to disrupt the discursive forces that had problematised his identity as vulnerable and which normally produced shock and composure.

Stand-up comedy fine-tuned Philip's wittification of self. Performance assemblages required negotiation of a dialogical space to bring difference into play. Bringing difference into play, however, recruited trickster abilities in the service of laughter that ignored the potential harm

of humour. Other facilitation assemblages constructed impasses of deficit discourses on behalf of rights and social justice. Territorialised facilitation practices worked with the rules of games of truth that played serious or funny. His attempts at trickster facilitation to prank thought, to traverse taboos, and to provoke new knowledge (Edwards et al., 2021) were closed down. DIVINQ was an opportunity to construct an alternative trickster-facilitation practice.

Chapter 9: Encounters with territorialised pedagogy

This chapter focusses on my experience working in secondary schools. I explore how a poststructural ethic I held as a narrative therapist (White & Epston, 1990; Winslade & Monk, 1999) called me to notice othering practices and the discourses that produced them. This chapter works to identify the normalised territory and the aporia of my professional experiences in secondary schools that lead to the emergence of DIVINQ. The focus of this chapter is on my experience of the specific ways schools function as normative institutions and the effects on what ideas are available to make sense of difference. As part of a poststructural-informed practitioner-autoethnographic approach, I write first at the scene of my work prior to the development of DIVINQ. To assist in setting the scene, I also draw on research participants' memories of school. I use these retellings to identify the power-knowledge that produced the discourses available to circulate in pedagogical spaces and how these discourses shaped encounters with difference.

I begin with an exploration of the structural aspects, both physical-material and systemic-organisational. The supporting theory for this section is the Foucauldian concept of dividing practices (Foucault, 1965/1988) that organise schools around difference. I analyse pedagogical aspects such as curriculum content and teaching practices to identify how power-knowledge and disciplinary power construct relationships and the meaning of difference. The classroom context of health education is a key focus as a site for both participants and my encounters with concepts of sex, gender, and sexuality. In this chapter, I analyse the function of humour and laughter as informal pedagogies when plugged into classroom assemblages to regulate behaviour as part of a normalising gaze (Foucault, 1977/1991).

I put queer theory to work to explore how pedagogical practices might, to echo Britzman (1995), constrain bodies of knowledge that can inform knowledge of bodies. More specifically, I am concerned with how knowledge-ignorance constructs strategic unknowns (Logue, 2014; McGoey, 2012) by privileging certain knowledge and obscuring or denying other forms.

I employ Youdell's (2005) concept of constellations in the analysis of educational practices on the understanding of difference. I take intelligibility beyond individual identity categories to examine how power-knowledges are circulated through various school assemblages that construct problematisations of difference. The aim is to show how common taken-for-granted institutional practices produce the intelligibility of disability and LGBT+.

I call on irony to playfully subvert common sense with respect to normalised practices and emphasise how the aporia affected my professional development as a facilitator. Irony, McWilliam (2000) argues, "depends on knowing how something works" (p. 174). During interviews, participants engaged in playful irony as they knew how DIVINQ and school *worked*. Irony is therefore strategically located throughout this chapter after workings of practices are discussed and context is provided.

Locating the practitioner-autoethnographic scene

Before I met Philip, I had made the move from teaching to counselling. I was attracted to the poststructural underpinnings of narrative therapy and its associated ethics. After my professional counsellor education, I encountered an ethical dilemma as I noticed how pedagogical and institutional practices reified difference-as-other. To echo Foucault (1984/2014), e*verything* was dangerous in terms of the effects on what concepts *of* disability and LGBT+ were made available. DIVINQ emerged as a rupture point of an ethical concern to break pedagogy away from this territory. As a background to examining DIVINQ as a possible deterritorialising practice, in this chapter I map the normative territory from which DIVINQ emerged.

The informal pedagogy of spatialising practices

This first section explores the effects of organising to minimise exposure to difference. Dividing practices operate from the moment children enrol, based on their age and, often, by ability grouping or streaming. Kōwhai had the additional layer of sex-gender separation. Rata's special needs unit was a specialised space that divided disabled students from the rest of the school.

My understanding of the effects of separating disabled students was jolted when I talked [in my counselling role] with students who were part of the unit. I first met Rachael in a counselling context. To draw on the terms of Barraclough et al. (2024), I had yet to consider the complexity of subjectivity informing my practice with respect to disabled students' identity formation in school. In the research interview with Rachael, I called on embodied memories (Gannon, 2006) of the intensity of our earlier counselling conversations:

> Jeannie: I remember the sense of frustration around how diversity was perceived. Especially our conversations around students in the unit being seen as 'regular' students.

Rachael had stirred my desire to work more intensively with the ethical stance of narrative therapy, that is, as Winslade and Monk (1999) argue, to resist totalising and deficit descriptions of people. The discussions with Rachael forced an encounter with the othering effects of being assigned to the special needs unit. After broaching (Barraclough, et al., 2024) the effects with Rachael, I recall becoming concerned about the effects of spatialising/dividing practices on the intelligibility of disabled/unique functioning young people. Dividing practices are both social and spatial (Madigan, 2019) and my conversations with Rachael traversed both aspects.

When I first started working at Rata, I was comfortable with the idea of a special needs unit to meet disabled students' diverse range of needs while providing access to mainstream education. When I look back, I recognise my thinking as captured by dominant discourses that have constructed the idea of what Armstrong (2003) describes as powerful discourses of what is considered "appropriate" and which becomes "common sense" (p. 20). This, in turn, informed my acceptance that the unit functioned as an inclusive practice – it just made sense. In the research conversation, Rachael recalled the effects of being assigned to the unit:

> Rachael: I *hated* having to be labelled that way.
>
> Jeannie: What did you hate about the labels?
>
> Rachael: Just the fact that we weren't allowed to have our own life.

Rachael reflected with disdain on how the disabled label had affected others' perceptions of her as a student. An effect of this labelling was the close monitoring of her daily interactions by staff at the unit. Labels both create and confirm public identities, producing assumptions about people's abilities (Booth, 1987). The social spatialising effects of the diagnostic labels created and confirmed an assumption of vulnerability. Thus, the disability label had powerful positioning effects that limited her access to agency; as she clearly expressed, she was "not allowed to have [her] own life". Brantlinger (2009) and Fuss (1995) state that imposed labels have effects on identity that people accept or reject. Rachael had objected to the imposition in ways that caught the attention of staff, and this was how we met. Whether voluntary or involuntary, labels constructed *all* students in the unit as vulnerable through deficit discourses. Some students like Rachael experienced frustration with the limited agency, including the ability to interact with others beyond the unit. The use of labels plays a role in maintaining boundaries (Armstrong, 2003; Booth, 1987; Goodley, 2007; Kearney, 2011) and produced a protective gaze of concern to manage boundaries.

Through counselling conversations with young people assigned to the unit, I became aware of the effects labels had on disabled students' intelligibility in the wider school community. Dominant discourses problematised disabled students as vulnerable. This construction positioned staff to perform protective practices that were normalised and, indeed, expected as evidence of professionalism. Rachael's resistance to the games of truth that played her identity as at-risk produced affective disturbances [upset], which brought her to the attention of staff in the unit. We talked about how this brought her to counselling:

> Jeannie: How did we meet?
>
> Rachael: I got chucked in your office.
>
> Jeannie: Oh right, sounds like a real choice [said with heavy irony].
>
> Rachael: It was, 'it's either this or it's detention'.
>
> Jeannie: You got the choice of counselling or detention?
>
> Rachael: It felt that way.

Rachael's sardonic tone highlighted how *the process* did not offer agency or a voice. Her distress was a problem to others and had produced concern. The point here is that the effect of labels had contributed to Rachael's distress, which was then read by staff as evidence of vulnerability, and which required counselling support. In the research interview, I ironised the ethical tension to call out the positioning effects – a "real choice" that, at the time, offered limited options to Rachael. Thus, the counselling relationship I had with Rachael was initially constructed through disciplinary power and practices of surveillance. It was difficult for me to hear Rachael give her account of this meeting when we met for the research interview.

Various expert knowledges and ethical guidelines informed expectations of professionalism to fulfil obligations and respond to Rachael's perceived needs. Unit staff were delegated the task of assessing needs and accessing support. I had been recruited as a counsellor to become part of the civilising control over emotions and distress. Both unit staff and I had been delegated civilising tasks aligned with our areas of expertise. As a result, we were *all* pulled in the gravitational forces/intensities of vulnerability, risk, and ethical responsibility. Our professional identities moved us into positions to act and manage risks.

When Rachael and I had worked together in a counselling context, we explored her unique local knowledges that had developed through her lived experiences (White, 2007) I was interested in Rachael's knowledge of how labels mattered:

> Jeannie: How do you think others view young people with functional diversity, otherwise known as 'disabilities', in schools?
>
> Rachael: I think people had a real sense of panic, that they'd never understand disabled people.

The description Rachael gave was something I had observed firsthand in teachers. Rachael had identified the problematic nature of the dominant discourse of disability: it produced fear in others when they met disabled people. Humanism constructs an image of disability as both abject (Kristeva, 1982, 1996) and other (de Beauvoir, 1997; Spivak, 1985) that normalises panic responses to disability. Shildrick (2002) states that difference demarcates the borders of security through safe and unsafe, provoking both recognition and rejection. The "panic" described by Rachael revealed the effects of recognising the boundaries and of responding.

Constructing encounters with sameness: obscuring difference

I remember assemblies where Rata was positively promoted as a diverse school. I invited Rajan and Connor to recall what diversity they thought they had been exposed to at Rata prior to DIVINQ:

> Rajan: Rata is good in terms of being ethnically diverse.

At Rata, the regular, overt celebration of cultural difference likely reproduced what was intelligible as diversity. Internal discourses (Foucault, 1976) reinforced ways of speaking that normalised and validated cultural difference as diversity. Rajan reflected on his understanding of diversity before DIVINQ:

> Rajan: In terms of like disability and sexuality, it isn't something that I would say I was *as* exposed to. It wasn't, at that time, what I would have considered normal.

The dominant field of thought that was available at the time did not make space for Rajan to think of disability and LGBT+ as normalised. They were assigned subject positions of "morally objectionable" (Eriksen, 2006) and thus not recognised or celebrated as readily as culture. I can attest there were disabled and queer bodies *everywhere* – their material presence

in the school existed. However, schools are generally uncomfortable with sexuality (Allen, 2011) and, as Youdell (2005, 2006b) argues, schools are sites permeated with intensive heteronormative discourses that reinscribe normative ideas of sex, gender, and sexuality. As Rajan observed, dividing practices had limited his exposure to disability and the intensive normalisation of cisgender-heterosexuality had rendered abnormal and invisible LGBT+. Institutional discourses positioned disability and sexuality as unintelligible forms of diversity. In the absence of encounters, disability and sexuality were unable to move into the field of thought as a normal. When I look back, the presence of the special needs unit had produced a contradiction of inclusive-rejection that further materialised the territorialisation of difference-as-other.

Rajan and Connor shared how participating in DIVINQ brought the dividing practices of school into focus:

> Rajan: It [DIVINQ] made me think about how people are separated in school. Like the streamings and the classes and how the unit is separated from the rest of the school. Just different ways people are separated.

Rajan had not thought about these dividing practices prior to DIVINQ as the various organising processes of school had been made invisible through their normalisation. Brantlinger (2009) and Kearney (2011) argue that it is not just labels and segregation that are problematic but other forms of separation, such as ability grouping, that limit inclusivity. Connor reflected on what DIVINQ made more visible and known:

> Connor: One of the big things that stuck for me was just the streams they put us into. I started thinking quite a lot about that and how useful that was or how prohibitive it was. Because I found myself stuck the first few years, at least at high school, with people who were very, very similar to me.

Connor considered that his experience of streaming had limited his encounters with difference. His participation in DIVINQ jolted his awareness [unplugging from The Matrix] of dividing practices and he questioned the value of being stuck with sameness. Streaming is a common spatialising practice that comes under ability grouping (Brantlinger, 2009). Connor's comments suggest that one of the effects of techniques of routine and order is to hide the exclusionary effects of some actions taken on behalf of broader educational goals.

Technocratic rationality of modern capitalism works to assess and fit young people into education to develop their productive potential (Brantlinger, 2009; Goodley, 2007). The meritocratic system, Brantlinger (2009) argues, constructs pathways of privilege for some and lower tracks for others. Connor experienced structured privilege, and at first accepted its terms. He later identified the hidden cost of being placed on higher tracks: a limited experience of difference. My point is that pedagogical practices such as ability grouping ensure tracks never meet. Thus, *all* young people in secondary schools, such as the ones I worked in, are almost invariably subjected to structural processes that dampen encounters with students *unlike* them.

Kōwhai: gendered and material exclusionary practices

In addition to dividing practices such as streaming, two structural aspects of Kōwhai created an encounter with sameness. The first related to gender since I moved from Rata, a co-educational school to Kōwhai, a girls-only school. The second was the absence of other forms of material difference since there was no specialist unit in Kōwhai. Sienna and Lucy reflected on the effect of not encountering physical disability prior to their participation in DIVINQ:

> Sienna: I never had a conversation with somebody with cerebral palsy before and I never really had a conversation with somebody who has a speech impairment.
>
> Lucy: I hadn't been exposed, because I didn't know many disabled people and I didn't know the struggles they go through.

At the time, the image of thought available for Sienna and Lucy to understand disability involved hardship and suffering. Kearney (2011) argues that, at the very least, the principle of inclusive education is that young people have a right to attend their local school. Kōwhai did not have any accessible buildings when I arrived, somewhat in breach of the Education Act (1989) and the Human Rights Act (1993). I recall the shock I felt on arrival of encountering extreme body function-sameness – not a walker or wheelchair in sight. It was improbable to have no disabled young people attend their local school. I asked a senior leader why there were no disabled students, and their response was, "We don't have the facilities to cater to their needs". Principals in Aotearoa/New Zealand schools can act as gatekeepers and how they view the value of inclusive education matters (Kearney 2009, 2011). In my experience, disabled bodies deeply troubled some school leaders. As market models of competition have influenced education, Kearney (2009, 2011) proposes that the exclusion of disabled students is a strategy to protect a marketable brand by filtering for students who add value rather than risk. Thus,

Sienna, Lucy, and other Kōwhai participants were exposed to a limited representation of bodily difference. In this way, structural exclusions hid disabled bodies. Thus, when students met Philip, the shock of the encounter with the materiality of disability was more intense.

Pedagogical practices

This second section explores how formal pedagogy of health curriculum content and teaching practices territorialises an understanding of bodies. Britzman (1995) argues that bodies of knowledge and knowledge of bodies are constituted in educational settings, and that "as a practice and as a discourse, education *intimately disciplines the conceptual needs* [emphasis added] of students and teachers" (Britzman, 1998, p. 80). I explore the types of knowledge and discourses that were mobilised to discipline conceptual needs related to sex-sexuality. This includes how laughter operates as an informal pedagogy in health education assemblages as part of disciplining conceptual needs. Throughout this section, I weave my account of working as a classroom teacher with participants' recounting of being students. This is designed to show the aporia of practice where I encountered the limits of the games of truth able to be played. The purpose of this section is to describe the pedagogical territory that I hoped DIVINQ might deterritorialise.

Health education

In the research interviews, I invited Rata and Kōwhai participants to discuss their experiences of health education and Kōwhai participants took up the invitation. To navigate the potential of producing a gendered account, I focus on the effects of pedagogical practice on discourses circulating in health classes. I taught health up to Year 10 [age 14-15]. There was a unique aspect to Kōwhai's health programme that contrasted with my experience:

> Jeannie: I am a curious as to what ideas you might have picked up through the health teaching here [Kōwhai], because it's *four years* of health.

When I moved to Kōwhai, I was surprised that the school maintained compulsory health education to Year 12 [age 16-17]. To echo Britzman (1998), I was interested to know what, if any, new knowledge of bodies was made available at Year 12. Namrita shared her experience of health education from primary through to secondary school:

> Namrita: Health [education] starts around Year 4, 5, or 6. Then Year 9 and 10 are just going over that again.

Jeannie: What sort of stuff did you keep going over?

Namrita: How your reproductive system works like 'You will have your period and this will happen' [I laugh].

As Namrita described the early emphasis on reproductive anatomy and the repetition of content, I cringe-laughed in recognition of my past participation in dominant teaching practices that privilege repetition (see Cole, 2011). Hygiene discourses from the early 20th century (Fitzpatrick & Tinning, 2013; Lenskyj, 1990; Middleton, 1998) have influenced the health curriculum to produce a plumbing and prevention emphasis (Lenskyj, 1990). Namrita experienced contemporary classroom practice that continued to draw on bio-medical hygiene discourses. Allen (2008) argues that the practice of content repetition is informed by an assumption that young people are ignorant of their bodies. Namrita described what it was like going over the information:

Namrita: And we're like [with sarcasm] 'Yeah we *know*, it's *happening'* [I laugh harder].

Namrita recounted calling out teachers' assumptions that young people did not know what was happening with puberty. Her mock frustration ironically pointed out that she and other young people have, to echo Britzman (1995), *bodies of knowledge*. I laughed in awkward recognition of participating in teaching assemblages that disavowed local-subjugated knowledges (Foucault, 1980). Schools are places where micro-politics operate in spaces where certain forms of knowledge and understandings of health become formally legitimated (Fitzpatrick & Tinning, 2013). Namrita's clever comment wittingly traced how bio-medical knowledges are formally legitimised while delegitimising other forms of knowledge, such as young peoples' experiences of their bodies changing. In traditional health class assemblages, teachers are positioned as gatekeepers of what knowledge is considered relevant for students to learn.

It was therefore unsurprising that Namrita's recollections of the health education she received resonated with a tone of boredom. Cole (2011) argues that traditional pedagogy's use of repetition kills off excitement for young people *and teachers*. After seven years of plumbing content, boredom could be expected. Kushala provided another example:

Kushala: One thing they repeated throughout was keeping safe in terms of STIs [sexually transmitted infections] and stuff like that.

The prevention of disease was a key repeated message. Developmental discourses produce teenage years as a tumultuous time, being out of control, and inclined to risk taking (Allen, 2007a, 2011; Fitzpatrick & Tinning, 2013; Sanjakdar et al., 2015). In health teaching assemblages, physical hygiene discourses can entangle with developmental discourses that problematise teenagers as an at-risk identity group. Curriculum content and teaching practices reproduce games of truth of teenaged sexual activity as risky. This constructs a constellation of sex-sexuality as dangerous wherein the weight of the emphasis – or, as I suggest, *gravity* – is placed on individual responsibility. In such assemblages, ignorance can then be mobilised to focus on teaching care-of-self practices.

Questions and navigating taboo territory

When the topic of sex and sexuality is discussed [in any pedagogical context], teachers and students must negotiate moral discourses. In health education, this territory is more explicit and therefore produces a tension of how to manage taboo-territory in conversations. Holly commented on the difference between DIVINQ and classroom conversations:

> Holly: I feel like in health class, because the environment isn't set up like DIVINQ, if someone were to raise a question [in health] or to just be curious about something, it would probably be shut down pretty quickly.

The construction of a pedagogical space mattered and affected how sexuality could be discussed. Holly considered that, in a health class, a teacher might respond differently to questions about sexuality. As Allen (2011) states, the risk aversion of schools with respect to sex-sexuality means that teaching sexuality demands more than what is usually expected of teachers. Holly described the possible effects of such extra demands:

> Holly: You [teacher] want to keep a neutral space and you don't want to have to have a full conversation because you just want to get on with the syllabus and just get all the *facts* out there.

Holly appreciated the professional expectation and potential risks of teaching the health curriculum. The care I took as a teacher to control discussions certainly resonate with Allen's (2011) argument about the demands of health teaching. Holly had identified that a way to produce neutrality was objective knowledge [teaching facts] to manage potential competing discourses. I recall that, as a classroom teacher, it took significant effort to construct a "neutral space". At the time, I believed that potential controversial discourses could be avoided *if*

teaching assemblages accessed biological-medical knowledge. I had been convinced that a *safe* environment for students and teachers could be constructed by maintaining control of the expert power-knowledges that produced objective-factual games of truth. As Foucault (1997b) states, games of truth imply that there are rules for how truth is produced. In the example above, Kushala and Holly described how health class had ruled that "unprotected sex can lead to catching an STI or pregnancy".

Classroom teaching activities: plumbing and prevention discourses in practice

In "getting the facts out there", learning assemblages are put together to construct what is imagined as a safe environment to impart knowledge. This included the teaching-learning activities employed. Some common activities that participants discussed were familiar to me in demonstrating how assemblages can function to produce safe/unsafe. Participants recalled activities such as condom races, completing question boxes, and self-rating continuums. I use these examples to provide further context to the territory/landscape DIVINQ worked to deterritorialise. I employ Foucault's (1984/2014a) concept that everything is dangerous to describe the effects of common classroom activities on the circulation of power-knowledges. I explore how these activities brought sex and sexuality into the field of thought. The purpose is to map problematisations and games of truth played through the assemblages constructed in each activity. This includes assumptions that the activities described below were successful in constructing a neutral safe space.

Condom races

The aim of this activity is to learn the correct use of a condom. Students are organised into teams and in a relay format. Namrita had strong memories of experiencing this activity:

> Namrita: It's definitely hard to forget. One question that was always popping up was 'Why are we doing this?' I mean it's important that we know.

The activity is an explicit encounter with sexual activity. Namrita recounted questioning the purpose while recognising the value of the knowledge and skills the race intended to develop. In a context where young people's sexual subjectivity is denied (Allen, 2007a), Namrita's question - "why are *we* doing this" situates the activity as both overtly sexualised and, at a single-sex school, produced gendered discourses. Namrita continued her account of the questions the condom race raised for her:

> Namrita: But why are we the ones putting a condom on a fake penis when we don't have, [pauses] well most of us, [pauses again], well I'm not aware of anyone else who does [all chuckling] but *most* girls here don't have these extremities. Also learning Matai [brother school of Kōwhai] doesn't do this, why? That was the main thought in Year 9 and 10.

Namrita recalled questioning the purpose of the activity with respect to the gendered assumptions of responsibility. During the interview, she paused and playfully provoked the cis-heteronormative assumptions produced by the activity. An effect of DIVINQ might be to draw attention to the games of truth able to be played in health education. That is, Namrita's questioning highlights how ignorance of intersex and transgender bodies is produced through knowledge. Her use of irony called out the taken for granted materiality of bodies in a traditional single-sex school.

Sexuality scale

In the interview, Kushala recalled an activity that focussed on sexuality as part of one's identity:

> Kushala: I think it was Year 12 we had like this scale thing you'd put yourself on of like straight to completely lesbian. A lot of the time teachers talked about how it's quite rare to be one hundred percent straight.

The activity was presented by the teacher to rethink sexual identity as black and white. The use of a scale provided two reference points: heterosexual and homosexual. While sexuality was no longer either-or, the scale located heterosexuality as the normative centre (Youdell, 2006b) from which people slid away from.

