

Deleuze, Simondon, and Disability:
A Transcendental-Empirical Approach to Disability
and Disability Studies

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ABSTRACT

This study looks at disability, disability research, and the of field Disability Studies in terms of processes productive of representation. Via the philosophy of Gilles Deleuze and Gilbert Simondon it makes the case that, in terms of these process, disability is in excess of representation, in a permanent state of becoming. Following this logic there is no single way of understanding disability. The study applies this logic to disability research and the field of Disability Studies, arguing that, in terms of processes effective of representation, disability research is in a constant state of becoming and is for this reason irreducible to any single methodology.

Attending to conditions for experience as Deleuze and Simondon understand them, the study makes a transcendental-empirical approach to disability, disability research and the field of Disability Studies, looking, from Deleuzian and Simondonian points of view, to processes productive of the empirical. In this way the study makes a critique of representation. The study shows that while disability cannot be without representation, in terms of processes productive of representation, disability is in a constant state of becoming that impacts upon disability research. The study makes the case for an affective (force-related) orientation to disability and disability research, foregrounding conditions for experience and the becoming of experience.

Turning to Spinoza, Nietzsche and Foucault via Deleuze and Simondon, the study shows that, understood in terms of force relations, affect is in excess of representation. Theorising the ‘affective becoming’ of disability and disability research, the study argues that disability research must be attuned to force relations that encompass experience and the field of Disability Studies. Attending to conditions for representation, we are poised to address the becoming of research and the impact of research on people with disability.

Articulating the ‘affective becoming’ of disability, disability research and the field of Disability Studies, the study brings Deleuzian and Simondonian concepts into relation with ethics, social and political action. Taking up Deleuze’s understanding of desire and Simondon’s notion of the transindividual, the study shows how the personal is political and how transcendental empiricism bears on ethics, social and political action. The case is made that while such action cannot be without representation, conditions for representation are irreducible to what they produce. From this point of view the becoming of the social and the political encompasses the experiential. Attending to the experiential dimensions of social and political action, we are poised to address what the field of Disability Studies may become.

DECLARATION

I certify that this work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in my name, in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text. In addition, I certify that no part of this work will, in the future, be used in a submission in my name, for any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution without the prior approval of the University of Adelaide and where applicable, any partner institution responsible for the joint award of this degree. The author acknowledges that copyright of published works contained within the thesis resides with the copyright holder(s) of those works. I give permission for the digital version of my thesis to be made available on the web, via the University's digital research repository, the Library Search and also through web search engines, unless permission has been granted by the University to restrict access for a period of time. I acknowledge the support I have received for my research through the provision of an Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship.

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Dedicated to the memory of Jennifer Lila Gray, Mim Edwards, and to the arrival of Michaela ‘Tooty’ Edwards-O’Keefe.

Big love to my legendary nephew, Ethan.

I have done my best.

ABBREVIATIONS AND NOTES

Gilles Deleuze

- (B) *Bergsonism*. translated by Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam, Zone Books, [1966] 1991.
- (DI) *Desert Islands and Other Texts—1953-1974*. translated by Michael Taormina, Semiotext(e) [2002], 2004.
- (DR) *Difference and Repetition*. translated by Paul Patton, Bloomsbury, [1968] 2015.
- (ECC) *Essays Critical and Clinical*. translated by Daniel W. Smith and Michael A. Greco, Verso, [1993] 1998.
- (EPS) *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*. translated by Martin Joughin, Zone Books, [1968] 1992.
- (F) *Foucault*. translated by Seán Hand, Bloomsbury, [1986] 2006.
- (LS) *The Logic of Sense*. translated by Mark Lester and Charles Stivale, Bloomsbury, [1969] 2013.
- (NP) *Nietzsche and Philosophy*. translated by Hugh Tomlinson, Bloomsbury, [1962] 2013.
- (PI) *Pure Immanence: Essays on a Life*. translated by Anne Boyman, Zone Books, [1995] 2005.
- (PS) *Proust and Signs: The Complete Text*. translated by Richard Howard, Bloomsbury, [1964, 1970, 1972] 2008.

Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari

- (AO) *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. translated by Robert Hurley, Mark Seem and Helen R. Lane, Penguin, [1972] 2009.
- (K) *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*. translated by Dana Polan. University of Minnesota Press, [1975] 2016.
- (ATP) *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. translated by Brian Massumi, Bloomsbury, [1980] 2013.
- (WP) *What is Philosophy?* translated by Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchell, Columbia University Press, [1991] 1994.

Gilles Deleuze with Claire Parnet

- (D) *Dialogues*. translated by Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam, Columbia University Press, [1977] 1987.

Michel Foucault

- (AK) *The Archaeology of Knowledge*. translated by A.M. Sheridan Smith, Routledge, [1969] 2002.
- (BB) *The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the College de France 1978-1979*. translated by Graham Burchell, Palgrave Macmillan, [2004] 2010.
- (BC) *Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception*. translated by A.M. Sheridan Smith, Vintage, [1963] 1994.
- (EEWI) *Ethics—Subjectivity and Truth: Essential Works of Foucault 1954-84, Volume One*. translated by Robert Hurley and others, Penguin, [1994] 2020.
- (HM) *History of Madness*. translated by Johnathan Murphy and Jean Khalifa, Routledge, [1961] 2009.
- (OT) *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*. translator not listed, Routledge, [1966] 2002.
- (PK) *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977*. translated by Leo Marshall, Colin Gordon, John Mepham and Kate Soper, Vintage, 1980.
- (WK) *The Will to Knowledge: The History of Sexuality, Volume One*. translated by Robert Hurley, Penguin, [1976] 2008.

Immanuel Kant

- (CPR) *Critique of Pure Reason, Unified Edition*. translated by Werner S. Pluhar, Hackett Publishing, [1781, 1787] 1996.

Friedrich Nietzsche

- (Db) *Daybreak: Thoughts on the Prejudices of Morality*. translated by R.J. Hollingdale, Cambridge University Press, [1881] 1997.
- (GM) *On the Genealogy of Morality and Other Writings*. translated by Carol Diethe, 3rd ed., Cambridge University Press, [1887] 2017.
- (GS) *The Gay Science—with a Prelude in German Rhymes and an Appendix of Songs*. translated by Josefine Naukhoff and Adrian Del Caro, Cambridge University Press, [1887] 2001.

Gilbert Simondon

(*ILNFI*) *Individuation in Light of Notions of Form and Information*. translated by Taylor Adkins, University of Minnesota Press, [1954, 1989] 2020.

(*METO*) *On the Mode of Existence of Technical Objects*. translated by Cecile Malaspina and John Rogove, Minnesota University Press, [1958] 2017.

Spinoza

(*E*) *Ethics*. translated by Edwin Curley, Penguin, [1677] 1996.

Abbreviations (as they appear in the Curley translation, with minor changes. Every effort has been made to render the abbreviations legible throughout this study.)

A- Axiom

P- Proposition

D- Definition

Dem- Demonstration

C- Corollary

Schol- Scholium

Exp- Explanation

L- Lemma

Post- Postulate

Pref- Preface

(Roman numerals refer to the chapters: I, II, etc.)

Note on citations and referencing: MLA 8 is reserved for lists of works cited. Otherwise, Harvard in-text is used for ease of reference.

Note: Following the UK ‘social model’ of disability, a distinction is made between biophysical impairment and its social effects. However, unless otherwise indicated, throughout this study the terms ‘disability’ and ‘disablement’ should be understood to include impairment.

CHAPTER 1

“Writing”, Deleuze remarks, “is a question of becoming, always incomplete, always in the midst of being formed, and goes beyond the matter of any livable or lived experience” (*ECC* 1). This study is a means of conceptualising becoming and is framed in terms of critique of representation. It is inspired by work I have undertaken previously,¹ applying Deleuzian notions of becoming to writing and autoethnography. Writing one’s experience of disability, I have argued, is a means of articulating the irreducibility of experience to established representations of disability and impairment.² Living with disability, one does not always encounter it as a ‘thing’ toward which one is faced; rather, it is something one *lives through* and *becomes with*. This approach is applicable to the field of Disability Studies, which, from the point of view of lived experience of disability, and through such experience, is irreducible to established representations. The study looks to conditions for experience and representation. It applies Deleuzian and Simondonian ideas of genesis to disability and disability research, making a critique of representation applicable to them. It shows that while representation is unavoidable and indeed necessary to understandings of disablement, in terms of conditions for representation, disability is in excess of representation. The case is made that disability is more than representational, that while representation is essential to understandings of disability, it can obscure the changing affects and effects of disablement. Seen from the point of view of conditions for representation, disability is in a constant state of becoming. In this way representations of disability remain in process. It follows from this that disability experience is processual and irreducible to existing representations.

Looking to the experiential dimensions of research (how research is encountered) and how research is practised, the case can be made that disability research is in a constant state of becoming. Just as experience is processual, research remains in process. How disability is researched, and how people encounter disability research, changes. To understand the processual nature of experience and how experience is subject to change, we must look to conditions for experience. Doing so, we encounter disability in terms of its irreducibility to representation. To say that disability is irreducible to representation does not mean that there cannot be representations of disability—it means that disability cannot be reduced to existing representations. Following Deleuze and Simondon in looking to conditions for representation,

¹ As an undergraduate.

² Following the UK ‘social model’ of disability, a distinction is made between biophysical impairment and its social effects (see below). However, unless otherwise indicated, throughout this study the terms ‘disability’ and ‘disablement’ should be understood to include impairment.

we find that representation is processual and subject to change. Bringing their processual understanding of representation to disability research and the field of Disability Studies, the study foregrounds the processual dimensions of disability experience and disability research. It shows that while representation is necessary to disability, and while experience of disability is unavoidably representational, like experience, representation remains in process. Remaining sensitive to conditions for representation, and looking at disability from the point of view of these conditions, we see that it is irreducible to established representations. The very creation of concepts depends on processes that encompass representation. There is, this study argues, a becoming of disability research in excess of existing representations. Remaining sensitive to conditions for representation, we are poised to address the becoming of experience and the impact it has on disability research. What this study addresses, what it conceptualises, are conditions for experience and representation on which the field Disability Studies depends.

Having encountered Disability Studies through life writing, I present it at the outset in terms of a Deleuzo-Proustian ‘apprenticeship to signs’. I do so to address the relevance of the present work to Literary Studies—the field in which, from a disciplinary standpoint, I am currently situated. While it does not address Literary Studies specifically, and while it does not pursue disability in terms of literary representation, this study is applicable to Literary Studies in so far as representation, and representations of disability, remain to be theorised.³ Like experience, the very act of writing remains in process. Writing does not simply conform to established meanings and representations, rather, it creates them. To understand the creation of representation and its literary significance, we must attend to conditions for representation. This logic can also be applied to interpretation. How we interpret literary texts is subject to change and changing conditions of encounter. My own encounters with the field of Disability Studies have brought me to argue the case for a reappraisal of its representative capacities and how it represents people with disability. I have had to ask, How does this field represent me? What I have found is that Disability Studies rarely speaks to my experience or to the becoming of experience itself. I do not dismiss the field on this count, nor would I seek to reduce it to my experience. I simply note that what inspired this study is my own frustration at representation and what I consider Disability Studies’ failure to account for conditions for representation. What I submit is that disability experience is irreducible to representation, that Disability

³ On Deleuze in relation to literature and Literary Studies, see Buchanan and Marks (eds.) (2000), and Bogue (2003).

Studies can account for this irreducibility by means of a *transcendental empiricism* that encompasses conditions for experience.

What Deleuze conceptualises in his work on Proust are the means by which experience is significant. Proust's novel, *In Search of Lost Time*, is the outcome of an apprenticeship to signs whereby the protagonist comes to know himself and the world around him. These signs are not simply given but are generated in experience in such a way as to be generative of experience.⁴ For Deleuze, signs are transcendental in so far as they are conditions for experience, and empirical in so far as they are encountered in experience. In this way signs account for the experiences particular to the protagonist of the *Search*. It is in this transcendental-empirical manner that I approach the field of Disability Studies and lived experience of disability. My encounters with Disability Studies have been an apprenticeship to signs, the outcome of which is this study.

1.1 Overview

At the outset, I want to make it clear that the critique of representation this study makes should not be conceived as rejection of representation. The very act of critiquing representation is representational. What critique of representation encompasses are the conditions for representation. What matters is how we arrive at representation. What are the causes of representation, and how can we avoid mistaking these causes for what they effect? This question pertains not only to perception vis-à-vis consciousness (how we see the world) but to social and political representation. Subjectivation is a process of representation with its own conditions and values. Taking up transcendental philosophy, which looks to the conditions for experience, has ethical significance in so far as how we understand conditions for experience informs what sorts of experience can be had. Deleuze's transcendental empiricism figures as a means of conceptualising conditions for consciousness and the representation of consciousness. While Deleuze takes his cue from such figures in Western philosophy as Immanuel Kant, David Hume and Edmund Husserl, his contemporary, Gilbert Simondon, understands critique of representation in broad terms of science and technology. While Deleuze refers to a philosophical canon and philosophical personae, Simondon more often than not refers to chemistry, biology, and processes of technological innovation.⁵ What Deleuze and

⁴ To this end Deleuze argues that what "forces us to think is the sign". "The sign is the object of an encounter, but it is precisely the contingency of the encounter that guarantees the necessity of what leads us to think. The act of thinking does not proceed from a simple natural possibility; on the contrary, it is the only true creation." (*PS* 62)

⁵ This distinction, as Deleuze and Simondon scholars will note, is somewhat tenuous. Throughout his work (and particularly in *Difference and Repetition*) Deleuze refers to biology, evolutionary science, and thermodynamics

Simondon share is a concern for conditions of genesis and how Being itself is generative. What this amounts to is an explication of processes productive of form, content and matter, and a theorisation of the genesis of representation.⁶

Understanding capacities for representation, looking at how representation is achieved, we are poised to address questions of what representation can do. The study argues that, rather than simply imposing representations on disability as if it is reducible to representation, disability research, and by extension, the field of Disability Studies, must have means of articulating conditions for representation—conditions that are in excess of what is represented. It must have ways of addressing the becoming of experience and the becoming of disability. While it remains representational, and while it must be represented, in terms of conditions for representation, and in terms of the becoming of experience, disability is in excess of representation. Looking to conditions for representation we are in a position to assess what representation is and what it can do. The study asserts that there is a problem with representation in so far as it is imposed on people with disability and in so far as it obscures the conditions on which it depends. Without attending to these conditions, without understanding representation in terms of what causes it, we struggle to address the becoming of experience and the emerging nature of disablement. Bringing critique of representation to disability and disability research, this study articulates Deleuze's generative understanding of difference along with Simondon's 'individuating' orientation to Being. As they see it, in so far as beings remain in process, and in so far as representation is processual, there are conditions on which experience and representation depend. Giving an account of conditions for representation as Deleuze and Simondon understand them, the study shows how their ideas function and how they can be applied to disability research.

While existing Deleuzian orientations to disability and disability research foreground the ethical dimensions of Deleuzian thought and how they apply to experience and representation,⁷ these orientations often fail to account for the conditions of Deleuzian thought. This study foregrounds Deleuze's philosophical lineage to show what Deleuzian concepts consist of. It engages with the history of philosophy and philosophers Deleuze made a history of. Clarifying Deleuzian concepts, showing what they consist of, the study foregrounds the theoretical

to articulate his understanding of 'dramatisation' (see for example *DR* chapters 4 and 5, and 'The Method of Dramatization' in *Desert Islands and Other Texts*), while Simondon draws from Aristotle and Kant to illustrate his critique of hylomorphism (more on this below). On these differences of method, see Voss (2020).

⁶ On this notion see Hughes (2011).

⁷ For an account of existing Deleuzian orientations to disability and disability research, see Chapter 2.

underpinnings necessary to their application. Taking up Simondon's understanding of individuation in concert with Deleuze's generative understanding of difference, it shows how Deleuze's thought intersects with Simondon's and what a Simondonian approach to disability and disability research may achieve.

The study prioritises explanation of Deleuzian and Simondonian concepts and foregrounds their lineage. With this work I make a philosophical approach to disability and disability research, bringing Deleuze and Simondon into relation with their interlocutors. It is my hope that this study will function as something of primer for disability researchers interested in applying Deleuzian and Simondonian concepts to their work. I aim to bring disability research into contact with Simondonian concepts and to articulate the finer points of Deleuze's philosophy. Prioritising philosophy, the study gives a detailed account of Deleuze's generative understanding of difference and Simondon's ontological and ethical orientation to individuation. It shows that there are conditions—conditions Deleuze and Simondon consider sub-representational—that account for experience and representations of experience.

Looking to conditions for experience, it is imperative that these conditions are not confused with what they produce. Transcendental empiricism functions on the premise that what conditions experience is irreducible to, and indeed different from, experience itself. If I experience the world in terms of forms, I should not reduce experience to established forms. Like Deleuze and Simondon I will look to conditions generative of form, conditions that are different from what they *give*.⁸ When I encounter a 'social model' of disability that posits a distinction between impairment and its social effects, I will look to conditions that make this distinction possible. Rather than assuming that matter simply 'complies' with form or that mind and matter are distinct, I will look to the genetic (generative) coordinates that underly them. Doing so I will make a transcendental-empirical approach to disability and disability research premised on the notion that how experience is understood informs what sort of experience can be had.

