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From Ecological Creativity to an Ecology of Well-Being: 'Flows & Catchments' as a Case Study of NVivo

Dr Brad Warren
Deakin University, Melbourne, Victoria

Dr Patrick West
Deakin University, Melbourne, Victoria

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Brad Warren & Patrick West

Abstract

This paper's research question concerns how the ecological creativity of the Volcanic Plains region of Western Victoria may be transformed into an ecology of well-being of benefit to the local community. Drawing on the philosophies of Spinoza and Gilles Deleuze, we argue that community well-being results from the richness of connections and relationships made within a place. The case study for our investigation is 'Flows & Catchments', which is an ongoing, collaborative, creative-arts research project auspiced by Deakin University. Its *modus operandi* is Practice-Based Research (PBR), and its aim is to promote community well-being in Western Victoria. However, while the whole metier of the creative arts is to make the novel connections and relationships that should bring about community well-being, the various artists of 'Flows & Catchments' have proved slightly reluctant to make connections outside of their individual or small-group sub-projects. In this way, ecological creativity has not reached its full potential as an ecology of well-being because the rich connections and relationships essential to this well-being have not yet been fully realised. This paper explores the potential of using the NVivo qualitative analysis software package to bring together the creative-arts sub-projects of 'Flows & Catchments', as a way of fostering an ecology of well-being out of a currently dispersed ecological creativity.

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1. Process Notes for a Creative Project

Had to experience and re-experience the place before seriously starting to write….
        Iterative process, back and forth between me and Simon….
Simon seems to keep my exact lines but re-position them in the script….
        Key words/phrases to provoke my creativity. Eg. 'vinegar oceans'.
A long-sustained 'impossible' idea: What might the time of water be? It now reaches a realization in the script. The curl of foam on the water representing a long accumulation of surface gatherings….
        Oblique approach to dialogue. Monologues pushed together to create a 'distanced dialogue'. Distanced by the images/sounds of the land….
        A related point to the above. Man-made/artificial barriers seemed less so when actually out in the land….
I asked Simon to film the old corrugated iron by the river….
        Was this the eel trap?!...
No-one apart from — perhaps wanted to film the sheep's afterbirth….
        A metaphor is an image of connection in the mind….
Henri Bergson from Creative Evolution*: 'Wherever anything lives, there is, open somewhere, a register in which time is being inscribed. This, it will be said, is only a metaphor' (1998: 16)….*
        And I certainly can't do without metaphor if I am to write a script….
The hope is that metaphor may work in an 'anti-metaphorical' direction to both materialize the world and to inscribe the world with many 'registers' of time…. As many registers as there are modes of metaphor perhaps….
        Camperdown George and non-linear time: place-based metaphors of time….
Isabella Dawson and linear time: equally place-based metaphors of time but of another place (Scotland)….
        Distanced by the images/sounds of the land….
Pull or tension between 'detail' and 'storytelling'….

These are just some of the process notes for a documentary-fiction film entitled *Sisters of the Sun*, which forms only one element of a multi-participant creative-arts project, 'Flows & Catchments'. Multiplied by the process notes of all contributors, the total chaotic impression might suggest that any notion of a single unified project falls apart. The centre seems unable to hold when so many different sub-project voices are in play around the

margins. Still, how might it be possible for each sub-project of 'Flows & Catchments' to connect with each of the other sub-projects in the interests of maximising the outcomes of the project as a whole?

2. Background to 'Flows & Catchments'

'Flows & Catchments' is an ongoing collaborative research project seed-funded by Deakin University's Centre for Memory, Imagination and Invention (CMII) in 2011. It has about eight active members. Its focus is on the Volcanic Plains Region of Western Victoria, and it seeks to achieve an understanding of the area that retains its rich and lived complexity, without reduction to dis-associated empiricism or instrumentalisation. Specifically, this paper's research question concerns how the ecological creativity of the region under consideration may be transformed into an ecology of well-being of benefit to the local community. Drawing on the philosophy of Spinoza and Gilles Deleuze, we maintain that community well-being results from the richness of connections and relationships made within a place. We will explore, in this paper, how and to what extent 'Flows & Catchments' expresses this concept through its creative-arts sub-projects as parts of a unified project.