Humanism constructs sexuality as an essentialised aspect of identity that is internal, fixed, stable, and can be uncovered. In the context of health education, prevention discourses are not just about physical health but include mental and emotional health. Talburt (2004) argues that developmental discourses offer LGBT+ two subjected positions: either at risk or securely adjusted to their gay identity. To become mentally well-adjusted, young people are expected to accept and commit to an identity and the role. The continuum activity had intended to support young people to accurately align themselves to secure and accept their identity. However, a *danger* (Foucault, 1980) of this activity is territorialising sexual identity with dominant humanist discourses that normalise and, indeed, encourage self-disclosure as essential for preventing psychological distress. To ironicise the positioning effects of the

continuum activity, a game played is “find your true self – or it will be bad for your mental health”.

Question box: managing shame of ignorance

While not specific to sexuality education, the question box was often used in health classes. Fleur described the set-up and purpose of the activity:

> Fleur: We would like write questions and put them in a box for the teacher to read out because people were too scared or nervous to ask their own question. Rather than just ‘Hey, I’ve got a question’.

Fleur appreciated that some people could feel vulnerable and exposed by asking a question out loud. In functioning like a post-box where anonymous written questions could be collated, the question box attempted to neutralise this fear and produce a safer way to ask. The promise of anonymity [writing and not asking out loud], however, conveys the message that the given topic is in uncomfortable territory. Thus, the question box activity as a whole assemblage materialised a public/private dualism by working to move private discourses into the public while trying to reduce the fear of asking a question. Fear is produced by the potential taboo of sexuality and, as Lone (2011) suggests, the idea of failing to know something. If, as Weems (2019) states, the positioning within discursive fields enables and/or constrains what can be stated or enacted, then the post-box assemblage produced a contradictory experience of a safe space by circulating moral and developmental discourses that constrained what was stated and enacted. The type of question asked is effectively declaring one’s ignorance in public, of one failing to know something. Fleur commented on the effects of reading out the questions:

> Fleur: The teacher would read it out; and then, *everyone* would crack up.

I can confirm Fleur’s observation that “cracking-up” laughter would happen, regardless of the question, as the tension of anticipation was released through laughter. The awkwardness of discussing sex in sexuality education is, as Allen (2014) argues, often released through humour and laughter. I remember the nervous energy whenever I would pull a question out of the box. Students were left on edge, wondering if their question might be read out. Thus, while the activity attempts to mitigate shame/embarrassment through anonymity, the process of reading the question out loud was effectively a public declaration of ignorance to the class. The type of laughter that emerged in these situations produced ridicule (Billig, 2005) and tended to carry a disciplining effect of shame (Oades-Sese et., 2014).

Humour-Laughter: encounters with friendly discipline

This section explores the disciplining effects of humour and laughter. I recall at teachers' college being told "Don't smile before Easter". This dominant discourse has changed since I trained as a teacher in the late 1990s. Humour is now considered pedagogically productive and has been shown to support engagement, self-esteem, and positive thinking (see Allen, 2014; Blackmore, 2011; Garner, 2006; Gordon, 2010; Morreall, 2014). Teachers are now encouraged to use humour to humanise themselves and disrupt disciplinary-aloof relationships with students.

Health education: language matters – forming the constellation "awkward"

I was in a constant state of vigilance when teaching sex-sexuality as laughter would frequently disturb the flow of lessons. There were moments where I called on humour, as Allen (2014) has suggested, to release awkward tension; however, the risk of homophobic jokes produced concern for potential harm, and so I limited my use of humour. At that time, humour definitely had an uncomfortable fit (Allen, 2014; Blackmore, 2011; Gordon, 2010; Morreall, 2014; Strong, 2013; Vlieghe, 2014) with my disciplined teaching practice. In this third section, I explore how contemporary ideas about the pedagogical potential of humour may not tune assemblages to resonate or *fit* more comfortably. This provides context for DIVINQ as a retuning assemblage in the following chapters. I asked participants to compare how humour and laughter worked in DIVINQ to other classroom learning. Fleur recounted that the vocabulary of sex-sexuality had produced discomfort and tension from being observed by the teacher:

> Fleur: Health is more like, awkward laughing.
>
> Jeannie: How do you mean awkward laughing?
>
> Fleur: Say it was STIs or penises and you're cracking up like 'This is so awkward'. My health teacher, who was also my dean, was taking the class so it was like 'Argh, get us out of here'.

The uncomfortable tension produced in the territory of sexual discourses was high. In the context of sexuality education, laughter can release tension (Allen, 2014). However, in the assemblage Fleur described, there were positioning effects that laughter could not ease. I remember as a teacher taking a deep breath before using similar words and bracing for either

inappropriate comments, laughter, or both. When the private taboo suddenly became spoken and public, this amplified an awkward state of unrelaxation that is produced by what Morreall (2009) states are the socially acceptable norms of behaviour. Fleur had encountered a disciplinary/normative gaze of a teacher which was intensified by that teacher occupying a dual role of being both a teacher and year level dean.

Fleur's account of awkward laughing resonated with the complexity I encountered of teaching health as a counsellor. In the classroom assemblage Fleur described, there was a double weighting of power operating. First, self-surveillance produced tension to perform polite, respectful behaviour – not laughing. A general social-cultural norm that prohibits the use of sexualised language intensified a need to manage the urge to laugh. Second, the extra authority of the teacher being a dean intensified an authoritative gaze. The assemblage could not employ laughter as a tension-release and was, as Vlieghe (2014) argues, viewed as a form of insurrection that risked students such as Fleur being positioned as disrespectful, which may, in turn, require a disciplinary response.

Developmental discourses: constellation maturity "should be serious"

To echo Vlieghe (2014), I recall that if laughter had broken out in class, it had seemed like an insurrection, and that I needed to respond. Namrita and Kushala commented on teachers' responses to laughing. They described how being a senior student intensified the disciplining gaze:

> Namrita: You'd be laughing about something, and the teacher would be like 'You girls are so immature, you're acting like juniors'.

Namrita recalled that laughter was immediately sanctioned and described how mocking maturity was used by the teacher as a form of discipline for laughing. According to Gordon (2010) and Vlieghe (2014), laughter directly challenges the civilising discourses and practices of education. As seniors, the failure to perform civilised, age-appropriate behaviour was met with a subtle mock-disciplining position call from the teacher. I recall using a similar phrase of "acting like juniors" that was a call to invite shame-embarrassment from losing the status of being a mature adult who was in control of one's bodily urges. "If meaning is to be socially policed, then mockery and laughter are the friendly neighbourhood officers who cheerily maintain order" (Billig, 2005, p. 238). I remember the policing effect of the kind of mocking statement Namrita recalled, and the subsequent hush that would fall over a class. It was, as

Billig put it, a way to maintain order. Namrita expanded on the relational effects of failing to perform maturity in health classes:

> Namrita: In Year 12 we were shown really serious videos about drugs and you're like 'Well I guess I can't laugh' when you really want to. But you can't because if you laugh, you're seen as juvenile and you're not going to be taken seriously later in discussions.

Namrita understood that her intelligibility as a good student was determined by how laughter was perceived by others. She described a contradiction where her desire to laugh might be read differently by her peers and teacher. Developmental and care-of-self discourses produced an expectation to demonstrate that, as a senior, she took her responsibility seriously. Therefore, laughter came under a more intensive disciplinary gaze. Namrita observed that evidence of laughter risked senior students being positioned as immature and, therefore, lacking the authority to speak [voice] in a senior class. The sanctioning of laughter functioned to preserve seriousness-rational-reason as the standard for recognition of the right to speak. Kushala described an informal pedagogy of performing the good student routine:

> Kushala: It's an expectation from school that you're mature, like, you shouldn't be mucking around or joking or laughing about what's discussed in class. I think that it just put pressure on us to be serious the entire time.

Institutional practices produce a persistent gaze that reinforce performances of maturity that exclude joking-laughing. While humour can improve teaching-learning relationships, the overall fit of humour in schools is still an uncomfortable one. Overlays of developmental discourses and professional expectations that teachers manage inappropriate behaviour, such as laughing and joking, territorialise the intelligibility of good teaching-learning. Pedagogical assemblages then struggle to tune into potential positive aspects of humour-laughter. More significantly, as students move closer to adulthood in their final senior year [Year 13], relaxing, playing, joking, laughing, and having fun become evidence of one's failure to learn skills of self-management (see NZC, 2007). In this way, the function of humour-laughter as informal pedagogy is entangled with disciplinary power that works to develop young people as ideal humanist subjects: focussed, serious, mature, and in control of their bodies.

Mapping the work of this chapter

To use Britzman's (1998) terms, this chapter has explored how secondary school education can intimately discipline conceptual needs with respect to difference and how it renders these practices invisible. Institutional practices construct both formal and informal pedagogical assemblages that reproduce difference as other. The arrangements of bodies in physical spaces, in the form of dividing practices, limits encounters with difference. This (re)produces deficit discourses and a concept of vulnerability as at risk of harm. Professional practice is then oriented to minimise harm. As a site of encounters with sexuality, health education draws on biomedical knowledge that circulates plumbing-prevention discourses. Classroom activities navigate and attempt to neutralise social taboos. However, teachers are positioned as experts and practices reinforce (cis)heteronormative intelligible constellations of identity. In this territory, humour and laughter operate as informal pedagogies through a disciplinary gaze. Humour-laughter is viewed with suspicion by teachers and developmental discourses produce pressure for young people to perform responsible-mature behaviour. Assemblages function to reify humanism's image of an ideal subject that is self-reliant and who strives to maintain invulnerability.

Chapter 10: Forming the DIVINQ assemblage

After eight years of DIVINQ, we are trying something new. Philip has experience working in leadership beyond education and Kōwhai values student leadership. This is a chance to utilise Philip's broad range of knowledge and facilitation skills.

In the dimly lit lecture theatre, Philip and I wait with anticipation. A notice has gone out to invite Year 13 students to a presentation about DIVINQ as diversity leadership. I'm not sure about the vibe of the room. The tiered seating is formal and sets up a hierarchy. Philip and I have a few tricks to retune the space. The room itself constructs an opportunity to set a different tone. The large screen and speakers are perfect for playing the red pill-blue pill scene from *The Matrix*. I place two bowls of blue and red jellybeans on the desk at the front of the room and turn to Philip.

> "I wonder how many students have seen *The Matrix*."
> "Most of them probably weren't even born when it came out."

Philip and I chuckle together. Students begin to arrive, one approaches us.

> "Is this the diversity leadership talk that was in the notices?"

I give a reassuring nod and they find a seat with some friends. I look at Philip, we give each other a knowing nod to begin.

> "Thanks everyone for coming, I know some people couldn't make it due to other commitments. Today is really a chance for you to experience a little bit of what DIVINQ is like. At the end you can sign up."

Someone calls out from the back of the room interrupting me.

> "Can we eat the jellybeans?"

I try to locate who has asked the question. It's one of the DIVINQers from last year. They are grinning at us from the back row. The question has provided an opportunity to play. Philip recognises the student and takes up the invitation.

> "Hi Sienna, well what a surprise you are just interested in the sugar."

Sienna guffaws loudly "You know me too well Philip". Surprise ripples through the room and others laugh quietly. I giggle and can feel the room relax but keep the joke going.

> "Yes, there will be a chance to take a red or blue jellybean when you leave. But they are part of the presentation so no eating the props just yet."

I tease the audience by popping a jellybean in my mouth. I chew with slow deliberation.

> "I can confirm they are jellybeans. Right, Philip, let's introduce ourselves and see who is ready to take the red pill of DIVINQ."

I shake the bowl of red jellybeans. A few smiles start appearing in the darkened room. I flick to the first slide.

…….. disassembling…
As we wrap up the presentation, we explain to the audience that they can choose a red or blue jellybean to take as they leave. The metaphor becomes material. A few bemused faces trudge out without a jellybean, some take blue ones. Maybe DIVINQ was not what they expected. A few bound down the stairs and introduce themselves. Past DIVINQers introduce their friends who sign up and leave with a handful of leftover blue jellybeans. Maybe DIVINQ is a purple pill.

In this chapter, I explore the process of forming DIVINQ. The purpose is to highlight the repositioning moves and the effects of these on the production of a new space to think/discuss difference. I employ the Deleuzoguattarian concept of assemblages (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) to analyse the way DIVINQ comes together in a school context. Assemblages have two axes: horizontal and vertical. The horizontal axis, which is of relevance to this chapter, deals with "machinic assemblages of bodies, actions and passions" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 88). The machinic and collective aspects are entangled. This chapter focusses on the ways bodies and objects which are already in circulation were reorganised to form a new assemblage while the following chapter explores the concept of the collective assemblage. I begin with an analysis of how common objects, spaces, and relational practices were reassembled and explore the effect of such rearrangements on the constellational reference points available to understand difference. I analyse DIVINQ's use of the film *The Matrix* (Wachowski & Wachowski, 1999) as a conceptual metaphor to scaffold access to queer-posthumanist ideas. I complete this chapter with an analysis of using humour-laughter as part of developing a trickster-facilitation position in the horizontal axis. As part of this analysis, I consider how this might then retune the function of humour-laughter to become a familial space (Weems, 2019). I put humour theory to work with poststructural positioning theory (Davies & Harré, 1990; Parker, 1992) to identify the repositioning effects humour-laughter had on the *gravity* produced by abject-other discourses. In resonance with Chapter 9, participant accounts work

alongside mine at the scene of DIVINQ. The analysis I take oscillates between participant experiences and my account to how small actions made a difference to the tone of DIVINQ.

I call on Grosz's (2010) idea of "disturbing differences" and I resonate with her suggestion that this "is a wonderfully ambiguous phrase that leaves it unclear whether it is differences that disturb, or whether differences are disturbed by something else" (p. 101). I take an approach that considers DIVINQ as a both/and process. This chapter analyses how the process of forming DIVINQ initiated a playfully disturbing space to unsettle problematisations of disability and LGBT+.

As a narrative therapist, I had a desire to go beyond the skills of counselling to develop ways of working that might bring poststructural-posthuman ideas into a secondary school environment. My analysis account looks back on the employment of a poststructuralist ethical stance with respect to power-knowledge and how this was applied to the formation of a new assemblage. To echo Britzman (1995), while I had a desire to *disrupt* the bodies of knowledge informing knowledge and *ignorance* of bodies, school practices functioned to stabilise LGBT+ and disability as other. This chapter explores how the process of rearranging bodies (including mine and Philip's) and objects served to initiate disruption.

Disturbing power: structural and relational reorganisation

This first section outlines actions that disrupted dominant institutional practices of power to produce a new space. These early steps worked against disciplinary power to retune the functioning of the inquiry assemblage. I analyse how certain moves disturbed adult-young person relationships and contributed to constructing a trickster position.

The first step was to bring students into DIVINQ. I used a variety of common school communication avenues such as student notices, email, and word-of-mouth to recruit senior students. I took care with the language I used to describe the focus of DIVINQ as different from other assemblages, such as a support group, a focus on human rights, or a social justice project. These moves were an ethical stance (Winslade & Monk, 1999) to reposition DIVINQ within the broader institutional landscape, as a first encounter with a point of difference. My hope was that the wording, as part of the horizontal arrangement, might stir curiosity and desire to try DIVINQ. The next step was for interested seniors to meet with me (and sometimes Philip). My assigned institutional identity as a member of staff positioned me with authority. At Rata, I was known as Jeannie and did not have any visible identification as a member of

staff. However, at Kōwhai, I had a title (Ms Grant) that I wore on a name badge. At both schools, I had a professional institutional identity (counsellor) that constructed a formal and serious role which needed to be disturbed to construct a new facilitation position. Lucy recounted the surprise of using my name in DIVINQ and how this made a difference to her relationship with me as a facilitator:

> Lucy: The fact that you were 'Jeannie' you weren't 'Miss Grant' – I think that probably did help and so you weren't like a teacher.

Lucy's comment identifies the positioning effects of language that produce performances of respect such as students being expected to address *all* adults with titles. Although I was not a classroom teacher, I was positioned as a Teacher-In-Charge of an extra-curricular group that came with the disciplinary power of being in charge. Thus, my decision to introduce myself as Jeannie was, in the context of these schools, a rebellious repositioning that resisted an institutional position of authority and offered a repositioned encounter with me as *a person*. From this *new* position, I could become a facilitator.

At Kōwhai, I would turn up the playful intensity of the deterritorialising encounter through the performance of removing my name badge in front of the group. The badge identified my formal title, as noted above. The removal of a visible sign of authority disrupted disciplinary-power and was a demonstration of an ethical stance to come alongside young people. An institutionally assigned, hierarchical position of "school counsellor" was suspended and I was repositioned on the margins, as just a regular person. This was one of the key moves that initiated my becoming a trickster facilitator as part of the machinic arrangement of DIVINQ.

Rematterings relationships: use of physical spaces and objects

Classrooms have furniture such as desks, tables, and chairs. Over the years, I observed how the arrangement of these objects in schools tuned pedagogical encounters to a formal, disciplined tone, such as desks in rows, often facing a board. Lucy described how a common arrangement of desks-tables and chairs mattered:

> Lucy: The setup of the room *definitely* helped. It wasn't like a classroom where you stand at the front and you tell us the things then we respond to them. It was a big round table. Everyone sat in equal point at the table. So, there was no hierarchy really.

Lucy observed how the organisation of the room disturbed a sense of hierarchy from other learning encounters and made a difference to the relational tone of DIVINQ. I acknowledge that there is diversity in the way contemporary classrooms use space, including new furniture to disrupt more traditional rows of desks and chairs. However, my experience in secondary schools resonates with Lucy's account. At both Kōwhai and Rata, the common classroom set-up was desks in rows or groups with the teacher standing at the front.

Lucy noticed how the circle formation of DIVINQ disrupted hierarchical power. Lipman (1987) and Jackson (2001) state that a key aspect of the Community of Inquiry model is a circle format as it is ideal for disrupting traditional classroom dynamics. A circle enables people to tune into the tone of conversations and see others' reactions (Jackson, 2001). Lucy's comment confirmed the circle had an equalising effect. The practice of writing on the board was another opportunity to disrupt a normative classroom routine:

> Holly: I definitely thought about the white board. I think the reason the brainstorms got so crazy is because you would write down literally *everything* like *every* idea on the board.

Holly recounted *how* the use of the whiteboard for recording discussions was different to other classroom writing practices. She observed that my style of writing was disturbing and memorable. The performance of writing was a playful and intense disruption of teacher power and counsellor seriousness. Through writing, I maintained the responsibility of facilitator while refusing teacher authority to choose, edit, or filter what was recorded. I became a conduit for ideas and a collector of information. The function of writing shifted to mapping the conversation. As part of the machinic arrangement, the practice of board writing both changed its function and produced my identity as playful provoker of thought – a moment of becoming trickster facilitator.

These subtle reorganisations retuned how objects and relationships functioned as part of an inquiry assemblage. Gentle shifts can disrupt the material and discursive qualities of a relational space to move from, as Weems (2019) proposes, being prison-like (disciplinary) to more familial.

Initiating an encounter with difference through humour

When I worked with Philip as a co-facilitator, his use of humour further assisted me to become intelligible as a trickster facilitator. Philip came to DIVINQ as an outsider to the school system

with experience in disturbing difference as both a professional comedian and a facilitator. Philip's presence in the space initiated an intensive encounter with physical disability. Lucy recalled meeting Philip and the effect of his use of humour:

> Lucy: His use of humour was definitely a big thing, it just like hooks you in.
>
> Jeannie: What does it hook you into?
>
> Lucy: It diffused the awkward, uncomfortableness we associate with people with disabilities.

Lucy had anticipated feeling uncomfortable when meeting Philip. She expected to experience shock as the normative image of disability available, constructed Philip as abject-other. Dominant pathologising discourses produce an image of disability as less than human and, therefore, when people meet someone with a physical disability (such as cerebral palsy), there is a moment of recognition and rejection (Morris, 1991; Overboe, 1999; Shildrick, 2002). Philip's humour, however, disturbed this image and produced the recognition of him as human:

> Lucy: It was like, 'Ah, cool, he's like a funny guy' [laughs]. And then, 'Wow, he's got a lot to say, and he's got a lot of funny things to say'.

As the discourses that would typically construct Philip's identity as disabled-other dissipated, Lucy experienced a pleasurable surprise that invited her to take up a different listening position. She could unhook from fear-rejection and hook into a more relaxed encounter. Philip's use of humour offered an alternative subject position of "cool guy with lots to say" and his identity was repositioned as *facilitator* with a legitimate voice.

I appreciated Philip's ability to gently resist dominant discourses that, as Overboe (1999) argues, offers limited intelligible positions, and which tend to be polarised as either superhuman or less than human. According to Shakespeare (1994), three images are commonly constructed of disabled people: sinister, tragic, or heroic. In the machinic arrangement of DIVINQ, Philip's humour disturbed the discourses that limit how disability is understood. Armstrong (2003) argues that these dominant images can work as stereotypes and can be deployed in schools as inspiration and/or voyeuristic pity – as I had witnessed over the years. Early on, when Philip and I discussed what kinds of discussions to have in DIVINQ, we took an ethical stance to try and avoid stereotyped images. Over the years, I have observed

that Philip's humour not only accelerates a process of composure, it also resists his identity becoming captured by discourses of dominant-deficit images of thought. Philip disturbed and rearranged how his body, actions, and passions produced his identity. In this way, he opened up a broader concept of who could be a facilitator in a school context.

Over the years, Philip and I negotiated our co-facilitation relationship. Outside of facilitation, we developed a friendship that increasingly tuned our way of working together. Sienna described the effects of our friendly banter for disturbing expectations of professional adult behaviour:

> Sienna: Because you guys were such good friends, you would just joke with each other and talk shit and it just felt like you were students with us.

Sienna observed that our playful interactions had exposed participants to our friendship. To pun LGBT+ coming-out discourses, we were *outed* as great mates. When we joked around with each other, Philip and I shared our enjoyment of each other *as people*. Our verbal play collapsed a formal protective distance and produced an encounter with us as vulnerable. When our adult friendship was plugged into the assemblage, the hierarchical positions ascribed by default power/positioning in schools were dislocated and this, in turn, repositioned our relationship with young people. In other pedagogical contexts, our verbal interactions might have been viewed as disrespectful. In the DIVINQ assemblage, our banter disturbed institutional power. We did not take ourselves seriously but were still the responsible adults in the room.

Of course, there was a risk in starting with a joking tone since our intelligibility as credible professional facilitators were potentially on the line. We could have been positioned as unprofessional and not taking diversity *seriously enough*. In an ironic inverse of Philip's experience in comedy (see Chapter 8), the DIVINQ participants could have become upset or angry as they thought they had signed up for a serious philosophical inquiry. Thus, it was important that the information provided about the group disclosed the lighter tone of DIVINQ.

The Matrix: constructing a conceptual metaphor…and enjoying it

The Matrix was referenced in early communication with potential participants as it formed the conceptual scaffold of DIVINQ. I recall when I first floated the idea to Philip of working together, that we had also discussed *The Matrix* (Wachowski & Wachowski, 1999) and I

remember my thrill at finding out that he also loved the movie. In our research conversations, we recounted our initial responses to watching the movie back in 1999 and the impact on our thinking at the time:

> Philip: I remember it was one of only a few films that *fundamentally* changed the way I thought about the world. I remember walking around in a daze for days afterwards going "Oh my god, this isn't real".
>
> Jeannie: Can I trust my senses? I stopped trusting my senses.
>
> Philip: How do we know that it isn't *real.* I remember thinking "My god, *The Matrix* could be true and we wouldn't know it" and seeing people just going about doing things with no awareness.