1.2 Background and Rubric

This study is complementary to existing Deleuzian interventions in Disability Studies (for an overview of these interventions, see Chapter 2), and works to clarify conditions of Deleuzian philosophy for their further application to disability and disability research. First and foremost

⁸ On the relation between difference and givenness and its position in Deleuze's philosophy, see Bryant (2008).

it is a work of metaphysics and transcendental philosophy, foregrounding the metaphysical and transcendental dimensions of Deleuzian and Simondonian thought. It focusses on the theoretical dimensions necessary to the practical application of this thought to disability and disability research. If disability researchers are to make use of Deleuze and Simondon, Deleuzian and Simondonian ideas must be understood with a view to their application. The study attempts to ‘paint’ that view, to facilitate practical application. It is not primarily intended as work of ‘applied Deleuzism’ or applied ‘Simondonianism’, though as a matter of course it moves in that direction. Gesturing to the application of Deleuzian and Simondonian ideas, it shows why these ideas are applicable to disability and disability research. Bringing Simondon into relation with Deleuze, the study takes advantage of the recently published translation (2020) of his doctoral thesis, *Individuation in Light of Notions of Form and Information*,⁹ the findings of which are relatively unknown to the field of Disability Studies. The study draws less extensively from Simondon’s *On the Mode of Existence of Technical Objects* (2017),¹⁰ which looks to relations between technologies and living beings. Key to the relation between the social and the individual this study theorises is Simondon’s notion of the ‘transindividual’, which “attempts to account for the systematic unity of interior (psychical) individuation and exterior (collective) individuation” (*ILNFI* 9). Simondon’s account of biophysical and psychical individuation works to counteract long-standing dualisms of mind and body that are, this study argues, incumbent upon disability research and ‘social’ conceptions of disability. The study views Deleuze’s critique of representation through the lens of transcendental empiricism to complement existing Deleuzian orientations to disability research. It does so not to replace them but to illuminate Deleuzian philosophy, referring to Deleuze’s interlocutors. It is in no way exhaustive of Deleuze’s and Simondon’s philosophies, but it applies a transcendental-empirical framework to the critique of representation that is central to their work.

Making a critique of representation, we can assess conditions of interaction between the social and the somatic. We can assess the social effects of disability and test the validity of social conceptions of disablement that rely on a distinction between biophysical impairment and its social effects (see Chapter 2). Taking up Simondon’s notion of the transindividual, the case is made that the biophysical is psychosocial. While distinctions between the somatic and the

⁹ This text has been published in its original French at different times and in different forms. The first section, known in English as ‘Physical Individuation’, was originally published as *L’individu et sa genèse physico-biologique* in 1954. The second section, *L’Individuation psychique et collective*, known in English as ‘The Individuation of Living Beings’, was published in 1989.

¹⁰ *Du mode d’existence des objets techniques* (1958).

social are practical, they obscure the imbrication of the somatic and the social on which experience depends. By looking to conditions for representation, we can assess to what extent emphases on social effects of impairment obscure the ‘always-already’ social situation of impairment.

From a Simondonian perspective we can look to conditions that underly the social and articulate their relation to the individual (person). Taking this approach, I avoid where possible terminology that I believe can inhibit the refinement of concepts. The study acknowledges the utility of such terms as ‘poststructuralism’, ‘posthumanism’ and ‘postmodernism’ in so far as they are associated with the field of Disability Studies,¹¹ but it works to articulate concepts and conditions that underly them. It is my contention that terminology borrowed from philosophy and Cultural Studies is too often applied through the field of Disability Studies without precaution or necessary understanding. Such is my experience. Second to this I contend that while defining the field of Disability Studies in terms of different methodologies can be illuminating,¹² it can also obscure concepts. I understand my own approach to disability research to be one that puts philosophy first, while I also acknowledge that this prioritisation is typological. My educational background is not in sociology or disability research, but in Continental philosophy and Literary Studies. If it must be noted, I have ample experience living with disability, and it is this experience that brought me to the field of Disability Studies.

Coming to Disability Studies via disciplines that are (at least historically) exterior to it, I recognise an ambivalence (most attributable in my estimation to UK Disability Studies but by no means reducible to it) to interventions in the field by people working outside of sociology or between sociology and other disciplines. There is an existing tension, largely academic in nature, between those who acknowledge and endorse the application of concepts associated with Continental philosophy to disability research (those who acknowledge a practical and ethical combination of the two), and those who contest this application.¹³ As I see it, if this application is to be contested, it must first be understood. When Michael Oliver speaks of “post-structuralist and postmodernist theories” and their application to disability research, he submits that “[a]part from the fact that few people could understand them and their relevance, they have

¹¹ On postmodernism and poststructuralism in relation to disability and Disability Studies, see Shakespeare and Corker (eds.) (2002); on the posthuman in relation to disability, see Braidotti and Roets (2012).

¹² See for example Goodley (2017), and Shakespeare (2014). Note that I acknowledge the utility of this approach and do not reject it. Chapter 2 makes use of it to clarify different methodologies constitutive of Disability Studies.

¹³ See for example Meekosha and Shuttleworth (2009), and Vehmas and Watson (2014).

failed to provide any socially useful knowledge that could be used in improving policy or service development for disabled people” (2009: 9). In my view not only does Oliver make light of his misgivings, he makes mockery of the very field he means to further. My position is not that one must subscribe to ideas associated (often problematically) with poststructuralism and postmodernism (the latter term now tending toward historical curiosity), but that one should understand them before judging their utility. Oliver’s own application of Marxian and Marxist ideas to disability research fails to address correlations between Marx, Marxism and Continental philosophy, a situation that is in my view detrimental to his understanding of social models of disability (see Chapter 2).

Regardless of whether one endorses or ultimately rejects the approach to disability and disability research this study makes, I hope the approach itself is clear. Rather than putting terminology before explanation, it is better to address what terminology is intended to explain. Following Whitehead, Deleuze remarks that “the abstract does not explain, but must itself be explained” (*D* vii). Transcendental empiricism works to explain conditions that underly experience—conditions that are abstract within experience. A transcendental-empirical approach to disability and disability research works to assess conditions by which and through which people with disability (and others of course) encounter disability research, and to assess conditions of categorisation that constitute the field of Disability Studies. We should ask, for instance, to what extent categories are applicable to lived experience of disability—not to reject them out of hand but to assess their utility. When researchers in the field make use of a social-relational conception of disability (See chapters 2 and 4), we should ask under what conditions such relations are possible. Similarly, when a strategic distinction between mind and body is used to describe conditions of experience, we should ask if this distinction can explain the conditions it posits (chapters 2 and 4). From an ethical perspective we can ask not only *who* is the subject that Disability Studies addresses, but *what* are the conditions that subjectivation is premised upon. These questions are applicable to transcendental-empirical critique and warrant an investigation of transcendental empiricism.

1.3 Ontology and Ethics

The fundamental argument behind this study is that how experience is understood informs what experience can be had. We can also put it that how disability research is understood informs what it can do. This Spinozist perspective (see Chapter 5) is premised on the notion that the nature of Being (what Being is) informs what beings can do. It is in this way that ontology and ethics are related. How representation is understood informs what sort of representation can be

had. Transcendental empiricism is associated with ethics in so far as how Being is understood informs the representation of Being and beings. From here we can ask, How might disability research best represent people with disability, and how should we conceptualise the diversity of disability? Deleuze's understanding of difference is not one that simply celebrates diversity but one that posits difference as the sufficient reason of diversity. This means that difference is the cause of diversity. From his genetic (generative) account of difference, Deleuze turns to the ethical dimensions of diversity. This entails the question, How best can we account for diversity when it is the outcome of difference? This study argues that, because disability is essentially different¹⁴ (difference being generative in nature), disability research must be capable of accounting for the diversity that difference makes. Along these lines the study argues that both disability experience and disability research are irreducible to representation, that the very meaning of disablement is always becoming. This should not be taken to mean that representation should be abandoned—as if this were possible—but that the conditions for representation must be examined, and examined from an ontogenetic, transcendental-empirical perspective.

Rather than reducing disability to a set of representative values, disability research should articulate disablement in such a way as to acknowledge its being in excess of representation. It may be claimed that this is impossible—that by its very nature disability is representational. However, transcendental empiricism shows that Being is always in excess of beings, that sense is in excess of what it *gives*. In this way, and to borrow from a Spinozist adage, we do not know all of what disability research can do; nor can we know the extent of disability experience. It may be argued that the critique of representation this study makes imposes a kind of quietism on disability research with the rejection of representation—but this is not the case. The study does not reject representation but looks to its becoming. The 'irreducible' nature of becoming is such that politics always remains open, for better and worse. It also means that, in terms of experiential qualities and how it changes experience, disability is always becoming. This brings politics into relation with experience and renders the field of Disability Studies an *affective* (force-related and change-making) *body of becoming*.

In my own experiences with Disability Studies, I have found the field to be saddening and debilitating—though not exclusively. When it is posited that disability is necessarily oppressive, or that disability simply equals oppression (see Chapter 2),¹⁵ I have to ask if this

¹⁴ Here I do not mean that disability is essentially *other*, but that difference is essential to diversity.

¹⁵ See for example Abberley (1987).

has been my experience. I do not do this simply to impose my own experience on disability research *per se*, but to bring into relief the diversity of disability experience and to highlight the affective (force-related) capacities of disability research. Though there is an historical correlation between disability, oppression and exclusion,¹⁶ disability experience is in no way reducible to oppression and exclusion. The sheer diversity of disability means that it is irreducible to oppression, and that where oppression exists, it is relative to conditions of disablement (biophysical and otherwise). I have found that disability research is often premised (implicitly or otherwise) on a ubiquitous disability oppression—a situation I find exhausting and demoralising. Again, I do not submit that disability oppression does not exist, I simply note that disability is irreducible to oppression. Contrary to this ‘monologic’, ethics encompasses experience in an immanent fashion whereby experience is irreducible to *transcendent* valuations. From this perspective we should not look for values beyond experience but look to define them within experience. This may seem to contradict transcendental empiricism, which looks to conditions for experience; but it is not the task of transcendental empiricism as Deleuze and Simondon understand it to impose values from outside of experience—as if this were possible—but to assess conditions by which values are constituted in experience. For both Deleuze and Simondon the transcendental is not transcendent to what it determines but different from what it determines. We can put it that in order for there to be representation there must be conditions for representation, conditions that are different from representation. If experience is irreducible to representation, then is in a constant state of becoming—one that demands an ethical and immanent valuation.

Aligned in this way, disability research and the field of Disability Studies would work to articulate and to respond to conditions for experience. Normative valuations (what ought to be done about disability and conditions people with disability face) needn’t be abandoned. They may be brought into relation with the ‘concrete richness’ of disability experience.

1.4 The Transindividual, Difference, and Individuation

The task of this study is to clarify Deleuze and Simondon’s ideas for their application to disability and disability research. It begins (Chapter 2) with an introduction to the field of Disability Studies that works to situate the argument that disability is irreducible categorisation, that disability research can account for this irreducibility through a transcendental-empirical approach to conditions for representation. The course of this study can be characterised in terms

¹⁶ See Snyder and Mitchell (2006).

of movement from ontogenesis to its ethical dimensions. This movement shows that if beings are the result of processes, then an ethics that looks to the relation between what Being is, what beings are and what they can do, will be ongoing and therefore irreducible to representation. To say that this ethics is irreducible to representation does not mean that it cannot be representational but that the becoming it encompasses is in excess of representation. From here it may be posited that disability research is irreducible to the categories that constitute the field of Disability Studies, that the field should embrace this irreducibility to complement its own becoming.

The study argues the disability research can be taken up with a view to ontogenesis and ontogenetic philosophy. Ontogenesis concerns Being (what and how Being is) and beings (what and how beings are). It shows that beings are the result of genetic (generative) processes. Ontogenetic philosophy theorises genesis, encompassing both science and metaphysics to articulate Being and the becoming of beings. This study complements existing Deleuzian interventions in disability research, applying Simondon's understanding of individuation to disability and disability research. It makes use of Simondon's concept of the 'transindividual'. With this concept Simondon shows that there is energy in excess of the individual. If the individual (what we understand to be individual—say, a person or subject) is the result of processes of individuation, for Simondon, these processes do not end with the individual but effect (and affect) its relations with other individuals. There is then a kind of collective or 'transindividual' energy productive of individuation. This energy pervades individuals. Simondon sees that the psyche is the result not only of biophysical individuation but of collective or transpersonal individuation.¹⁷

Taking up Simondon's notion of the transindividual, the study counters distinctions between impairment and disability (where disability is understood to be a social effect of impairment) to articulate the 'always-already' social situation of impairment. Just as, from a Simondonian perspective, experience is never separate from collectivity, impairment, so this study argues, is never completely distinct from sociality. From this perspective experience is never distinctly individual but operatively *transindividual*. Following Simondon the argument can be made that impairment is immanent with the social and that social effects of impairment are immanent with experience. This notion puts disability research in immanent relation with experience, and

¹⁷ For commentary on Simondon's notion of the transindividual, see Combes (2012), and Scott (2014).

renders the field of Disability Studies an affective (force-related and change-making) body of becoming.

Coupled with Deleuze's understanding of difference as the cause of diversity (the very producer of diversity), the field of Disability Studies can be understood as a 'body' determined by difference and productive of diversity. This body would eschew any 'monologic' of disability experience and would work to articulate the diversity that difference makes. That disability experience is diverse does not mean that experiences are not comparable or opposable but that they are in excess of what any body of knowledge can apply to them. Along these lines the study does not seek to render disability research distinctly Deleuzian or Simondonian but to further the becoming of disability research and the field of Disability Studies. While it works to clarify Deleuze and Simondon's philosophies for their application to disability and disability research, it does not seek to reduce them to Deleuzian or Simondonian concepts. What Deleuze and Simondon share is a transcendental-empirical perspective on Being and beings, one that works to conceptualise conditions for experience.

While Deleuze understands ontogenesis (the generation of beings) in terms of *difference*, Simondon looks to *individuation*. Deleuze does not ignore or reject individuation but posits individuation in relation with difference. Simondon does not reject difference as Deleuze understands it. It is more the case that individuation in Simondon's philosophy is the cause of diversity. With his concept of *difference-in-itself*, Deleuze sees that difference is not *between* things but *in* things (see *DR* chapter 1). For Deleuze, difference in its genetic (generative) capacity is productive of representation, which means that difference comes before representation. We can put it that two things are not simply different according to the difference between them, but on account of the difference that *makes* them. Generative difference is *internal* to things, while representational difference is *outside* them and *between* them. To make the case for internal difference, in *Difference and Repetition* Deleuze looks to the history of the concept of difference, arguing against the reducibility of difference to representation.

Like Deleuze, Simondon makes a critique of representation, but by referring to the concept of *hylomorphism*. In ancient Greek the term *hylō* denotes matter, while *morphē* denotes form (Chabot 2013: 75). Hylomorphism is the concept according to which matter is understood simply to conform to form.¹⁸ Simondon uses the example of the brick to show that matter (in this case, clay) and form (the form of the brick) do not simply meet on something like a 'one-

¹⁸ As Pascal Chabot makes clear, according to the principle of hylomorphism, "[f]orm is the determining and specifying principle that transforms matter" (2013: 75).

to-one' basis, but that matter and form are *informed* by *generative* processes. Simondon holds that the “relation between form and matter [...] does not take place between inert matter and a form coming from outside”, but that “there is a common operation that is on the level of existence as matter and form”. What causes matter and form to generate is “*force*”, where force accounts for the production of the brick (*ILNFI* 26, italics in text). What Simondon means to highlight is the commonly excluded middle responsible for matter and form—in other words, the process productive of matter and form. In understanding this process, we bring into relief the generative processes productive of beings.

Simondon does not limit his critique of hylomorphism to conditions of the physical but uses it to approach the transcendental. He underscores the hylomorphic relation implicit to Kantian idealism whereby the world of perception is understood to conform to innate categories of understanding (see *CPR* B106). Simondon shows that from a hylomorphic perspective perception merely conforms to form—a situation that leaves out conditions for form (see *ILNFI* 292-293). Simondon finds that Kant *traces* conditions for experience from what is experienced, thereby failing to account for conditions for experience. Here Simondon is close to Deleuze, Deleuze arguing that Kant had traced “the so-called transcendental structures [of perception] from the empirical acts of a psychological consciousness” (*DR* 179). As Deleuze and Simondon see it, Kant begins his analysis *from* experience, linking it back to conditions for experience in a way that makes the transcendental resemble the experiential. Counter to this, the task of transcendental empiricism as Deleuze and Simondon understand it is to account for the genetic (generative) conditions for empirical consciousness. Deleuze therefore eschews Kant’s conditions for *possible* experience (innate categories of understanding) to bring into relief *real* conditions for experience.

As Deleuze sees it, “[e]verything changes once we determine the conditions of real experience, which are not larger than the conditioned and which differ in kind from the categories” (*DR* 85). To say that the conditions of real experience are not larger than the conditioned means that conditions for experience are not *more than* (in the sense of being greater than) what is experienced. Deleuze does not deny that experience has conditions, his point is that conditions for experience are irreducible to forms of experience. His argument is not that we do not experience the world in terms of forms, but that forms obscure the conditions on which they depend. For Deleuze, ‘everything changes’ when we pursue real conditions for experience—conditions that are irreducible to what is experienced. From Deleuze’s (and Simondon’s) transcendental-empirical perspective, experience is irreducible to form. Again,

this is not to say that forms do not exist or that we do not experience the world in terms of form. It means that conditions for experience are irreducible to form and better understood in terms of processes productive of form.

From here I submit that everything changes, at least from a theoretical standpoint, when disability experience is considered irreducible to form. I do not argue that disability experience does not engage with forms (forms of oppression, forms of exclusion, also, forms of liberation and joy), rather, my argument is that disability experience—indeed experience itself—is irreducible to forms. One aspect of transcendental empiricism, one way it may be applied, is through the creation of concepts that articulate emerging conditions of disability experience and how disability is experienced in the *here and now*—the here and now being here and now by virtue of processes in excess of it. From an ethical standpoint, transcendental empiricism works to relate conditions for experience to the *becoming* of experience. These conditions are not transcendent to experience but *immanent with it* (albeit different in kind).

1.5 Subjectivation and Processual Subjectivity

From a position of immanence, subject/object relations cannot simply be taken as given but must be assessed according to the relations that constitute them. In terms of their becoming these relations are *affective* (force-related and change-making) in nature. The conditions of ‘pure’ immanence are such that immanence, as Deleuze writes, “does not depend on an object or belong to a subject” (*PI* 26). Here immanence serves as a kind of transcendental background through which subjects and objects emerge.¹⁹ *With* immanence, subjectivity is processual and should be understood in terms of processes of subjectivation. From a processual perspective, subjectivity is an *event* constituted by relations that are ongoing and irreducible to synthesis.²⁰ What this means is that the ego (Self or ‘I’) should not be taken for granted, or simply as given, but must be assessed in terms of the *singular* conditions productive of it.