The *modus operandi* of 'Flows & Catchments' is Practice-Based Research (PBR), which is research in the creative arts that uses 'subjective, interdisciplinary and emergent methodologies' to 'extend the frontiers of research'. It depends on 'personally situated, interdisciplinary and diverse and emergent approaches' (Barrett and Bolt, 2007: 1-2). It is also highly reflexive, and draws on 'ineffable or tacit knowledge', as well as on intuition. It acknowledges 'a plurality of views' (Barrett and Bolt, 2007: 4-5). PBR spreads out from the local and specific, in art, to engage broader issues of knowledge, culture and society. It is about extrapolating the little picture to the big picture, and thus, perhaps, subtly or not so subtly altering the big picture as it does so. 'An innovative dimension of [its] subjective approach to research lies in its capacity to bring into view, particularities that reflect new social and other realities either marginalised or not yet recognised in established social practices and discourses' (Barrett and Bolt, 2007: 4). This last aspect of PBR is particularly relevant to our interest in transforming the perhaps-hidden ecological creativity of a mainly rural region into an ecology of well-being.

In order to fully demonstrate the breadth of the 'Flows & Catchments' sub-projects, their engagements with PBR (in most cases), and the efforts of team members to engage the ecological creativity of the Volcanic Plains region of Western Victoria, the following section describes a selection of them in detail:

2.1 'Flows & Catchments' Sub-projects (1):
The Intellectual Legacy of James Dawson
James Dawson was the author of *Australian Aborigines* (1881), and it is from him that 'Flows & Catchments' derives its overall research inspiration. The research on Dawson outlined

below is essentially archival and historical in nature, while the foci of the other studies included are principally concerned with PBR. This is worth noticing because it highlights the multi-method approach of 'Flows & Catchments' overall.

The most remarkable feature of Dawson's *Australian Aborigines* is its 'Vocabulary of Words in Three Languages' augmented with a list of place-names and sample sentences illustrating the grammar of the languages. The wordlists are remarkable for representing dialects spoken right across the region with which we are concerned. A detailed study and cross-referencing of these wordlists for consistency / irregularities would necessarily encompass elements of both qualitative and quantitative methodologies, thus rendering 'Flows & Catchments' both *multi*-method and *mixed*-method (we explore this more in the discussion of NVivo below). This study of Dawson's wordlists is forthcoming in our project schedule as an investigation of the relationship between landscape and language.

Although some archival study into the whole of Dawson's (largely unpublished and unstudied) works has been done (see, for example, the work of Jan Critchett, or the Indigenous cultural recovery programs that draw on Dawson's Wordlists), there has not yet been adequate recognition of their bi-cultural significance as records of a unique attempt at intercultural reconciliation, nor of Isabella Dawson's (James's daughter's) role in collecting Indigenous languages. With regard to the latter: to what extent are the language lists James Dawson published gendered? And what might the implications of this be for the shift from ecological creativity to an ecology of well-being? Are ecologies of well-being gendered in some ways? There is scope here for further research as 'Flows & Catchments' develops.

Dawson uniquely anticipated and provided the impetus for 'Flows & Catchments', and particularly its interest in PBR. One example of his initiatives in this regard is his commissioning of artist Eugene von Guerard to paint scenes from the area's volcanic landscape in oils in 1855, with a view to a study of ecology and the inculcation of environmental values amongst the local populace. This is a prime example of how the ecological creativity of a place may be gathered up in artistic form for the benefit of its human inhabitants. All of Dawson's enquiries were motivated by friendship, by a sense of community through connection, and by a research agenda predicated on the importance of lived human relationships and communication within and with natural places. Overall, his importance to 'Flows & Catchments' is that he exemplified a place-based approach to learning and well-being.

2.2 'Flows & Catchments' Sub-projects (2): *Sisters of the Sun*
The fictional-documentary film *Sisters of the Sun* has already been mentioned in our consideration of the Process Notes used as the introduction to this paper. This film constitutes the primary example of Practice-Based Research addressed here, and it explores several related questions: How does language work to name place, or not? How does language work to create a sense of connection to place, or not? And how does the creation

of memory, or more precisely memorialisation (as typically occurs after one's death), create or not create a sense of continuity linking past, present and future?