Philip and I shared an epiphanic encounter with the movie. We were both enthralled by the rich complexity of the deeper philosophical ideas (see Gunkel, 2008; Irwin, 2002; Žižek, 2006) it raised. The film offered a visual representation of many of the ideas we were interested in exploring further: reality, truth, consciousness, mind, and materiality. Philip and I desired to challenge ideas about difference but did not share the same epistemological background education and training. To borrow the terms of posthuman theory (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994; St. Pierre, 2017), our use of concepts and ideas resonated in different fields of thought. The movie imagery offered a metaphor to translate poststructural theory and articulate my emergent posthumanist knowledge/curiosity so that our ideas around facilitation processes could become intelligible to each other and harmonise conceptually. Over the last 20 years, ideas and imagery from *The Matrix* film, such as the red pill, have been taken up by a number of interest groups such as alt-right/white supremacists (see Dignam & Rohlinger, 2019). We adjusted our introduction of the film over time to acknowledge complex, contested meanings that included the personal identity journeys of the directors as transwomen. This reassembling explored how meaning is not fixed but can change.

Retuning spaces to turn discipline toward desire

It is not uncommon for students to watch a film in a class or as part of a curriculum. DIVINQ space-time locations varied between Rata and Kōwhai, but were always outside of class time and were sometimes held in the weekend. Namrita and Fleur recalled how the use of space mattered:

Namrita: I think that was one of the highlights of DIVINQ. Everyone just made themselves a cup of tea or something.

Fleur: We were like sprawled over all the chairs – just pure relaxation.

Namrita and Fleur described how a casual informal tone was produced by bodies engaging differently. The process of watching the movie together constructed an assemblage where bodies, objects, and rituals were rearranged and dissipated institutional power that might linger from being at school. Student bodies were sometimes out of uniform, desks were moved, or we used the library. Rituals such as sharing food and providing hospitality supported a pleasurable encounter. The physicality of the new assemblage connected flows of desire and enjoyment. Relaxation was an effect of the way the film was used; not just in terms of the storyline but in how the group took up viewing positions. To call on Weems (2019), the assemblage retuned usually disciplined spaces toward becoming more *familial*.

Shared facilitator passions: desire as productive

It is no secret that I love *The Matrix* and all its sequels (Wachowski & Wachowski, 2003a, 2003b, 2021). I brought my passion for the movie into the assemblage as another way of repositioning myself:

Lucy: From the very beginning you were like 'I love *The Matrix*, *The Matrix* it's so great, you haven't seen *The Matrix*? Woah, we need to watch *The Matrix*.'

Lucy colourfully recounted my performance of enthusiasm that created an encounter with me as fan of the movie. Just as Philip was humanised through humour, I was similarly humanised through becoming "crazy Matrix fan". I was aware of the need to continually move myself to the margins, to decentre the power-position as a member of staff. The fervent energy Lucy described was often accompanied by wild gesticulation and was another way to lose the badge that had constructed an adult counsellor identity. The performance repositioned my role in DIVINQ as a provocative playful fringe-dweller. Lucy described the effect on the facilitation relationship:

Lucy: It created a moment and you opened yourself up to something you really loved and shared that with us. I think that really did help.

My exuberance disturbed the social convention of maintaining a professional distance and produced a personal encounter. In Gilson's (2011) terms, the moment tuned into vulnerability, as open to being affected. Many teachers share their interests with students, including their enthusiasm for a subject, and I am certainly not claiming that I am unique in this regard. The difference was the overt disclosure had repositioning effects of disturbing disciplining discourses, and this ensuing vulnerability succeeded in producing intimacy. A new *familial* affective space initiated an encounter with me as a trickster facilitator, by constructing a deformalised, liminal space.

The Matrix in DIVINQ: Metaphor for disturbing humanism's coding

The construction of a relaxed, casual space was one aspect to watching *The Matrix*. The other was to bring a conceptual scaffold to DIVINQ. Participants commented on the value of both aspects:

> Lucy: I really enjoyed doing that [watching the movie] and talking about *The Matrix* and then understanding all your references to it throughout.

Lucy recalled how watching the movie was both a fun, pleasurable encounter, and translator for the ideas we would discuss in DIVINQ. St. Pierre (1997) states that metaphor can be a device to unsettle humanism and get to the unthinkable. The film's imagery of reality being a form of code that is difficult to see became a metaphor to explore the invisible workings of humanism. Lucy and Holly recounted the usefulness of "unplugging" as a metaphor:

> Lucy: It's the path of least resistance to be plugged in and just go through life and be like 'Yeah, I'll just do this and yeah, I'm having a good time enjoying my life, it's pretty ok'. You don't think about everything else.

Lucy described plugged-in as a comfortable, unquestioning experience of life. To draw on Braidotti (2019) and St. Pierre (2000), there was a *familiarity* that had been rendered *invisible* through humanism's tacit normalisation. DIVINQ used "plugged in" as a metaphor for humanism's pervasive imperceptibility. In her retelling, Lucy identified the normalisation of individuality that orients humanism. Thus, *The Matrix* worked as a metaphor for humanism's privileging of individual self-reliance. It also explores the idea of ignorance is bliss. Lucy noticed that being "plugged in" produced a capacity to ignore aspects of life that might be uncomfortable or challenging. In this way, the term "plugged-in" was a useful metaphor for the study of ignorance (Britzman, 1995) and the production of strategic unknowns (Logue,

2014; McGoey, 2012) that can limit or obscure other ways of seeing things. To echo a line from the film, ignorance (the blue pill) can be bliss. Holly and Lucy reflected on the significance of the red pill metaphor:

> Holly: You've got this opportunity to take a step back and look at the systems that you're a part of. It's like you have that choice of whether you want to just keep participating or whether you want to or…
>
> Lucy: Stand up to it.

To unplug (red-pill) is to see the effects of systems of power for the first time and to recognise that it is possible to take up forms of resistance. Posthuman knowledge, Braidotti (2019) states, produces a desire to understand conditions of life that limit freedom and defamiliarisation to breaking established patterns of thought. In DIVINQ, the red pill/unplugging metaphor offered a conceptual scaffold for posthuman knowledge to become intelligible. Gunkle (2008) argues that what makes the film philosophical is that it "puts into play and opens the space for questioning the antagonisms, dualisms, and binary logics that already organize our understanding of the world and structure modes of thinking" (p. 827). These philosophical ideas also resonate with Britzman's (1995) study of limits and study of ignorance as queering techniques.

In the film, there is a significant scene where Neo, the film's protagonist, adjusts to his body in the real world (after being unplugged), which Rajan identified:

> Rajan: The scene in *The Matrix* where he [Neo] goes "Why do my eyes hurt?" [Morpheus replies] "Because you've never used them before".

This was a poignant moment in the film that called on the imagery of physical pain if someone is unprepared to *see* through a *different* set of eyes. In DIVINQ, this metaphor translated how unplugging from a humanist field of thought can be uncomfortable. Braidotti (2019) argues that "[n]o process of consciousness-raising ever is painless, though this does not equate it with suffering" (p. 82). The eye hurting metaphor normalised an expected discomfort from DIVINQ's emphasis on defamiliarising.

Rebellious humour and laughter: Producing a gravity shift

In this section I describe how humour and laughter functioned differently in DIVINQ. I explore the effects of humour-laughter on the construction of new relationships and deterritorialisation of dominant discourses that had captured disability and LGBT+ as "morally objectionable" (Eriksen, 2006, p. 15). I had experienced school approaches that tended to tune conversations with heavy tones of risk, harm, rights, and social justice. I was interested in participants' perspectives of how humour and laughter worked in DIVINQ:

> Jeannie: When we came into DIVINQ, how did humour and laughter help?
>
> Lucy: Topics like that [LGBT+ and disability] are quite serious or there can be some quite serious issues surrounding them.
>
> Namrita: A lot of the subjects we're laughing about are normally really taboo. Discussions are really serious. We're not allowed to make jokes – we're not allowed to laugh.

Lucy and Namrita acknowledged that certain forms of difference were entangled with complex meanings. The problematisations of LGBT+ and disability available before they participated in DIVINQ, produced games of truth that made rules for where conversations about difference could go. Discussions were limited to take-this-seriously territory. As discussed in Chapter 9, the effect of territorialised taboo constrained what humour was able to do in other types of learning assemblages. These assemblages are not necessarily wrong or dangerous in themselves, but they do tune ideas through dominant discourses that then restrict how humour-laughter can occur and be read. Lucy and Namrita observed how making jokes (in other spaces) could position them as disrespectful and insensitive as prevailing discourses of disability and LGBT+ construct them as social problems or, as Lucy described, "serious issues". An effect of discussions held in serious taboo territories is an intensification of the normative gaze – that watched for laughter or jokes as signals that the topic is not being taken seriously. Lucy and Namrita's comments confirmed how a territorialised problematisation of LGBT+ and disability circulates moral and ethical discourses that then call people to take up discussions with a heavy tone of grave concern. Sienna reflected on the important disturbing function of laughter:

> Sienna: If you're having an intense discussion and you're laughing about something then it lightens the mood.

While Sienna did not provide a context for the intensity of discussion, she described how laughing can change the tone of a conversation. In his theory of "humour as playful relaxation", Morreall (2009) proposes that, in the moment humour shifts a relationship, laughter sends a message that we are safe together and *enjoying* this together. In Sienna's example, an intense discussion is an effect of discourses producing a serious intensity that laughter disrupts. Laughter can lighten the mood and retune a discussion *if* safety is experienced:

> Holly: I think it [laughter] just puts everyone at ease.
>
> Lucy: It's not a big serious…
>
> Holly [jumps in]: Scary topic.

In the context of discussing disability and sexuality, Holly and Lucy described the shift in affective tone that laughter can produce. Morreall (2009) argues that most humour involves problems but, instead of taking up a position of practical concern, people can take a playful approach. DIVINQ constructed a space where practical concern could be dropped. As Holly and Lucy described, laughter could then release tension held in the serious fields of thought. Laughter disturbed the density of territorialised serious meaning. Instead of changing the topic, DIVINQ disturbed the normally serious field of thought around the topic so that practical concern could be dropped and the topic could be held in a lighter-playful tone.

Laughter jolting relationships out of serious mode

At the start of each year, a new DIVINQ group would come together. However, each session had a different combination of people. Kushala recalled the effect of social disconnection and the important role laughter played in signalling connection:

> Kushala: None of us were exactly friends, we were just different people brought together. It's like if no-one laughs about it, you feel quite awkward to say what you want to say, because you feel so formal.

Kushala described how the absence of laughter produced uncertainty and watchfulness. She observed that without laughter to signal "being safe together" (Morreall, 2009, p. 53), her sense of surveillance intensified. In a serious-formal mode, people monitor their behaviour against

social norms in a state of unrelaxation (Morreall, 2009). Kushala's comment highlights the possibility that if no-one laughed this could signal unsafety:

> Kushala: The fact a lot of us would laugh at the same things, it just helped make you feel more comfortable and open.

Kushala noticed that laughter confirmed a shared understanding and eased tension to signal safety. All humour is a form of social shorthand that enables people to recognise commonality (Rose, 2007). In DIVINQ, laughter (or not) in response to humour about difference indicated to us as facilitators if we had constructed a safe space. As Kushala described, when most people laughed, this quickly communicated that it was acceptable to take a lighter position and drop practical concern. In the initial stages of forming the DIVINQ assemblage, humour was deployed to, as Rose (2007) states, test the relational waters. Laughter signalled that people were comfortable to play with ideas. In a school context, the topics discussed in DIVINQ usually stayed in *extra serious mode*. Thus, when people laughed together in DIVINQ, this deeply disturbed seriousness wherein the affective shift supported the assemblage to get into *play mode* (Morreall, 2009). Others confirmed Kushala's account:

Lucy: When you are laughing, just having a good time, it's easy to bring stuff up that you maybe wouldn't.	Namrita: When you can laugh about these things, you can talk about them more.
Sienna: Laughter for me is associated with comfort and enjoyment and when you're comfortable you're more likely to open up about *anything*.	Connor: That was probably one of the biggest contributions to that open environment where you felt everything was ok to ask and everyone could contribute.

In DIVINQ, laughter successfully subverted territorialised serious mode and produced a playfully relaxed space. Thus, the assemblage recruited positive qualities of humour-laughter (Blackmore, 2011; Garner, 2006; Gordon, 2010; Morreall, 2014) to construct a more open environment that fostered trust. In this space, participants found their voice. They could share more in discussions. Sienna and Namrita described the effect of laughter on the inquiry process – the thinking of DIVINQing:

> Sienna: I feel like the laughter created comfort and I think that's how we thought deeper: because we all felt comfortable with each other.

Sienna confirmed DIVINQ tuned into the positive qualities of humour-laughter and astutely observed how an affective ease produced a comfortable space to take risks. The study of limits (Britzman, 1995) seeks out new places on the edges of thinking. In DIVINQ, humour-laugher might facilitate a study of limits by opening up a playfully relaxed pedagogical space for the inquiry to push past what Britzman (1995) describes as "novel horizons" (p. 156). Namrita shared a similar account of the effects of laughter on DIVINQ's playful inquiry process:

> Namrita: I thought it made us all closer like a family of sorts. You're sitting at a dinner table and you're just throwing and bouncing ideas off everyone.

Namrita described her experience of the closeness laughter produced. Her account resonates with Blackmore's (2011) argument that humour in classrooms can construct a more relaxed intimate environment and echoes Weems's (2019) observation that "if school is imagined to feel like home, one may approach the classroom space quite differently than if school is imagined to feel like prison" (p. 97). Namrita observed that laughter constructed a home-like tone where conversations flowed differently. In pedagogical contexts, "it is the particular positioning (of identities) within discursive fields that enables and constrains what can and can [not] be stated or enacted" (Weems, 2019, p. 98). In DIVINQ, laughter repositioned adults and young people and disrupted the discursive fields that constrained what could be discussed. I recall the cacophony of voices as ideas flew around the room and sparked more ideas.

Namrita's comment resonated with my enjoyment of DIVINQ and captured the energetic qualities of DIVINQ's playful conversations. When considering DIVINQ as an assemblage, humour disturbed discourses and laughter was an energetic affective force that turned/rotated (St. Pierre, 2017) the inquiry away from territorialised learning practices.

Ethical deployment of rebellious humour

It was our responsibility as facilitators to be alert to the positioning effects of humour. To echo Weems (2019), this was to ensure that prison-like, disciplinary positions were not available. According to Billig (2005), all humour is a form of ridicule and, therefore, humour has the potential to harm people. In turning toward the rebellious aspects of humour, DIVINQ had also sought to question systems of power (Billig, 2005) although, as Namrita observed, care was always taken with the humour deployed:

> Namrita: I mean obviously they're not insensitive jokes. We're not like 'Haha black people.'

Namrita made an important declaration regarding the sensitivity of jokes. She acknowledged that ridicule *could* have been deployed that denigrated others (Rose, 2007), such as minority groups. The harm of this humour, Benatar (2014) and Morreall (2019) argue, is the reproduction and validation of stereotypes regardless of who is telling the joke. Namrita gave an example of the type of rebellious humour DIVINQ took up in relation to proposed laws about bathroom use that impacted on transgender students in schools in other countries:

> Namrita: We laughed at the stupidity of it, that this was going on. But there is still that underlying 'I can't believe that this is going on' kind of thing.

Namrita described how laughter in DIVINQ focussed on systems of thought behind fear of difference and the effects. There was still shock and disbelief. However, laughter mocked systems of power, so that the law itself became the object of ridicule. The example Namrita gave resonates with Rose's (2007) ironic and reflective irony, that produces a jolt from the *common-sense* idea of separate bathrooms based on biological body plumbing. The possible discriminatory effects of laws were taken seriously, however, rebellious humour moved the problem away from individual identities and toward the games of truth played from various positions of concern. If most humour is about problems, as Morreall (2009) states, then humour-laughter in DIVINQ might move the object of ridicule away from people as the problem and toward how fear of difference produces responses to problematisations.

Philip's experience as a comedian was invaluable in setting up the ethical deployment of humour to construct an alternative space to think differently. When I invited participants to recall the value of humour in DIVINQ, the conversation turned to Philip and his experience in comedy that influenced the inquiry space:

> Rajan: The way they [comedians] use humour to put people at ease but also breach often uncomfortable topics.

Rajan appreciated the nuanced skills a comedian must have to negotiate the boundaries of taboo topics. Trickster facilitators violate taboos and create liminal spaces to produce change (Edwards et al., 2021). Thus, Philip's experience as a comedian resonated with trickster facilitation and were in harmony with DIVINQ's efforts to produce a new conversational space.

However, there is a delicate ethical line both comedy and trickster facilitation share, as observed by our co-facilitator, Sam:

> Sam: Comedians *intentionally* talk about things that are quite taboo and they can get away with it. Sometimes they don't, sometimes they cross the line but that I feel like they are constantly trying to *flirt* with that line.

In the service of producing laughter, Sam described the risks comedians take with humour. Stand-up negotiates boundaries of socially acceptable incongruity (Brodie, 2014). Sam observed that this requires an awareness of where the line of these boundaries might be. An audience needs to have a shared understanding of that line for a comedian to be successful. Comedy and trickster facilitation are similar in that they are both forms of provocation on a line where meaning might be contested. The intended outcome in stand-up comedy is to produce laughter; in DIVINQ, it was thinking. Rajan expanded on the qualities of comedy for challenging thinking:

> Rajan: Stand-up comedians use humour to have like a really deep, or just a really simple sort of ring of truth to it.

Rajan observed how comedians make jokes about ordinary experiences that people recognise as something familiar to which they can relate to their own lives. Critchley (2002) argues that jokes are incredibly powerful in that they light up the common features of the world in a more practical way. Jokes offer "practical abstractions, socially embedded philosophising" (Critchley, 2002, p. 87). Two commonalities of comedy and philosophy are that they explore ordinary everyday experience and ask deeper questions (Morreall, 2009). Rajan's comment affirms the potential of humour to question games of truth. Humour's ability to flirt with the line of contested meanings and its capacity to keep people thinking requires an understanding of the thresholds of affective responses. Rajan commented on the delicate ethical aspects of using humour and identified how subtle shifts of language produced different affects:

> Rajan: The good thing with humour is if you deliver a joke the right way, you can say something judgemental but make it not *feel* judgemental. But if the joke is delivered the right way you can be like 'Oh yeah, haha, I do that' but you don't feel judged for it.

Rajan noted that the effect of humour begins with the person telling the joke. He astutely described the pleasure of being released from concern of judgement, one of the potentially positive effects of humour. The teller has responsibility for the positioning effects of the meaning produced in the moment. If *all* humour is a form of ridicule (Billig, 2005) and has a social function (Rose, 2007), then the language used to tell the joke brings discourses into play that either problematise systems of power or individuals. People may resonate with or reject both types of humour. Rajan's comment highlights how a strategic use of humour can call people into a space of reflection by distancing or jolting people out of common sense. More specifically, ironic and reflective humour creates opportunities to reflect and explore novel horizons. In this case, the "haha I do that" moment identified by Rajan exemplifies the effects of transgressing thresholds of ideas by trickster facilitators.

Puns and word play – mocking language itself

In DIVINQ, language and words themselves provided opportunities to play with concepts. Puns are a form of rebellious humour that disrupts the normative codes of language (Billig, 2005). They often happen spontaneously and in unplanned ways since words may have multiple meanings and different words may sound identical. Puns became fruitful opportunities to disturb and *play* with meaning. When I asked Philip and Sam how they thought DIVINQ used humour to disrupt more serious topics related to diversity, Sam observed the power of the playfulness of puns:

> Sam: I think the way we use humour to dismantle some of that stuff is very pun oriented. It's never like 'Ha ha you're so dumb'. It's always, 'Ha ha I misheard that, and I thought you said *youth in Asia*' [all hysterically laughing].

Sam was referring to a creative piece of writing involving voluntary euthanasia. When the serious topic was accidentally punned, laughter could have turned to target the individual for being *wrong*. He described an ethic of care taken by the DIVINQ assemblage to resist people becoming positioned as wrong by turning laughter away from the disciplining effects of ridicule. It exemplified how puns in DIVINQ, as a double troubling move, often served to disturb the certainty of language and resist shame or humiliation.

The language-labels available to discuss difference comes pre-coded with deficit ideas that attempt to reterritorialise identities as wrong. Sam related his experience of playing with labels in DIVINQ:

> Sam: I keep coming back to puns. There is something about being quite playful and funny with words that takes the *weight* of labels away that we're quite committed to. [In DIVINQ] we can create humour to disrupt the weight of what a label could be, the weight of me as transgender.

Sam reflected on the power of word play to disturb the heaviness of identifications such as transgender. He noted how the DIVINQ environment actively employed puns to lighten the meanings of labels available. I echo Sam's observation that puns, by "puncturing pretentiousness" (Benatar, 2014), reduce the density-gravity of dominant discourses that shape intelligible identity constellations. To extend Benatar's metaphor, an effect of DIVINQ's (pun)cturing was the deflation of heavy labels.

The work of this chapter

The process that formed DIVINQ involved the construction of a new machinic assemblage. The rearrangement of rooms, furniture, and playful interactions disturbed institutional hierarchies and disciplinary power. Playful performances moved my identity to the margins and produced a tricker facilitation position. *The Matrix* (Wachowski & Wachowski, 1999) film doubled as a metaphor to construct a conceptual scaffold for queering-posthuman and to accelerate pleasurable forces. These object-relational reorganisations functioned to retune DIVINQ from a more prison-disciplining tone to an intimate-familial space. A key aspect was the work of humour and laughter as disruptive forces. The deployment of rebellious-reflective irony turned toward systems of power and jolted concepts of difference problematised as serious and moved out of uncomfortable territory. Language and puns in DIVINQ produced intense disruptions of these problematisations. Laughter released the tension/unrelaxation in serious-taboo fields of thought, giving way to a playfully relaxed, intimate space. In this way, the arrangement of bodies and objects retuned humour-laughter to become queering-posthuman pedagogical practices by accelerating a desire to take risks with thinking.

Chapter 11: DIVINQ at work

In this chapter, I explore the experience of participating in DIVINQ as a form of community of inquiry (Lipman, 1987, 2003, 2017) *in* a playfully relaxed space. I analyse the process of forming a trickster co-facilitation relationship and how this disturbed traditional communities of inquiry practices. The purpose is to explore the nuanced practices of DIVINQ that sought to deterritorialise serious-disciplined learning. A focus of this chapter is how aspects of queer theory and Deleuzian affective pedagogy could produce an epistemically vulnerable community of inquiry. That is, I examine how the whole assemblage, participants and facilitators alike, functioned to deterritorialise serious-disciplined learning and produced a safer space to think difference differently. Throughout this chapter, I draw attention to how principles of future-oriented education – working with diversity of knowledge and new partnerships – might be reimagined.

This chapter works *with and through* Chapter 10 that had explored the machinic workings of DIVINQ and had focused on its formation process. The Deleuzoguattarian concept of assemblages is again employed with analysis attuned to DIVINQ as "a collective assemblage of enunciation, of acts and statements, of incorporeal transformations of bodies" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 88). I therefore focus on the transformative aspects that might produce a form of queer-posthuman inquiry. Through desire, assemblages function as abstract machines with the circulation of desire producing connections in the assemblage (Livesay, 2010). I explore the practices that might dissipate disciplinary power to enable desire to circulate. Where Chapter 10 had explored the retuning of humour and laughter to produce a playfully relaxed tone, this chapter analyses how humour-laughter informed DIVINQ's pedagogy of epistemic vulnerability (Logue, 2014). It discusses the kind of acts and statements of the collective assemblage that produced a safe space to think difference differently. The idea of safe space in schools depends, as Weems (2019) states, on the positioning of people in assemblages. In this chapter, I analyse how trickster facilitation took up repositioning acts and the effects of these on DIVINQ's tone of inquiry.