Like Deleuze (and Deleuze and Guattari), Simondon associates subjectivity with processes irreducible to form. For Simondon, the ego (Self or ‘I’) is the result of transcendental (conditioning) individuation and experiential individualisation. He sees that the “opposition of the empirical subject and the transcendental subject overlaps that of the subject reached *here and now*” (*ILNFI* 293, italics in text). This means that transcendental (conditioning) coordinates exist in *affective* (change-making) relation with experience. These coordinates

¹⁹ For an account of Deleuze’s understanding of immanence and the role it plays in his philosophy, see de Beistegui (2012).

²⁰ On role of the event in Deleuze’s philosophy, see Bowden (2011).

should not be understood in terms of forms transcendent to experience but as conditions immanent with experience (albeit different from what is experienced).²¹ Put simply, for both Deleuze and Simondon the subject is always *under construction*. As they see it, subjectivation is the effect of different ‘economies’, libidinal, political, and socio-material in nature.

Before addressing this situation in his work with Guattari, Deleuze made a study of Spinoza’s compositional understanding of subject formation (see Chapter 5), this understanding being implicit to the *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* collaborative project. For Spinoza, beings are effects of processes in excess of them. Contrary to a common misconception (addressed in Chapter 5), Spinoza does not see that beings are determined once and for all but that they are determined by and determining of relations irreducible to transcendent ends. Spinoza gives an account of conditions of Being and for beings and the means by which we may understand them. Deleuze and Guattari apply a similar orientation to their *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* project, looking to conditions of desire. Following Spinoza, they maintain that desire is constitutive of beings and their affective (force-related and change-making) capacities.

Articulating a ‘schizoanalytic’²² approach to disability and disability research, chapters 5 and 6 brings into relief *affective* (force-related and change-making) capacities of disability research. Disability research should be (and I believe is) oriented to questions not only of what can and should be done for people with disability, but questions of what people with disability desire from disability research and what they desire for themselves. Regardless of one’s physical or intellectual capacities, one always desires.²³ What I desire from disability research is a means of acknowledging and articulating the diversity of disability experience and means of avoiding any ‘monologic’ that works (inadvertently or otherwise) to reduce disability to established forms.

From a transcendental-empirical perspective, sense is always becoming. In his *Logic of Sense*, Deleuze theorises the production of meaning and finds that sense is irreducible to meaning. For Deleuze, sense is generative of meaning so as to be in excess of it. Following Deleuze, the

²¹ As Simondon scholars will note, immanence *as* Substance has a problematic status in his philosophy. This is addressed in Chapter 5.

²² I do not employ this term unaware of the offence it may cause to those who experience schizoaffective disorder. However, it should be noted that Deleuze and Guattari understand by the term ‘schizophrenia’ a process irreducible to schizophrenic *disorder*. As they have it, schizophrenia does not simply denote a psychiatric condition but encompasses the what they call ‘desiring-production’. Along these lines, the analysis of desire is ‘schizoanalytic’ in nature (see *AO* 379).

²³ This is not to say that disability research cannot or should not address individuals effectively or otherwise unconscious. What it might address are the desires of those affected by and responsible for individuals in this condition.

study shows that disability and disability experience are always becoming and therefore irreducible to established meanings. Taking up Deleuze's conception of sense, we see that knowledge of disability depends on conditions of formation. Chapter 7 articulates Foucault's ontogenetic understanding of knowledge formation to show that knowledge is the effect of power. Power for Foucault is not simply the power one *has*, but the power one *is*. Foucault uses this understanding of power to theorise relations of knowledge. As he sees it, understanding what power is, we can assess the kinds of power we are subject to, and the kinds of power we are capable of.²⁴ Bringing Foucault's conception of power/knowledge relations to disability and disability research, the study shows that knowledge is irreducible to representation in so far as it is constantly becoming.

1.6 Politics and Representation

If the field of Disability Studies can be construed as a body of *affective becoming*, it must be irreducible to any one representation. This does not mean that it cannot be representational, it means that in order to encompass the becoming of what it represents, it must be conceived as irreducible to any one representation. We will understand this better when we acknowledge that movements (social and political—for example, women's movements, LGBT+ movements) are formed by individuals with various agendas and desires, who come together to petition for and to enact social and political change.²⁵ In this way representation has a *function* and is irreducible to any single participant or group member. There are indeed many ways that LGBT+ agendas, for example, overlap with disability agendas, racial equality agendas, and so forth. Experience shows that we are not all the same, that we often experience what is ostensibly the same in diverse ways. Difference is, therefore, common among us and is, following Deleuze, that by which the given is given.²⁶ Turning to policy development and service implementation we should look to the diversities they effect, and differences constitutive of them. In so far as disability is in excess of representation, policy development must encompass its own becoming. In like fashion, service implementation should be

²⁴ Foucault argues that the “individual is an effect of power, and at the same time, or precisely to the extent to which it is that effect, it is the element of its articulation”. Thus, the “individual which power has constituted is at the same time its vehicle” (PK 98).

²⁵ On Deleuzian approaches to feminism, see Buchanan and Colebrook (eds.) (2000), Braidotti (2011), and Stark (2016).

²⁶ For an account of difference in its relational capacities and how these capacities bear on social and political action, see Bignall (2011).

understood to be contingent on difference in so far as difference is generative. These principles will help articulate the diversity of experience, and the becoming of experience.

Seen from a Simondonian perspective, social and political action is predicated on a ‘transindividuality’ in excess of individuals.²⁷ For Simondon, what brings people together to form social and political groups is the constantly individuating energy constitutive of them. From this point of view group formation is in excess of representation, in a state of becoming. For Simondon, psychosocial development correlates with group individuation, which means that the individual is always the effect of group relations.²⁸ Understood this way, groups are not simply representational but maintain a ‘pre-individual’ energy necessary to the individuation (or the becoming) of individuals. There are, then, prior to any particular social or political group, conditions for them. The task of a transcendental-empirical approach to group formation, policy development and service implementation will be to articulate conditions (transcendental in nature) for these things.

1.7 Chapter Synopses

As Simondon sees it, sociology tends to overlook conditions for the social.²⁹ In this way it fails to account for how the *given is given*. By bringing transcendental philosophy into relation with disability and disability research, the study looks to conditions for the social, and articulates an onto-ethical orientation to disability. Onto-ethics looks to what Being is and what beings can do. It also shows that how experience is understood informs what sort of experience can be had. By showing how conditions for experience are theorised by Deleuze and Simondon, the study makes an ontological approach to ethical dimensions of experientiality, bringing conditions of Being into relation with experience and showing how conditions for experience impact on what beings can do.

After giving an historical account of disability research and the field of Disability Studies (including an overview of existing Deleuzian and DeleuzoGuattarian interventions), Chapter 2

²⁷ On the transindividual in relation to social and political action, see Read (2016), Morfino (2015), and Balibar (2020).

²⁸ “[T]he psychosocial personality is contemporaneous with the genesis of the group, which is an individuation” (*ILNFI* 333).

²⁹ “Sociologism [...] misrecognizes the characteristic relation of social life [...] by substantializing the social based on exteriority instead of recognizing the relational character of social activity” (*ILNFI* 330). What this means is that, as Simondon sees it, sociology posits the social simply *between* individuals and in terms of a relation *exterior to* individuals, rather than looking to the genetic (generative) conditions that underly the social. For Simondon, that which constitutes the social is prior to and in excess of the individual—passing through individuals.

introduces transcendental empiricism by showing that impairment is ‘always-already’ social and therefore irreducible to a dichotomous relation between impairment and its social effects. Subtending the biophysical and its social effects are, the chapter argues, conditions transcendental in nature, conditions immanent with experience though irreducible to it. Seen from this perspective, social effects of impairment cannot be reduced to a socio-material orientation that “takes account of both changes in the mode of production and the mode of thought, and the relationship between the two” (Barnes and Oliver 2012: 60). Following Althusser, conditions of economy are *overdetermined* (having multiple causes and effects), which means they cannot be reduced to relations of contradiction.³⁰ Similarly, conditions of disablement (where ‘disability’ figures as a social effect of impairment) are overdetermined, with multiple causes and effects.

Chapter 3 examines key Deleuzian concepts such as difference, repetition, the virtual, and immanence, and brings Deleuze’s transcendental empiricism into relation with Kant’s transcendental idealism and Husserl’s transcendental phenomenology. It shows what Deleuze’s transcendental empiricism responds to and what it serves to articulate. As we have seen, transcendental empiricism looks to conditions for experience. As Deleuze sees it, to understand what it is given, it is necessary to examine conditions for the given. In this manner Deleuze approaches conditions for experience, looking to the *differences* that constitute the ego (Self or ‘I’). The chapter shows that from Deleuze’s transcendental-empirical perspective, conditions for experience are processual, *becoming*, and therefore irreducible to representation.

Chapter 4 turns to Simondon and the process of individuation he theorises to articulate the genesis of the biophysical and the psychosocial. Simondon shows that the mind/body dynamic is irreducible to dualism and depends on conditions in excess of dualism. From the point of view of individuation, there is not a body *and then* a mind. There is, rather, a process productive mind and body effective of their imbrication. Chapter 4 articulates this process to counter Critical Realism and Critical-Realist approaches to disability and disability research. Critical Realism, so the chapter argues, makes a distinction between mind and body that fails to account for conditions for this distinction. Additionally, Critical Realism obscures the experiential imbrication of mind and body whereby mind and body are experienced not as distinct entities but as *affective becomings*. Positing a distinction between mind and body without looking to

³⁰ See ‘Contradiction and Overdetermination’ in Althusser (2005).

conditions of genesis, Critical Realism obscures conditions by which impairment is ‘always-already’ social and irreducible to the distinction between impairment and its social effects.

Chapter 5 takes up Spinoza to articulate the processual nature of subjectivity and conditions of subjectivation. Turning to what Deleuze understands by ‘expression’ in his approach to Spinoza, the chapter explains the function of Substance (God *or* Nature) in Spinoza’s philosophy and how it relates to modal composition. From a Simondonian perspective, the chapter problematises the situation of Spinozist ‘attributes’ in relation to Substance (God *or* Nature). For Spinoza, substance is *expressed* through an infinity of attributes—yet from the point of view of what humans and other living beings experience (and *have* to experience), there are but two attributes: thought and extension.³¹ Spinoza’s conception of the attributes of thought and extension conforms to a hylomorphic logic that cannot account for the genetic (generative) conditions on which thought and extension depend. To say that Substance (God *or* Nature) is the cause of these attributes does not elucidate the process (which Simondon understands in terms of individuation) generative of them. However problematic Spinoza’s conception of attributes may be, his understanding of modal composition works to articulate the way beings become, and the very process of subjectivation. Chapter 5 shows that, contrary to a common misconception, for Spinoza, beings are not determined once and for all but are determined according to ongoing and contingent relations constitutive of agency. One is always ‘in the middle’ of relations, both determined by and determining of relations through which Being is expressed. For Deleuze, Being is expressed in term of difference and Ideas that are differentially constituted (see *DR* chapter 4). Understood in this sense, Ideas are not representational but genetic: the cause of what is given to representation. Spinoza takes a similar approach to genesis, positing God *or* Nature as that which is expressive of beings and the relations they make. Spinoza is taken up in chapter 5 to clarify Deleuze’s own understanding of genesis, and to articulate the ‘compositional’ conception of agency and agential relations fundamental to his work with Guattari.

Chapter 6 takes up Spinoza’s understanding of desire, bringing it into relation with Deleuze and Guattari’s conception of ‘desiring-production’. For Deleuze and Guattari desire is irreducible to lack and encompasses the production of beings. Along these lines, desire cannot be reduced to a ‘monological’ interpretive scheme. Deleuze and Guattari are critical of

³¹ Spinoza puts it that “*God, or a substance consisting of infinite attributes, each of which expresses eternal and infinite essence, necessarily exists*” (*E I P11*, italics in text). He also holds that the “*object of the idea constituting the human mind is the body*” (*I P13*, italics in text). There are, then, an infinity of attributes through which God *or* Nature is expressed, yet only two that express human experience: thought and extension.

psychoanalysis and the ‘Oedipal logic’ that reduces desire to an established dynamic. As they see it, desire is immanent with relations of material production, which means it must be understood in terms of *production* rather than *lack* (simply wanting this or that thing). They see that desire is processual and determining of relations. Understanding how desire functions helps us understand Being in terms of its *affective* (force-related and change-making) capacities. As an affective body of becoming, Disability Studies would encompass the desires of people with disability and their desires for disability research. Building on Spinoza’s ‘compositional’ conception of Being, Chapter 6 articulates the affective becoming of experience and how it relates to what Simondon understands by the ‘transindividual’. For Simondon, the transindividual serves as the background out of which social formations emerge (formations of state, of law, etc.). As Simondon sees it, that which is productive of social formations is in excess of them. Following Deleuze and Guattari, established social formations may be conceived as ‘majoritarian’, which denotes a “constant and homogenous system”, while ‘minoritarian’ denotes “a potential, creative and created”. In so far as their concept of the ‘minoritarian’ correlates with the transindividual (the transindividual being fundamental to social formations), there is a “becoming-minoritarian of everybody” (*ATP* 123) in excess of representation. Conceived as an affective body of becoming, disability research must encompass this ‘becoming-minoritarian’ and acknowledge the becoming of disability experience.

Chapter 7 turns to the genesis of knowledge formations, taking up Foucault’s conception of power to articulate the becoming of knowledge. The chapter shows that where there is knowledge there is representation, but that conditions for knowledge are irreducible to representation. For Foucault, knowledge is the result of power. Power in its genetic (generative) capacity is irreducible to institutional powers (powers of law, powers of state) and encompasses the becoming of beings. In his work on Nietzsche, Deleuze conceptualises power in terms of differential force relations affective (changing) of beings. Deleuze sees that according to Nietzsche’s understanding of ‘will to power’, power is “not what the will wants, but on the contrary, the one that wants in the will” (*NP x*). What this means is that power *is* will and is in this sense *affective* (changing) of beings. From a ‘Foucauldian-Nietzschean’ perspective, power and knowledge are subject to ‘genealogical’ critique that looks to relations between knowledge and power and ways that power is generative of knowledge. Like Deleuze and Simondon, Foucault looks to conditions for knowledge, bringing these conditions into relation with an ethics of becoming. Chapter 7 works to articulate power/knowledge relations for their

application to disability and disability research, theorising becoming from a Foucauldian perspective.

The concluding chapter (Chapter 8) looks to capacities of group formation and conditions on which group formation depends. Where there are groups, there are conditions of formation in excess of them. For Simondon, group formation is productive and changing of the psychosocial, which means that group formation is in excess of established social and political alliances. Conditions of transindividuality are such that individuation exceeds the individual (person or subject), encompassing a psychosocial becoming beyond individuals. Understood in this sense, groups maintain a “pre-individual reality” (*ILNFI* 9) productive of individuation. This means there is energy prior to individuation on which individuation depends. Where there are social and political alliances, there are conditions for them. The chapter makes the case that, taking stock of Simondon’s notion of the transindividual, disability research and the field of Disability Studies can encompass social and political action in excess of representation.

...

In terms of its onto-ethical orientation, the study posits the following:

- 1) Giving an account of conditions for experience, we come to understand what sorts of experience we are capable of.
- 2) Understanding conditions for experience, we are poised to encounter conditions of impairment and what it is understood by its social effects.
- 3) Understanding group formations in terms of conditions for them, we are able to conceptualise social and political action in excess of representation.

CHAPTER 2

The chapter begins with a summary account of the field of Disability Studies, placing its various origins in context with medical sociology, disability activism, social and political theory. Outlining the ‘formation of disability studies’ (Albrecht et al. 2001), the chapter establishes a trajectory for a transcendental-empirical approach to disability and disability research. Detailing the various theories and methodologies that comprise the field of Disability Studies, the chapter makes the case that impairment is ‘always-already’ socially significant, that the turn to a politically motivated ‘social model’ of disability, while useful as an ‘oppositional device’ (Beckett and Campbell 2015), has occluded the ‘always-already’ social situation of impairment. This is not to suggest that the social model in its various iterations is simply detrimental to the theorisation of disability and impairment, but that impairment has always been socially situated *and* irreducible to these situations. For this reason, as a social effect of impairment, disability cannot be interpreted solely in terms of capitalist instrumentality, or in simple terms of ‘oppression’ (Finkelstein 1980; Abberley 1987). To make the case, the chapter brings into focus feminist and postcolonial interventions in disability research, along with established Deleuzian and DeleuzoGuattarian interventions, which are relevant to Deleuze’s critique of representation and Simondon’s critique of hylomorphism. The chapter also makes use of Althusser’s understanding of ‘overdetermination’ to show that disability has multiple causes and effects.

Taking up Deleuze’s understanding of sense, the chapter makes the case that disability is irreducible to representation. To make this argument, the chapter turns to Critical-Realist interventions in disability research. Via Critical Realism, the body is found to be distinct from its social significance (Shakespeare 2014). While the Critical-Realist approach to disability makes for a useful diagnostic tool, it fails to capture the *imbricated* nature of impairment and its social effects. Taking up Massumi’s understanding of affect and engaging with Merleau-Ponty’s late phenomenological investigations to counter mind/body dualism, the chapter introduces Deleuze’s conception of the transcendental in preparation for detailed analysis of transcendental empiricism in Chapter 3. The present chapter works to bring disability and disability research into relation with notions of the transcendental and transcendental critique.

2.1 Formations of Disability

Research associated with the field of Disability Studies is oriented to analysis of various qualities of impairment and their social effects. It sets the body (inclusive of the mind) in

relation with socially-situated valuations of the body, to examine impairment in relation with its social effects. In so far as it interrogates concepts of disablement (what it means from hermeneutical and materialist perspectives to have disability), this research also encompasses disabling effects of illness (Thomas 2007). Research associated with Disability Studies examines medical diagnoses, anatomy and physiology with a view to medical ethics and the scientific, social and cultural milieus that inform them (Davis 1995).