To answer these questions, documentary-style interviews with people who live and work in the Volcanic Plains Region (including shearers, eel fishermen, farmers and quarrymen) are bookended by a fictional story about Isabella Dawson's preparation of her father's wordlists. Historically, Isabella's research took the form of conversations with a number of the local aborigines, but for this film her relationship with Wombeetch Puuyun (also known as Camperdown George) is foregrounded. A further ghostly re-fashioning of the historical material, which gives the film an almost magical-realist tone, is implicit in the setting of their conversation. This mainly takes place around Wombeetch's grave, an obelisk or cenotaph erected at Camperdown cemetery through the efforts of James Dawson, which bears the inscription 'last of the local tribes'. A certain ambiguity of time pervades this fictional part of the film: an ambiguity consistent with the explored idea that place contains its own sense of timing, distinct, for example, from historical time as modelled on (the English) language as a linear progression—as of words following other words in a wordlist. According to Wombeetch Puuyun in the film, place itself connects past, present and future, rather than any words on a gravestone. In a final, climactic scene, he scatters the pages of Isabella's diary to the winds, across place.

In line with the philosophical and ecological ethics of 'Flows & Catchments', the aim of the film-makers was to conduct an experiment in the maximisation—through the de-composition and re-composition of established notions of time, place and language—of a sense of community amongst those they interviewed and amongst people more broadly. In other words, once framed by the fictional story of Isabella Dawson and Wombeetch Puyuun, what new perceptions might be suggested, for the viewer, concerning the well-being or otherwise of the interviewees as representatives of a diverse landscape of ecological creativity?

Sisters of the Sun's 'fit' within the PBR model warrants further discussion. Recalling the definitions outlined above, it is **interdisciplinary** insofar as it is a *fictional-documentary*, a weaving together of creative-writing narrative with documentary film-making. The process of its generation was necessarily **reflexive** as its creators negotiated how the separate elements of such a cross-genre art form could be wed together, as a way of thinking about their investments in the story they were telling. (Because 'real life' kept intervening in the shape of the people interviewed, it was not possible to write the script in a non-reflexive vacuum.) *Sisters of the Sun* was **emergent** in that it was unknown how the interviewees would react to each other and allowances / adjustments were sometimes necessary 'on the spot', and it was **subjective** since it was primarily driven by its creators' own personalities, interests, enthusiasms and so forth. As for **'its capacity to bring into view, particularities that reflect new social and other realities either marginalised or not yet recognised'** (Barrett and Bolt, 2007: 4, as per above), *Sisters of the Sun* brings out the indigenous background to current, mainly non-indigenous, farming and industrial practices in the region

under investigation. It re-frames contemporary life through the prism of a (partly fictional) story of the past. In this, we think, lies its potential to enact a shift from ecological creativity (a film about a place) to an ecology of well-being (the happiness of that place's inhabitants).
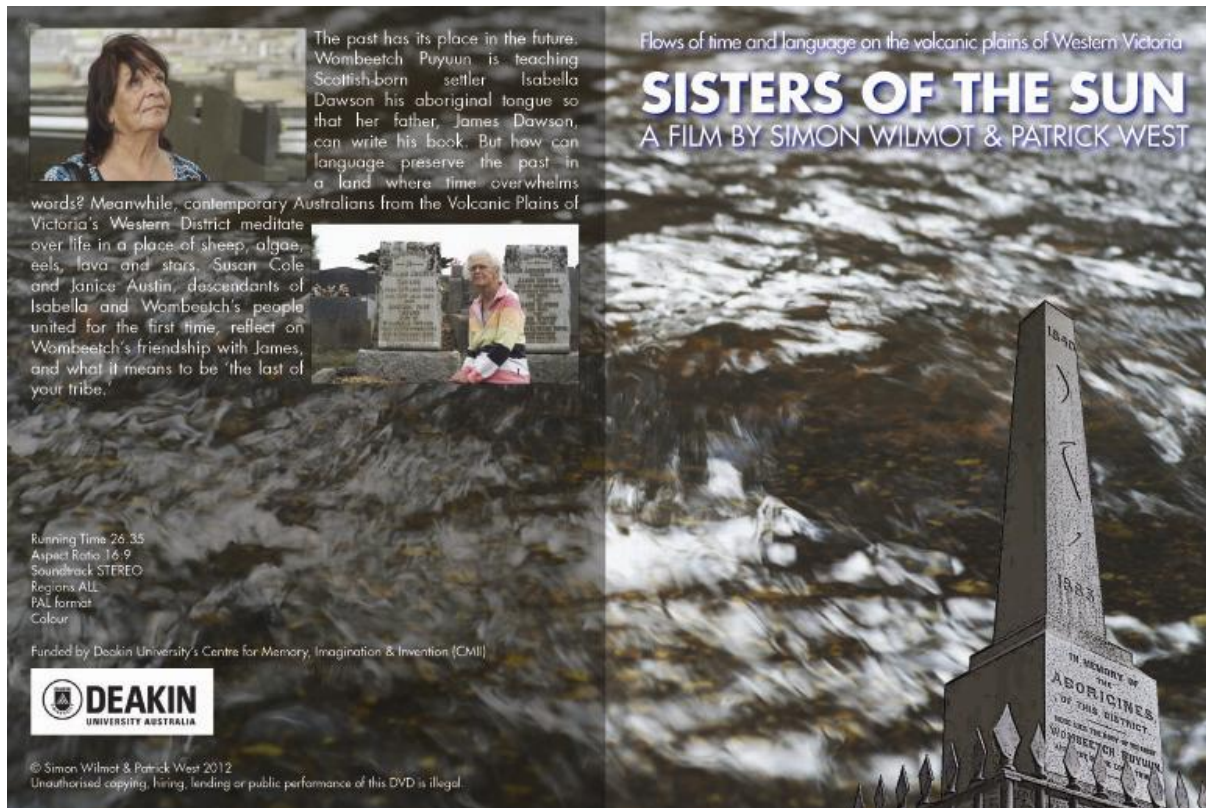