Community of Inquiry facilitation requires facilitators to have the necessary backgrounding skills (Kennedy, 2004). These specific facilitation techniques—adopting a position of ignorance, bridging, and triggering—guide the inquiry process and aim to develop young people's critical thinking. In this chapter I explore how trickster facilitation might require

alternative backgrounding skills. Tricksters are associated with processes of liminality, in-between spaces that produce transformative moments, and new knowledge about the world (Edwards et al., 2021). I call on participant and facilitator accounts to analyse the process of becoming a trickster facilitation team on the production of an in-between space of transformative moments.

My encounter with the questioning process of the Philosophy for Children approach had impacted my early teaching career. I later desired to return to develop a Community of Inquiry practice that resonated with what Winslade and Monk (1999) and White (1997) describe as the attunement of narrative therapy's ethical stance to poststructural theory so as to question power-knowledge on the production of truth. A dissonance that emerged was the kind of thinking and subjectivity produced by traditional philosophy for children. Kohan (2014) argues that to move away from Western concepts of thinking and truth, philosophy must escape through a form of *antimethod*. This chapter explores how DIVINQ may be understood as a possible antimethod to produce an encounter with uncommon thought.

Facilitation: opening up new territory to explore

The impetus of DIVINQ was co-facilitation. Edwards et al. (2021) argue that "[f]acilitators are embedded in dynamics of desire and a process of seduction or 'leading astray'" (p. 544). In this first section, I explore the repositioning moves our facilitation had made to seduce and lead inquiry astray. It should be noted that there are differences between Rata and Kōwhai participant contributions in this chapter, with Rata participants tending to discuss Philip's facilitation. This is because DIVINQ was only in its formative stages in Rata and Philip and I, having only just met, had yet to develop our friendship. As a result, I took more of a supportive role in the facilitation of DIVINQ at Rata. In contrast, by the time we ran DIVINQ in Kōwhai, our friendship had deepened, I had grown in confidence to use humour in my facilitation, and Sam had joined us as a co-facilitator. All of these aspects influenced the kind of DIVINQ assemblages that formed and, therefore, participants experience of DIVINQ.

Changing power relationships: friendship disturbances at work

In the previous chapter, I described the steps I took to reposition myself with young people in schools. Over time, as my relationship developed with Philip and Sam, we developed playful disturbances together. I was interested in participants' experience of our facilitation relationship:

Jeannie: Is there anything about Philip and Sam and how the three of us worked together that helped?

Lucy: It sort of didn't feel like you [Jeannie] were the facilitator, or it did because obviously you were running it. It was just like you brought a couple of your friends and [all laughing] and we were just all having a chat.

Lucy acknowledged that while I still held responsibility for the process, the casual interactions between us produced an encounter with friendship. We all broke into laughter during the interview as there was some irony with Lucy's observation. A teacher might bring their friends in to talk, however, the intimacy of friendship tends not to be considered professional in more traditional classroom assemblages. Lucy and Fleur described how introducing Philip and Sam as my friends helped to bring them into a casual position as part of our facilitation relationship:

Lucy: It wasn't like 'These are guest speakers, and they know a lot so you should listen to them'. It was like 'These are my mates'.

Fleur: That's honestly how it felt: 'This is my mate Philip, we've been great friends for ages' and it was just like 'Yeah, cool, Philip what have you got to say'.

Lucy and Fleur recounted my enthusiastic, over the top expression of desire to share our friendship with them, that had a rapid retuning effect. When I look back, there was an aspect of overt, open enjoyment that turned away from reserved professionalism. Acts of friendship disturbed disciplinary power and repositioned Philip and Sam as outside guest speakers. A trickster is a complex character who is both a teacher of cultural skills and a prankster working on the margins (Edwards et al., 2021). Exuberance was deployed as a trickster prank-move to produce a double repositioning by both disturbing my professional identity and student expectations of formal-teacher hierarchy.

I recall being in a teacher position and disciplining students who did not demonstrate respect toward a guest speaker. I would scan the room for any evidence of misbehaviour, such as laughter or talking. As part of the DIVINQ collective assemblage, playful introductory moves resisted reterritorialisation by disciplinary power that could have reproduced a "be quiet and listen" position that Lucy described. There was the potential for dominant discourses of inclusion that, in Britzman (1995) terms, could have positioned Philip and Sam to be responsible for facilitating changing attitudes to difference and provide information.

Facilitation through friendship disturbed a guest-speaker-as-authority position. Acceleration of desire became a trickster move to produce an in-between space where we were not teaching, counselling, or meeting needs.

In the initial stages of DIVINQ's workshop development, I suggested to Philip that we could draw on Philosophy for Children and the Community of Inquiry practice developed by Matthew Lipman (1987, 2003, 2017) . None of the participants had experienced a traditional Community of Inquiry process prior to this. Some Kōwhai participants had been part of a philosophy club with a neighbouring boys' school [Matai]. The practice they described in the research interview resonated with what Makaiau and Miller (2012) describe as the academic tradition of philosophy, or big P philosophy. Therefore, I asked participants how the facilitation of DIVINQ was different to other classroom learning experiences. Namrita and Fleur described how our joining in and participation in the inquiry had made a difference to their experience of our facilitation:

> Namrita: You guys would be a part of the group, you would DIVINQ with us.
>
> Fleur: I feel like you guys weren't above us. It was not only us learning but you were learning as well.

Namrita and Fleur noticed that when we merged with the inquiry assemblage, a sense of hierarchy dissipated. In more traditional facilitation of communities of inquiry, facilitators take a neutral position, acting as guides around the process but also demonstrating restraint (Hannam & Echeverria, 2019; Jackson, 2001; Kennedy, 2004; Lipman, 1987, 2007; Makaiau, 2015; Sharpe, 2017). DIVINQ's facilitation resonated with aspects of taking a procedural guide, but we were also fully involved in participating as a both/and position. Thus, joining with the group while also facilitating the session constructed an ethical stance of becoming epistemically vulnerable together as an inquiry. Fleur described her sense of the space produced:

> Fleur: It just felt like a safe space. When we entered that room, it was just our space. It wasn't yours, it wasn't mine. It was everyone in the rooms [sic]. It was just a mutual understanding.

Upon crossing the threshold, Fleur experienced a sense of shared accountability and responsibility. She noticed a shift in power that produced an encounter with reciprocity. A safe

space became available through the assemblage. Weems (2019) proposes that schools often claim to provide safe spaces but the arrangements of bodies and circulating disciplinary power can produce unsafe spaces. In DIVINQ, safer space was made possible by repositioning adults and young people that reduced the circulation of disciplinary power. Thus, the room was transformed through DIVINQ. This suggested that the future-oriented principle of working with diversity may be enhanced through a facilitation approach that attends to affective space as much as physical spaces.

The idea of learning with young people is not new or unique to DIVINQ and I acknowledge a vast range of pedagogies, including the concept of Ako from mātauranga Māori (see Napan, Connor, & Toki, et al., 2020). A principle of future-oriented education is working in new partnerships. New partnerships might emerge from collective rearrangements of relationships as an ethical practice that recognises power is always present and productive. Collective assemblages produce what is considered productive.

Facilitation as a process of leading astray

Senior secondary school students are immersed in learning environments where pedagogical practices are guided by clear outcomes, learning goals, and curriculum content. I recall as a teacher how the curriculum set specific pedagogical outcomes and every lesson had a learning goal—a map. When I first teamed up with Philip at Rata, I was ready to diverge from this map-like practice that young people knew how to navigate. Connor commented on his encounter with alternative our approach:

> Connor: I don't know if you guys had a particular direction or end point in mind or a goal of it [Jeannie chuckles]. If you had a specific topic you were trying to get us to broach or a particular answer you were trying to get us to come to. It didn't feel like you were leading it in a particular way.

Connor reflected with some puzzlement about the way we guided the inquiry. Our facilitation did not provide a strong sense of the direction. During the research interview, I laughed with irony, reflecting on the very real possibility that, at this early point, Philip and I were making it up as we went along and were just as lost. In the absence of more familiar pedagogical landmarks to navigate DIVINQ, a sense of disorientation was a possible effect. I laughed in ironic affirmation of Connor's observation that, ironically, our facilitation was indeed a practice of *leading astray*.

A risk of trickster facilitation is people "may be cast adrift from social conventions and may encounter moments of precariousness, doubt and uncertainty" (Edwards et al., 2021, p. 545). Although there was some danger of participants experiencing these feelings, a key purpose of facilitating DIVINQ was to avoid finding clear paths and following lines of inquiry that sought certainty and truth. These were territorialised goals of traditional philosophical and critical thinking. Rajan reflected on why the facilitation style mattered:

> Rajan: I think like the way DIVINQ is facilitated is *the* most important thing really. It's easy for a bad facilitator to take any workshop off the rails.

Rajan identified our facilitation approach as significant to the functioning of DIVINQ and suggested poor facilitation could have an impact on any group process. Schwarz (2016) describes facilitation as a skill that involves "a way of thinking and working with groups that increases the chance that they'll perform well" (p. 4). I was interested to know what facilitation skills Rajan thought may have derailed DIVINQ:

> Rajan: Not necessarily derailed it, but like railroaded the conversation into one direction or another.

Rajan considered bad facilitation might over guide by steering the inquiry in specific directions. Traditional inquiry processes hold facilitators accountable for guiding discussions toward better thinking by helping young people develop good thinking tools (Jackson, 2001). Facilitators' backgrounding knowledge and skills (Kennedy, 2004) ensure that rails are developed in young peoples' ability to think critically. Humanist thought constructs binary directions and either/or arguments. Rajan astutely observed how bad facilitation of DIVINQ could fall onto these tracks.

A key pedagogical aim of traditional philosophy for children is to develop skills to think critically. Good thinking skills are a set of techniques for ensuring a community of inquiry gets somewhere (Jackson, 2001). I remember training as a facilitator of philosophy for children and the emphasis on the development of methodical questioning skills. Biesta (2011), Kohan (2014) and Vansieleghem (2005) argue that "good thinking" guides thought along Western ideals of logic, reason, and rationality – the *rails* of humanist thought. Had DIVINQ's collective become guided by such rails, discussions of difference could have found moralistic tracks that get to difference as vulnerable other. A posthuman process of defamiliarisation leads to conceptual disobedience (Braidotti, 2019). Thus, a posthuman facilitation approach

may benefit from a sensitivity to conversations seeking rails that could reterritorialise and reproduce conceptual obedience.

In the early stages of DIVINQ, Philip took more of a lead in the co-facilitation relationship. Rajan reflected on some of the facilitation skills Philip had demonstrated that made a difference to the tone of discussions:

> Rajan: I think Philip recognises when you are skimming over a subject.

Rajan considered a key ability was to read when discussions might stay at more superficial layers of ideas. Philip could read the dominant games of truth and problematisation, including the more familiar intelligible discursive frameworks of rights and social justice which, as Rajan noted, were more at the surface level. Thus, Philip could recognise when discussions were stuck on limits of thought (Britzman, 1995) on topics related to difference. Rajan described the aspects of Philip's facilitation that moved discussions below surface:

> Rajan: Being able to read the room. Because maybe people are uncomfortable with it or because they just haven't thought deeply enough about it. So being able to understand, get a sense of why topics [of difference] might be headed or where discussions might be headed.

Rajan acknowledged that some people might find discussing difference disturbing. He appreciated Philip's nuanced skill of reading how people were feeling – the affective tones of discomfort. My experience of secondary schools resonates with Rajan's observation that topics related to sexuality and disability produce unease. Common social conventions for discussing LGBT+ and disability are that they are simply not discussed, or that such conversations are dominated by discourses of inclusion (Britzman, 1995) that serve to pull the conversations back to the surface as safer territory.

"The study of limits is in a sense a problem of where thought stops a problem of thinkability" (Britzman, 1995, p. 156). Philip had experience locating the limits of thinkability and the bearable threshold of "where thought can bear to know" (Britzman, 1995, p. 156). The value of tricksters is to push into taboo but this can be unsettling as people experience becoming cast adrift. Philip had worked pushing into taboos in comedy and facilitation and was adept at recognising when people experienced being cast adrift. Over the years of working together,

we developed a co-facilitation style that both cast people adrift (with humour) and kept them afloat (with laughter) as a key function of incorporeal transformations.

DIVINQ: Facilitating deterritorialising inquiry

This section explores how other horizontal aspects of the inquiry assemblage functioned to support deterritorialisation of disciplinary power-knowledge and humanist concepts of thinking and being. It describes how the whole assemblage functioned when we were all in the room and it explores the various disturbances we made to dominant-normative pedagogical practices, such as classrooms and communities of inquiry. To put it another way, if DIVINQ was a possible antimethod to reproducing humanist concepts of philosophical inquiry, what were some of the other practices we used that helped it to escape?

Becoming a judgement-free space

I remember young people struggled to ask questions when I was a classroom teacher. Both philosophy for children and narrative therapy were questioning practices I drew on as a facilitator. A shared resonance between them was gentle curiosity and constructing a respectful relationship. One of my hopes for DIVINQ was to break down the fear of asking questions around difference. I invited participants to compare their classroom learning with DIVINQ to explore the differences in their experience:

> Rajan: One of the big things was you felt comfortable asking questions. Even if they were stupid questions, or if you felt like it was an ignorant question.

Rajan described being more at ease to ask questions when DIVINQing and less concerned with what other people might think of him for asking. Lone (2011) proposes that young people stop asking questions as they move through school as asking means they have failed to learn something. As senior students, the effect of developmental discourses that positioned ignorance as evidence of one's failure to learn were still circulating, but with less positioning power. A reduction of the intensity of the normalising gaze that watched for evidence of ignorance produced a sense of comfort:

> Rajan: You were kind of like 'Ok I can ask it and people aren't going to judge me so much for it'.

Rajan described an awareness that, although some judgement was possible, he was less concerned and was more able in DIVINQ to ask. Foucault's concept of surveillance (Foucault,

1977/1991) relates to the ways external acts of watching for transgressions become internalised. A possible effect of disturbing knowledge-ignorance dualisms and disciplinary power that watch for questions as evidence of failure is a safer space in which to ask questions. Kushala similarly reflected on her experience of judgement and its effect on participating in other classroom contexts:

> Kushala: It [DIVINQ] just eliminated the fear of being judged. Because for me, especially with group discussions and things in class, I was quite quiet. I would always have opinions and things I want to say but I was always scared of being judged if I said it out loud that I just wouldn't. I would keep my thoughts to myself.

Kushala described her desire to participate in discussions in other classroom contexts but, equally, her worry about what others might think of her contributions. She held back from contributing as it did not feel safe to voice her ideas. Lone (2011) argues that "[a]sking questions publicly broadcasts what they don't know, and this has the potential to be somewhat shameful, or at least embarrassing. *And so they go silent* [emphasis added]" (p. 79). When shame circulates in classrooms, young people lose confidence to share their ideas (Oades-sese et al., 2014). The internalised gaze produced a cautioning warning that Kushala heeded. Thus, Kushala resisted publicly broadcasting in classroom spaces as there was a risk of judgement and possibility of shame. DIVINQing contrasted with this experience:

> Kushala: Coming to DIVINQ it was really cool/nice to be heard instead of being judged.

An effect of less judgement was relaxed enjoyment. DIVINQ had produced a positive positioning effect that legitimised Kushala's authority to speak and be heard (Davies, 1991; Parker, 1992). The construction of a safer space in DIVINQ was supported by reducing the internalised gaze that watched for getting things wrong. To draw on the terms of collective assemblages, in DIVINQ, the dissipation of surveillance had constructed a safer space to take risks, promoting the emergence of an alternative questioning practice.

Questioning: queering "Gently Socratic" Inquiry

As previously noted, a plain vanilla inquiry practice is a basic form of communities of inquiry (Jackson, 2001; Makaiau, 2015) process adapted for DIVINQ and it begins with exposure to a stimulus text. The second stage involves developing questions and the group deciding which question to start the inquiry. I encountered a dilemma of how an inquiry process could scaffold

queering questions. The nexus of the dilemma was *who* asked the questions and what constituted good questions. DIVINQ diverged from the plain vanilla process at this point and the questioning style of DIVINQ was something on which participants remarked:

> Rajan: I remember you guys throwing us questions to think about, open ended questions. If we only touched the topic on the surface, getting us to go deeper.

Rajan recounted how Philip and I initiated discussions by posing questions that kept the territory open for DIVINQers to ponder. When people answered, we [as facilitators] could locate, like reading a map, where ideas were situated – the territory. I propose that the surface ideas Rajan described were territorialised by humanism's problematisations of difference that tended to offer surface-level notions of social justice and human rights. Our facilitation supported the inquiry assemblage to turn away from the games of truth played in this territory. To go deeper was to break the rules of such games. The practice of adults doing most of the question throwing contrasted with facilitation of communities of inquiry where young people develop skills to take over the questioning and resist imposing their ideas or directing discussions. To borrow from Britzman (1995), our facilitation queered DIVINQ by supporting the inquiry to turn toward places where thought *cannot bear* to know. Connor shared some examples of the questioning approach we had taken as facilitators:

> Connor: It was just 'Oh that's interesting, how do you feel about that?' and 'What are your thoughts on what they just said?' as opposed to 'Yip that's correct.'

Connor observed that our style of facilitation unsettled certainty, refused to confirm that something was right (or wrong), and that we asked about *affects*. The value of feelings/affects contrasted with traditional inquiry where these are managed, as Biesta (2011) states, to get to what is considered a purer philosophical process. Some of our open-ended questioning resonated with a Gently Socratic approach where dialogue and attentive listening are emphasised. Kennedy (2004) suggests that facilitators of Communities of Inquiry need certain background knowledge and skills. In resonance with Kennedy, DIVINQ's facilitation avoided steering discussions toward definite answers and, as facilitators, we took a position of ignorance. This approach also echoed narrative therapy's "not knowing stance" (Freeman et al., 1997; Monk & Gehart, 2003) that takes a cautious approach to totalising truths and where questions seek to call forward local knowledge. Thus, a shared resonance produced a

questioning style of tentative curiosity and made space for feelings (affects) to become productive.

The Gently Socratic Inquiry process I had originally trained in fostered calm ordered dialogue with people taking turns. Kōwhai participants experienced a different questioning approach that emerged as my friendship developed with Philip. Fleur recounted how the group could simply hurl questions back:

> Fleur: You would ask a question and then we'd be like asking twenty questions back.

There was often a cacophony of questions coming all at once. I loved this aspect of DIVINQing as it was an affective disturbance to disciplined order and calm rationality. As a facilitator, I did not encounter talking over the top of each other as a lack of respect or loss of self-control. The energetic qualities of firing-back broke the codes of politeness and followed surges of desire. Fleur described how our responses channelled the chaotic energy:

> Fleur: Then you guys would be like 'Oh actually, yeah, that's a good point' and then we'd be like 'But we didn't think about that' so it was like constantly picking each other's brains.

Fleur recounted how the acknowledgement of a different perspective invited participants to consider their own thinking. She observed that there was a playful commitment to keeping everyone on the edge of their thinking and described how our facilitation had let ideas flow. If facilitation is a process where the dynamics of desire lead people astray (Edwards et al., 2021), then our facilitator responses to participant contributions kept moving the affective energy through the group. When Philip and I responded with uncertainty about *our* thinking, we questioned epistemic standing (Logue, 2014). This enabled vulnerability and ignorance to become productive since we were accelerating a queering-playful study of limits and ignorance. The inquiry could then turn away from a position of ignorance as a lack of knowledge and toward an encounter with, as Gilson (2011) and Logue (2014) suggest, vulnerability as open to being affected. Co-trickster facilitation fostered banter-like exchanges to open a space for ignorance to become productive so that the inquiry assemblage could function as a pedagogy of epistemic vulnerability. Sam offered his observation of the effects the brain-picking practice produced:

Sam: It was like 'Hey, I have this question' and someone would go 'Oh that's cool, I've been thinking about this' and that led to another question and another question and another one.

When a question struck a chord, connections were made and there was a cascading effect that gathered momentum. As ideas sparked off each other, our work as facilitators was to keep up with the threads of discussion and to pick up productive questions that might disturb difference. We invented a signal of hand raising to help the assemblage take up some responsibility for tuning discussions. If people thought the questions were getting too far away from where we had begun, they raised their hand, and the energy was redirected. I enjoyed letting a conversation go and would map the questions on the whiteboard without interrupting the flow. Facilitation did not always immediately steer or guide but made space for desiring forces to flow through the assemblage.

Deterritorialising success: anti-discipline desire

One of the tedious aspects of teaching for me was the endless assessments and the focus on achievement. At the time of participating in DIVINQ, most students were in Year 12 or 13, a peak time for measuring success-failure. If I had one hope for DIVINQ, it was to hold a space where competitive achievement and success discourses were muted. Lucy emphasised the effects of not being assessed on her experience of participating:

Lucy: *Everyone's* successful – there's no measure of success in DIVINQ, there's no test, there's no projects you have to do, you're just there because you want to be.

Lucy described DIVINQ's absence of measurable success as a pleasurable shock. Without familiar assessment criteria, she experienced learning as desire that was different to the usual disciplined routines. Cole (2011) argues that children and young people are immersed in systems that drive toward exams or assessment. As facilitators, we used territorialised expectations of meritocratic learning and played tricksters with mock threats of DIVINQ-exams. These prankster position calls were to reassure and confirm DIVINQ as anti-disciplinary, while affirming desire as a key tone of the inquiry space. When I finished classroom teaching, I did not want to do *any* assessment. I was interested to know if this had changed the pedagogical relationship with DIVINQ:

Jeannie: How do you think that helped not having assessment?

> Lucy: Because you are learning for the sake of learning. You're not learning for anything else, and it makes you realise you do like learning.

The encounter with DIVINQ as an assessment-free space supported Lucy to remember and reconnect with the joy of learning that she had forgotten. She remembered that learning was more than meritocratic outcomes or for producing "social capital valued for future exchange" (Brantlinger, 2009, p. 402). For senior students like Lucy, DIVINQ came at a time when learning was saturated with a focus on gaining social capital through exam results. Traditional pedagogical practices such as assessment diminishes the enthusiasm and joy of learning (Cole, 2011). Lucy compared her DIVINQ experience with the effect of other classroom learning:

> Lucy: You don't like learning a lot of the time. You say like 'Oh I've had a long day, it's been hard' about all your other classes and then you get to DIVINQ and it's like 'Yeah, this is great'.

Lucy described the kind of language she might use to express the draining effects where school could be hard work and tiring. Cole (2011) argues that traditional teaching practice subdues the lifeforce of young people, producing boredom, and likens it to a vampire locked into vitality (p. 42). Senior students were more likely to experience boredom and fatigue after many years of repetition of disciplined, assessment-driven learning (in my experience, teachers also lose vitality). Thus, an encounter with learning for "the sake of it" disturbed fatigue and had a *revitalising* affect. A common phrase young people used was "School sucks". To pun the anti-vampire encounter, DIVINQ did not *suck* the lifeforce out of learning. It was a well needed infusion for some young people and for me.