The field of Disability Studies draws from medical sociology, which concerns processes of medicalisation and what it is to be subject to them. While these processes are important to meanings of disability, drawing from medical sociology, disability research associated with the field of Disability Studies counters ‘medical model’ discourses that understand disablement in terms of impairment alone, to the exclusion of its social effects (Thomas 2004b; Goodley 2017). From social-relational perspectives, disability is not limited to conditions of the body but ‘overlaps’ the world in which it is situated. As a socially and geographically situated phenomenon, disability exceeds the body, merging with a range of factors—socio-material, cultural and environmental (Gleeson 1999). In language familiar to transcendental philosophy, social-relational conceptions of disability function in the manner of a ‘Copernican revolution’, steering disability away from pathology, towards economy, politics and philosophy.

The turn to social-relational coordinates of disablement has led to the development of various political and ideological agendas for disability activism and research. Disability activism and research has been divided according to different methodologies and political orientations. Within the field of Disability Studies, researchers (Thomas 2007; Goodley 2017; Oliver 2009; Barnes and Oliver, 2012; Barnes 2012; Mitchell and Snyder 2012) have indicated a number of domains of disability activism and research across the Global North. While these domains cannot accurately represent the multifaceted and emergent nature of disability activism and research, they provide useful historical and methodological context.

The following summation of domains is in no way an all-encompassing of disability research and activism. It is intended to introduce the argument that disability has always been socially situated—that the socially-situated nature of disability exceeds the various methodological and political orientations that constitute the field of Disability Studies. To this end, while they may be usefully construed as in terms of an ‘oppositional device’ (Beckett and Campbell 2015), social models of disability cannot be reduced to opposition or ideology (Abrams 2016). Outlining the most prominent dimensions of the field of Disability Studies, the chapter foregrounds social situations of disability in relation to Disability Studies.

2.2 Four Domains: Marxist-Materialist, Minoritarian, Cultural, and Social-Relational³²

a. Marxist-Materialist

The Marxist-materialist approach to disability activism and research has perhaps the most prominent association with Disability Studies. Associated in the UK with Marxist sociology, the Marxist-materialist orientation brings into relief socio-material coordinates of disability. From this perspective “disability is a situation [...] caused by social conditions” (UPIAS 1976, 1997: 3). This stipulation is fundamental to principles established in 1975 through the coordination of the Union of the Physically Impaired and the Disability Alliance, brought together to oppose the institutionalisation of physically impaired people, and to clarify terms of activism in pursuit of social and financial independence (Oliver 2009).

While some disability activists and researchers, notably Michael Oliver and Colin Barnes, consider the socialisation of disability to be independent of any one agenda,³³ it is linked in the UK to the historical-materialist tradition. From this perspective, disability is symptomatic of capitalist instrumentality, conditions of industry, the development of the welfare state and practices of institutionalisation (see Finkelstein 1980: 7-8). Barnes and Oliver hold that processes of disablement “can only be understood by utilising an analysis that takes account of both changes in the mode of production and the mode of thought, and the relationship between the two” (2012: 60). Here disability is an effect of attitudes determined by socio-material organisation. Rendered a social condition, disability is made synonymous with oppression (UPIAS 1976, 1997; Finkelstein 1980; Abberley 1987). From a Marxist-materialist position, conditions of capitalism are such that people with impairments are *socially* disabled and isolated from what Marx has called ‘species-being’.³⁴ Along these lines, Oliver sees that it is necessary to “transform rather than reform capitalism” (Oliver 2009: 122).

Beyond the curious absence of analysis of disability under state communism (in the USSR and China for example) by Marxist-materialist disability researchers, this orientation has been criticised on grounds that it is negatively impacted by Marxian and Marxist notions of alienation (Abberley 1999³⁵). From the point of view of Marxist-materialist disability research,

³² Here I acknowledge the excellent discussion of the origins of the field Disability Studies in Dan Goodley’s *Disability Studies: An Interdisciplinary Introduction* (2017).

³³ “[T]o suggest that this distinction is anything other than a practical guide to action is false” (Barnes and Oliver 2012: 22). While these authors resist any specific theorisation of the social model of disability, they are apt to link it to an historical-materialist orientation that relates the social model in a strong sense to Marxist political and social theory.

³⁴ Meaning an essential human identification with purposeful production.

³⁵ “The ability to labour in some socially recognised sense still seems a requirement of full membership of a future good society based on Marxist theory. [...] Following Marxist theory thus understood, some impaired lives cannot

disability has been defined in terms of a lack of capacity to work—a lack of capacity to *produce*.³⁶ This framework is problematic in so far as it essentialises human capacities and limits ways that disability may be understood. Additionally, it conflates Marx’s notion of alienation with disability, so that anyone isolated from species-being, regardless of impairment, may be considered disabled. In simple terms, the Marxist-materialist approach fails to match the complexities of impairment and its various overlappings with race, gender, and class. (Shakespeare and Watson 2002). It forecloses analysis of impairment and its social situations, positing a necessary relationship between impairment and oppression, and obscuring empirical grounds for research (Shakespeare 2008).

Linking disability to capitalism, the Marxist-materialist approach fails to account for the situational and somatic complexities of impairment (Corker and Shakespeare 2002). Rendering disability definitionally dependent upon capitalism, it binds disability research to revolutionary politics, so that the ‘answer’ to disability is necessarily revolution. Applied with broad strokes it cannot address the specificities of impairment and social interactivity, nor can it conceptualise disability beyond the terms of Marxian and Marxist critique. One way this approach may be optimised is through Althusser’s notion of ‘overdetermination’. For Althusser, conditions of capitalism cannot be determined in terms of single causes and effects but must be understood in terms of multiple causes and effects irreducible to contradiction. Along these lines, disability has multiple causes and effects and cannot be reduced to any one condition. As Althusser understands it, capitalism has multiple causes and effects that are ongoing and yet to come.³⁷ Seen from this perspective, disability is irreducible to criteria set out by Barnes and Oliver—criteria that arguably fails to account for the complex conditions of capitalism.

Since the 1990s the Marxist-materialist orientation, also known as the ‘hard social model’, has been exchanged for a ‘softer’, more broadly ‘relational’ position (Shakespeare 2014). This has led to the theorisation and examination of ‘impairment effects’ (Thomas 2007). From a ‘social-relational’ perspective impairment exists in continuum with disability. Along these

then, in any possible society, be truly social, since the individual is deprived of those possibilities and that social membership to which her humanity entitles her, and which only work can provide” (Abberley 1999: 9).

³⁶ “The contemporary concept of disability is clearly linked to the rise of industrial capitalism and the development of wage labour requiring a specific kind of individual, namely, one able to operate dangerous machinery in competition with his peers” (Barnes and Oliver 2012: 82).

³⁷ See ‘Contradiction and Overdetermination’ in Althusser (2005).

lines, impairment is conceived in terms of psychosocial effects (Goodley 2009; Reeve 2012) and is, in DeleuzoGuattarian terms, ‘assembled’ with these effects.

b. Minoritarian (‘Minority Model’)

In comparison with the Marxist-materialist orientation, the minority model places emphasis on social equality *over* structural critique (Mitchell and Snyder 2012; Goodley 2017). It takes up social concepts of disability to defend constitutional rights and to secure equality of access. A key example of minority model policy is the *Americans with Disabilities Act* (ADA) (1990) (recognized since 2009 as the *Americans with Disabilities Amendment Act*, or ADAA³⁸), which in broad terms “prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life [...], and public and private places that are open to the public”.³⁹ While the stipulations of the ADA are open to case-specific interpretation (Siebers 2008), the Act itself has constitutional bases. A similar example of a minority conception of disability is Australia’s *Disability Discrimination Act* (DDA) (1992-2018⁴⁰), which, like the ADA, presents criteria for legal acknowledgement of disability and sets guidelines for determining disability discrimination. Both the DDA and the ADA render disability discrimination subject to interpretation. This gives disablement intersectional bases in so far as there are multiple ways of understanding disability according to the law.

As Elizabeth Lightfoot writes, “[t]he minority model views people with disabilities as a socially constructed minority group because of the shared discrimination they face”. Thus, “people with disabilities are similarly situated as racial and ethnic minorities and women” (2015: 447-448). While the concept of disability as oppression is upheld, the terms of oppression are more flexible than those posited through the Marxist-materialist approach, overlapping with situations of impairment, race, gender and class.

c. Cultural (‘Cultural Disability Studies’)

So-called ‘Cultural Disability Studies’ (Shakespeare 2014) examines the place of disability within cultures and looks to cultures surrounding disability. In so far as disability functions both in and as a “symbolic network” (Siebers 2008: 3), it is subject to discourse and discursive construal. Cultural Disability Studies examines representations of disablement, how they are formed and how they interact (Mitchell and Snyder 2000; Snyder and Mitchell 2006; Davis

³⁸ Cited as NCLD—2019

³⁹ Cited as ANN—2017

⁴⁰ Cited as DDA—2018

1995; Garland-Thomson 1997). Because disability is as much a concept as it is a matter of somatic composition, it is determined across a variety of discourses—scientific, socio-political and cultural. In so far as it is conceptual, disability is always culturally mediated and dependent upon discourse (Mitchell and Snyder 2000).

Cultural Studies orientations to disability work to uncover historically-situated meanings of disablement. Looking to cultural constructions of disability, Cultural Disability Studies works to analyse structures that determine meaning and identity. Here Cultural Disability Studies becomes ‘Critical Disability Studies’ (Shildrick 2012; Meekosha and Shuttleworth 2009). Critical Disability Studies examines cultural indicators of disablement and their origins. It brings into relation analyses of power, institutions, and biopolitics (see Foucault *BB*; Tremain 2015; Mitchell and Snyder 2015). Coupled with Critical Disability Studies, the ‘cultural turn’ within Disability Studies has been criticised on grounds that it is interpretive rather than prescriptive and fails to engage with normative values and questions of *what should be done* about disability (Vehmas and Watson 2014). Shakespeare (2014) draws attention to the ethical limitations of Cultural and Critical Disability Studies. In so far as these lines of enquiry work to describe the various cultural and historical situations of disablement, they neglect (so the argument goes) the examination and production of positive outcomes for people with disability. While it is certainly the case that Cultural and Critical Disability Studies have explicit descriptive capacities that are often foregrounded, it may be argued that these capacities are complementary to normative and prescriptive dimensions of disability research. In order to establish normative dimensions, reference must be made to existing conditions of disablement, conditions that are social-material *and cultural* in nature. Cultural and Critical Disability Studies therefore have a part to play in the development of normative outcomes for people with disability.

d. Social-Relational (‘Nordic Relational Model of Disability’)

The social-relational approach to disability is associated with the Nordic countries and practices of integration related to ‘normalisation’ and ‘social role valorisation’ (SRV) (Goodley 2017). Developed in the 1960s by Swedish physician Bengt Nirje, normalisation “rests on an understanding of how the normal rhythms, routines, and patterns of life in any culture relate to the development, maturity, and life of disabled persons” (1999: 17) Normalisation looks to means of social stability for people with disability and is associated with practices of deinstitutionalisation in ‘investment welfare states’ (Roulstone 2013). The turn to deinstitutionalisation and integration throughout the Nordic countries has caused impairment

to be placed in continuum with the social world, which grants reflexivity to concepts of disablement.

It is from the point of view of the Nordic approach that researchers and activists outside of the region have come to reject the ‘hard’ social model (Thomas 2004; Shakespeare 2004; 2014; Watson 2002), looking instead to interactive relations of disability and impairment. This has led to the development of a methodologically diverse social-relational conception of disability, independent of normalisation discourse. Beyond concepts and practices of normalisation, social-relational disability research is empirically grounded in a manner that arguably escapes the criticisms directed at Cultural and Critical Disability Studies and Marxist-materialist analyses. The turn to social-relational empiricism *over* examination of socially and culturally constructed conditions works to locate specificities of impairment and particular situations through which they arise. Rather than approaching disablement solely in terms of critical theory and political economy, the social-relational method practised by researchers such as Tom Shakespeare, Carol Thomas and Nick Watson draws attention to specific conditions of impairment and their social effects.

This emphasis on empiricism is evident in Watson’s 2002 study of attitudes about disability held by people with disability. Through interviews Watson finds that disability is not always determining of identity for people with disability. Instead, “people [create] an idea of themselves for themselves” sometimes regardless of disability (521). This brings into question the validity and practicality of social models of disability. If people with disability do not understand disability in the same ways, the effectiveness of models for disability activism, politics and research cannot be guaranteed. In a similar vein Shakespeare argues that defining the social coordinates of disability in terms of oppression “creates a dangerous circularity”. He suggests that it “would not be possible to set out to discover whether or not disabled people are oppressed, if disability had previously been defined as oppression” (2008: 11, 11-12). While he does not deny that concepts of oppression are applicable to disability, he rejects on empirical grounds that disability can be made synonymous with oppression. In line with this critique, Cultural and Critical Disability Studies may be criticised on grounds that the terms of analysis they offer are too broad to account for lived experience and particular instances of social interaction. In this way disability is misrepresented by Cultural and Critical Disability Studies, which overstate terms of oppression and/or misconstrue specific coordinates that determine oppression.

Researchers applying social-relational and empirical methods of analysis foreground specific conditions of embodiment, designating impairment a somatic phenomenon prior to social and cultural construal (Shakespeare 2014). From this perspective, while impairment is applicable to social and cultural analyses (which look to ways impairment is approached by and through medical science, governing bodies, social and cultural institutions), impairment itself is not taken to be produced by discourse and discursive practices (Watson 2012; Shakespeare 2014; Simon J. Williams 1999; Soder 2009). This approach is taken up through the application of a ‘Critical-Realist’ ontology, where the body is taken to be distinct from its social and cultural coordinates. Roy Bhaskar, considered the founder of Critical Realism (Collier 1994), applies this ontology to concepts of scientific practice, arguing that it is “because our activity is (normally) a necessary condition of constant conjunctions of events that the philosophy of science needs an ontology of structures and transfactually active things” (1975: 15). The term ‘transfactual’ encompasses conditions for knowledge—processes prior to analysis and foundational to matter itself.

With Critical Realism, Bhaskar lays grounds for a practical epistemology: a way to understand events and to pursue scientific practice. Disability researchers have adopted this ontology to produce an epistemology (a formation of knowledge) that addresses complex relations between somatic composition, social and cultural frameworks. Simon J. Williams writes that from this perspective disability “is an *emergent* property, located, temporally speaking, in terms of the *interplay* between the biological reality of *physiological impairment, structural conditioning* (i.e., *enablements/constraints*) and *socio-cultural interaction/elaboration*” (1999: 810, italics in text). In terms of disability research, this onto-epistemology, which determines *what there is and how it can be known*, works to clarify various ‘layers’ of reality (i.e., somatic, socio-material and cultural) that constitute impairment and its effects.

Critical Realism may be critiqued on grounds that it fails to articulate the ‘transfactual’ conditions for knowledge and social construction. Rather than looking to processes generative of matter and mind, it takes matter and mind to be *given* and thereby occludes conditions for their imbrication. While it is useful and indeed necessary to posit conditions for the given, these conditions are, from a transcendental-empirical perspective, irreducible to the given. From the point of view of hylomorphism, matter is understood to ‘comply’ with form, thereby simply assuming form. In failing to articulate the genesis of matter and form, Critical Realism conforms to hylomorphic logic. This logic is discussed in detail in Chapter 4.

2.3 Disability and Disability Studies in Postcolonial, Feminist, and DeleuzoGuattarian Contexts

Having outlined four prominent domains for disability research, the chapter turns to postcolonial contexts, feminist orientations, and existing DeleuzoGuattarian approaches. As with the previous section, what follows is in no way all-encompassing of the domains discussed. It is presented to foreground the argument that impairment has always been socially situated—that disability is irreducible to any ‘social model’, cultural or political orientation. Taking up existing DeleuzoGuattarian orientations to disability research, this section relates them back to Deleuze’s transcendental empiricism.

a. Postcolonial (‘Postcolonial Disability Studies’)

While social, cultural and political orientations to disability are not exclusive to the Global North, they are commonly geared to analysis in this context (see Ghai 2002; Chataika 2012; Ghai 2012; Shakespeare 2012; Erevelles 2011). It may be argued that in practical terms, Disability Studies is yet to engage with coordinates of impairment and its social effects across the developing world. ‘Global contexts’ (Erevelles 2011) for the conceptualisation and examination of disability remain under construction. Providing a brief account of postcolonial and ‘Global South’ interventions in disability research, it is acknowledged that these terms cannot adequately apply to, or represent, the complex social and cultural dynamics they gesture toward. It is acknowledged that no single ‘model’ can be made representative of disability in its postcolonial and Global South contexts. These terms are presented primarily for the sake of concision and for convenience only.

Postcolonial approaches to disability look to the various socio-material and cultural correlates that inform understandings of disability in post-colonised⁴¹ societies and the developing world. From this perspective, disability overlaps with concepts of race, ethnicity, gender and class, and discourses that inform them. Postcolonial orientations to disability research bring into question the applicability of the various social models of disability developed in, and arguably *for* the Global North. In line with the critique set out in Spivak’s ‘Can the Subaltern Speak?’ (1988), Postcolonial Disability Studies works to deconstruct dynamics of representation, to assess identity formation and its ‘subaltern’ contexts in relation with established concepts of

⁴¹ Following Bignall (2011) it is acknowledged that the term post-colonial (‘post-colonised’) problematically implicates, in her words, “premature claims to an already lived temporal and moral distance from the process of colonisation” (3). For this reason the term ‘postcolonial’, which resists ‘temporal and moral distance’, is preferred. However, throughout this discussion, ‘post-colonial’ refers to that which occurs *after*, and on account of, colonisation.

disability. Along these lines Anita Ghai (2002) makes the case that in India, culturally-embedded stigmas around disability render the application of ‘imported’ social models problematic. For Ghai, it is necessary to “evaluate the location from which we can challenge the perception of categories of disabled and able-bodied as fixed, permanent, internally homogenous and [...] oppositional” (96-97). This evaluation brings into question the formation of social conceptions of disability and their capacity to account for disablement beyond the Global North. Additionally, it makes possible culturally specific assessments of the relationship between ability and disability, to show how this relationship unfolds.