Image One: Sisters of the Sun *Cover Art.*

2.3 'Flows & Catchments' Sub-projects (3):
Presentations, Artistic Installations and Exhibitions: the Lake Bolac Eel Festival and Stone Soup

Besides historical / archival research and film-making, other 'Flows & Catchments' activities include spoken-word presentations within the Volcanic Plains region, such as at the Warrnambool Art Gallery, outlining how the creative arts may motivate a re-creation of self in response to the ecological creativity of place and, in practical terms, the benefits of long-term and short-term artists' residencies for building an ecology of well-being in local, rural and often socially and economically under-privileged communities.

One example of this sort of community arts engagement was a workshop held with local people at the Lake Bolac Eel Festival in March 2012 to bring to life a creative music soundscape around the theme of volcanoes. This soundscape was later performed as part of the twilight evening concert at the festival's culmination. In addition, there have also been photography and other artistic exhibitions, which have been presented through involvement with local schools and clubs, as well as participation in a broad range of other local events.

Image Two: Communal Music Making at the Lake Bolac Eel Festival.

A further sub-project, also included as part of the Eel Festival, was the production and exhibition of a series of drawings / diagrams that described and suggested types of projects to be done with local communities. These communal drawings were conceived of as the making of *Stone Soup*. The notion of *Stone Soup* is taken from folk tales about travellers in search of food who invent the idea of a magical Stone Soup to induce cooperation by asking local residents to garnish the mixture with local produce. Other forms of the folk tale from around the world include Nail Soup, Button Soup and Axe Soup. For the Eel Festival, three different types of communal drawings (soups) were made. Participants were able to choose from Stone, Axe or Heirloom Soups, and then invited to take part in their production. The function of the 'Soups', from a PBR perspective, was the exploration and exposition of local community, with a view to further development of community interactions and well-being in response to the underlying ecological creativity of place and people. At the Eel Festival's conclusion, the drawings were given to the community, and they will be exhibited again at the festival in 2013.

Image Three: Stone Soup.

The 'Flows & Catchments' suite of inquiries aims to use the creative arts to facilitate community well-being in the context of the rich ecological creativity of the region serviced predominantly by Deakin University's regional campuses. Within the Volcanic Plains region there are limited resources for local schools, declining enrolments, declining populations overall, as well as associated problems of social isolation. It is hoped that, through the projects just described, people will be brought closer together and at least some of these problems may be addressed. In particular, work with and within local schools is essential, since educational institutions are ideally suited to serve as conduits of ecologies of well-being. A one-day workshop in creative writing, photography and movement was held at the Lake Bolac College in early 2013 as a pilot project for more work of this sort involving up to five nearby schools.