Recruiting desire as productive – affective intensity of curiosity

DIVINQ sessions were spread throughout the year and were sometimes months apart. To keep the vampires at bay, Philip and I invited DIVINQers to notice where difference was discussed or raised in the public forum, such as in the media or in their own lives. They were asked to notice what grabbed their attention, sparked their interest, or fired up strong responses in them. To resist the potential for reterritorialising meritocratic discourses, this informal homework was never checked or assessed. A couple of examples we used at Kōwhai were End of Life Choice legislation and gendered school uniforms:

> Fleur: I would have thought of something on Tuesday and I would be like 'Shit, I've got to remember that'. So, it was a place to get out those questions.

> Holly: I wrote notes in my phone and stuff to bring up throughout the week. I would be like ‘Oh my god, I need to talk about [that]’ [laughs].

Fleur and Holly playfully recounted bursting with a desire to talk and containing their enthusiasm to discuss ideas. There was an anticipation of DIVINQ as a place where they could bring up certain topics and excitement bubbled. When I look back, I can understand why the first few minutes were sometimes frenetic – like floodgates being opened and a torrent of ideas rushing into the room. Deleuzian affective pedagogy sees learning as a rupture or shock in which a body is opened to forces of difference and becoming (Cole, 2011; Duff, 2013; Hickey-Moody, 2009; Semetsky, 2013). When participants experienced moments of shock outside of DIVINQ, they found ways to sustain these forces by writing their ideas down or recording thoughts. This seemed to hold bodies open over time, and when brought to the inquiry, became a stimulus text for discussion. In this way, note-taking might identify the shock tones and the assemblage became a site of shared reprocessing. It echoes Billig’s (2005) concept of laughing about it later, as a form of retelling, which allows people to laugh, reflect and transform ideas together.

As the year progressed, some Kōwhai participants became increasingly affected by issues related to difference. They noticed more and some would burst into my office and ask, “Have you seen this, Jeannie?”. Duff (2013) argues that Deleuze’s ethics of signs supports affective pedagogy “that requires subjects to become more responsive to the sense of signs and events, such that they may accelerate or harness the forces of becoming available within them” (p. 197). DIVINQ sought to increase participants’ sensitivity to signs and, in turn, their adeptness at reading signs of difference differently. Participants desired a space to accelerate and harness the forces available and the assemblage merged the practice of using stimulus texts with Deleuzian affective pedagogy as a space to process sign shocks.

Effect of DIVINQing: energised confusion

Most DIVINQs occurred during lunch time. At the end of a session, the assemblage rapidly disassembled and students returned to class. Participants commented on the reverberations from DIVINQing:

> Fleur: I would come out and be like, ‘What the fuck was that’ and “How am I going to concentrate now”. There were just so many ideas buzzing around in my head.

Fleur recounted the discombobulation DIVINQ produced. The energised reverberations disturbed a return to the kind of thinking needed for classroom learning – or possibly assessments. I recall feeling a similar buzz after DIVINQ meetings and wondered what other teachers thought when participants returned to class unfocussed. A playful affective encounter with thought produced exhilaration:

> Lucy: You leave and you're a bit drained but also refreshed.

Lucy experienced becoming both exhausted and invigorated. The fatigue had a different effect to the vampiric encounters she had described earlier in this chapter. Exhilaration is a unique bodily phenomenon of excited relaxation (Ruch, 1993). Intensive bodily effects of laughter (Ruch, 1993; Yim, 2016) with vitalism of encounters (Cole, 2011) produced affective reverberations of pleasurable fatigue. One of the joys I experienced of facilitating DIVINQ was becoming reinvigorated. However, I was often so engrossed in the process, I would lose track of time:

> Sienna: I just remember we would be so happy then suddenly the bell would ring, and it would end. We would say, [pleading tone] 'Please can we stay, don't make us go to class, we don't want to leave, we want to keep talking'.

Sienna described how the pleasure of DIVINQ's play mode was jarred by the ring of the bell. She experienced the end of the inquiry as a shock and the desire to continue DIVINQing was intense. The joy of play mode was interrupted by the bell and this reminded her of the wider disciplining institution. The bell was a like a vibratory shock reset to serious mode. I recall Sienna and others pleading for the session to keep going and I often contemplated keeping the inquiry going. While there was little transition time, the use of playful protest eased the disassembling and shift to serious mode. The mock protest described by Sienna made one last claim of a preferred pedagogical space before DIVINQers had to return to focussed disciplined learning. When I look back, returning young people to focussed disciplined spaces was an ethical tension. DIVINQing had produced a significant disturbance. On the terms of Foucault (1980), a possible *danger* of DIVINQ was unsettling young people, so they continued to desire and potentially become dissatisfied with vampiric pedagogical practices.

Deterritorialising knowledge-certainty: desiring confusion

One of my main hopes for DIVINQ was to disturb the field of thought supporting humanist concepts. When a new group came together, it took time to disturb the territorialised

relationship with disciplined learning. In my interview with Philip and Sam, I shared an observation:

> Jeannie: I find that they [students] come in really wanting to *get it*. They are so *keen* to get the right answers initially.

I recall the earnest energy of early DIVINQ sessions – there was a lot of enthusiasm about the topic of diversity. However, there was often some reluctance to take risks with thinking and ideas tended to gravitate toward common statements related to legal rights and equality. I often heard phrases such as "Everyone is different therefore, we are all the same". The territory was deeply enfolded with social justice discourses that could take time to unfold. To recall Rajan's statement in Chapter 10, the answers on the surface were safe and could offer a protective position. In "getting diversity right", DIVINQers could take up an ally position so as not to appear to be ignorant, prejudiced, or disrespectful. What I possibly observed was a reterritorialising pull of dominant learning discourses that rewards correct answers that can surreptitiously protect epistemic invulnerability. In the early sessions, young people were understandably hesitant and cautious. A tone of tentativeness and uncertainty circulated. The collective horizontal aspect of the assemblage needed time to form a shared understanding of the process to construct a safe space and to then function as a relaxed inquiry. It reminded me of Adventure-Based Learning contexts. When I worked with a new group, it took time and warm-up activities to develop trust. Philip, Sam, and I discussed the changes we noticed after a few DIVINQ sessions:

> Jeannie: And in the end, they are just like 'Well, I don't get it.'
>
> Sam: And we're like 'Congratulations, you passed.'
>
> All: *We don't get it either* (laughing).
>
> Philip: It [DIVINQ] really is like sense *unmaking*.

Philip, Sam, and I playfully ironised how we might witness-celebrate DIVINQers break free from safe territory and grapple with confusion as an effect of disturbing normative pedagogical patterns of recognition and repetition. Over time, participants became more comfortable with confusion. Biesta (2011) argues that a "pedagogy focusing on exposure and interruption is a pedagogy that may bring about hesitation, an experience of *not knowing* [emphasis added]" (p.

317). Participants' expressions of confusion suggest that DIVINQ had disturbed humanist habits of thought that privileged certainty (Braidotti, 2019). As Kohan asserts, traditional Communities of Inquiry tend to seek modes of thought that emphasise common sense or totalising truths about the world. Our playful validation of confusion as a desirable effect of DIVINQ echoed the type of trickster dynamic we developed and, on the terms of trickster facilitation, demonstrated how our antics could bring new knowledge that valued ignorance (Edwards et al., 2021). Tricksterisms such as this example helped to turn the assemblage by playfully exposing and interrupting common sense or, as Philip described, a process of sense unmaking. Fleur commented on her experience of the interrupting effects:

> Fleur: I'd go in [to DIVINQ] having an opinion one day and then someone would challenge that and I would be like 'Oh shit, now I don't know what to think'. [Jeannie laughing]. 'I've thought this for seventeen years, what do I think now?' I remember being confused, *always*.

Fleur described a sense of shock when her ideas were challenged. Encounters with other peoples' views had cast doubt on previously taken for granted truths that had produced uncertainty. Conversations in DIVINQ exposed young people to other perspectives; encounters with difference disturbed fields of thought that had produced a comfortable certainty. I laughed in ironic acknowledgement of the effects of sense unmaking, since confusion was a desired outcome of DIVINQ and a signal of games of truth being disturbed.

D'Mello and Graesser (2014) propose that confusion occurs when "individuals encounter incongruence in the form of impasses, anomalies, contradictions, disruptions of goals, extreme novelty that cannot be comprehended, and interruptions of organized sequences of actions" (p. 290). To draw on this definition, DIVINQ was a form of confusion-generating assemblage that functioned to produce incongruence with normalised ways of thinking:

> Fleur: DIVINQ was like a blow-your-mind confusion.
>
> Lucy: Like confused with something you think you already know.

Fleur experienced an affective shock of confusion that jolted her understanding. Lucy described confusion as the certainty of knowing something was disturbed. The effect of disturbing knowledge-ignorance was both stimulating *and* perplexing. Deleuzian education practice, according to Cole (2011), is turbulent and creative as it sets values and beliefs against

each other as epiphanies. In tune with D'Mello and Graesser (2014) and Cole (2011), DIVINQ initiated encounters with defamiliarisation that challenged games of truth and problematisations. This produced incongruences that set values and beliefs against each other. Ignorance became productive by exposing assumptions about how things are *known*. However, humanist constructions of dualistic concepts were a potentially reterritorialising force:

> Sienna: With DIVINQ, there's no black and white, and there's the [with enthusiasm] *invitation to believe* that there's no black and white.

Sienna observed how the DIVINQ process disturbed binary thinking *and* troubled dualisms. She experienced delight and surprise at having an opportunity to question the truth of either-or constructions. As St. Pierre (2000) and Braidotti (2019) argue, humanist habits of thought are so normal, they are coded into the thinking and language of everything and construct certain discourses as simply natural or common sense. Thus, black and white thinking, as Sienna put it, was just how things were. As a playful process of defamiliarising, DIVINQing began a process of disentangling from the default of humanism. In the context of philosophy for children, the entanglement of humanism with education sets up the problematic of how to think differently (Biesta, 2011; Kohan, 2014; Vansieleghem, 2005). To draw on the terms of queer theory's study of limits, I propose that DIVINQing disturbed *thinkability*: the *how* of thinking difference. Rajan described his encounter with thinking difference differently using a simile:

> Rajan: It's like a breaking down of, almost like a translucent kind of glass. It's like 'Oh ok, it's not kind of like something on the other side I know is there, but I don't quite get', but more like 'Oh, it's not actually that different at all, it's just another person like any other person around me.'

Rajan emphasised that DIVINQing shifted his perception of difference. The metaphorical glass that DIVINQ had broken down were the opacity of problematisations and games of truth that produced a particular way of thinking difference. This glass had constructed an image of difference that compared similar and different – comparative difference. As this broke down, the ideas shaping the intelligibility of difference-as-*other* (unlike me) were dissipated and alternative discourses became available. Rajan could then, to echo Colebrook (2002), begin to *think difference differently* and tune into an intelligibility that resonated with Deleuzian

difference – difference in of itself (Deleuze, 1994). DIVINQ had retuned Rajan's field of thought that then reshaped his understanding of difference.

A hair-raising conversation

Kōwhai is a single-sex school. This presents an opportunity to explore gender. The media have run a story about a secondary school trying to expel a male student for refusing to cut his hair. As we move from my office to the meeting room next door, Philip, Sam, and I decide this is a great DIVINQ stimulus text.

……

DIVINQers chat and eat lunch. Philip looks at me and we give each other the good-to-go look. Philip addresses the group.

"We found this *hair-raising* article that we'd like to DIVINQ with you."

I place paper copies of the article on the tables. Faces move through a range of perplexity. Conversations spontaneously erupt.

"Oh, I heard about this. Why do schools have rules about hair?"

I grab a whiteboard pen and move toward the board. DIVINQers get phones out and start searching the internet for more information.

"I cannot believe this is happening and *why* is it always boys schools?"

I write up the question and turn, pen poised in my hand. A flurry of questions pours from the group, I scribble-scribe word for word. There is a natural pause in the discussion. Philip addresses the group.

"That's a good list to start with, some pretty *cutting* questions there."

Philip throws a sidewards glance to see if the group caught his pun. They giggle-groan confirming they understand. The discussion starts in familiar territory of school rules, discipline, uniform, and human rights to body autonomy. I catch Philip's eye and he pauses the conversation.

"Philip, I think we could push the concept of what a body is, a bit further."

I draw some stick figures on the board. Some are smaller, some have triangles, and one has four legs. I draw faces and hair on various body parts and at different lengths. I hear chuckling.

"Jeannie, are you trying to draw people and the triangles are girls?"

I smile and gesture in mock satisfaction at the diagrams.

"You are correct. We are an all-triangle school."

There is moment of diversion into shapes and signs that represent genders. Philip quizzically asks.

"Is that me with four legs? It could be if I fall out of my chair."

I grab another pen and scribble another body with wheels. Philip nods his approval. I throw out a new question.

"What does hair mean on different bodies and in different places?"

Questions of gender, age, culture, sexuality and species flow. The conversation turns to a discussion on the meaning of body hair across time. Philip throws in some observations of 1980's musicians. The group start googling 80's bands and there are gasps.

"Wow, you really can't tell what gender people are."
"Did everyone have long hair and a perm in the 80's?"

Philip and I disclose our 80's hairstyles. Photo evidence is requested from the group. We quickly move off that topic. The conversation turns to hair dressing. There is consensus that products and services for women cost more. The cost of haircuts comes up and Sam comments.

"It cost me *so much more* for a haircut when I was girl – it's so much cheaper now."

The room is silent for a moment as people process the piece of information Sam has shared about himself. A student responds in a very deliberate tone.

"Well…that's…. just wrong."

There is a long pause. The shock and opportunity to mock gendered concept of hair products is tuned through Sam's informal outing of himself. Someone else takes up the thread.

"How is that fair, you mean the price of haircuts is based on gender?"

Others join the querying of Sam's new-found male privilege. I leap back up to the board and begin writing, Sam smiles.

"Yeah, I know, because my hair hasn't changed. Well, maybe a little I mean…"

Sam runs his hand over his head.

"I seem to be losing plenty of it."

He chuckles, the group laugh and continue to discuss the wrongness of gendering body parts like hair, nails, skin. We decide it's too expensive to be female – we all quit gender on the spot. The bell interrupts the conversation. Panic crosses the face of a DIVINQer.

"*I don't want to stop talking about this. Don't make me go to class.*"

The group reluctantly pick up bags and saunter toward the door. The student moves under one of the tables, gripping one of the legs as the protest continues.

"I want to DIVINQ for the rest of the day. Philip, stay, Jeannie just mark my attendance. I won't be able to concentrate anyway."

A teacher looks in, three adults sit laughing, a student is under a table, chaos and disorder. Two DIVINQers attempt to drag the lone protester from the room. The group roll out the door and nearly knock a teacher over, who gives a disapproving look. The students have crossed the threshold into disciplined space.

"Sorry miss, we are going to class."

As the teacher leaves, the group turns to the three of us.

"You know it's all your fault if I we can't concentrate and fail our internal assessment."

Philip banters them off to class.

"Sorry for exposing you to 80's fashion. Those images will never leave you."

The group laugh and wave as they blend in with the crowd, someone calls out.

"Still want to see that 80's perm photo, Philip. Thank you, Sam, I'm buying all my products from the men's section now."

Summarising the function of the collective assemblage of DIVINQ

This chapter explored how the collective assemblage (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) of DIVINQ functioned as a queering-affective pedagogical practice. In a posthuman form of leading astray, facilitation *re-tuned and turned* the inquiry away from traditional Community of Inquiry practices and territorialised moral-serious tones. Playful adult interactions unsettled hierarchical relationships and constructed a trickster facilitation relationship. Disciplinary power was dampened, and affective forces of desire were accelerated that disrupted Gently Socratic Inquiry practices. Our energetic questioning approach took young people to the limits

of their thinking. Trickster facilitation produced an epistemically vulnerable assemblage where ignorance and desire became productive. To use Weems' (2019) terms, DIVINQ repositioned people in discursive fields that *retuned* what enabled and/or constrained conversations to construct a *safer-space* to take risks with ideas. DIVINQ's queering-antimethod generated pleasurable confusion. In the absence of formal teaching-learning and meritocratic landmarks such as assessment, participants experienced reinvigorated enthusiasm for learning. However, the jolt of returning to classroom learning was a shock and left some participants in dissonance with disciplined focus.

Chapter 12: Continued reverberations

In this chapter, I explore DIVINQ's influence on participants' ideas and ways of thinking beyond school. Across this chapter, I employ the metaphor of cymatics and other sound-associated metaphors to discuss the impact of DIVINQ on participants beyond their school years. A reverberation is an aspect of sound wave physics that is an effect or impact that resembles an echo (Merriam-Webster, n.d). I analyse ongoing echoes of DIVINQ on problematisations of difference that might reshape how difference enters fields of thought (Foucault, 1984/2014b). This includes potential posthumanist reverberations of the DIVINQ process on the intelligibility of difference. I consider how, as a result of participating in DIVINQ, certain concepts for participants remained disturbed to produce new ways of being in the world.

Chapters 10 and 11 had focussed on the processes and approaches of DIVINQ to produce encounters with difference and to disturb dominant pedagogical practices. If, as Gannon (2006) argues, "[t]he authority for the story begins with the body and memories of the autoethnographic writer at the scene of lived experience" (p. 475), then the scene of DIVINQ provided the autoethnographic account of these chapters. At the time of my research conversations, we were all looking back together at the school experience of DIVINQing. Participants had all left school and were either at university or in other forms of work. In this chapter, I write at the scene of the research interview where, for Rata participants, ten years had passed while Kōwhai participants were one to two years out of school. The research interview was a new assemblage that invoked a sense of reunion. In this chapter, I take a position of looking back on the surprises, disjunctures, and jarring moments (Gannon, 2006) that emerged from the conversations with participants.

In analysing the effects an *un-disciplinin*g practice like DIVINQ may have had on young people's conceptual needs, I employ, with irony, Britzman's (1998) argument that "[a]s a practice and as a discourse, education *intimately disciplines* [emphasis added] the conceptual needs of students and teachers" (p. 80). This chapter attempts to coalesce possible anti-discipline/rebellious undertones that continued to reverberate and disturb concepts such as knowledge, normalisation, truth, and difference. Snaza et al. (2014) state that, "[p]osthumanist thought requires us to reconfigure how we understand politics and "knowledge," reconfigurations that would send shockwaves through educational research and pedagogical

practice *by troubling the humanist concepts* [emphasis added] through which virtually all educational thought has been articulated" (p. 40). If DIVINQ had produced lasting troubling vibrations, this chapter explores how these "shockwaves" might be experienced. Braidotti (2013) argues that the importance of posthumanism is its stance against universality and for an approach to life that engages complexity, multiplicity, and questions of power. In this chapter, I explore how past DIVINQers might take up such a stance in their lives.

Relationship with knowledge

The core of education and pedagogy is to develop knowledge to take into the world (Goodson & Gill, 2014; Murphy, 1996). I was interested in the lingering vibrations of knowledge in young people's lives after they had left school. Connor reflected back on his pre-DIVINQ approach to learning and the troubling effect DIVINQ had on his preference:

> Connor: It [learning] was always very cerebral. If I wanted to tackle difficult topics, I'd pick up a book on religion and things like that. I would think about them from a philosophical or logical argument and try and break it down to very basic steps and have a very *strong* viewpoint that I could then argue with my friends and try and win. That was how I liked to learn things.

Connor's previous position was in perfect harmony with what Duff (2013) and St. Pierre (2017) describe as humanism's cogito that resonates with and through Cartesianism's mind-body dualism. Before DIVINQ, a concept of thinking as an internalised process of analysis, rationality, and reasoning, from which truth could be deducted, was comfortable for Connor. He reflected on this relationship with knowledge that produced an adversarial approach and a win-lose stance in conversations. In this form of a cerebral-cogito position, learning could equip him with knowledge to take an expert-invulnerable stance. Connor reflected on how DIVINQing had disturbed his earlier intellectualised position to learning:

> Connor: I realised [through participating in DIVINQ] what I missed from being exposed to other people and their situation. [DIVINQ] was a really effective way to learn as well, to gain better understanding just by meeting other people and hearing more about them.

DIVINQing had significantly disrupted Connor's prior position that preferred disciplined, academic knowledges. He had developed a preference for what Foucault (1980) defines as

local knowledge through encounters. Connor commented on the strong reverberations of accessing local knowledge that he carried through in the ten years after DIVINQ:

> Connor: It's really my best, the most prominent form of learning I do these days is through travelling and meeting people and just getting a better understanding of the world through other people's experiences.

DIVINQing had amplified the value of local-popular knowledges for Connor that had expanded how he learnt. I had not expected such an effect from such a brief experience. DIVINQ's intensive engagement with difference produced an ongoing desire to seek more exposure. Logue (2014) argues that ignorance is maintained through the types of knowledges and learning experiences that are hidden or *denied as valuable*. For Connor, DIVINQ had legitimised and confirmed the value of learning through encounters. During the interview, I was pleasantly surprised by his revelation of his life becoming enriched from engagement with people.

Connor's account called me back to one of the research interviews with some of the Kōwhai participants who discussed their experience of a philosophy club with a neighbouring boys' school: Matai. In the research interview, their descriptions of their experience that resonated with concepts drawn from "Big P philosophy": mastering techniques of thought and to preserve these as they were (Makaiau & Millar, 2012, p. 9). The club had explored philosophy in an academic tradition that Kōwhai participants described as a place of intellectual sparring. I imagined Connor's pre-DIVINQ self might have resonated strongly with this club's canonical style of philosophical debate. Indeed, Western philosophy is entangled with humanism's binary hierarchies (see Chapter 2) that would have legitimised Connor taking a rational approach. Philosophical inquiry that produces encounters (such as DIVINQ) may access local-subjugated knowledge to support a more adequate understanding of difference.

Unplugging from singular truth: playing games of truth *with* truth

In the research interviews, I had turned to *The Matrix* (Wachowski & Wachowski, 1999) metaphor of "unplugging" by describing DIVINQ as a process to help expose the normative humanistic codes that produce reality. I was interested in whether DIVINQ's "unplugging process" had any lasting effects on their ideas of truth. Holly described grappling with a new relationship with truth after her dualistic concept of true-false had been troubled by DIVINQ. The dominant binary coding of fact-fiction and of subjective-objective was a reterritorialising

encounter that produced a dissonance in humanism's field of thought. Humanist language and concepts did not fit as well to describe the world:

> Holly: I guess the idea of truth, like the responsibility you have to convey a certain truth or not, and thinking are all truths equal to each other. People have different truths they believe in and that's a very weird thing to think about. Like facts can be subjective.

Holly thought about what truth meant and considered the ethics of how she participated in spreading truth. The possibility that there might be multiple truths compared to an absolute continued as an echoing effect. While the DIVINQ process momentarily unsettled rules of truth, humanism fields of thought remained a dominant tone. Thus, for Holly, the various fields of thought that had rippled through each other and which had created waves of uncertainty led to a lingering sense of weirdness. Holly reflected on how a more flexible stance to truth had reverberated in other ways:

> Holly: I think I'm kinder to other people as well. If someone said something to me that was prejudice[d] or something, I wouldn't snap at them. I'd probably be like 'That's kind of weird', I wouldn't get offended because it [DIVINQ] makes you more empathetic.