Just as Critical Disability Studies examines dynamics of meanings of disablement, postcolonial approaches to disability research, which foreground overlappings of race, gender, ethnicity and class in relation with disability, may be practically applied in terms of policy development and normative outcomes for people with disability. The World Health Organization’s 2011 *World Report on Disability* (WHO 2011) acknowledges the diverse nature of disablement and the complexity it brings to bear on policy development. However, as a lead author of the document, Tom Shakespeare recognises that “the majority of research and analysis of disability remains relevant to the minority of people [occupying the Global North] with disability in the world”. “In many areas”, he writes, “we lack solid evidence about the lives of people with disabilities in developing countries and the problems they face” (2012: 271). It may be argued that rights-based discourse surrounding disability, such as the UN’s Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (CRPD) (2006-2016), is problematic in terms of application. While the CRPD acknowledges that “disability is an evolving concept and that disability results from the interaction between attitudinal and environmental barriers” (CRPD 2006-2016, page unlisted), its utility remains context specific. Rights-based discourse around disability must be supplemented with postcolonial analyses that foreground complexities of identity formation, somatic composition social and cultural interaction in Global South, post-colonial and developing-world contexts.

b. Feminist (‘Feminist Disability Studies’)

Similar to postcolonial interventions, feminist approaches to disability research and activism foreground social and cultural coordinates that inform women’s experiences of, and engagements with, disability. While a properly definitive account of Feminist Disability Studies is beyond the scope of this study, it may be put that feminist orientations to disability and disability research locate specific features of female disability experience: somatic composition, social and cultural configurations. Along these lines, and like other feminist

discourses (see Grosz 1993; Gatens 1996; Braidotti 2011), feminist disability research and activism renders the ‘personal’ ‘political’ so that lived experience is brought into relation with social determinants of disability. Kim Q. Hall writes that “[j]ust as disability studies shows how disability is irreducible to bodily impairment, feminist theory shows how gender is irreducible to biological sex” (2010: 1). This orientation grants sex, gender and disability social and political groundings that work to curtail essentialism without discarding the body or impairment. Price and Shildrick (2002; see also Shildrick and Price 1996) argue that disability exists as a process of interaction between bodies (dis/abled) and discourses that inform them. They suggest that “the coming together of anomalous and normative embodiment can stand for a limit case between self and other” (2002: 64-65). Here embodiment is understood through relations that ground and transform identity.

In so far as feminist discourse is informed by disability activism and research, it may be argued that Feminist Disability Studies, to use Claire Colebrook’s words, “introduces the body into feminist theory” (2000: 76). Without reducing disability to impairment, feminist interventions highlight complex interrelations of corporeality and social construction (see Thomas 1999; Morris 1991; Bê 2012). Ana Bê points out that feminist accounts of disability contribute to critique of the ‘hard’ social model, which posits “disability as public and impairment as private” (2012: 366). The feminist dictum that the personal is political may be taken up to foreground impairment in relation with its social effects, bringing embodiment to bear on social theory and constructivism.

c. Deleuze and Guattari (‘DeleuzoGuattarian Disability Studies’)

This section gives an account of existing Deleuzian and DeleuzoGuattarian interventions in Disability Studies, though it is not intended to be exhaustive of them. It sets the stage for a transcendental-empirical approach to disability and Disability Studies by showing in a summary fashion what Deleuzian and DeleuzoGuattarian interventions in Disability Studies consist of. Much like feminist interventions, the turn to Deleuze (and Deleuze and Guattari) from within Disability Studies works to place impairment in relation with the social. Deleuze and Guattari “make no distinction between man and nature”. For them, “the human essence of nature and the natural essence of man become one within nature in the form of production or industry, just as they do within the life of man as a species” (AO 4). From this position somatic composition is situated in *immanent* relation with social production. Connecting the body *with*

social production, Deleuze and Guattari posit that “all production is at once desiring-production and social production” (AO 296).⁴²

This ‘immanent constructivism’ may be deployed to contest the notion of species-being in relation to the ‘hard’ social model of Marxist-materialist disability research. Because human essence is permanently ‘under construction’ or ‘in production’, it defies the terms Abberley (1999) considers consistent with Marxist theory (see section 2.2 (a)). For Deleuze and Guattari production is irreducible to labour, being extensive with psychic and somatic composition. An immanent understanding of composition, which sets the body in immanent relation with social production, allows for analysis of affective (force-bearing) relations that *produce* the body and socio-material and cultural coordinates that affect (change) the psyche. Working with the DeleuzoGuattarian notion of the ‘rhizome’ (addressed in Chapter 6), Petra Kuppers observes that disability as a label, concept and condition “adheres to individual bodies and to a social scene, to a structural position as well as an embodied, lived experience”. Here disability as designation, concept and condition functions like a “cut [...] in the flesh” and “a cut in the social field” (2009: 228).

For Deleuze and Guattari, rhizomes serve as means of ‘mapping’ interactions of social and ‘natural’ (somatic and otherwise organic) elements. The rhizome places emphasis on lateral emergence, where notions of hierarchy are replaced by concepts of immanence, and mapping takes the places of tracing (ATP 12). In a similar vein to Simondon’s understanding of individuation, the concept of the rhizome foregrounds ‘becoming’ and interaction *over* existing forms and relations. Mercieca and Mercieca argue that “[i]n the rhizome, disability research focuses more on engagement and connection than on interpreting and eliciting reality *out there*” (2010: 88, my emphasis). This means that, contrary to the terms of Critical Realism, somatic composition is immanent with, rather than prior to, social construction. Instead of relying on an *a priori* principle of demarcation that situates the body prior to discourse, the rhizome renders them ‘mutually emergent’—*becoming* rather than distinct (see Chapter 6). Applying this ‘immanent’ conception to disability and disability research, Michael Feely (2016) comments that “existence, for Deleuze, becomes a flat ontological plane populated by different but mutually affecting material and semiotic entities. To make such an ontology work”, Feely goes on to suggest, “requires a new way of thinking about and discussing actual material entities, rather than representations of them” (869).

⁴² The terms of ‘desiring-production’ are discussed at length in Chapter 6.

Taking up Deleuze and Guattari to critique and reformulate ideas of disability representation, Jasbir K. Puar (2017) argues that “[d]isability is not a fixed state or attribute but exists in relation to assemblages of capacity and debility, modulated across historical time, geopolitical space, institutional mandates and discursive regimes” (xiv). For Puar, ‘capacity and debility’ refer to socio-material, political and discursive factors that affect populations. This brings the DeleuzoGuattarian notion of assemblage to bear on disability. Following Spinoza, Deleuze and Guattari view beings in terms of *relations of affect*. For Spinoza, beings are composed of relations. These relations determine what beings are and what they can do. Crucially, for Spinoza, relations are not fixed or determined to necessary ends. Beings are at once determined by and determining of assemblages through which Being is expressed (see Chapter 5). Along these lines, Puar posits that “[a]ssemblages of disability, capacity and debility are elements of the biopolitical control of populations that foreground risk, prognosis, life chances, settler colonialism, war impairment, and capitalist exploitation” (xvii). Here concepts and determinants of disability are *assembled* with conditions and concepts beyond disability itself.

Drawing on Spinoza, Deleuze and Guattari, and working in proximity with their concept of assemblage, Anna Hickey-Moody (2009) makes the case that “a body’s movements are both internal and external, in the respect that bodies—individuals, institutions, nation-states—have capacities for self-regulation” (46). For Spinoza, bodies are composed of relations irreducible to the biophysical, encompassing social and political alliances and anything composed of relations (architecture, geophysical phenomena, etc.) (see *E P13 A”2 Def.*). Bodies are therefore *extensive*, encompassing socio-material and discursive coordinates. This ‘arrangement’, or assemblage, sets bodies (somatic and otherwise) *in relation* to articulate the *emergent* nature of Being. Hickey-Moody (2019) utilises Deleuze’s reading of Spinoza, which places strong emphasis on the question of what a body can do (*EPS 217-235*) to ‘map’ affective relations constitutive of agency. As she puts it, “Deleuzian thought helps to activate understandings of the agency of embodied connections” (127).

Braidotti and Roets (2012) make a DeleuzoGuattarian approach to disability research, constructing a “nomadic methodology” which “respects the visible and hidden complexities and uncertainties of the real-life world” (168). Here the modern and Enlightenment-informed “vision of the subject as a unitary and rational self” (164) is replaced by an “open-ended, relational vision of interdependent subjects” (178). This ‘relational vision’ sets disability in continuum with ability so that disability and ability are understood in terms of *ongoing*, as opposed to fixed, relations. Adopting a ‘compositional’ ontology—one which understands

Being in terms of relations through which it is expressed (in other words, a Spinozist ontology)—Braidotti and Roets set ontology and in continuum with epistemology to understand disability not only in terms of *what* it is but *how* it can be known. DeleuzoGuattarian interventions in disability research bring ontology into relation with epistemology not only to establish what disability is and how it can be known, but how it can be responded to.

Stephens et al. (2014) draw from DeleuzoGuattarian concepts to analyse relationships between environment and experience for children with disability. Working with the concept of assemblage and the Spinozist question of what a body can do, they maintain that “[u]npacking the binary of individual/social requires rethinking the singularity of body and identity” (197). The authors argue that conditions of accessibility (wheelchair access, access to technologies that facilitate communication, etc.) exist in affective continuity with subject identity and self-expression. Along these lines disability is posited as processual and contingent upon relations. From this perspective normative outcomes for people with disability are framed in terms of equality of access, not only with regard to lived environments but in broader terms of ‘agential fulfilment’. To understand how agency may best be fulfilled, it is necessary to assess conditions by which it is produced.

Dan Goodley (2007) takes a similar approach, analysing relations between parents of children with disability and institutions through which disability is mediated. Goodley contends that “[p]arents are rhizomatic” (149). This means that relations between parents and children are *emergent* and mediated by institutional conceptions of, and responses to, disablement. This rhizomatic conception of parenting works to examine conditions that determine relations between parents and children. Goodley (2009) also places emphasis on relationality drawing on the DeleuzoGuattarian notion of the ‘body without organs’ (BwO) to ‘bring the psyche back into disability studies’. For Deleuze and Guattari the BwO encompasses both conscious and unconscious intensities and functions as a ‘site’ for the composition of desire and syntheses of agency (see *ATP* 173-195, 589-590; Hughes 2011: 31-33, 135-140; Message 2010: 37-38). Goodley shows that “[t]he body-without-organs provides a metaphorical alternative to the bounded impaired-as-useless body that is so often conceived in our societies” (2009: 260). For Deleuze and Guattari, “[t]he body without organs is an immanent substance” (*AO* 327). As a site for the construction of agency, Goodley holds that the BwO “provides an opportunity for blurring the levels of discursive and material, society and body, culture and psyche” (2009: 261). Conceptualising the compositional nature of agency through the BwO, Goodley contends

that the BwO works to bring the psyche—arguably excluded from the ‘hard’ social model of disability—back into Disability Studies.

Working in proximity with Deleuze’s conception of transcendental empiricism, James Overboe (1999; 2009; 2012) conceptualises disability in terms of difference and singularity. Applying Deleuze’s non-binary understanding of difference, Overboe “calls for an ‘equality of condition’ that validates both disability embodiment and sensibility” (1999: 23). This approach foregrounds the constitutive role of difference in disability. Along these lines disability is irreducible to broad designations considered fundamental to rights-based discourse. Taking a transcendental-empirical approach to disablement, Overboe means to locate conditions of disability experience. From this angle, identity is secondary to the difference generative of it. Here difference is in excess of identity. Understanding disability through Deleuze’s genetic (generative) understanding of difference need not exclude rights discourse but helps to articulate the specific applicability of such discourse.

Overboe (2009) provides further grounds for transcendental-empirical disability research looking to the concept of ‘impersonal singularities’ set out in Deleuze’s essay, ‘Immanence: a Life’ (*PI* 25-33). In this essay Deleuze reiterates his claim that while the transcendental is constitutive of experience, it *does not resemble* experience. He sees that experience is constituted by ‘impersonal singularities’: affects (forces) that condition experience. While these conditions cannot be taken for experience, they are *immanent with* experience in so far as life encompasses the transcendental and the empirical. Overboe takes up Agamben’s (1998) conception of ‘bare life’ to examine terms by which life is understood and how these terms impact upon ideas of incapacity and disability. He contends that disability is affected “by the personal register of humanism and the impersonal register of the non-human” (2009: 250). Here the impersonal exceeds the personal and is for Overboe ‘non-human’, conditioning what is human. Along these lines, affects (force-related effects) of disablement exceed representation.

Bringing this ‘impersonal register’ into relation with Disability Studies, Overboe (2012) argues that “[d]isability studies’ true thought and true theory must break free from the [‘normal’] image of the able-cripple that has too often fallen back on the notion of self or subject who subtends theory” (119). Like Braidotti and Roets, Overboe takes a ‘compositional’ approach to subjectivity and subject relations. This approach situates disability in terms of relations productive of embodiment and experience. Phil Bayliss (2009) takes a similar approach to highlight the multivalent nature of disablement. Utilising Deleuze and Guattari’s

concept of ‘nomadic thought’ linked to the rhizome (see *ATP* 409-493), Bayliss brings into question ‘grand narratives’ of disablement that occlude its emergent relationality. Critical of both social and medical models of disability, Bayliss submits that “[i]f we are to re-frame the question of how we understand the concept of disability [...] in a way that moves beyond a simple dichotomy of medical and social-model thinking, then poststructuralist questioning of existing domains of knowledge and praxis may offer opportunities for the development of [...] counter-cultural narratives” (2009: 282). For Bayliss, Deleuze and Guattari’s rhizomatic and nomadic orientation to research is complementary to this line of questioning.

2.4 Foundations of Disablement: Affect, Virtuality, and the Transcendental

Having outlined existing Deleuzian and DeleuzoGuattarian interventions in disability research, the chapter sets out bases for a transcendental-empirical approach to disability and disability research. While established Deleuzian DeleuzoGuattarian interventions extend the terms of disability research, the grounds for such intervention remain to be clarified. Before making a detailed account of Deleuze’s transcendental empiricism in the following chapter, the case is made that impairment is always socially situated, that this situation is contingent upon processes by which experience is given. Along these lines it is argued that social models of disability extend from broader coordinates that depend on the transcendental and what Deleuze following Bergson calls the ‘virtual’ (*B* 42-43, 51-73; *PS* 34-42). Here the ‘virtual’ encompasses processes that engender psychic and somatic composition and social coordinates through which they are mediated. From a Deleuzian perspective, that which is actualised depends on transcendental, ‘virtual’ valences that are irreducible to actualisation (*DR* 269-286; Bignall 2011: 100-131; Somers-Hall 2012: 91-122).

To bring the virtual/actual distinction into relation with embodiment and lived experience, the chapter turns to Merleau-Ponty’s *Visible and Invisible* (1969). In this text Merleau-Ponty gives an account of conditions for experience. Taking established phenomenological investigation to task, he puts it that, “I am in every operation of knowledge delivered over to an organization of my thoughts whose premises are masked from me, to a mental constitution which is given to me as fact.” (43). Here Merleau-Ponty gestures to conditions in excess of representative thought. Doing so, he brings into question “the philosophy of reflection not only for transforming the world into a noema [object of reflection], but also for distorting the being of the reflecting ‘subject’ by conceiving it as ‘thought’” (*ibid.*) Merleau-Ponty does not reject representative thought (as if this were possible), rather he is critical of phenomenological analysis in so far as it fails to approach conditions for thought. In simple terms, Merleau-Ponty

reproaches phenomenology for conflating the thinking subject ('I think') with conditions for the thinking subject. As he sees it, "[t]he philosophy of reflection starts with the principle that if a perception is able to be my own it must be from the start one of my 'representations'" (*ibid.*). The point for Merleau-Ponty is that there must be something in excess of representation that engenders representation. The task of transcendental empiricism as Deleuze understands it is to account for conditions for representation. While these conditions are 'sub-representational', they may be conceptualised to dislodge historically-situated notions of subjectivity, and to critique socially and culturally embedded formations of thought (see *DR* 171-223; Bignall 2011; Patton 2000).

Working between phenomenology, Deleuze and Disability Studies, Margrit Shildrick (2015) takes up Merleau-Ponty's critique to rethink terms of embodiment. In so far as Merleau-Ponty "points to a dimension in excess of the interhuman connections that channel the co-construction of embodiment" (Shildrick 2015: 15), he posits a 'flesh of the world' (Merleau-Ponty 1969: 130-156) in excess of representational embodiment. From this point of view, in so far as it is representational, embodiment has sub-representational conditions. Shildrick utilises the notion of the 'flesh of the world' to conceptualise the body in terms of evolving relations beyond established subject/object designations. By foregrounding conditions for representational embodiment, concepts of disability are brought into question. In so far as representational embodiment is contingent on the 'flesh of the world', representations depend on sub-representational valences that resist essentialism in its representational guises. This renders both disability and embodiment evolving concepts to be rethought in terms of evolving subjectivity.

Brian Massumi (2002) is close to Merleau-Ponty when he presents 'affect' in terms of intensity. Taking up Deleuze and Spinoza, Massumi distinguishes intensity/affect from representation, positing affect *as* intensity prior to representation. He argues that an "*emotion or feeling* is a recognized affect, an identified intensity as reinjected into stimulus-response paths, into action and reaction circuits of infolding and externalization—in short, into subject-object relations" (61, italics in text). As 'recognized affect' emotion is dependent on sub-representational intensities that condition representation. From this point of view there are two 'levels' of intensity. 'Identified intensity' is cognate with emotion as it is commonly understood (joy, sadness, etc.), while in excess of identified intensity are micro-intensities that render affect representational.