3. Ecological Creativity Becomes an Ecology of Well-Being – Theoretical Background

The broad hypothesis encompassed by the title of this paper, that ecological creativity can lead to an ecology of well-being, requires theoretical justification on two fronts:

Firstly, validation of ecological creativity as an enabling notion is itself required: that is, theoretical support for the idea that creative arts practice in general, and PBR in particular, can bring out or lead to the generation of relationships and meanings within (in this case) a largely rural and nature-based ecology (the Volcanic Plains region). To creative artists themselves, this may appear a self-evident truth, but it nonetheless warrants some discussion.

In the second instance, we must then establish precedent for the supposition that the rich range of outcomes from the 'Flows & Catchments' suite of PBR sub-projects can, collectively, lead to the generation of an ecology of well-being for a wider community. That is, how can the disparate outcomes of 'Flows & Catchments' be brought together to facilitate a whole that, through the creation of (new) connections and metaphors, is somehow greater than the sum of the individual parts? (We observe, however, that in practice the movement from ecological creativity to an ecology of well-being is likely always already to be happening in countless undefinable ways.)

With regard to justification for PBR itself, we note that it can be understood as an attempt to explore the circumstances of (specific) place, through the re-organisation of both its elements and of the elements of our response to them, in the form of original artwork. As Paul Carter observes, 'a double movement occurs, of decontextualisation in which the found elements are rendered strange, and of recontextualisation, in which new families of association and structures of meaning are established' (2007: 15-6). This, we suggest, is exactly how artists may create new relationships and meanings that are inspired by place rather than imposed upon it; we regard ecological creativity as an evocation or expression of the (perhaps largely immanent or as yet unrealised) creativity or artistry of a place itself.

Secondly, regarding the follow-up movement from just such an ecological creativity to an actual ecology of well-being, our hypothesis that this latter phenomenon emerges out of the maximisation of (artistically created) relationships of people and place is derived largely from the ecological tradition that stretches, at least, from Spinoza to Gilles Deleuze (and that now, we can see, also involves James Dawson). In Deleuze's reading of Spinoza, he re-casts this tradition as an ethology, in which (creative) experiments in the relations of things, in 'the capacities for affecting and being affected that characterize each thing', can lead to the (re-)creation of community: 'the composition of a world that is increasingly wide and intense' (1988: 125; 126). Artists, we suggest, have great potential for carrying out such Deleuzean experiments (of ecological creativity) in order to layer them into community (for well-being purposes) through the dissemination of their work via exhibitions, workshops and the like.

To evoke a slightly different metaphor, perhaps the ecological-creativity-to-ecology-of-well-being shift that we are proposing can be viewed as a shift from the 'micro' to the 'macro': that is, from relatively small creative arts projects to larger community outcomes. To this end, well-being itself needs to be understood as a living part of an ecology *of creativity* and not just as an expression of a prior set of ecological relations. This is because one of the characteristics of ecocritical (or ecological) thinking is that it looks for relationships connecting differently scaled domains. Ecocriticism 'involves a change of scale and vision: rather than an obsession with human-sized objects, it attends both to the miniature realm of a blade of grass, an ant, amoeba, or pathogen, *and* to the mega scale of the ocean, the mountain, or even to the earth itself (as well as everything in between)' (Bennett and Royle, 2009: 141) [our emphasis]. There is always an active even creative shifting of scales going

on. The very notion of differently scaled realms suggests both an inclusivity of all possible realms (of whatever size) and how these realms need to be related, above all creatively, as a complex ecology. Well-being—at the human scale, size or level—then becomes an integral part of a broader ecological domain necessarily sustained (because of the dynamic relationships of scale involved within any natural environment) in creative fashion.

In these ways, the connection between ecological creativity and an ecology of well-being—between creative arts practice and wider community benefit / development—can be established. The creative arts puts the world together (connects it up) in complex and exciting ways. 'It is no longer a matter of utilization or captures, but of sociabilities and communities. How do individuals enter into composition with one another in order to form a higher individual, ad infinitum? How can a being take another being into its world, but while preserving or respecting the other's own relations and world?' (Deleuze, 1988: 126). How indeed? With regard to PBR, making these connections explicit, especially across such a disparate range of sub-projects as 'Flows & Catchments' encompasses, requires active involvement at the methodological level over and above what is offered solely by a PBR approach.