Holly considered that when she now encountered a different perspective, she had more capacity to hold a space for a conflicting view to hers – even if there was an uncomfortable effect. Empathy was a repositioning effect of disturbing knowledge-ignorance dualism and it made a space for appreciating the limits of thinkability. Thus, when potentially confronted with a discriminatory position, Holly could ride out prejudiced position calls in the moment as "that's kind of weird" – and resist a defensive position. I was interested to understand how DIVINQ had supported Holly to stay open to other perspectives:

> Jeannie: How do you think DIVINQ does that?
>
> Holly: I think when you open yourself up to making mistakes, you're more accepting of other people making mistakes as well, even though you kind of get worn down when people say the same things [about difference] over and over again.

Holly reflected on DIVINQ as place that explored getting things "wrong" as part of the process. She was more aware that people might not be open to other perspectives or willing to adjust their thinking. An effect of becoming vulnerable in DIVINQ had produced a sensitivity to how others might experience vulnerability. Holly appreciated that people might desire to protect themselves from potential shame when their beliefs were challenged. In this way, "making mistakes", as Holly put it, were forms of ignorance (Logue, 2014; Proctor, 2008). Ignorances played different rules within games of truth. Holly read mistakes as a disagreement over the rules. When people took up positions that competed for truth, it took a toll, and she remained affected by what others said. Holly's account resonates with Gilson's (2011) argument that vulnerability as openness to being affected can be both positive and negative. Holly's increased openness led to the positive effects of kindness and empathy, but she also experienced the negative effect of fatigue.

No more taboo territory: taking DIVINQ thinking into the world

The facilitation of DIVINQ reminded me of working in Adventure-Based Learning in terms of producing risk-taking experiences (see Priest, 1990/1999). Both processes produced discomfort and vulnerability as a form of experiential learning. DIVINQ was a similar to Adventure-Based Learning with respect to being a carefully managed space for young people to take risks with ideas. I was interested to know how risk-taking may have continued for participants post-DIVINQ and in what ways:

> Fleur: I'm a lot more willing to talk about anything. There's never anything hard to talk about.

> Namrita: I haven't been afraid to just to open up a discussion about anything.

Fleur and Namrita considered that DIVINQ had reduced their sense of risk and reticence to discuss ideas that were previously difficult to broach. Fleur and Namrita's desire to talk about diversity reverberates with queer theory (Britzman, 1995), which seeks to broaden the limits of thought and which holds that no topic is unbroachable. Braidotti (2019) states that posthuman knowledges promote a desire for adequate understanding. This desire equips people with an increased power to act that is experienced as joy and a renewed desire to know more. Arguably, Fleur and Namrita had experienced a posthuman reverberation in their desire to, and enjoyment in, initiating conversations "about anything". Namrita reflected on why this was important to her:

Namrita: When other people kind of look away and don't want to discuss it, I still want to bring up the discussion. Because DIVINQ taught me there are things that you have to talk about sometimes, to get some sort of a change going on.

Namrita cared about creating change and believed that controversial topics could produce discomfort in other people. To echo Britzman (1995), she was willing to have conversations in places other people could not bear to know. With a newfound capacity to act and a desire to affirmatively change conditions, Namrita had taken up social action as a personal project. Often, social justice discourses promote the idea that large numbers of people or visible public projects (often with media coverage) are necessary to make a meaningful difference. On the terms of Foucault's (1984/2014a) argument that everything is dangerous, while social activism is not necessarily dangerous or bad, I noticed in my conversations with students that smaller social interactions, that could make a significant difference, were all too often minimised or dismissed. Therefore, I was heartened to hear Namrita believe that change was possible from having hard conversations.

Not everyone shared an immediate experience of confidence to continue conversations. At the time of our online interview, Sienna was studying overseas, away from her familiar supportive community:

Sienna: I still felt like it was a little bit scary for me to express those ideas outside DIVINQ; was a little daunting, was a little bit scary.

Jeannie: What was scary?

Sienna: It was just fear of other opinions. But other peoples' opinions are ok, it should have been fine, it shouldn't have mattered. I think I still wanted to be accepted.

Beyond the space of DIVINQ, Sienna hoped to have conversations about difference but was cautions and unsure about how others might respond to the discursive territories DIVINQ had explored. To call on Britzman (1995), Sienna was aware that disability and LGBT+ were differences other people might not bear to know. Thus, Sienna encountered an aporia that produced a contradiction of desires and recognised there was a risk of trying to engage people who might not share an interest in pushing the limits of their thinking about difference. In a complex context of change, Sienna had read the social relationships for signs of safety and prioritised settling into her new environment. I appreciated Sienna's discernment in assessing

her environment and I respected her resulting caution. Sienna's situation, I believe, exemplifies how uncertainty and hesitancy may arise from the ethical tension that results when desire and relational contexts fail to provide conducive conditions for the formation of productive assemblages.

I recall the deep sadness I felt during my interview with Sienna when I heard her describe a sense of isolation. Sienna first met Philip at a student mediation workshop in Year 11 and was the only research participant who had DIVINQed for three years. A Deleuzian ethics of signs, Duff (2013) states, "requires subjects to become more responsive to the sense of signs and events, such that they may accelerate or harness the forces of becoming available within them" (p. 197). On Duff's terms, Sienna had read relational signs as a new university student in another country and was working toward accelerating forces of social connection she might affect and be affected by. The opposite of acceleration is deceleration. To extend Duff's argument, decelerating to slow down and read signs to construct a safe conversational space might also be an important practice.

Thinking and encounters through a retuned concept of normal

St. Pierre (2000) reminds that humanism may be powerful, however, it also produces its own failure by constructing boundaries of consistency and normalcy. DIVINQ had sought to tease apart boundaries, test limits, toy with grids of regularity, and target normalcy. This section explores what humanist concepts might have remained disturbed as a result of such endeavours.

A stimulus text we used in a DIVINQ session at Kōwhai was Philip's music video, *As love draws near* (Patston, 2012, July 6). In this video, Philip exposes how labels are assigned to people and the effects these labels have on assumptions people might make. Lucy reflected on her encounter with this text and its continued reverberations:

> Lucy: It challenged my labels. I wouldn't put them on people but you kind of worry that people are seen in a certain way because of a certain characteristic they have.

The music video troubled Lucy's understanding of language as descriptive of identity categories. Lucy considered that she would resist labels, but she recognised and was concerned that other people would read and reduce identity to physical signs of difference. A lasting resonance of DIVINQ was an ethic of care for how stereotypes can form. Overboe (1999)

states that the physical has become the norm for defining identity – a principle that is explored in Philip's music video. Physical disabilities such as cerebral palsy broadcast strong signals of difference that Lucy was now attuned to and was careful with respect to language. "If everything is both political and dangerous, then we are *ethically bound to pay attention to how we word the world* [emphasis added]" (St. Pierre, 2000, p. 484). Indeed, a potential effect of DIVINQ was the production of a dissonance with humanism's seemingly politically benign relationship with language. Having recognised the potential harm of certain terms, Lucy understood that words *mattered* in shaping the meaning of difference and had taken up an ethic of care in her use of labels.

Participants were in all stages of life after DIVINQ, with some working and others studying. Fleur shared an account of a work situation which involved supporting a young person who had experienced a stroke. She reflected on the influence DIVINQ had on her working relationship:

> Fleur: I don't want to say the word "normal" but everything's normal: no weird stuff, no uncomfortableness, and I think DIVINQ helped with that a lot.

Fleur encountered a dissonance with the meaning of normal and tentatively described being more at ease around difference. She acknowledged that disability-change in function was a part of this young person's experience of life and searched for language to describe the relationship. There was an ethic of care with her use of "normal" that tried to negotiate a de-pathologised position. DIVINQ had disturbed humanism's field of thought that had tuned normal in opposition to abnormal. However, the limits of language are such that people need to use the words currently available to them. Humanism continues to populate language with binary concepts that dominate commonly-used vernacular. I concur with Morris (1991) who argues that the word "normal" would be less problematic and more affirmative if it was associated with "common" (p. 20). Morris' point was made more than thirty years ago and a concept of "normal" remains problematic in its comparative relationship with "abnormal". Within the limits of the language available to her, Fleur articulated a relationship with difference where she could make space for unique function to work:

> Fleur: I know what she needs from me, she knows what she wants from me, and it just works perfectly.

In her description Fleur called the young person she was working with into an agentic position. She did not call on deficit or pathologised discourses that might position her as carer for someone who was vulnerable-at risk of harm. Her view of the relationship was one where she was open to being affected. Vulnerability was mutually beneficial to the working relationship. Thus, the relationship with difference in that unique context was constructed by Fleur as positive and productive. Stagoll (2010, emphasis in original) argues that:

> To think in terms of difference-in-itself means to set the concept aside and focus instead on the singular, and the unique circumstances of its production. Awareness of such specific circumstances means that the notion of some 'thing in general' can be set aside in favour of one's experience of *this* thing, here and now. (p. 76)

Fleur's description of the relationship attempted to put the effects of the stroke as disability aside. She identified the here and now as the working relationship that brought together their unique circumstances in a support-type arrangement. Although this analysis is limited by the absence of the young persons' voice in the relationship, Fleur's comment attends to a desire to reposition a carer position that might not other the young person.

Rata participants had only one year of DIVINQ, which was our first year as co-facilitators during which I was still working my way into a trickster facilitator position. The only shared text between Rata and Kōwhai was *The Matrix* (Wachowski & Wachowski, 1999) since Philip had yet to produce his music video *As love draws near* (Patston, 2012, July 6). Rajan and Connor reflected on DIVINQ's troubling of "normal", despite their shorter experience of DIVINQ:

> Rajan: I think for me the shifting was more around, normal ideas like different sexual orientations and sort of ideas around disability. I already knew and was kind of comfortable with that sort of stuff, but I think it really helped normalise it.

While Rajan was comfortable with LGBT+ and disability before DIVINQ, the process disrupted the concept of "normal" with which he was familiar. A humanist field of thought problematises LGBT+ and disability as "abnormal". "Concepts are centers of vibrations, each in itself and everyone in relation to the others. This is why they all resonate rather than cohere or correspond with each other" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994, p. 23). To build on this sound

metaphor, DIVINQ had retuned conceptual fields so that the concept of normal had a wider range of resonance. Connor echoed Rajan and reflected on the effect of DIVINQ on his world view:

> Connor: What I would want to say about it is I was 'I'm normal in my universe' and [DIVINQ] just kind of branched out what normal was for me – how we would be a lot more open to a wider sense of normal.

Connor considered his view of normal had been narrow. His previous default knowledges had kept the concept in a humanist universe that constrained the field of thought for what normal could be. He had been tuned into a narrow bandwidth of meaning. Kennedy and Kennedy (1994) argue that concepts not only work *within* fields of thought; concepts with ethical implications also produce ideas of how the world *should* work. "Normal" is a significant ethical concept that, once disturbed, changes perspectives of how the world should work. Queer pedagogy, Britzman (1998) argues, worries about and unsettles normalacy's immanent exclusions. On these terms DIVINQ's queering exploration of exclusions, and in particular, disability's consistent exclusion, had expanded the conceptual bandwidth of "normal" as a concept.

Identity: Change as ongoing becomings

People can become disabled at any time, and we all change function over time. Yet, as Philip had described in Chapter 5, most people do not want to talk about disability or even *think* about the possibility it might be something they experience in their life. A thought experiment activity we ran at Kōwhai provoked an encounter with the problematisation of disability by imagining life with changes in function. I was interested to understand if pathologising discourses had dissipated and what discourses might now shape an image of disability. I called back to the activity in the interview:

> Jeannie: Has [DIVINQ] changed how you would think about changes in function for yourselves? If you suddenly woke up tomorrow disabled for example [in reference to the activity].

> Holly: I think if I did become disabled, I would probably be like 'This isn't the worst thing that could ever happen to me'.

For Holly, the possibility of changing body function was not dominated by an idea of loss. Discourses that had shaped a deficit concept of disability had remained troubled for her. Fear of becoming disabled is deeply entangled with the normative image of body and life. Holly identified what meanings of disability were now available to her following a disentanglement from predominant notions of deficit:

> Holly: I would just be like, 'This is something that I'm going to adapt to and it's just going to be different'. Because people *catastrophise* being different, but it's just another way.

Holly described an alternative position of disability as becoming different and imagined she might resist normative games of truth that offered a position of loss or tragedy. "One of the effects of the presumed understanding of vulnerability as susceptibility to harm is that *vulnerability is often disavowed* [emphasis added]" (Gilson, 2011, p. 312). After experiencing an *avowing* of vulnerability (the DIVINQ activity), an image of becoming disabled was less saturated with pathologising discourses. The normative image of disability as a life of suffering had lost coherence. The activity circulated alternative discourses that retuned the intelligibility of a change in function (disability) to reverberate with a more positive sense of difference. Rules of truth games that had played the meaning of becoming disabled as being at risk of harm, defenceless, dependent, and *different to others* were now questionable. The gravity and heaviness of abjectivity had weakened. To borrow Holly's words, the constellation of "catastrophise" lost shape and made way for "just another way" to form.

Valuing encounters: tuning into subjugated knowledges

When Sam joined DIVINQ at Kōwhai, gender diversity was an addition to the materiality of difference in the assemblage. Lucy recalled the significance of meeting Sam through DIVINQ and the effect of her encounter with transgender lived experiences. She commented on how this created intense reverberations on her desire to keep learning and exploring her understanding of difference:

> Lucy: I feel like I know more and because of that I sought out a lot more information.

A lingering tone of epistemic vulnerability attuned Lucy to consider that there was more to learn, reflecting that a shift in limits of knowledge-ignorance had taken place. Logue (2014) argues that people can over-estimate their knowledge: "we view ourselves (and our closed communities) as epistemically superior, as more knowledgeable than we actually are, which

carries with it a feeling of false superiority and a sense of having power over others" (p. 59). Lucy resisted a position of superiority that knowing more might offer and she had a renewed desire to go on knowing more *and better* (Braidotti, 2019). Lucy described how DIVINQ had encouraged her to engage with alternative sources of knowledge:

> Lucy: It [DIVINQ] opens up other avenues for learning. Finding stuff online. Following transgender people on YouTube and learning about their lives.

Like Connor, Lucy suggested that DIVINQ had opened her to subjugated knowledges, that Foucault (1980) defines as local, popular, or indigenous knowledges that are denied space to perform. DIVINQ had produced a space where Sam's local knowledge of transgender experiences had amplified and extended to other forms of encounters, such as social media. Holly expressed similar ideas with respect to being more open to encounter difference:

> Holly: You're afraid to expose yourself to different people [before DIVINQ]. Because you're exposed to that, it totally changes how you view people and then it's like 'Oh, this is alright'.

Encounters with difference in DIVINQ had provided an opportunity to work through the shock and become composed. As a form of Deleuzian affective pedagogy, DIVINQ constructed a space to become affected. In a relaxed composure process, discourses that supported normative constellations of intelligibility (abject-other) had a reduced intensity. Post-DIVINQ, a position of vulnerability as open to being affected by others produced a desire to keep tuning into sources of local knowledge. The implication here is that a process such as DIVINQ may do more than just support composure; it could actually increase the desire to develop a more adequate understanding through engagement with others.

Maintaining a sensitivity to normative defaults

In the research interview, Holly, Fleur and Lucy discussed *The Matrix* (Wachowski & Wachowski, 1999) and the idea of questioning reality. I asked if that had continued after leaving school. Holly described how the process helped her to "wake up" and see normative constructions of gender and sexuality:

> Holly: I think about it a lot because I'm studying film, the treatment of women and LGBT people in media. All that [DIVINQ] stuff makes you think about why

> things are the way they are, as opposed to just doing that. I feel like if I wasn't in DIVINQ, I would probably buy into that sort of stuff.

Holly reflected on the subtleties of normalisation that she now noticed in media content. DIVINQs "unplugging" inquiry process had succeeded in defamiliarising her humanist habits of thought. DIVINQ had made visible the discursive codes that were otherwise naturalised and, thus, rendered invisible and normal. Holly extended her own thought experiment and speculated how her thinking might be different had she "taken the blue pill":

> Holly: I would just be like 'Whatever…I'll put male protagonists in everything because that's just easier for people and that's not true, you can put anyone in a film and people will like it. It's just…
>
> Lucy: A default.

Holly speculated that she would have reproduced what was *familiar* gender norms and simply gone along with what seemed to work. Humanism is not wrong, St Pierre (2000) states, but is so deeply entangled with everyday existence, it is difficult to identify. Lucy similarly offers the idea of a default that speaks to the pervasive invisibility of normalisation. Her astute observation is exciting in exemplifying the possibility that young people can recognise and resist grids of intelligibility just after leaving high school. While many other teachers and curriculum areas do push students to critically evaluate stereotypes, and these efforts should be acknowledged, DIVINQ is novel in its conscious endeavour to take up a posthumanist process of defamiliarisation in its bid to make visible gravitational forces of dominant discourses that shape intelligible identity constellations such as gender norms.

Desiring DIVINQ: ethical dilemmas of producing a safer space

During the research interviews, some participants shared what was happening for them in their current lives. Rachael expressed a desire to DIVINQ identity:

> Rachael: I know I've had a real struggle lately around identity and thought 'I wish I could get back in that room.'

Rachael was experiencing an encounter with difference *of* selves that drew her to reflect on DIVINQ. I suggest that Rachael's comment calls back to her experience of DIVINQ as a safer space to explore difference that she had come to appreciate. If a posthuman concept of self-

identity is formed in discourses of subjectivity, then struggles with identity could be expected when normative grids of intelligibility are disturbed. At the time of the interview, it was hard for me to hear that Rachael had been struggling. When I look back, I recognise there are ethical implications of losing access to spaces such as DIVINQ that are experienced as safe to explore identity.

Sienna was studying in the United States at the time of our interview. She reflected on being away from home and the complexity of adjusting to college life and new relationships:

> Sienna: It's [DIVINQ] changed life in the sense that I don't need to get caught up in the little things. But I also feel like there's an element of loneliness in that as well because not everyone thinks about those things. Sometimes you just want to have a conversation about something along those lines. Something a little more under the surface.

Sienna considered that DIVINQ had influenced what mattered to her and had, in some way, reoriented what she prioritised. Sienna noticed that she missed the opportunity to maintain DIVING thinking practices and, although she wanted to keep exploring ideas, had yet to find others who might share a similar desire to explore difference. During the interview, there was an echo of DIVINQing where I called on irony to acknowledge the troubling effects and Sienna caught my position call and playfully hit back:

> Jeannie: Is it like a sense of alienation because you've got that level of thinking, because you've exited The Matrix and you're back in it?

I called on the unplugged/exit metaphor that we had used in DIVINQ to explore the idea that humanism is difficult to see from the inside/when plugged in. When someone who has been unplugged plugs back in, they *know* that the world is a simulation, and everything is constructed from codes:

> Sienna: I feel different because of that, do you know what I mean?
>
> Jeannie [said with ironic tone]: Yeah, *sorry* [both laughing].
>
> Sienna: Yeah, *fuck you* [laughing].

Our playful interaction reconnected with trickster tones and suspended formality that called back to DIVINQs rebellious subversion of authority. This created a remembering together that acknowledged the new context of our relationship constructed through the interview assemblage. The exchange acknowledged that DIVINQ had an effect on Sienna's relationship with normative codes, that retuned how she plugged back into a Humanist Matrix. Given that I had hoped DIVINQ would have an impact on people, my "apology" to Sienna was anything but contrite. Instead, my mock apology recognised the success of DIVINQ (feeling different) and called that into evidence as I was not really "sorry" that Sienna had changed. Sienna read my trickster invitation and joined an ironicising extension to blame me for becoming different (but not really). It was a moment that brought into shape Braidotti's (2019) argument that no process of consciousness- raising is ever painless. According to Edwards et al. (2021), trickster facilitation should move people through liminality so that they can then reintegrate. A danger of staying in liminality is that people can be cast adrift from social conventions. Indeed, as Edwards et al. (2021) would see it, DIVINQ did not promote a reintegration process so that participants like Sienna *continued* to encounter moments of precariousness, doubt, and uncertainty.

Despite being isolated, Sienna remained enthusiastic about DIVINQ-type ideas. She shared her ideas of ways to stay connected with DIVINQ practices:

> Sienna: You don't need to have other conversations with other people you can just do it by yourself, you can write it down, you can do what you need to do it doesn't matter about the environment.

Sienna explored ways to construct what Braidotti (2019) describes as transversal assemblages: collective ensembles that can support groups to come together, based on affirmative politics and ethical relations. A possible reterritorialising concept of humanism that may be at work here is that of self-reliance and independence, both of which recapture the idea of work on the self (Foucault, 1997a) as an ethical obligation. Thus, DIVINQ might reproduce such an obligation to develop resilience on humanist terms, where diversity conversations could be taken up as a technique for self-improvement. Sienna's comment also poses a question about how a *community* interested in ongoing defamiliarising inquiry might work beyond being in the same room together. I suggest that transversal assemblages could recruit a variety of objects and technologies to sustain communities such as DIVINQ.

Reterritorialisations: plugging back into the Humanist Matrix

The research interviews were assemblages that both produced data and accelerated affective forces of remembering DIVINQ. The Matrix metaphor was picked up in conversations, often toward the end of interviews, as participants reflected on their current life situations. I have placed a series of quotes from the interview with Lucy into two columns beside each other to intensify the reverberations:

Lucy: I've regressed. Being back here has made me think it's super easy to be caught up in 'This is the top job, this is what you're striving for'. Jeannie: It's 'the matrix'? [laughs]. Lucy: The matrix**,** I'm plugged back in [laughing] I've left high school and I'm *right back in into it*. It's kind of nuts.	Lucy: Coming back here has brought up a whole lot of stuff. I haven't questioned the matrix in a long time [all laugh] and I should think about it more. Jeannie: Go home and take that red pill [all cracking up]. Lucy: Rethink what I'm doing, why am I doing it. Why do we all want these things because you just get out of high school and everything's to do with your career and you just get sucked in again.

Lucy reflected on the realisation that she had become recaptured (reterritorialised) by normative measures of success that produced an image of a successful, good life. She observed with irony how imperceptible the process had been that it had slipped her awareness. DIVINQ had only temporarily unplugged Lucy from humanist habits of thought. New institutional practices (university) and societal discourses had reterritorialised Lucy's thinking. Beyond secondary school, the gravity of meritocratic discourses and possible neo-liberalism had recaptured concepts of success and worth. The research interviews became pop-up transversal assemblages that reconnected and revitalised DIVINQ ideas. These were moments of reverberation with DIVINQ that held reterritorialising lightly together: we were, on Billig's (2005) terms, laughing about it later. Across the interviews, I had noticed that we frequently looked back with humour. A posthuman subjectivity might find joy in catching out moments of becoming swept up in the seriousness of life, not as a form of work-on-the-self (Foucault, 1997a), but in recognition of competing desires at work in the process of becoming.