In so far as intensity is sub-representational, its conditions are taken to be ‘virtual’. While Deleuze understands the virtual in terms of processes productive of the actual (see Chapter 3), Massumi takes up Deleuze’s understanding of the virtual to articulate affective (intensity-related) processes. For Deleuze “the virtual is opposed not to the real but to the actual”. Along these lines, “the virtual must be defined as strictly part of the real object—as though the object had one part of itself in the virtual into which it plunged as though into an objective dimension” (*DR* 272). The virtual accounts for processes of actualisation: processes that are irreducible to representation. It is in these terms that Merleau-Ponty’s ‘flesh of the world’ functions as a kind of ‘virtual backdrop’ for representation and representational embodiment. In this vein Massumi argues that “[t]he life of the body, its lived experience, cannot be understood without reference to abstract-real [virtual/actual] processual dimensions” (2002: 205). This means that the virtual has an essential bearing on both intensity and embodiment.

Giving an account of intensity and its virtual coordinates, and bringing the social into relation with the somatic, Massumi makes the case that discourse is conditioned by intensity so that “[a]ffect contaminates empirical space through language” (62). Here intensity is carried through the affective (change-making) power of language, while also exceeding the bounds of language. Massumi sees that “intensity is asocial, but not presocial” (30). This means that affect is constitutive of the social and also implicated in the social. Massumi contends that in a similar manner to the virtual/actual, “the ‘natural’ and the ‘cultural’ feed forward and back into each other” and “relay each other to such an extent that the distinction [between the ‘natural and the ‘cultural’] cannot be maintained” (11).

William Connolly follows Massumi along these lines when he conceptualises ‘the micropolitics of perception’ (2010: 190). As he sees it:

Sensory inter-involvement, disciplinary processes, detailed modes of surveillance, media infiltration, congealed attractors, affective dispositions, self-regulation in response to future susceptibility—these elements participate in perpetual circuits of exchange, feedback, and reentry, with each loop folding another variation and degree into its predecessor. The imbrications are so close that it is impossible to sort out each element from the other once they have merged into a larger complex. The circuits fold, bend, and blend into each other, inflecting the shape of political experience.” (190-191)

Here proprioception takes on social and cultural coordinates in so far as affect is intensive. For Connolly and Massumi the nature of intensity is such that it ‘encodes’ social and cultural data. Because social and cultural coordinates cannot be extricated from perception, at least

practically, there is no way to isolate ‘nature’ from ‘culture’ within experience. From this position there is little room to maintain the ‘hard’ social-model distinction between disability and impairment, or the soma/social duality associated with Critical Realism. While the Critical-Realist distinction between bodies and social construal may be taken up to survey ‘layers’ of interaction between soma and society, from the point of view of ‘intensive affectivity’, it is impossible to extricate the contents of perception from conditions that constitute it (see Goodley 2017: 134-138).⁴³

This situation does not necessitate a wholesale rejection of Critical Realism or social-model discourse; rather, the terms they provide may be applied to disability research on the condition that the permanent social and cultural imbrication of the body is acknowledged. Furthermore, it must be acknowledged that disability research is always socially situated. It cannot approach the body in isolation of discourse. This stipulation should not reduce the body to social construction, rather, it should enable an immanent constructivism placing ‘nature’ and ‘culture’ in continuum. From this perspective the meaning of disablement is always multivalent, and sense itself takes on virtual coordinates. Deleuze develops a ‘virtual’ understanding of sense in his *Logic of Sense* (1969), making the case that sense is irreducible to any one of its representational components (*LS* 16-28). For Deleuze, the meaning of a proposition always depends on sub-representational valences (see Bowden 2011; James Williams 2008). This gives sense virtual coordinates that are implicated in actualisation. Because sense cannot be contained entirely in representation—because it is a condition for representation, it has transcendental/virtual dimensions irreducible to representation. Deleuze sees that sense is always becoming, and always beyond representation. (*LS* 3-7, 35-44, 169-176, 186-193, 194-203). He argues that “[e]mpiricism truly becomes transcendental [...] only when we apprehend directly in the sensible that which can only be sensed, the very beginning *of* the sensible” (*DR* 71, italics in text). The task of transcendental empiricism as Deleuze understands it is to conceptualise conditions for representation. Applying this approach to disability and disability research, disability and the field of Disability Studies encompass dimensions in excess of representation. This does not mean that disability is only beyond representation. It means that the meaning of disability is never complete, that disability, disability research and the field of

⁴³ This critique may also be applied to transcendental empiricism in so far as it foregrounds conditions for representation. We cannot separate the transcendental from representations of it, nor can we wholly expunge the empirical from the transcendental. As Bryant notes (2008), Deleuze’s transcendental empiricism functions as a *speculative philosophy*. In this way it is aligned with critique of representation—not rejection of representation. Bryant suggests that “one does not adopt the position of transcendental empiricism because it is *against* representation. Rather, one adopts the position because something is wrong with the philosophy of representation *and* transcendental empiricism is able to solve this problem” (4, italics in text).

Disability Studies are in a constant state of becoming. Just as intensity is related to affect, sense is fundamental to representation and is for this reason in excess of it. In this way the meaning of disability remains in process.

2.5 Conclusion

The preceding overview shows that disability is irreducible to any single meaning, method of research or political agenda. Normative responses to disability necessitate descriptive analyses and theorisations beyond the terms of what Mark Sherry (2016) following Bill Hughes and Kevin Paterson (1997) calls a ‘sociology of impairment’. In so far as disability has transcendental determinants, it exceeds representation. From this point of view, disability research demands a methodological pluralism and a transdisciplinary ethos. Because disability is always socially situated and socially variegated, it is beyond the terms of any single ‘model’. While a social model that foregrounds socio-material and cultural coordinates of disablement is of value to disability research and activism, no such model should be deployed myopically, to the exclusion of other discourses. The social model of disability, in whatever form, should not be confused with the permanently social—and becoming—situation of disability.

Giving an account of Deleuzian and DeleuzoGuattarian interventions in disability research, the chapter has shown how Deleuzian and DeleuzoGuattarian ideas may be applied. Central to concepts of the rhizome, assemblage, and the body without organs, is an immanent constructivism that bears strongly on Deleuze’s transcendental empiricism. Bringing into focus conditions for the empirical, transcendental empiricism posits an immanent relation with the world of experience and conditions for experience. Crucially, this relation is not one of resemblance but complementarity. Conceptualising sense in terms of its transcendental/virtual coordinates, Deleuze makes the case that sense is in excess of representation. Applying transcendental-empirical analysis to disability, the chapter has argued that disability has transcendental and empirical coordinates. Introducing terms of transcendental empiricism, the chapter has provided grounds for a detailed account of Deleuzian transcendental empiricism in Chapter 3.

CHAPTER 3

Chapter 3 provides an overview of key Deleuzian concepts. Beginning with transcendental empiricism and its Kantian associations, and setting them alongside Husserl's transcendental-phenomenological method, the chapter shows how Deleuze's understanding of immanence, the virtual, difference, repetition, and the Image of thought bear on his notion of empiricism—and how this empiricism is applicable to disability and disability research. Analysing Deleuze's understanding of processes productive of the experiential, the chapter shows what are for Deleuze conditions for experience. To clarify Deleuze's understanding of the virtual, the discussion turns to Lennard Davis' conception of disability as an 'unstable category' (Davis 2002). Examining Deleuze's critique of Hegelian dialectic, the chapter engages with Fiona Kumari Campbell's (2009) notion of ableism. Broaching the practical application of Deleuze's empiricism, it turns to his *Proust and Signs*. Analysing conditions of transcendental empiricism, the chapter shows how transcendental empiricism may be applied to account for disability.

3.1 Transcendental Empiricism: Origins and Exercise

Transcendental empiricism looks to conditions for experience (see Rölli 2016; Bryant 2008; Stagoll 2010). The tradition of transcendental empiricism can be traced back to German Idealism and the philosophy of Immanuel Kant (Kerlake 2009). By taking an empirical approach to conditions for experience—that is, by turning from experience *back to* conditions for experience, one makes an empirical approach to the transcendental. Along these lines, Kant holds that:

The critique of pure reason may be regarded as the true tribunal for all controversies of reason. For the critique is not itself involved in these controversies, which deal directly with objects, but is aimed at determining and judging the right of reason as such according to the principles of its first [institution]. (*CPR* A751/B799)

For Kant, reason plays a regulative role in the analysis of conditions for experience. This means that reason has a part to play in determining the limits of cognition. In this regard reason is critical of its own capacity. Analysis of the capacities of reason is empirical in so far as it engages with conditions of reason and of the mind itself. While for Kant there is no way to determine reality beyond conditions of the mind, these conditions are experientially verifiable in so far as they determine objects of experience. One may turn from objects of experience to

analysis of what conditions experience—moving from experiential induction to the deduction of principles.

It is by turning from experience to conditions for it that analysis of the experiential becomes transcendental. With his transcendental-phenomenological investigations, Edmund Husserl attempts a reduction of the experiential to analyse its conditions. Husserl makes the case that:

The whole set of transcendental problems turns about the relation of this self—of the ‘ego’—to what is at first posited in its place as a matter of course, viz., my psyche; then it bears once more upon the relation of this ego and my conscious life to the world of which I am conscious and whose true being I recognize in my own products of cognition. (Husserl in Ricoeur 2007: 167)

Here Husserl articulates the interplay of the transcendental and the experiential. To make sense of conditions for experience, one must begin from experience. *From* experience, Husserl attempts to block out data of experience, to locate processes that are fundamental to experience. Referring to this process in terms of a ‘transcendental reduction’ (see Husserl 1970: 151-152), he argues that through this reduction

[a]ll natural interests are put out of play. But the world, exactly as it was for me earlier, and still is [...] has not disappeared; it is just that, during the consistently carried-out [reduction] it is under [my] gaze purely as the correlate of the subjectivity which gives it ontic meaning, through whose validities the world ‘is’ at all. (1970: 152)

As Husserl sees it, this reduction is necessary to the theorisation of the transcendental. By bringing the empirical into relation with the transcendental—by setting out empirical bases for analysis of the transcendental, Husserl means to establish grounds for transcendental enquiry. The problem with this enquiry is that it runs risk of tracing the empirical *on top of* the transcendental. While Husserl’s method serves as means of accounting for the transcendental (turning from experience to conditions for it), it can be seen to mistake the experiential for the transcendental. This means that instead of positing conditions for experience, this method grafts experience on to conditions for experience—hence tracing the empirical on top of the transcendental.

For Deleuze, Husserl does not go far enough with his theorisation of the transcendental and takes for granted the unity of perception rather than looking to conditions for this unity. From Deleuze’s perspective,

[i]t seems that Husserl does not think about genesis on the basis of a necessarily ‘paradoxical’ instance, which, properly speaking, would be non-identifiable (lacking its own identity and its own origin). He thinks of it, on the contrary, on the basis of an originary faculty of *common sense*, responsible for accounting for the identity of an object in general. (*LS* 111, italics in text)

As Deleuze sees it, Husserl does not locate conditions for the unity of perception—rather, he approaches the *given* unity of perception in the manner of ‘common sense’ or what is ‘commonly sensed’. What is ‘commonly sensed’ is the unity of perception, while what must be accounted for are conditions productive of this unity. Taking up Deleuze’s critique, Leonard Lawlor writes that “Husserl, in Deleuze’s eyes, remains at the level that is too large, as it is itself constituted by the smaller processes of singularities” (2012: 110). This means that, from Deleuze’s point of view, Husserl’s analyses do not engage with the *singular* conditions for perceptual unity. When Deleuze speaks of a non-identifiable’ and ‘paradoxical instance’, he refers to processes that are sub-representational and therefore *below* the threshold of perceptual unity. These processes are ‘paradoxical’ in so far as they do not resemble what they engender.

Deleuze takes a similar approach in his critique of Kant. In the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant argues that “homogeneity is necessarily presupposed in the manifold of a possible experience [...]; for without homogeneity no empirical concepts and hence no experience would be possible” (*CPR* A654/B682). Here Kant takes the unity of perception to be foundational to experience in such a way that the grounds of this unity are practically inscrutable. For this reason, with Kant, the transcendental is made to resemble what is experientially verifiable. Following Salomon Maimon (Kant’s relative contemporary), Deleuze is critical of Kant and the way he traces the transcendental from the empirical. Maimon holds that the “absolutely *a priori* is a type of cognition that precedes cognition of the object itself” (2010: 91, italics in text). Like Deleuze, Maimon sees that the unity of perception is conditioned by coordinates that do not resemble experience.

In line with Maimon, Deleuze makes the case that “Kant traces the so-called transcendental structures from the empirical acts of a psychological consciousness” (*DR* 179). This means that the transcendental is traced from that which is *given in* experience. To resist this tendency Deleuze couches his transcendental analyses in terms of a ‘superior empiricism’ made to account for conditions for experience (see Boundas 1991, and Stagoll 2010). While for Kant transcendental-empirical method accounts for conditions of *possible* experience, for Deleuze, as a ‘superior’ empiricism, transcendental empiricism engages with conditions for real

experience. While Kant seeks out forms that make experience possible, Deleuze looks to conditions for these forms. Along these lines Deleuze writes that, “while the conditions of possible experience may be related to extension, there are subjacent conditions of real experience which are indistinguishable from intensity as such” (*DR* 305). Placing emphasis on real conditions for experience, Deleuze understands the unity of perception in terms of processes *beyond* what is perceived. This means that, for Deleuze, the intensities that engender perception do not conform to a formal homogeneity but are implicated in the production of this homogeneity for experience. While these intensities do not resemble experiential data (my Self and the world around me), they are inherent to it. Here intensities beyond what is experientially verifiable are implicit to what is experienced.

For Deleuze, intensity does not simply conform to the unity of perception but is implicated in processes that produce this unity (*DR* 126). This means that what is given in experience is an effect of processes working in ‘real time’ rather than forms that are, as Kant has it, ‘necessarily presupposed’. Crucially, this does not mean that there are no forms for experience but that forms of experience are the outcome of genetic (generative) processes. Here it may be put that Deleuze’s transcendental empiricism is a *superior* empiricism that does not rest with ‘presupposed’ forms of experience or ‘common sense’ itself. This empiricism does not wholly resemble an experiential empiricism which would be limited to what can be taken *for* and *through* experience; rather, Deleuze’s transcendental empiricism conceptualises conditions experience that are irreducible to what is experience. Along these lines, and as Levi Bryant argues, (2008), Deleuze’s empiricism is closer to speculative philosophy than empiricism as it is commonly understood. What remains empirical is the examination of experience, but with a view to conditions for experience.⁴⁴ Here experience and conditions for it are immanent with each other without resembling each other.

3.2 Immanence

To elucidate the link between the transcendental and the empirical essential to Deleuze’s ‘superior empiricism’, the chapter turns to his concept of immanence. For Deleuze, immanence subtends the transcendental and the empirical. This means that the transcendental is not transcendent to experience but is implicated in it. The transcendental does not resemble the experiential but is in continuum with it. In this regard immanence functions as the ‘plane’

⁴⁴ Miguel de Biestegui argues that “[i]n so far as philosophy is concerned with the conditions of experience, it is transcendental. In so far as it is concerned with the real – and not merely possible – conditions of experience, it is empirical” (2010: 29)

through which the transcendental and the empirical communicate. In his essay ‘Immanence: a Life’, Deleuze holds that “[w]ere it not for consciousness, the transcendental field would be defined as a pure plane of immanence, because it eludes all transcendence of the subject and the object” (PI 26). For Deleuze, this pure plane of immanence is life itself. He puts it thus: “We will say of pure immanence that it is A LIFE, and nothing else. It not immanence to life, but the immanence that is in nothing is itself a life.” (PI 27) Here immanence is ‘in nothing’ because it is everything. To clarify this situation we can put it that subjects and objects are *given through* immanence. For Deleuze, where we perceive negation (or separation) there are conditions in excess of negation, conditions that allow for the perception of negation. As Deleuze sees it, consciousness works to ‘carve’ negation out of a pure and positive immanence which subtends subject/object relations.

A relevant example of this negation can be found with the Critical-Realist ontology, which, as we have seen (Chapter 2), sets a distinction between matter and its social construal (see Bhaskar 1975, and Collier 1994). From a Deleuzian perspective we can put it that Critical Realism ‘carves out’ this distinction from the continuum of immanence. In so far as matter becomes an object for thought, this continuum is replaced with a distinction between subjects and objects, mind and matter. In contrast, from the position of Deleuzian immanence, conditions for matter and mind occupy a pure plane of immanence necessary to their distinction (or how we perceive them as distinct). While this distinction remains a condition for thought in so far as thinking is an act of determination, it obscures the *immanent* condition of matter and mind. From here it may be put that determinants of the social model of disability, where ‘disability’ functions as a social effect of impairment, obscure the ‘always-already’ social situation of impairment and the body itself. The social model carves out of this permanently social situation socio-material and cultural coordinates through which impairment is addressed. The problem with this situation is that it obscures the enduring social and somatic situation of the body and fails to articulate the complex multivalence and imbrication of lived experience. The turn to immanence allows us to conceptualise the imbrication of the social and somatic, and events through which this imbrication is expressed.

Deleuze’s understanding of immanence lets us rethink relations and events of Being. Because immanence subtends all relations, terms of relation may be rethought. His idea of immanence invites an empirical orientation to ontology. Because Being is wholly immanent, determinations of Being—that is, events of Being—are to be analysed empirically. From the position of immanence, and with a view to transcendental empiricism, we cannot take the given

for granted but must look to, and conceptualise, conditions for the given. Deleuze puts it that “to learn” is to “constitute the space of an encounter with signs” (*DR* 27). The signs he refers to here are not limited to an established semiology but encompass broader relations of Being. Deleuze’s empiricism emphasises the relationality of Being and ways human being is determined through relations. He maintains that “[r]elations are in the middle, and exist as such” (*D* 55). This means that human being is constituted through relations in excess of what is given in experience, and in excess of Kant’s forms of experience. Here “[r]elations are external to their terms” (*D* 55, italics in text). As Deleuze sees it, relations of Being (pertaining to beings) are not ‘fixed’ for all time but develop in time as events.