4. NVivo as a Facilitator of Collaborative Practice-Based Research

At the outset of this paper, 'Flows & Catchments' was described as a *collaborative* research project. We have now shown how its many sub-projects share a broad hypothesis—focused on the notion of ecological creativity—and how they all desire the same outcome overall: an ecology of well-being. Nonetheless, we have not yet given adequate attention to precisely *how* all the threads can be drawn together. What is it, exactly, about the research findings of, say, *Sisters of the Sun* and *Stone Soup* that can be brought together and brought to light to facilitate an ecology of well-being on a larger scale? What are their commonalities, their opportunities for suturings and inter-lockings, and how can such connections be made? Or, to ask a corollated question: To what extent is 'Flows & Catchments' truly collaborative?

As a tool to enable inter-project collaboration, if fully utilised, the 'Flows & Catchments' methodology has experimented with the use of NVivo. NVivo is a qualitative analysis software program designed to assist researchers in the arranging of data under various themes and categories, facilitating the identification of threads and connections that may not have been apparent otherwise. NVivo is, in effect, an interactive, hyperlinked database with the capacity to incorporate a wide variety of file-types, including audio, video, still images, numeric (quantitative) data such as that contained in Excel and SPSS files, and of course text. It is this functionality, in turn, that enables the cross-pollination of findings / outcomes from a variety of different methodologies. It has already been established that 'Flows & Catchments' is a *multi*-method project, incorporating creative writing, film-making, painting, archival studies and so on. Further, it now emerges that it is also *mixed*-method, insofar as our use of NVivo facilitates a blending of qualitative and quantitative approaches.

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For example, in addition to its being able to utilise Excel and SPSS data, the program has the capacity to count instances (that is, make quantitative assessments) of qualitative phenomena on a large scale, to track, for example, exactly how many people expressed a particular idea or concern across all of the 'Flows & Catchments' interactions with local community. Thus, NVivo is well suited to our purposes; it encourages interdisciplinary communication across the various 'Flows & Catchments' components, with a view to creating new flows and catchments of its (our) own.

Nonetheless, a word of caution: for all files other than text, input is still required from researchers to draw together common themes and ideas, to add text as marginalia or footnoting that will enable connections to be made. For those familiar with NVivo (or indeed with qualitative methodological practice in general), what we are discussing here is *coding*, so that phenomena under study, in whatever form they take, can be arranged under common *nodes*. At least potentially, this might present a problem: especially when researchers come from different disciplinary backgrounds, there is always the possibility that ways of thinking and, more importantly, ways of reporting that thought in coding, will differ substantially. This consideration is of even more importance within PBR, because the fine-grained particularities of artistic practitioners and their sensibilities mean that they frequently do not share a common vocabulary. Although qualitative software functionality, including that of NVivo, has gone a long way towards alleviating such difficulties in recent years (Hoover and Koerber, 2011: 76), this potential drawback still warrants mention.

How might such a problem be overcome? 'Flows & Catchments' has appointed one of its members to oversee coding, such that common understandings of recurrent themes are understood in the same, or at least a similar manner. This task is envisaged to be as much about liaison between various research participants as it is about the direct entering of coding by the nominated party *per se*. A suggested title for this role is *dramaturge*–a research and development position *vis-a-vis* a theatre and / or its productions, where in this case the production at hand is the 'Flows & Catchments' suite of enquiries. To extend the metaphor, other descriptors might be *co-ordinator* or even *conductor*, but in the sense of organising and facilitating, rather than leading in any overt directorial sense. Not surprisingly, the *dramaturge* must be particularly skilled in talking with and summarising the views of those working in the PBR domain. A similar role is described by Goble *et. al.* (2012: 13), speaking in terms of an '*NVivo Expert*', although Goble and his co-authors do not identify a lack of common vocabulary as being as much of a problem as we have found, in 'Flows & Catchments', with regard to PBR practitioners.

Coming closer to our notion of *dramaturge* is the approach suggested by Sunderland *et. al.*, who also advocate a single coder (the Team Leader in this case) for research consisting of multiple sub-projects, but only after 'inter-raters … [have discussed] the data and findings until there is consensus on: (a) similarities and differences between the sub-projects; (b) meaningful ways to reinterpret, categorise, and describe the combined findings; and (c) a coherent meta-story or ''whole'' that has been formed from the ''parts'' of each sub-

project' (2012: 1061). In the case of 'Flows & Catchments', the different individual and small-team artists might be able to act as 'inter-raters' but, again, we have noticed that, interestingly, while artists are skilled in and enthusiastic about making connections at their own sub-project level, they are less inclined to attempt to inter-rate / integrate their work into the larger whole. The 'Flows & Catchments' *dramaturge* or Team Leader has thus also had to act, to an extent, as the sub-project inter-rater.