Bringing together the work of this chapter

Echoes of DIVINQ, rippled in participants' lives that retuned their relationship with difference. Participants had developed a sensitivity to humanism's codes and could see how the humanist

matrix constructed normative ideas that worked to reterritorialise concepts. Key concepts that shaped difference and which remained troubled were truth, knowledge, and normal. For participants, a retuned awareness of the positioning effects of language-labels had produced a cautious approach and a concept of difference that was no longer firmly held in deficit-pathologising problematisations. Dominant discourses were less able to shape intelligible constellations of abject-other with respect to LGBT+ and disability. To echo Colebrook (2002), there was capacity to think difference differently. Participants maintained a desire to develop their understanding of diversity that valued encounters to access local knowledge as they were more open to being affected by others. While some had confidence to take new ways of thinking and ideas into the world, others oscillated with uncertainty with respect to ways of forming transversal assemblages to access supportive communities. This is a potential ethical implication of DIVINQ's trickster facilitation: the transition process beyond the DIVINQ space currently lacks opportunities to connect with other emergent posthuman thinkers.

Chapter 13: DIVINQ's queering-posthuman potential

The aim of this project was to theorise DIVINQ as a practice so it might become intelligible in a landscape of queer-posthuman pedagogy and a future-oriented education context. The discussion coalesces the findings through the research questions. The main research question I began with was: In what ways might the specific inquiry practices of DIVINQ help to describe a posthuman, queer pedagogy? St. Pierre (2017) states that a Deleuzian goal of philosophy "is to experiment with the flows of destratification on the strata and to *tip the machinic assemblage* toward the plane of immanence, toward pure difference and possibilities for the new" (p. 693). The focus of the following discussion is how DIVINQ functioned as a form of philosophical inquiry assemblage that deterritorialised humanism's dominant field of thought and its effects on the accessibility, or not, of alternative queer-posthumanist fields in education. That is, I explore the practices that *tipped* DIVINQ toward alternative queer-posthumanist possibilities for new concepts of difference. The discussion is guided by the overarching Deleuzian concept of assemblages and is arranged in three sections.

In the first section, I explore the context out of which DIVINQ arose, that is, the stratified territory of institutional practices, and experiences of being "plugged in" to these. I identify the effects of normalised pedagogical practices on what knowledge is available to circulate. I describe the common organisational structures and teaching practices that contoured the territory that operate invisibly to shape young peoples' understanding of difference as negative and indeed "morally objectionable" (Eriksen, 2021, p. 15). A key focus of my argument is how humour and laughter, on these strata, function as a territorialising form of disciplinary power, as form of surveillance or normalising gaze. That is, I explore how assemblages are put together and function in such ways that constrain philosophical aspects of humour becoming accessible.

In the second section, I turn to the process that formed and produced a queer-posthuman community of inquiry assemblage. I explore the ways humour and laughter were deployed *to turn* or rotate the assemblage away from serious-disciplined practices and disturb the encounter with difference. A key aspect of this section is the exploration of trickster facilitation that emerged to guide inquiry, as tipping techniques that turn away from traditional communities of inquiry facilitation. This section explores how DIVINQ functioned as a Deleuzian affective pedagogy to produce epistemic vulnerability (Logue, 2014). The

discussion covers how the assemblage turned away from seeking to produce epistemic invulnerability.

In the third section I attend to the effects for DIVINQ participants on their lives beyond school and the effects of an iterative plugging back into humanist codes – reterritorialising ideas. I explore how the disturbances made by DIVINQ might demonstrate an emergent posthuman subjectivity through the ideas and knowledges the DIVINQ participants took with them into the world. I call on sound, the metaphor of cymatics (Jenny, 1967/2001), to describe how this subjectivity might oscillate between fields of thought. Through the discussion, I examine how principles of future-oriented education could be imaged through a queering-posthuman practice such as DIVINQ.

Learning about difference through The Humanist Matrix

This research project emerged from a concern I had for how young people were learning about difference both through formal pedagogy, such as planned teaching curriculum content, and informally through experiences and interactions with other(s). The research provided more evidence of territorialising practices that have ongoing effects for knowing/understanding difference in secondary schools.

In the analysis of Chapter 9, I showed that young people noticed that their understanding of diversity and difference had been imperceptibly shaped by the everyday school environment. Through their participation in DIVINQ, this shaping was made visible. An informal pedagogy of institutional structures such as special needs units, single-sex education, and streaming or ability grouping produces a lack of exposure to difference. Formal pedagogy, such as curriculum content and teaching practices, structures learning about sexuality that reinforces concepts of risk and responsibility. In this territory, difference remains firmly positioned as morally objectionable. Both adults and young people are *plugged-into* performing good learning and professionalism in ways that carefully manage difference.

Effects of dividing practices

In the field of inclusive education there is considerable research of the effects of dividing practices on young people identified as disabled, their identity, and their experience of school (see Armstrong, 2003; Booth, 1987; Brantlinger, 2004, 2006, 2009; Youdell, 2006b). This thesis explores the broader effects of such practices on the intelligibility of disability. To put it another way, it covers the effects of institutional practice on the knowability of disability.

The analysis of findings suggests that dividing/spatialising practices operate as an invisible informal pedagogy. Participants recalled experiencing the effects of spatialising/dividing practices in a variety of ways. An expected positioning effect of being assigned disabled labels is that identity becomes captured by deficit discourses (see Armstrong, 2003; Booth, 1987) which positions disabled young people as vulnerable and at risk of harm. An overprotective institutional gaze subjects students with physical disabilities such as cerebral palsy to extra surveillance and monitoring. This could be, as Overboe (1999) argues, connected to the corporeality of bodies being read as vulnerable and requiring intervention from non-disabled. Disabled young peoples' identity are effectively assigned an abnormal subject position in what is considered an inclusive, mainstreamed environment. As Philip explained of his own experiences, disabled young people have no choice in the assignment of labels (Brantlinger, 2009) and this impacts on their ability to access alternative, agentic identity positions (Fuss, 1995). This thesis makes an argument that while it is important to ensure all students have access to education, the density of pathologising discourses constrains the meaning of difference available in school. This constraint affects how disabled students become intelligible to their peers and teachers.

Both secondary schools involved in the study, Kōwhai and Rata, used obfuscation practices to hide difference, including internal discourses (Foucault, 1976) that normalise routines to acknowledge and celebrate diversity. For example, the analysis of findings showed that participants from Rata recognised the cultural diversity of the school but could *not see* other diversity before DIVINQ. The common concept of diversity arises from and resonates within a humanistic field of thought, which in practice informs an understanding of diversity as cultural, morally neutral, and easily celebrated, while simultaneously constructing LGBT+ and disability as morally questionable (Eriksen, 2006). The overall impact of this on daily school routines was the reduction of students' encounters with otherness that was not cultural and thereby opportunities to broaden their understanding of diversity, from exposure *to* difference. Thus, dividing practices not only firmly affix difference as morally objectionable but *tune* a conceptual field to resonate positively with concepts of cultural difference. This thesis argues that dividing practices such as streaming supported by techno-meritocratic discourses function to produce a territorialised, dualistic concept of difference as abnormal. Thus, the pedagogical effect on understanding difference remains captured by an unspoken fear of disability and LGBT+ that is naturalised and thus rendered invisible.

Pedagogical territorialisation: biomedical power-knowledge through heteronormative discourses

This thesis has focussed on the teaching of health education as a key site of formal pedagogy related to sex-sexuality. This study's findings showed how in health class, participants experienced repetition of content that focussed learning outcomes on managing their bodies and taking responsibility for their personal health. The affective tone generated through such assemblages is serious. Classroom teaching content preferred expert sources of biomedical bodies of knowledge to inform knowledge of bodies that calls on biological, medical, gendered, psychological, moral, and developmental discourses. Sex and sexuality are problematised through "plumbing and prevention discourses" (Lenskyj, 1990) that emphasise developing the right-true knowledge to take responsibility and to manage risks. However, my analysis showed that young people reported that they were continually repositioned as ignorant and *not knowing enough*. This thesis makes an argument that dominant learning assemblages tend to silence young people's *bodies of knowledge* and they are therefore unable to perform adequately and reproduce a concept of ignorance as lacking knowledge. The repetition of discourses of hygiene and risk silenced student knowledges and muted enthusiasm to learn. A *danger* (Foucault, 1984/2014a) of these approaches to teaching sex-sexuality is the ongoing stratification-reproduction of sex-sexuality as a site of dis-ease for both young people and teachers.

Analysis in Chapter 9 showed that certain, common classroom activities used in health education are structured to navigate the general societal taboo territory of sex-sexuality. These attempt to construct a *safe place* to discuss sexuality. While these activities were instructive in terms of supporting learning care-of-self practices, participants reported experiencing awkwardness. An unintended and somewhat ironic effect of safe-space practice is a reification of shame and embarrassment that breaks out as laughter. When awkward tension is released through laughter, this positions students as immature. This thesis proposes that in traditional health class assemblages, humour and laughter are read by teachers as a loss of self-discipline and a sign of disrespect. This reading produces an awkward tension wherein surveillance and disciplinary responses are deployed to re-establish a serious, focussed learning space.

The analysis showed that when LGBT+ identities are discussed in health classes, they are captured by discourses that support self-acceptance and commitment to an identity to become well adjusted (Talburt, 2004). This thesis argues that regardless of the skills, intentions or

desire to teach curriculum content differently, both formal and informal pedagogical assemblages in health classes (re)produce games of truth that position young LGBT+ people as vulnerable and at risk of harm, and problematise sex and sexuality as private experiences for which one is personally responsible.

Professional positions of response-ability: functioning inside The Matrix

In the territory described above, all adults are positioned in various roles of responsibility. Professional practice is constrained by expectations of accountability for meeting the identified learning needs of young people. The changing assemblages I myself was "plugged into" throughout my career functioned to produce young people to become confident, connected, lifelong learners with a strong identity (NZC, 2007). As a classroom teacher, my practice was oriented through what Britzman (1995) refers to as discourses of inclusion, that call on two strategies: techniques to change attitudes and providing information. As a counsellor, I was plugged into mental health hygiene and developmental discourses to support students to manage distress and develop a strong identity. A concept of individual agency that valued and promoted resilience as growth in capacity to manage change focussed my role on individual needs. This thesis makes an argument that pedagogical assemblages operating through a humanist field of thought continue to reproduce positions of response-ability by constructing ignorance as lacking knowledge and in relation with a binary of privileging expert-scientific knowledge. Developmental discourses and disciplinary power intensify a normative gaze that expects students to perform in ways that demonstrate serious maturity.

Humour and laughter: recruited to discipline and work as surveillance

Health education and especially sex and sexuality topics are complex material-discursive spaces. The analysis found that while humour-laughter might release awkward tension and reduce discomfort, the horizontal arrangement of traditional classroom assemblages relies on teachers' abilities to navigate the positioning effects of discourses that produce humour-laughter. Teachers are responsible for ensuring a safe learning environment. This thesis proposes that there is potential harm/danger in encouraging humour in classroom contexts since ideological positivism and positive psychology (Billig, 2005) can recruit humour as a form of work on the self. The *danger* of ideological positivism is that young people are expected to learn how to take a joke. This position has significant implications for classrooms where students could be encouraged by teachers adopting an ideologically positivist-positive psychology stance to *laugh off* homophobic, transphobic, dysfunction-phobic jokes, thereby

constructing assemblages that reify stereotypes and assumptions – even if these jokes are not directed at individuals.

Bringing section one together

This thesis argues that professional practice in schools is located and constrained by entangled fields of expert knowledge. Pedagogical assemblages that operate in such a stratified-territorialised environment use discourses of difference to uphold normative grids of intelligibility of identity and steer practice toward developing confident, strong identities. A *danger* of assemblages working in this territory is the privileging of disciplined knowledges forming strategic unknowns (Gilson, 2011; Logue, 2014) that remain uninterrogated. A strong knowledge-ignorance dualism functions to limit the *thinkability* of difference and negates the potential productiveness of ignorance. Ideas remain captured in Western dualisms that construct binary conceptual codes and a pervasive pedagogical tone of serious invulnerability prevails.

DIVINQ: the construction and functioning of a new assemblage

Kohan (2014) has suggested that philosophical inquiry in schools does not need to be abandoned to escape traditional Western ideals of what it means to think, but it needs to be restructured through other practices to form an "antimethod" (p. 92). DIVINQ resonates with Kohan's suggestion as a restructuring assemblage that uses humour and laughter to "experiment with flows of destratification" (St. Pierre, 2017, p. 693) and tip conversations away from serious-moral territory.

To move queer and posthuman thinking through a Community of Inquiry required, as a first step, rearranging traditional philosophy for children and classroom teaching practices. Research participants identified how the insider position of my role as counsellor/teacher produced an expected "teacher authority" that constructed an assumed hierarchical relationship. This project found that young people noticed the effect of using objects and rooms differently in DIVINQ and they were conscious of how this changed their experience of a relational space. Surreptitious and strategic repositioning performances such as badge removal, watching the film *The Matrix* (Wachowski & Wachowski, 1999), using adults' first names, and sitting in a circle dis-located institutional identity and disrupted familiar formal classroom practices. These performances initiated a deformalised experience of space and deterritorialised disciplinary power. The rearrangement of bodies and objects constructed a

new space. This thesis proposes that DIVINQ's queering-posthumanist inquiry began with the forming of an assemblage. The process of forming invited students to join in an alternative relational and conversational space where institutional hierarchies were suspended.

To escape the territory described in the first section, DIVINQ used encounters *with* difference and humour to trouble the naturalised fear of abject otherness. The process took up a form of Community of Inquiry that focussed on questioning *problematisations* of difference and discussions explored how these problematisations tune the intelligibility of disability and LGBT+. The assemblage reorganised some key aspects of traditional philosophy for/with children. DIVINQ employed common Community of Inquiry practices such as using a stimulus text and developing questions to explore ideas (see Jackson 2001; Makaiau, 2015). The process turned through the role of facilitators and the use of humour-laughter to access queering-posthuman thinking. The trickster qualities of the facilitation approach was the key to DIVINQ *turning away* from territorialised ideas. Traditional Community of Inquiry facilitation works with a level of restraint and trains young people to eventually run the inquiry (Kennedy, 2004) by encouraging the development of good thinking tools (Jackson, 2001). DIVINQ's facilitation disturbed traditional philosophical thinking skills by initiating thought through affective encounters: shocks. An experimental style of trickster facilitation worked with humour and laughter to jolt thinking out of common sense that informs normative territorialised ideas. Humour-laughter was strategically deployed to break free of Western rationalism to access uncommon sense. As such, trickster facilitation is a *key* aspect for tuning DIVINQ's *antimethod* (Kohan, 2014) inquiry practice.

Trickster co-facilitation: producing an in-between space

Tricksters are outsiders, brokers of anti-structure who are creative provokers of ideas (Edwards et al, 2021; Weaver & Mora, 2016). This thesis proposes that for adult-professionals working in a school context, becoming a trickster requires actively disturbing institutional disciplinary power to move adult privilege to the margins by becoming outsiders who work on the inside of. The analyses within Chapters 9 and 10 illustrated how facilitator performances worked differently from both traditional teaching and Communities of Inquiry. My playful protest at DIVINQ resisted the institutional-adult-insider position and negotiated a new, outsider position that was not counselling, teaching, or traditional facilitation of Communities of Inquiry. The analysis in Chapter 8 highlights how Philip's unique function/materiality positioned him as other and away from a normative image of human. Humanism's grids of

intelligibility produced his identity on the margins. Throughout his life, Philip had experimented with repositioning his subjectivity and exploring ways to resist the problematisation of disability. This thesis proposes that Philip's *bodies of knowledge* included posthumanist concepts that developed through encounters with others' responses to his difference, and his formal training. In becoming a professional trickster as a stand-up comedian, he had encountered an ethical dilemma of humour in stand-up assemblages – "talking shit *for* laughs". This dilemma contrasted with other professional facilitation assemblages where he encountered impasses of using humour to explore ideas related to disability and diversity. The dilemma formed around an expectation that normalised disability as tragic so that, as a facilitator, he should "talk serious, *forget* laughs". This thesis makes an argument for DIVINQ as an assemblage that uses humour to reposition adults alongside young people. From this position, a co-trickster facilitation relationship constructs a liminal inquiry space that can traverse taboo territory – where laughing *and* thinking are possible.

When participants first met Philip, they had experienced uncertainty and discomfort. DIVINQ made use of the affective tension produced by the normative-disciplinary gaze monitoring social codes of respectful behaviour and the encounter with difference. Philip's use of humour changed the affective shock and operated similarly to stand-up comedy's negotiation of a dialogical space by testing for participants' readiness to *unplug* from the territorialised terrain of morality, rights, and vulnerability that produce a deficit-pathologised discourses of disability. A vital element to the queering-posthuman aspect of DIVINQ is the employment of humour to re-tune the intensity of an encounter with disability. That is, as ironic humour plays with language, this disrupts dominant discourses and disciplinary power, producing a new space where participants feel more at ease, relaxed, and open to an encounter with difference, enabling composure to become possible. In particular, Philip's humour in the DIVINQ assemblage both troubled dehumanising discourses and moved him into an intelligible humanised position as a facilitator.

This project showed that young people understand that social injustice and discrimination exist and has effects on lives. They are aware of dominant discourses that produce ideas of hardship and vulnerability with respect to disability. If assemblages function between zones of territorialisation and deterritorialisation (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987), then DIVINQ recruits humour-laughter to resist territorialised ideas that, by calling on deficit discourses and moral virtues, could position Philip as inspirational. Co-facilitation through humour turned DIVINQ

away from normalising/naturalising fear of difference that draws on a concept of vulnerability as being at risk of harm. That is, DIVINQ's humoured facilitation intentionally turned away from mobilising vulnerability discourses that might support the objectification of disability to develop empathy and concern (see Morris, 1991; Shildrick, 2002). This thesis makes an argument that the "backgrounding technical knowledge" (Kennedy, 2004, p. 755) needed to facilitate such a queering turn with humour requires reading the positioning effects of problematisations and games of truth being played in each moment – the reading-the-room skill Rajan had spoken of in Chapter 10. In DIVINQ, trickster facilitation deploys humour to disturb what Gordon (2010) has described as "gloomy morality" (p. 740) tones that tune into at-risk-of-harm discourses.

Use of rebellious humour and irony as ethical deployment

One of the main questions I had when I began this doctoral study was how humour operates through DIVINQ and how it functions differently in terms of producing queering-posthuman pedagogical effects. The analysis of findings showed that young people identified Philip's trickster skills from comedy as significant for both provoking ideas about difference while easing uncertainty and fear of asking questions. While comedy and philosophy might have commonalities (Morreall, 2009), this thesis proposes that the DIVINQ assemblage harmonised Philip's facilitation and comedy experience with the philosophical qualities of humour to produce a space where participants experienced a pleasurable shock/surprise of talking-difference-lightly. The type of humour DIVINQ deployed invited them to think more deeply.

DIVINQ calls on rebellious humour (Billig, 2005) that focusses on systems of power, most often in the forms of ironic and reflective humour (Rose, 2007). Such examples include laughing at uniform rules and the gendered construction of hair products. These forms of humour externalise problems (White, 2007) by moving the focus of discussion to the systemic construction of difference. By exploring problematisations and by playing games *with* truth, these troubling processes produce conceptual incongruity through sudden discursive shifts in meaning – thus disrupting *access* to common sense, sometimes accidentally through puns (for example, voluntary "youth in Asia"). This thesis makes an argument that through DIVINQ, humour becomes a posthuman practice of *defamiliarisation* (Braidotti, 2019) when plugged into the inquiry assemblage by encouraging the questioning of *humanist habits of thought* (Braidotti, 2019).

The analysis found that young people identified the affects and effect of laughter as a defining aspect of DIVINQ. They described how laughing together as a *whole group* produced closeness, intimacy, and a relaxed space. Shared laughter deterritorialised institutional power that had constructed formal, serious, and disciplined relationships. This thesis works on the assumption that, in schools, relational hierarchies between adults and young people are very clearly defined and enforced. Intense laughter can temporarily unsettle hierarchies of authority that would usually organise these relationships (Vlieghe, 2014). As a form of queer-posthuman pedagogy, DIVINQ's laughter releases the affective tension held by moral discourses. Collective laughter works through DIVINQ to disrupt disciplinary power and its subsequent relational positioning effects whilst signalling the safety of coming together (Morreall, 2009) to explore difference differently. Laughing together becomes a queering force/intensity by disturbing what Britzman (1995) identifies as the limits of thought. To draw on Britzman, DIVINQ is a process that makes more bearable the places thinking cannot bear to know. This thesis proposes that when the whole DIVINQ assemblage laughs, a positive encounter with vulnerability as "open to being affected" (Gilson, 2011, p. 310) is produced and DIVINQ tunes into a safer or, as Weems (2019) describes, familial space.

This project suggests that laughter produces exhilarating bodily affects (Ruch, 1993; Yim, 2016) that participants described as energising and which amplified a form of chaotic vitality. To draw on the terms of posthuman pedagogy, the materiality of laughter accelerates forces of desire and allows the body to become a site of learning, disturbing the cogito of humanism.

Playful relaxation: affective-discursive disturbances *as* queer-posthuman pedagogy

The analysis showed that when participants compared DIVINQing with more traditional classroom assemblages, they experienced less judgement, and this enabled them to take more risks with their thinking in DIVINQ. I propose that the inquiry process becomes a queering technique by initiating a playful-energised engagement with Britzman's (1995) study of limits and ignorance. The surges of humour-laughter foster an encounter with becoming epistemically vulnerable that, as Logue (2014) proposes, can support ignorance and desire to become productive by troubling common knowledge. The material effects of laughter produce shared reciprocal enjoyment, relaxing bodies and fostering connectivity that generated a desire to *play more* with fields of thought. While deep confusion and uncertainty are experienced, these became revitalising effects by breaking boredom of learning as repetition. More significantly, this thesis argues that DIVINQ resisted reterritorialising of, as Lone (2011)

proposes, questions being evidence of not knowing something (that should be known). Thus, DIVINQ dampened a deficit meaning of ignorance that produces shame-embarrassment and constructed a space where not-knowing was and could be exhilarating. To echo Gilson (2011), ignorance was retuned as an opportunity to become open to being affected.

DIVINQ came together through my interest to develop pedagogy that could take up a poststructural ethic of constructing a space for subjugated knowledges to perform. The analysis of findings showed that the inquiry drew on local knowledge from personal experiences (including cultural), and opinions were validated as legitimate forms of knowledge. Young people were positioned with the authority speak and to take up a knowledgeable position while space was made for ignorance to be both productive and exhilarating. This thesis proposes that DIVINQ mobilises poststructural ethics by creating a space to question power-knowledge production of difference as other: and on the terms of future oriented-education (Bolstad et al., 2012), accesses diversity *of queer-posthuman* knowledge.