3.3 The Virtual

In so far as Being is expressed through relations, and in so far as these relations cannot be exhausted, Being exceeds relations that are actualised. Deleuze considers this quality of Being to be virtual: real but not actual. For Deleuze, what is actual has about it another quality that conditions it (see *DR* 223-293). As Simone Bignall puts it, “actualisation moves from virtuality to actuality in a way that allows a process of genuine creation and innovation” (2011: 107). Along transcendental lines, the virtual does not resemble what it conditions. As Deleuze puts it, the “virtual possesses the reality of a task to be performed or a problem to be solved: it is the problem which orientates, conditions and engenders solutions, but these do not resemble the conditions of the problem.” (*DR* 276) Complementary to Deleuze’s understanding of immanence, the virtual is not transcendent to what it conditions. We can put it that the virtual functions as a form of *movement* through which things (and the senses to which things pertain) are actualised. For example, the multivalent nature of disablement is such that meanings of disablement are *becoming* rather than static. Meanings of disablement are surpassed by lived experience so that the meaning of disablement is constantly becoming. Here disability takes on virtual coordinates in excess of the actual.

In *Difference and Repetition* Deleuze posits the virtual in terms of genetic (generative) structures implicit to the actual. He refers to these structures as Ideas. He puts it that “Ideas are problematic or ‘perplexed’ virtual multiplicities, made up of relations between differential elements” (*DR* 320; see also *DR* 241). Along these lines, Ideas are effective of the actual; but what is actualised *affects* (changes) the coordination of Ideas themselves. There is movement from virtual/Idea complexes to what is actualised, back to virtual/Idea complexes. What this means is that virtual/Idea complexes are changed by what is actualised. What Deleuze wants to articulate with this situation are conditions of genesis and the means by which beings

become. He borrows his concept of Ideas from Kant. For Kant, an Idea is a “necessary concept of reason for which no congruent object can be given in the senses” (*CPR* B384). Kant understands God and World (the conceptual unity of the world) in terms of Ideas. These Ideas cannot be located in experience but are conceptualised through experience. We cannot locate God in experience, nor can we locate the conceptual unity of the world, but the kinds of experience we have allow us to conceptualise both God and World. These things are not in experience but are, as Kant sees it, ideas drawn from what is experienced. For Kant, Ideas are conditions for experience, granting unity to experience. From a transcendental perspective, Ideas (capital ‘I’) are not given in experience, but they articulate the unity of experience. Deleuze transforms Kant’s concept of Ideas to articulate processes generative of the actual. These processes are not given in experience but are inferred from experience. For Deleuze, Ideas do not pertain solely to thought processes but function as the virtual through which things are actualised. He argues that “the reality of the virtual is structure”, and that, in so far as structure is virtual, we “must avoid giving the elements and relations which form structure an actuality which they do not have” (*DR* 272). The kind of structure Deleuze refers to here is not given *in* experience but pertains to conditions *for* experience. Along these lines structure is real but not actual—it is instead *virtual*.

While the virtual contradicts empiricism in so far as it posits reality beyond experience, from the vantage of transcendental and ‘superior’ empiricism, the virtual is implicated in what is experienced. For Deleuze, the virtual is generative of ‘problems’ that engender experience and ‘problems’ that are encountered in experience. He puts it that:

Problematic structure is part of objects themselves, allowing them to be grasped as signs, just as the questioning or problematising instance is a part of knowledge allowing its positivity and specificity to be grasped in the act of *learning*. (*DR* 80, italics in text)

Here the actualisation of problems extends from the virtual (see *DR* 212). This means that problems are both virtual and actual, while their actualisation do not resemble their virtual coordinates (*DR* 278). What Deleuze understands by ‘problems’ are not simply social or political problems, for example, but complexes through which Being is expressed. He puts it that:

A solution always has the truth it deserves according to the problem to which it is a response, and the problem always has the solution it deserves in proportion to *its own* truth or falsity—in other words, in proportion to its sense. (*DR* 207, italics in text)

From a transcendental-empirical perspective, when we encounter problems, we must look to conditions through which they are expressed. In this regard encounters with the transcendental, even in terms of a speculative philosophy, are subject to investigation. Along these lines, problems (political and social problems for example) and solutions cannot be determined for all time but only in time and through the sense of a given time. Looking at disability from this point of view it may be put that meanings of disablement are distributed across time in such a way as to be contingent upon the virtual. Lennard Davis argues in this fashion when he posits disability as an “unstable category” (2002: 1). For Davis, the meaning of disablement cannot be fixed but evolves through time. This situation problematises conditions by which disability is identified. Davis puts it that the “problem presented to us by identity politics is the emphasis on an exclusivity surrounding a specific so-called identity” (29). The problem with identity politics as Davis sees it is that it ‘fixes’ coordinates of identity—therefore obscuring the variegated and evolving nature of disablement. Davis makes the case that we “should not go on record as saying that disability is a fixed identity, when the power behind the concept is that disability presents us with a malleable view of the human body and identity” (26). From a Deleuzian perspective, ‘the power behind the concept’ of disablement is differential—difference being generative of diversity and in excess of identity. Behind the concept of disability are *dynamic* coordinates that *give* the appearance of fixed identity. Taking the virtual into account, it may be argued that disability is subject to virtual coordinates that distribute differing actualities of disablement. This means that disability is both virtual and actual.

3.4 Difference

For Deleuze, the generative nature of the virtual is entwined with the genetic capacity of difference. As he sees it, “the nature of the virtual is such that, for it, to be actualised is to be differentiated” (*DR* 274). While ‘differentiation’ accounts for what is actualised, ‘differentiation’ refers to conditions of virtual structure. Deleuze argues that it is “always in relation to a differentiated problem or to the differentiated conditions of a problem that a differentiation of species and parts is carried out, as though it corresponded to the cases of solution of the problem” (*DR* 269-270, italics in text). What this means is that problems are expressed *differentially*, according to the diversity that difference *makes*. For Deleuze, “[d]ifference is not diversity. Diversity is given, but difference is that by which the given is given, that by which the given is given as diverse” (*DR* 293). In so far as ‘difference is not diversity’, it is generative of diversity. Deleuze sees that “difference is not phenomenon but the noumenon closest to the phenomenon” (293). This is to say that while diversity is

representational, difference serves as the genetic (generative) component necessary to diversity.

Here the difference between Kant and Maimon makes for a useful example. While with Kant the transcendental is made to *resemble* experience, Maimon understands the transcendental in terms of differential intensities that condition experience without resembling experience. He puts it thus:

Sensibility [...] provides the differentials to a determined consciousness; out of them, the imagination produces a finite (determined) object of intuition; out of the relation of these different differentials, which are its objects, the understanding produces the relation of the sensible objects arising from them. (2010: 21)

Maimon places the Kantian transcendental ‘under a microscope’, looking from a speculative point of view to what is prior to Kant’s forms of experience. In so far as, for Maimon, ‘sensibility provides the differentials to a determined consciousness’, sensibility is ‘sensitive to’ genetic (generative) differences of intensity. We can put it that space and time as we experience them are constituted by differing intensities. Space and time are conditioned by differential relations (differential intensities) that precede continuity in experience. From this continuity understanding itself is constituted and works to produce concepts that are contingent on the very intuition of space and time. It is in line with this point of view that Deleuze takes difference to be generative of diversity. While diversity is representational, allowing us to posit differences *between* things, difference is *generative* of representation. From this perspective difference is fundamental to Being such that Being is expressed *through* difference.

Conceptualising difference *beyond* representation, Deleuze is critical of Hegelian dialectic and its propensity (as Deleuze sees it) to subordinate difference to representation (see *DR xv*, and Somers-Hall 2012: 91-122). For Hegel,

the law of diversity [...] asserts that things are different from one another through unlikeness, [so] that the determination of unlikeness belongs to them just as much as that of likeness, for determinate difference is constituted only by both together. (1976: 422-423)

Here Hegel places emphasis on the *representative* nature of difference so that difference is conceptualised *between* things, rather than being *internal* to things. Difference is subordinated to representation instead of being understood through its genetic (generative) capacity. Deleuze considers Hegelian dialectic constrained by representation in such a way that it cannot encompass the difference that difference *makes*. While Hegel posits difference *between* things,

this difference, as Deleuze understands it, cannot account for that by which the given is given, remaining simply at the level of the given. Remaining representational (so Deleuze's argument goes), Hegelian dialectic cannot encompass the creative virtuality that is (for Deleuze) implicit to actuality and the genesis of representation.

Bringing Deleuze's critique of representation back to disability and disability research, it may be argued that purely representational understandings of disablement, where disability is defined against ability, cannot account for the generative aspect of difference. This is evident in Fiona Kumari Campbell's *Contours of Ableism* (2009), which limits conceptions of disability to a representational binarism. As she sees it, it is "not possible to have a concept of *difference* without ableism" (2009: 6, italics in text). This means that understandings of 'ability' (what it is to be able as opposed to disabled) inform concepts of disability and what it means to be subject to them. Campbell suggests that "ableism sets up a binary dynamic that is not simply comparative but rather co-relationally constitutive" (6). From this position she maintains that:

The process of identity formation cannot be separated from the person who is brought into being through those very subjectifying sources of ableism that view disability as inherently negative [...]. Even though at a personal level disabled people may refute ableism and take steps to undo [their] own internalised ableism (disability self-hatred), the process of being clothed in disability always contains a mnemonic trace which recalls memory, history and is incorporated into beingness. (121)

While it is certainly the case that concepts of disablement are historically situated and that understandings of ability inform notions of disability, the manner in which Campbell determines disability and ability obscures their *becoming* multivalence. Because disability is experienced by people with disability in diverse ways, and because ability is experienced differently (one can be able in some ways and not in others.), the binary Campbell presents is too broad and too general to account for conditions of disability and ability and the various ways people with disability negotiate the world. Additionally, Campbell's binary perspective cannot account for the virtuality of disability (and ability) and the dynamic through which disability *becomes*. Limiting disability and ability to opposition, Campbell arguably reifies their oppositional relation, so that, as she puts it, "[d]isability cannot be thought of/spoken about on any basis other than the negative" (12). Although she means to validate the difference

disability makes,⁴⁵ by defining disability against ability, Campbell upholds its negative relation to ability and arguably occludes the diversity of disability experience.

Making a critique of binary determinations, I do not hold that these determinations should be rejected out of hand. Instead, arguing *with* Deleuze, I make the case that diversity is contingent on a genetic mode of difference that exceeds representation. For Deleuze, difference is not simply an effect of relations *between* things but is *productive* of relations themselves. This means that difference is not limited to representation—rather, it encompasses virtuality in excess of representation. Applying this generative conception of difference to disability, I do not simply make case that every experience of disability is different and that difference must be celebrated; instead, the case is made that difference in its genetic (generative) capacity is fundamental to disability. Taking up difference in terms of its genetic capacity, this study endorses an empiricism that is attuned to the genetic capacity of difference and what it makes.

3.5 Repetition

Just as difference is the lodestone of Deleuze’s ontology, repetition is essential to the diversity that difference makes. For Deleuze, repetition accounts for the *recurrence* of difference. Repetition is not simply an act of replay; it is a component of *genesis*. If we are to think difference beyond the terms of representation, we must also understand repetition beyond these terms (see *DR xiii*). Deleuze draws his concept of repetition from Nietzsche’s notion of ‘eternal return’. While Nietzsche famously addresses eternal return in terms of an ethical principle (see Nietzsche, *GS* s.341 [pg. 194]), Deleuze addresses it in terms of what he considers its genetic (generative) capacity. As he sees it,

[t]he eternal return is a force of affirmation, but it affirms everything of the multiple, everything of the different, everything of chance *except* what subordinates them to the One, to the Same, to necessity. Everything *except* the One, the Same and the Necessary. (*DR* 147, italics in text)

This means that repetition does not simply encompass similitude but is a condition of difference. In *Difference and Repetition* Deleuze uses both difference and repetition to account for conditions of perception and perceptual unity. For Deleuze, it is the repetition of differing intensity that produces perceptual unity. From here the question arises: If difference constitutes perceptual unity, how is this unity possible? How is it that objects appear to us (as unities

⁴⁵ “Whilst many disabled people enfold disability into our shifting selves (to say nothing about other aspects of our profile: gender, race, sexual orientation, religion) in varied ways, I argue that the disabled experience *does* create difference – a valuable difference – a different perspectivism or living in the world.” (121, italics in text).

instead of ‘differing intensities’), and how are we able to experience unity? Deleuze conceptualises perceptual unity in terms of three different conditions (see *DR* 93-118).

- 1) The first condition is referred to in terms of ‘habit’. Deleuze draws from Freud’s understanding of the body as a surface for the collection of intensities (*DR* 124-125). Intensities are bound to the body and embody particular sensory zones (the mouth, the anus, the genitals). We can put it that sense itself becomes accustomed to these zones so that they are sought out and returned to in the manner of sensory habits.
- 2) The second condition is the compounding of intensity for the production of conscious and unconscious memory. We can put it that sensory zones of habit occupy the uppermost tip of memory. In so far as we continue to sense, and in so far as there is a *continuum of sense*, intensities are compounded to produce conscious and unconscious memory, and *conceptual affects*. Following psychoanalytic theory, Deleuze refers to these affects in terms of ‘partial objects’ (*DR* 129-130). Like Kant’s Ideas, partial objects are not objects of direct experience but ideas (or concepts) accumulated through experience (conscious and otherwise). In this sense they are ‘Ideals’—like love, which may be described as a ‘concoction of intensities’ (on this, see for example *PS* 48). Here memory is implicated in concepts of understanding linked to sensory perception. Once a ‘partial object’ is formed, it is ‘read back’ into phenomena of experience (people and objects). The compounding of intensity functions to *produce* conscious and unconscious memory. In order for us to have concepts, and in order for us to think in terms of the ego (Self or ‘I’)—that, is in order for us to *have* an ego (Self or ‘I’)—there must be conditions for the ego. if we are to have an ego (and if we are to *be* an ego), the ego must be engendered through processes productive of conscious and unconscious memory. For Deleuze, the compounding of intensity is implicit to memory.
- 3) The third condition links back to Deleuze’s understanding of ‘eternal return’. In order that memory has something to memorise, and in order for habit to form, there must be an ‘opening’ for intensity. Deleuze refers to this opening in terms of an “empty form of time” (*DR* 350). This empty form of time is the condition by which what is experienced as time (through habit and memory) continues to *become*. Through the empty form of time Deleuze emphasises the eternal return of difference. As we have seen, for Deleuze eternal return is not the return of the same but the recurrence of difference. Drawing from Maimon, Deleuze holds that all intensities are different—and it is the ‘compounding of different intensities that produces conscious and

unconscious memory. In order for memory to *become*, and in order for concepts and faculties of cognition to emerge, there must be an opening for intensity.

As Deleuze understands it, these three *different* processes are continually repeated to produce perceptual unity. We can put it that the mind is the effect of difference and repetition. Difference and repetition are implicated in conditions for perceptual unity. Even if we reject the conditions (habit, memory, and the empty form of time) Deleuze proposes, we needn't reject the attempt to articulate conditions for experience. Understanding how experience is constituted, we are better equipped to understand what sort of experience can be had, and what sort of thought we can think.

3.6 The Image of Thought

Transcendental empiricism takes on ethical significance in so far as it problematises conditions for thought and their impact on experience. Obviously, what we think affects (changes) what we experience (and vice versa). For Deleuze, conditions of perceptual unity produce an Image of thought implicit to what we think. It is according to this Image that we understand *what* thought is, and as Deleuze sees it, what thought wants (see *NP* 96-104; *PS* 60-69; *DR* 171-223). He holds that is according to an image of thought that “thought has an affinity with the true”, that thought “formally possesses the true and materially wants the true”. It is, he suggests, “*in terms* of this image that everybody knows and is presumed to know what it means to think” (*DR* 174, italics in text). Like Foucault (see Chapter 7), Deleuze is interested in conditions for knowledge and the kinds of knowledge they produce. Deleuze looks to ways thought is recognised and ways knowledge is understood. From a transcendental-empirical perspective the question emerges, How do we understand knowledge in relation to thought, and how do we know what it is to think? If we simply rest with Kant's forms of experience, what does this mean for thought? Do these forms allow us to engage with conditions for thought, or do they cause us to take these conditions for granted? With his critique of representation Deleuze means to interrogate ways thought is represented and what these representations produce. Understanding thought in terms of *processes* instead of forms, we are in a position to question forms of thought that are commonly sensed, that account for ‘common sense’.

If what we think is contingent on processes rather than forms, thought is an *event* produced in ‘real time’. Understood in terms of events, conditions for thought may be approached empirically—from the position of a *superior empiricism* that does not simply begin and end with the experiential but encompasses conditions for the experiential. Transcendental

empiricism encompasses events irreducible to form, events productive of form. From this perspective, given forms of thought (or ‘images’ of thought) may be brought into question and assessed in terms of conditions for them. Here we become sensitive to the very *event* of thought and conditions on which *what we think* depends. In his study of Nietzsche (*Nietzsche and Philosophy*), Deleuze makes the case that for Nietzsche, the “truth of a thought must be interpreted and evaluated according to the forces or power that determine it to think and to think this rather than that” (NP 97). Via Nietzsche, Deleuze posits that ‘forces’—or for our purposes here, *processes*—generative of thought produce an *Image* of thought according to which we know what it means to think. To understand this Image, whatever it may consist of, we must assess conditions for it, bringing them into relation with the culture(s) in which what we think is situated (see NP 96-103). There is from this Nietzschean perspective *value* placed on thought—value that is determined by culture. For Nietzsche, what we think (the experiential content of thought) is affected (changed) by that in which we are situated. One must remain sensitive to culture and its capacity to affect thought. ‘Superior empiricism’ pertains therefore not only to conditions for thought, but to the content of thought and the manner in which this content is affected (changed). Theorising the Image of thought, Deleuze gives transcendental/‘superior’ empiricism ethical dimensions—assessing not only how thought and experience are produced but how they are affected (or changed).