At the time of writing, our experimentation with NVivo as a tool to facilitate collaborative research remains in its nascent stages. The ideal is that NVivo will provide a platform whereby all 'Flows & Catchments' participants have ready access to one another's projects and their findings, and that fruitful discussion and genuine cross-project collaboration will thereby ensue. However, as already hinted at, a certain degree of reluctance has been encountered amongst participants, hindering NVivo from being utilised to its fullest potential.

Some of this reticence has stemmed from the time and effort required to learn to navigate an unfamiliar program and, likewise, the time required to input coding, regardless of the assistance of the *dramaturge*. The extent to which coding depletes time-resources has long been known to qualitative researchers, and has been noted elsewhere. See, again, Goble *et. al.*, who note that 'Adding coding to … [a] project not only added a step in the analysis, it [can be] … very time consuming, particularly for users who are not intimately familiar with [programs such as NVivo]' (2012: 10).

Other hindrances have been technical: it transpired that the file-format used to record *Sisters of the Sun* was not compatible with the version of NVivo we were using when the film was made, and re-formatting and breaking it into manageable pieces for use within the program proved to be too lengthy a process to be viable (this problem has since been resolved, but warrants mention here since, for a short time, it seemed insurmountable).

Finally, and most saliently, it might be that there is a disjuncture between NVivo and the particular mindset of creative arts practitioners, insofar as they may feel that their link to craft is threatened by the sort of collaboration and connectedness that NVivo implies. However, as Paul Carter argues, this needn't be the case:

> Robert Morris's point that, considered as processes, "the artificiality of media-based distinctions (painting, sculpture, dance, etc.) fall away" is valid, but shouldn't imply a weakening of the craft base informing these different practices. In my view, the important work is done at the surfaces between adjacent disciplines. This is true even (and perhaps especially) where art forms are notionally multi-disciplinary (music theatre productions would be a case in point, museum installation practice another). As for purer forms of creative expression, they, too, prove on closer inspection to be a turbulent jostling for position of different material

behaviours. It is the discourse between these that animates, amplifies and creates the place of the work. (2004: 178)

NVivo, we suggest, has great potential for making connections across and within the multi-disciplinary and 'purer' art forms of 'Flows & Catchments' without any 'weakening of the craft base.'

Despite the slow uptake of NVivo by 'Flows & Catchments' practitioners thus far, there are strong indications that its potential will eventually come to be realised. Its suggested use has in several cases led to an active recognition (especially by 'Flows & Catchments' photographer Rozalind Drummond) that simply labelling individual projects under a common banner does not, in and of itself, constitute genuine collaboration. The importance of this cannot be overstated: recognising that a problem exists is the first necessary step towards overcoming it.

When NVivo was first shown to Simon Wilmot, the director of *Sisters of the Sun*, he was excited about its potential for use as a kind of editing-suite: a platform where film could be annotated and documented for both research and teaching purposes. Now that the technical problems outlined above have been remedied, it is hoped that this will soon be the case. But there is a further point to make here. Pointing towards the parallels between NVivo and craft-based approaches like Simon's might be an essential heuristic step in creating enthusiasm around engaging with NVivo as the entry point to stronger sub-project collaborations.

5. Conclusion: Moving Forward

NVivo is our proposed solution for how our case study—the 'Flows & Catchments' suite of sub-project enquiries—might instigate the move from ecological creativity to an ecology of well-being. It is hoped that 'Flows & Catchments' will change and develop from a collection of discreet yet related sub-projects into genuinely collaborative research, and in so doing facilitate the kind of rich community connections that James Dawson anticipates, and about which Spinoza and Gilles Deleuze theorise.

Thinking on a somewhat broader and more abstract level, a related function of the NVivo approach we have outlined can be summarised thus: to strike a balance between potentially chaotic creative experiences–such as those epitomised in the process notes at the outset of this paper–and the desired outcome of a model for facilitating well-being as an aspect of ecological creativity. In this regard, it is vital not to fall into a normative or overly prescriptive model of well-being based, for example, on didactic art-making, or to surrender to the potential chaos of creative practice.

Acknowledgements

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