Trouble of troubling thinking: transitioning back to serious mode

DIVINQ sessions took place in a very small window of time during the school day. The end of lunchtime, signalled by the bell ringing, jolted the inquiry back to institutional routines. I was less effected by such a jolt, as I had the flexibility and agency to take a break. However, for DIVINQers, there was the shock of disassembling and rejoining formal, disciplined classroom learning – an unforeseen outcome of constructing an enlivened-queer assemblage. Some participants were left oscillating between the experience of DIVINQ's playful, deformalised relationships and a need to rapidly adjust and plug back into intelligible performances of "good-well-behaved student". The affective tones of DIVINQing lingered with research participants describing how their concentration and focus remained disturbed on their return to class. To take a reflexive position of discomfort (Pillow, 2003), this was a danger (Foucault, 1984/2014a) of DIVINQ that was not necessarily bad even though it had implications for transitioning between DIVINQ and other learning. As Weems (2019) argues, assemblages produce affective spaces, and the shift from DIVINQ's familial-space (casual, relaxed, playful, informal) to the prison-like pedagogical assemblages of conventional classrooms emerged as an ethical tension in holding DIVINQ sessions. The familial tones produced in DIVINQ were out of tune with the pedagogical assemblages that produced a serious, disciplined, focussed tone where teachers watched for evidence of mature respectful

behaviour. In the future, greater consideration for the transition back to conventional classroom settings, by way of an affective retune when disassembling at the end of a DIVINQ session, would be fruitful to dampen the oscillation recalled by several participants.

Bringing section two together

DIVINQ recruits rebellious-ironic and reflective humour to *become* a queer-posthuman pedagogical practice *and* a form of antimethod to traditional communities of inquiry. Trickster facilitation fosters deterritorialising by turning the philosophical inquiry away from seriousness and disciplined-rational thought, creating a space to disturb concepts of normal, truth, difference, and knowledge. DIVINQ engages the bodily experience of laughter as a form of Deleuzian affective pedagogy. Laughter both disturbs hierarchies and supports people to become relaxed, open, and to take risks. DIVINQ's playfully relaxed inquiry space produced opportunities to access subjugated knowledge, become epistemically vulnerable, and enjoy confusion. This thesis argues that DIVINQ exemplifies how a Community of Inquiry process could potentially work with future-oriented principles by accessing *new* queer-posthuman knowledge and by forming new partnerships through a practice of trickster facilitation.

Reverberations and resonances

I have used sound metaphors across this thesis and I turn now to cymatics imagery to orient this third section of the discussion. As Deleuze and Guattari (1994) contend, concepts resonate with each other. This thesis imagines humanism as a series of strong tones that coalesces normative images of thought, while tuning out other potential forms of intelligibility. The effect of this is to shape normative concepts that then in*forms* a taken for granted understanding that disability and LGBT+ are abnormal. Part of this research project was to understand how or if DIVINQ could retune the frequency and intensity of tones that shape key concepts including that of difference. This next section explores some of the lasting and subtle effects of DIVINQ and how these were experienced by participants in their lives beyond school. "Posthumanist thought requires us to reconfigure how we understand politics and 'knowledge'" reconfigurations that would send shockwaves through educational research and pedagogical practice by troubling the humanist concepts through which virtually all educational thought has been articulated" (Snaza et al., 2014, p. 40). Although DIVINQ's effects were more gentle ripples than the shockwaves proposed by Snaza et al. (2014), this thesis proposes that

DIVINQ's effects on young people was lasting and shaped around two posthuman frequencies: a desire for adequate understanding and defamiliarisation.

A desire for adequate understanding: seeking encounters and *different* knowledges

"Adequate understanding provides the subjects with an increase in their power to act, which is experienced as joy and the renewed desire to go on knowing more and better" (Braidotti, 2019, p. 77). The analysis I offer in Chapter 12 shows that after DIVINQing, knowing *more* and *better* was identified by the kind of knowledges and experience young people continued to engage with. Local/subjugated knowledge was sought through meeting with other people and seeking encounters in a variety of places such as travelling and online. DIVINQ had created a space for subjugated knowledges to perform and be legitimised as adequate forms of knowing. A Deleuzian affective pedagogy through DIVINQ was shown as challenging assumptions of what constitutes adequate knowledge, by making visible how and where sequestered knowledge (Gilson, 2011; Logue, 2014) produces strategic unknowns of difference. For some participants, the adequacy of disciplined expert knowledge was toned down. They learned to consider more rigorously dominant games of truth and binary concepts such as normal/abnormal. Braidotti's (2019) desire for adequate understanding reverberated in DIVINQ as the density and weight of deficit discourses were eased. The *power to act* was realised in DIVINQ's endeavours to initiate conversations about difference that then encouraged DIVINQers to become more open to difference in their daily interactions and relationships.

Braidotti (2019) argues that a desire for adequate understanding relies on perspective and is limited, in that seeking is both epistemological and ethical. This project found that after their participation in DIVINQ, young people became more observant of games of truth that had ruled difference as abject-other. They could more easily recognise problematisations of difference and the discourses that naturalised fear of otherness. An epistemological and ethical stance emerging from participation in DIVINQ is an awareness of perspectives, which eases some of the frustration that arises when encountering deficit ideas. This thesis argues that DIVINQ produced an emergent-posthumanist sensitivity to dominant discourses, enabling a greater attunement to, and easier recognition of, territorialised normative assumptions.

DIVINQ's provision of *lightened* encounters with difference brought forward the value of learning through affective experiences. As evidenced by participants' clear recollections of

their DIVINQing, intensive learning experiences over a shorter time had a greater significance and impact than routine pedagogical practices of repetition over time.

Defamiliarisation: continually questioning the Humanist Matrix

The practice of DIVINQ produced a unique experience of defamiliarisation "as a pedagogical tool to encourage the knowing subjects to disengage themselves from the dominant normative vision of the self they had become accustomed to" (Braidotti, 2019, p. 81). The process of defamiliarisation includes questioning habits of thought entangled with Eurocentric-humanist-anthropocentrism and "the forms of representation they sustain, so as to make room for the new" (Braidotti, 2019, p. 81). The findings show that participating in DIVINQ supported young people to keep questioning humanist habits that limit representations of diversity which, in turn, makes room for new ways of understanding difference. The habits of humanism that had previously territorialised difference remained disturbed beyond the DIVINQ sessions. This thesis argues that DIVINQ's ripples produce a tenuous tonal resonance with Deleuzian difference that gives some shape of a concept of diversity that goes beyond cultural difference.

While DIVINQ might have troubled grids of intelligibility that, as St. Pierre (2000) argues, reward identity and punish difference, these grids remained largely intact. The analysis I offered shows that the language available to young people to describe difference was then caught between fields of thought. For example, words such as "normal" and "disabled" continued to circulate but their meanings were in dissonance with those ascribed by humanism. Participants were generally more aware of the weight and tone of words for producing meaning and subsequently started to take a more tentative approach to the language they used. This thesis proposes that the decoding of reproduced habits of thought can be queerly translated through the metaphor of The Matrix. Young people can recognise when they are recaptured by humanist grids of intelligibility or are "plugging back in" – a positioning that enables them to mock the matrix that reterritorialises ideas. An argument of this thesis is that metaphor can operate as a form of externalising (Madigan, 2019; White, 1997, 2007), to move from an internal, individualised idea of personal habits to an externalised concept of dominant discourses. An effect of externalising through metaphor is a shift in the weight (gravity) of meaning available which has implications for identity formation. The Matrix as a metaphor for grids of intelligibility is helpful for supporting a poststructural concept of identity as produced in discourses (codes) that offer various subject positions that can change and be recoded. However, given the contestability of The Matrix as a metaphor, in particular "the red-

pill" (see Dignam & Rohlinger, 2019) being taken up in far-right conspiracy discourses, in the future, DIVINQ could draw on other science-fiction films such as Denis Villeneuve's *Arrival* (Villeneuve, 2016) that similarly explores concepts of difference, meaning, time, and reality.

Minor tones of Deleuzian difference: social justice or 'social-just-is'?

The autoethnographic aspect of this thesis follows my decades-long, deep desire to push pedagogical practice beyond affirming strong identity, rights, and social justice. The creation of DIVINQ was an opportunity to trouble humanism's comparative difference or habitual practice of constructing difference only in terms of different-to. As a posthuman practice, this involved avoiding inquiry that reduced difference to representation (Grosz, 2011) through identity categories such as gay and disabled. Posthuman pedagogy is an emergent field in secondary education. I am mindful that posthuman education discourses are currently dominated with what Snaza et al. (2014) describe as the cybernetic triangle of human-animal-machine. If future-oriented education employs such a grid of intelligibility to access posthumanist concepts, then I suggest that posthuman *new knowledge* could, as Goodley (2007) argues, reproduce ableist ideas and reterritorialise fear of difference. This thesis proposes that practices such as DIVINQ's might *weaken* humanist fields of thought that tune into comparative difference. Such a weakening might be as Deleuzian-difference that DIVINQ goes, that is, to trouble categorising difference and producing representation. For example, in the analysis offered in Chapter 12, the idea of becoming disabled, after participating in DIVINQ, was described by Holly as "not as scary". In the years after DIVINQ, a concept of disability resonated in a new field of thought that reduced dehumanising discourses and made space for change in function as a movement *toward* positive difference (but was still a bit scary). This thesis makes a case for DIVINQ producing an emergent posthuman identity as a form of tricker subjectivity. This emergent posthuman identity traverses taboo territory, seeks to continually find margins, and questions normative codes/grids of intelligibility.

When I began this doctoral project, I had not considered the potential shock young people might experience when they no longer had access to DIVINQ conversations and plugged back into a world still deeply coded with humanism. Braidotti (2019) argues that shifting individual (and cultural) identifications is not as simple as shedding a garment. Change happens more easily at a subjective level; however, "translation into a public discourse and shared social experiences is *a complex and risky affair* [emphasis added]" (p. 82). The analysis I offered suggests that while some participants could risk going public with DIVINQ-type ideas, others

encountered life contexts where sharing was indeed complex, and risky. Thus, while not intended, DIVINQ may have left some participants feeling isolated and experiencing loneliness. While I agree with Braidotti that no process of consciousness is ever painless and entirely free of suffering, it is possible that, for some DIVINQers, the sudden shift from a deeply connected, safe community to the world beyond was an experience that involved distress, particularly if supportive connections were less available.

If, as Braidotti (2019) suggests, collective ensembles or "transversal assemblages" (p. 82) are needed to sustain posthuman projects, then this thesis proposes that an ethical consideration for DIVINQ is promoting access to collective assemblages to ensure young people vibrating with *new thinking* can find and/or form new communities of shared resonance. Online communities, social media, and digital platforms can enhance connectivity. While this does not necessarily bring people into a physical encounter, digital technology options might be an aspect of connecting with community, and for schools to think beyond geographic locations with respect to what is considered a community.

Considering a reflexivity of discomfort and next steps

In taking a reflexivity of discomfort (Pillow, 2003), I acknowledge that this project has possibly tried to do too much and covers a lot of theoretical ground. In bringing this thesis assemblage together, my skills as a writer for research and creative style have yet to harmonise. I am a becoming researcher with a passion for writing. With more writing projects, I hope to strike a clearer chord with my use of posthuman theory.

This research project invited the participation of young people who had a desire to share their experiences of DIVINQ. As a form of practitioner research, my prior relationship with participants had crossed counselling, teaching, and DIVINQ. Therefore, there may have been some young people who did not enjoy DIVINQ and did not feel able to offer criticism, so declined to participate. This project interviewed only young people who had already done DIVINQ but a future research project could engage with young people before, during, and after DIVINQing.

This research project does not provide a specific outline or guide on how to DIVINQ as a form of philosophical inquiry. The aspects of working as a Community of Inquiry are tenuous. I suggest that while I have articulated a potential antimethod (Kohan, 2014) to traditional

inquiries, DIVINQ may not necessarily be claimed under such an umbrella by those who are more experienced in this field of pedagogical practice.

The thesis is situated in a precarious position as it is not about a particular identity group (such as LGBT+ or disabled students) that is often the subject of research in secondary school education. As this research is focussed on theorising the process of DIVINQ, it is possible that participant accounts appear to be ignored in favour of my reading to define the practice. This thesis could appear to dismiss the contributions of pedagogical theory emerging from both humanism *and* posthumanism that has contributed to supporting young people in schools. During the project, I have become exposed to new theory that has extended my understanding of how posthuman theory is being put to work in a variety of fields. I am interested in the growing field of Dishuman Studies (see Braidotti, 2019; Goodley, 2014; Goodley & Runswick-Cole, 2016) under the umbrella of disability theory that challenges dehumanising practices as a potential resonance with DIVINQ.

All this said, I take pleasure that this thesis has given DIVINQ a theoretical shape. The opportunity to articulate a practice that has spanned a significant period of my professional career is extremely satisfying.

Epilogue

Philip has sent out 100 information packs to Auckland secondary schools to introduce DIVINQ and an offer to present to staff. The screaming silence of just one tentative response washes over us. We sit on Philip's deck listening to the tui warble, trying to make sense of what seems to be a lack of interest in DIVINQ.

> "Philip, I'm not sure schools are ready for DIVINQ. I know they care about inclusion, critical thinking, philosophy – especially ethics. But DIVINQ doesn't fit neatly into a curriculum box or set progamme that schools can easily pick up and justify running."
>
> "Maybe we could try a new text like *Arrival* or *Avatar*. *The Matrix* - and especially the red pill metaphor – has a different flavour now that it's become associated with alt-right ideas."
>
> "Red-pill: comes with side-effects of misogyny and white supremacy."

We both crack up laughing. Philip laments, "It's such as shame that so much of the movie was a transgender allegory that has been written over – *recoded*."

It is a painful irony that our use of *The Matrix* as a metaphor happened before Lana and Lily were out as transwomen. An idea stirs. I turn to Philip.

> "Maybe DIVINQ just needs a reboot. We could acknowledge the story of *The Matrix* franchise, be *transparent* about contestable imagery. It might even be a good DIVINQ in itself – how multiple meanings compete for being the true-real interpretation."
>
> "We could take DIVINQ online. Do podcasts, YouTube, why not make DIVINQ accessible to everyone? People are used to Zoom and technology to meet and facilitate after Covid."

I pause and feel an unease of loss ripple. It would be a completely new assemblage. Philip reads my uncertainty and waits patiently for my reply. "That could work – but I remember why I wanted to work with you, after that talk at Rata back in 2008. DIVINQ is what

happens when people are in the same *physical* room." Philip nods slowly and sits back, with a whimsical look. "Āe, kanohi ki te kanohi – yes, face to face."

A woosh of wind whistles over our heads as a tui swoops. Somewhat surprised by the proximity of the dive, but enjoying the close encounter, I grin and say,

> "I'm content to let DIVINQ go. It has transformed me as a facilitator and produced this friendship. I'm in a relationship with irony and have become a trickster. Maybe it's time for a new project."

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(Consistent with University of Waikato policy, this thesis uses APA 6, the system current at the time of initial enrolment)

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Appendices

Appendix A: Invitation and information sheet – past DIVINQers

Dear Divinqer,

Diversity Inquiry (DIVINQ) has been running since 2008 and I am interested to find out how it has changed peoples thinking about diversity as well as their thoughts about the inquiry process. I am doing this as part of my doctoral study with a focus on DIVINQ as a form of philosophical inquiry in schools.

I am inviting former participants in DIVINQ who have now left high school, to join in on some research about the DIVINQ process. This would involve meeting in groups of 4-5 with me to talk about DIVINQ as a process and share reflections about how you remember the conversations and experiences you had being part of DIVINQ. This is not a formal evaluation; it's just a chance to reflect on any aspects that people would like to raise in order to think about what worked well and what could be strengthened. Writing a story about this process could also be helpful for other people thinking of running similar programmes. The focus of the research is on how DIVINQ explores diversity and how it might be different to other conversations about difference while you were at school. I am interested to know about how you experienced the style of facilitation at the time you were at school and your reflections since. The conversation will focus on these general areas of your secondary school experience:

1. Learning about gender identity, sexuality and disability at school
2. Your experience of DIVINQ
3. The role of humour in your school and learning experiences:

The conversation will take between 1 to 1.5 hrs and will be audio recorded. I will follow up with an email after a few days inviting any further comment or reflection after the group interview/discussion. This will be guided by the following questions:

- Were there any other thoughts or reflections about diversity inquiry you wanted to share but didn't get a chance to in the interview?
- Are there any final reflections or comments you would like to make about any aspect of your experience of DIVINQ and how it changed how you see diversity?

You may give these post interview comments to me in a written or other form such as a video or audio recording.

Timeframe of research:

The group interview is planned for in the month after this letter has gone out and people have

responded. Interviews will be transcribed by me and sent out within a month of their completion. A pseudonym will be negotiated that does not correlate to any other identifiable name such as an online identity. While you can withdraw from the research at any time, you will not be able to remove your contribution to the interview once it is completed. I will check in with you before the interview to go over any questions you have.

Please find the consent form attached and return it to confirm your interest in participating in this research. If you consent I will contact you regarding possible times and venues for the group discussion/reunion/research.

Contact me via text 021 115 1238 or email Jeannie.grant@gmail.com

Appendix B: Consent form – past participants of DIVINQ

Consent to participate in research. Please read the following and complete the

consent form below. I understand that:

1. As I have taken part in DIVINQ in the past, I have been asked by Jeannie Grant to participate in her doctoral research project at the University of Waikato.

2. The purpose of this research is to understand how the process of DIVINQ changes peoples understanding of difference and how humour supports this.

3. Participation in this research is voluntary.

4. There will be one group interview with approximately 3-4 others and a follow up reflection which can be written or done in a form that works for me as described on the information sheet:

- One group interview that will be audio recorded
- After this interview I will be sent some reflection questions to respond to (see information sheet) – either in writing, or by sending audio/visual recording of my answers
- The interview will be recorded and transcribed by Jeannie
- My identity will be protected at all times through a pseudonym – a suitable pseudonym will be negotiated with Jeannie to ensure the best possible anonymity
- While every effort will be made to ensure anonymity, this cannot be fully guaranteed
- Jeannie is interviewing me about my experience of DIVINQ and her role in this as a facilitator not as a school counsellor. I understand that if I saw her as a counsellor this will not be part of the discussion
- However if things come up as a result of this research process Jeannie can put me in touch with an appropriate support network
- I am able to withdraw from the research either before or after the group interview. I can do this by emailing or phoning Jeannie. I can also withdraw by contacting Jeannie's doctoral supervisor, Dr Lise Claiborne from Waikato University. Her email address is lise.claiborne@waikato.ac.nz
- I understand that I don't have to give any reason why I want to withdraw. However if I withdraw after the interview has taken place, I will not be able to remove my individual contribution
- I agree to maintain the anonymity and privacy of others who participate in the research
- The thesis will be available for me to read through the University of Waikato Research Commons.

5. I also give my consent for the thesis being developed into a series of articles, resources, seminars or conference presentations, and for Jeannie to include selected quotations from the

transcripts.

I have read the consent form and understand what is being requested of me as a participant in this study. I freely consent to participate.

Name of participant ……

Signature……

Date……

Appendix C: Invitation and information sheet – co-facilitators

Dear Philip/Sam

In 2008 we (Philip and I) co-created Diversity Inquiry out of our combined skills knowledge and experience in education, counselling, social work, comedy, human rights and philosophy. As discussed with you informally I am undertaking doctoral study at The University Of Waikato. I am really interested to know from you how DIVINQ has resonated with you. I would like to explore the way humour and laughter have influenced or had an effect on your ways of thinking and working with people and what DIVINQ has changed or shifted for you as a person. I would like to interview you both in an informal discussion environment. The conversation will focus on these themes:

1. Your experience of gender identity, sexuality and disability at school
2. The influences on your thinking over the years about difference
3. Your experience of Diversity Inquiry (DIVINQ) as a facilitator and individual
4. The role of humour in your work

The conversation will take between 1 to 1.5 hrs and will be recorded. I will follow up with an email after a few days inviting any further comment or reflection after the interview. This will be guided by the following questions:

- Were there any other thoughts or reflections about diversity inquiry you wanted to share but didn't get a chance to in the interview?
- Are there any final reflections or comments you would like to make about your experience of facilitating DIVINQ?

You may give these post interview comments me in a written or other form such as a video or audio recording.

Timeframe of research:

I would like to meet at a time that is convenient for you both and at a location that you feel comfortable, please let me know what would work best for you both. The discussion will be transcribed by me and sent out within a month. You **will not** have anonymity in this research. Therefore, if after reading the transcript there are sections you do not wish to be included in the research I will remove them from the transcript and not include them as part of the research. You will have 4 weeks from receiving the transcript to request any editing of your individual contribution. You may withdraw from the research at any time.

Please find the consent form attached and return it to confirm your interest in participating in this research. If you consent I will contact you regarding possible times and venues for the group discussion/reunion/research.

Contact me via text 021 115 1238 or email Jeannie.grant@gmail.com

Appendix D: Consent form – co-facilitators

Consent to participate in research. Please read the following and complete the

consent form below. I understand that:

1. As I have been involved in the co-facilitation and/or development of DIVINQ, I have been asked by Jeannie Grant to participate in her doctoral research project with the University of Waikato.

2. The purpose of this research is to understand how the process of DIVINQ developed and how it changes peoples understanding of difference, particularly how humour supports this.

3. Participation in this research is voluntary.

4. There will be one discussion/interview and a follow up reflection which can be written or done in a form that works for me as described on the information sheet:

- One discussion that will be recorded
- Within a couple of days of the discussion, I will be sent some reflection questions to respond to (see information sheet) – either in writing, or by sending audio/visual recording of my answers
- The discussion will be recorded and transcribed by Jeannie
- My identity will NOT be anonymous
- I will have one month to review the transcript and request removal of any statements I do not wish to be included as my identity is not anonymous
- Jeannie is interviewing me about my role as a facilitator of DIVINQ. I understand that our personal/friendship connection beyond diversity inquiry will not be a focus in this research
- However if personal things come up as a result of this research process Jeannie can put me in touch with an appropriate support network should I request
- I am able to withdraw from the research either before or after the discussion. I can do this by emailing or phoning Jeannie. I can also withdraw by contacting Jeannie's doctoral supervisor, Dr Lise Claiborne from Waikato University. Her email address is lise.claiborne@waikato.ac.nz
- I understand that I don't have to give any reason why I want to withdraw. However, I understand that I will have up to one month to withdraw the transcript material from the time of the discussion. I will not be able to withdraw the transcript material after this point
- The thesis will be available for me to read through the University of Waikato Research Commons.

5. I also give my consent for the thesis being developed into a series of articles, resources, seminars or conference presentations, and for Jeannie to include selected quotations from the transcripts.

I have read the consent form and understand what is being requested of me as a participant in this study. I freely consent to participate.

Name of participant …….

Signature…….

Date……

Appendix E: Interview assemblages

Transcript Reference	Type Of Interview	Location of Interview	Who Is Interviewed	Length of Interview	pseudonyms
Philip and Sam first interview	Face to face	Private Residence	Co-facilitators of divinq	1hr 36min	None
Philip and Sam second interview	Face to face	Private Residence	Co-facilitators of divinq	1hr 4min	None
Group interview transcript 1 18th January 2018	Face to face	My office at Kōwhai	2 Kōwhai participants – (left 1-2 years ago)	48min	Namrita Kushala
Group interview transcript 2 23rd Feb 2018	Face to face	My office at Kōwhai	3 Kōwhai participants (left 3-4 years ago)	1hr 3min	Fleur Holly Lucy
Individual interview 1 17th March 2018	Via MSN Messenger video call	At private residence	1 Kōwhai participant (left 3 years ago)	48min	Sienna
Individual interview 2 28th March 2018	Face to face	My office at Kōwhai	1 participant – inaugural group from Rata (10 years) Part of Unit	1hr 14min	Rachael
Pair interview 25th April 2018	Via Skype video call	At private residence	2 participants from inaugural group	50min	Connor Rajan