3.7 Proustian Disability Studies?

For Deleuze, what we experience is constituted by differential relations irreducible to what is experienced. Experience is an event both produced and affected (changed) by differential relations. Transcendental empiricism accounts for conditions for thought and experience. In so far as thought and experience are the result of differential relations, a ‘superior’ empiricism is necessary to account for them. This transcendental-empirical mode of enquiry encompasses sense in so far as Being *is sense*. As Chapter 2 has shown, sense for Deleuze has transcendental valences. This means that sense is “always presupposed as soon as *I* begin to speak” (LS 35, italics in text). Sense for Deleuze is prior to what is spoken and in excess of what is meant. We can put it that sense a condition for meaning. From a transcendental-empirical perspective, we remain sensitive to conditions for thought, bringing them into relation (without reducing them) to the *contents* of thought.

In his *Proust and Signs*, Deleuze looks to encounters through which Proust (and his protagonist) articulates the search for lost time. The ‘signs’ his protagonist encounters are *effects* of sense—sense being in excess of signification. The protagonist is *enveloped* by sense

in so far as sense is a condition for signification. Deleuze puts it that the “sign is an object of an encounter”, and that the sign “is what forces us to think” (PS 62). Along these lines, the “search for lost time is presented as a system of signs” (54). This situation brings the transcendental into relation with the experiential and shows that contents of thought are effects of encounter irreducible established forms. Applying this orientation to disability and disability research, emphasis is placed on conditions for disability and encounters *with* and *through* disability. We can put it that the meaning of disability is never entirely given, that it is always in process and therefore irreducible to established meanings. Disability research may be conceived in terms of ‘encounters with signs’ that *force us to think*. Just as from a transcendental-empirical perspective conditions for experience are irreducible to what is experienced, conditions for disability may be understood to be in excess of established forms. This is to say that the meaning of disability is never entirely given, that sense is *productive* of signs that are encountered in experience. Taking a transcendental-empirical approach to disability and disability research, we remain sensitive to conditions for disability and their irreducibility to established forms.

3.8 Conclusion

Providing an overview transcendental empiricism and bringing it into relation with key Deleuzian concepts, the chapter has shown what Deleuze understands by the transcendental, and how, for Deleuze, the transcendental conditions experience. According to his understanding of difference and repetition—where both difference and repetition have genetic (generative) capacities—*how* we experience is the result of processes *beyond* what is experienced. Transcendental/‘superior’ empiricism takes on ethical significance encompassing conditions that produce and affect (change) experience. Transcendental empiricism bears on the question of what sort of experience can be had. This question is relevant to disability and ways disability experience is understood. The chapter has shown that rather than being a simple ‘fact’ of diversity, disability is *differentially* constituted in excess of representation. This means that disability is always *beyond* representation, that meanings of disablement are always *becoming* and subject to encounter. Under the heading of ‘Proustian Disability Studies’, the chapter has laid grounds for a transcendental-empirical approach to disability research, one that foregrounds conditions for experience and the becoming of disability. Even if we reject the way Deleuze understands conditions for experience, we needn’t reject his empiricism. Approaching disability in terms of conditions for it, encompassing both the transcendental and

the empirical, disability research can look to what should be done about disability, with a view to lived experience and becoming.

The following chapter articulates transcendental empiricism through the work of Gilbert Simondon. While for Deleuze ‘difference is that by which the given is given’, for Simondon, the “principle of individuation” accounts for “the characteristics of the individual” (*ILNFI* 1). Just as Deleuze understands genesis in terms of *difference*, Simondon conceptualises genesis in terms of *individuation*. Deleuze takes individuation to be a component of actualisation implicit to the difference that difference *makes*. This means that where there is differentiation (or actualisation), there is a process of individuation.⁴⁶ For Simondon, diversity is the effect of individuation, which is to say that individuation (as differentiation) is generative of diversity.⁴⁷

These distinctions aside, Deleuze and Simondon take up transcendental empiricism to account for conditions *generative* of experience. While for Deleuze transcendental empiricism amounts to a critique of representation, for Simondon, transcendental empiricism is linked to the critique of *hylomorphism*. As we have seen (Chapter 1), hylomorphism asserts the conformity of matter to form. According to hylomorphism, matter simply *assumes* form in such a way that the *genesis* of matter and form is obscured. With his critique of hylomorphism Simondon means to expose the ‘middle’ that hylomorphism excludes: the ‘space’ in which matter and form are produced. Simondon’s critique of hylomorphism is a critique of representation, looking to the relationship between matter and form. Articulating the mind/body relation in terms of individuation, Simondon looks to processes productive of the mind and body and processes productive of their *imbrication* in experience. From the point of view of individuation, there is not body *and then* mind so much as mind and body are the result of transcendental (conditioning) processes. To account for the imbrication of mind and body *in* experience, and to expose conditions that Critical Realism arguably obscures, Chapter 4 shows what Simondon understands by individuation and the critique of hylomorphism.

⁴⁶ Deleuze argues: “We must show not only how individuating difference differs in kind from specific difference, but primarily and above all how individuation properly *precedes* matter and form, species and parts, and every other element of the constituted individual”. (*DR* 49, italics in text). Here we can put it that while ‘specific difference’ *amounts* to identity and representation, individuating difference is *generative* of identity and representation.

⁴⁷ Simondon puts it that “[a]s an activity, growth is amplification via differentiation and integration, not a simple continuity or unfolding” (*ILNFI* 230).

CHAPTER 4

Just as Deleuze posits a *generative* concept of difference, Simondon takes up individuation to articulate the generation of so-called ‘individuals’ (or what results from individuation). Here we must recall that, for Deleuze, individuation is an aspect of *actualisation*, which is to say that differentiation (recalling that differentiation denotes actualisation) is an *individuating* process. These details aside, the difference between Deleuze and Simondon may be posited in terms of what they address. While Deleuze looks to processes generative of experience with a view to the likes of Kant and Husserl, Simondon takes up individuation to articulate processes generative of the physical, the biological, the psychic and the social. That said, it is not the case that Deleuze ignores these things—it is more the case that they occupy greater space in Simondon’s work.

Chapter 4 examines Simondon’s understanding of individuation with a view to processes productive of matter and mind—processes productive, we might say, of the body and that by which it is experienced. For Simondon, *individuation* is that by which the given is given. He sees that individuation accounts for the very genesis of matter and mind. While Critical Realism makes a distinction between processes productive of matter and mind and how they are experienced (processes that are from a Critical-Realist perspective ‘transfactual’ in nature [see Chapter 1]), it fails to articulate the *generation* of matter and mind and their living imbrication. Critical Realism therefore conforms to a hylomorphic logic that obscures the very generation of matter and mind, body and experience, excluding the ‘middle’ by which they are given. From the point of view of Simondonian individuation, matter and mind—body and experience—are effects of ongoing processes irreducible to the given. These processes are transcendental in nature in so far as the transcendental accounts for conditions for experience. Simondon takes up transcendental empiricism in pursuit of conditions for experience and to articulate *affective* (change-making) relations between the transcendental and the empirical. We should recall that for both Deleuze and Simondon the transcendental does not resemble what it produces. To account for the difference between the transcendental and the empirical, Simondon makes a critique of hylomorphism, addressing the ‘middle’ productive of matter and form. Deleuze, on the other hand, pursues genesis in terms of a critique of representation. While Simondon couches his critique in terms of hylomorphism, this critique is a critique of representation,⁴⁸ addressing the means by which representation is given. The following section

⁴⁸ Simondon argues: “The hylomorphic schema is not merely inadequate for the knowledge of the principle of individuation; it also leads to a representation of individual reality that is incorrect: it turns the individual into the possible term of a relation, whereas the individual, on the contrary, is a theater and agent of a relation; the

takes up Deleuze's assessment of hylomorphism and Simondon's critique, bringing Simondonian individuation into relation with Deleuzian difference to make a transcendental-empirical approach to disability and disability research.

4.1 Individuation, and the Critique of Hylomorphism

Like Deleuze, Gilbert Simondon looks to the generative capacities of Being. While Deleuze understands difference to be generative of diversity, Simondon understands individuation to be generative of the individual. Simondon takes up individuation to account for processes productive of the physical, the biological, the psychic and the social. He is interested in processes that engender the biological, and relations between living things and technologies. Key to his understanding of individuation is his critique of hylomorphism. As we have seen, it is according to hylomorphism that matter is taken to assume form in such a way that the generation of matter and form is obscured. Simondon is critical of Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas and the way they conceive the relation between matter and form (Chabot 2013; Bowden 2012). In the *Physics* and *Metaphysics*, Aristotle takes matter to 'fit' form so that form is taken to be the *ends* of matter.⁴⁹ For Simondon this orientation excludes the generation of matter and form. As he sees it, the

hylomorphic schema belongs to the content of our culture; it has been transmitted since classical Antiquity, and we often think of this schema as perfectly grounded, not relative to a particular experience, perhaps improperly generalized, but coextensive with universal reality. (*METO* 250)

What Simondon shows with his critique of hylomorphism is that processes productive of matter are irreducible to form—that both matter and form are the result of generation. From this perspective,

[t]here is a genesis when the coming-into-being of a system of primitively oversaturated reality, rich in potential, greater than unity and harboring an internal incompatibility, constitutes for this system the discovery of compatibility, a resolution through the advent of structure. (*METO* 168)

individual can only be termed in an ancillary way because it is essentially a theater or agent of an interactive communication." (*ILNFI* 50) This is to say that hylomorphism functions in such a way as to *misrepresent* the conditions by which the individual is given.

⁴⁹ Aristotle argues that "since nature is twofold, the matter and the form, of which the latter is the end, and since all the rest is for the sake of the end, the form must be the cause in the sense of that for the sake of which" (*Physics*, Book II 199a20-199a33). Similarly, Aquinas holds that "a natural thing does not act by its whole self [...] but by virtue of its form, through which it is in act" (2011: 8).

What Simondon brings into play here is individuation: the process generative of matter and form. This process partakes of a ‘pre-individual reality’—or as he puts it in the above, an ‘oversaturated reality’—that accounts for individuation. As he sees it, energy passes through what it engenders. This means that the real (reality) is always becoming and is therefore irreducible to appears. From this point of view the individual is,

a being that is genetically [in terms of genesis] constituted by a relation between an energetic condition and a structural condition that extend their existence in the individual, which can at any moment behave as a germ of structuration or as an energetic continuum. (*ILNFI* 110)

Individuation gives rise to structure and passes through structures (organisms and institutions for example). Simondon describes this passage in terms of ‘transduction’. By ‘transduction’ he understands “a physical, biological, mental, or social operation through which an activity propagates incrementally within a domain by basing this individuation on a structuration of the domain operated from one region to another” (*ILNFI* 13). Put simply, transduction describes the *act* of structuration: the individuating process productive of structure. Here transduction is the ‘engine’ of individuation. For Simondon, transduction, individuation and structuration are *immanent* with the (pre-individual) ‘oversaturated reality’ through which they emerge. Like Deleuze’s understanding of the virtual, Simondon’s concept of the pre-individual accounts for what constitutes things and states of affairs. As we have seen, while Deleuze’s critique of representation may be understood in terms of an orientation to Western philosophy, Simondon’s critique of hylomorphism relates to processes generative of matter and form. However, this distinction is difficult to maintain in so far as hylomorphism *is* a philosophical concept, and in so far as both Simondon and Deleuze’s investigations have scientific implications.

4.2 Simondon, Deleuze, and Transcendental Empiricism

In his 1966 review of Simondon’s *L’individu et sa genèse physico-biologique*⁵⁰ (*The Individual and its Physico-Biological Genesis*—referred to by translator Taylor Adkins as ‘Physical Individuation’), Deleuze praises Simondon for aligning “contemporary science” with “the major problems of classical philosophy” (*DI* 89). As Deleuze puts it, Simondon “elaborates [...] a whole ontology, according to which Being is never One”. He shows that, “[a]s pre-individual, being is more than one—metastable, superposed, simultaneous with itself” (89).

⁵⁰ This text is part of Simondon’s dissertation, *L’individuation à la lumière des notions de forme et d’information* (*Individuation in Light of Notions of Form and Information*—cited here as *ILNFI*).

What Deleuze and Simondon share is their attention to ontogenesis (the genesis of beings). Addressing Simondon's account of individuation, Deleuze argues that "[t]raditionally, the principle of individuation is modelled on a completed individual, one who is already formed". He goes on: "Because we put the individual after the individuation [...] we put the principle of individuation *before* the process of becoming an individual" (86, italics in text).

From this perspective the individual is taken for granted, and processes that engender the individual are taken to *resemble* the individual. Just as Deleuze maintains that the transcendental does not resemble what it engenders, Simondon argues that individuation does not resemble the 'individual' that we encounter. Anne Sauvagnargues (2012) makes the case that Simondon's account of individuation "enables Deleuze to build his transcendental empiricism" and "shows Deleuze how the hypothesis of consciousness may be avoided by replacing the subjective transcendental with emissions of singularities" (1, 19). In his *Logic of Sense* Deleuze draws on Simondon to make the claim that "[s]ingularities are the true transcendental events" (LS 118; see also LS 116-125). As we have seen (Chapter 3), for Deleuze, experience is engendered by processes irreducible to form. From the point of view of Simondonian individuation, form is the effect of an *individuating* process constitutive of the individual. What Deleuze and Simondon share is their commitment to the critique of representation. For Simondon, the individual is the effect of a pre-individual metastability. This means that the process engendering of individuals is *more than stable*, that it is in excess of stability. It is this excess that accounts for the continuation of individuation and the development of life.

For both Simondon and Deleuze, Being encompasses becoming in such a way as to be metastable in nature. From a transcendental-empirical perspective, relations of form should not be understood solely in terms of the given but must be approached according to conditions for form. For Deleuze, this approach amounts to critique of representation. As he puts it,

[t]he elementary concepts of representation are the categories defined as the conditions for possible experience. These, however, are too general or too large for the real. The net is so loose that the largest fish pass through. (DR 85)

The categories he refers to here are to the Kantian categories of understanding (see CPR B106). As we have seen (Chapter 3), Deleuze is critical of Kant's categories and their tendency to obscure conditions for understanding. As Deleuze sees it, Kant fails to account for the very *genesis* of the categories. He therefore fails to approach conditions for representation. For Deleuze,

[r]epresentation fails to capture the affirmed world of difference. [...] It mediates everything but mobilises and moves nothing. Movement, for its part, implies a plurality of centres, a superposition of perspectives, a tangle of points of view, a coexistence of moments which essentially distort representation. (DR 70)

The crux of Deleuze's critique is that representation obscures the process by which it is engendered. Just as Simondon is critical of conditions by which matter is taken to *assume* form (*hylomorphism*), Deleuze is critical of representation and its tendency to obscure 'the world of difference'. Rather than simply resting with concepts of understanding, Deleuze attends to processes generative of understanding. Here we can put it that, resting with given forms of disablement and existing concepts of disability, disability research often fails to encompass conditions for disability. From a transcendental-empirical perspective, disability research should look to conditions for experience, conditions that encompass what is in excess of the given. Disability research should remain sensitive to the pre-individual and virtual coordinates by which the given is given.

4.3 The Pre-Individual and the Virtual

For Simondon and Deleuze, the process that engenders the individual is in excess of the individual. As we have seen (Chapter 3), for Deleuze, this process encompasses the virtual: that which is real but not actual (see DR 269-277). With Simondon, individuation extends from a state of pre-individuality that is comparable with Deleuze's understanding of the virtual. Simondon holds that the individual is an "*element in a vaster individuation through the intermediary of the charge of pre-individual reality that the individual contains*" (ILNFI 8, italics in text). We can put it that the pre-individual *pervades* the individual, being in excess of the individual. Like Deleuze's virtual, the pre-individual is a condition for actualisation. For Simondon, the individual is the effect of individuation, while individuation itself depends on a pre-individual metastability. As we have seen (Chapter 3), with Deleuze the virtual is presented in terms of *Idea*. He puts that "Ideas are multiplicities" and that "every idea is a multiplicity or variety" (DR 270). We should recall that for Deleuze Ideas (capital 'I') are generative rather than representational. Like difference, they are that by which the given is given. While Ideas are differentiated, what they actualise is differentiated. It is according to this difference-making dynamic that the given is given.

Deleuze takes up Simondon's understanding of individuation to describe the transition from virtuality to actuality. He speaks of this process in terms of "differentiation-individuation-dramatisation-differentiation" (DR 327), a difficult turn of phrase that denotes conditions by

which the virtual is actualised. While ‘differentiation’ refers to the organisation of virtual coordinates, ‘individuation’ refers to conditions of *actual* organisation; ‘dramatisation’ accounts for intensive distribution (recalling that for Deleuze intensity is that by which the given is distributed), while ‘differentiation’ denotes the effects of intensive distribution. We can put it that “indi-drama-different/ciation” (*DR* 332) is a synthesising motion from virtual to actual. Like Simondon, Deleuze looks to conditions for the given. For Deleuze, forms of life are the result of differential distribution. Along these lines, “species do not resemble the differential relations that are actualised in them” (*DR* 328). From the point of view of the virtual, “[t]he individual [...] finds itself attached to a pre-individual half which is not the impersonal within it so much as the reservoir of its singularities”. This means that, for Deleuze, “the pre-individual field is a virtual-ideal field, made up of differential relations” (*DR* 322). What Simondon and Deleuze share is their transcendental-empirical perspective. From this perspective reality cannot be reduced to objects of experience, rather, it includes conditions for the experiential.

4.4 Individuation, and the Critique of Substantialism

Simondon conceptualises individuation to account for processes productive of the physical, the biophysical and the psychosocial. Looking to the biophysical from the point of view of individuation, he finds that the mind and the body do not confront each other as separate substances but as co-relational events. This means that:

The domain of psychological individuality [...] does not have its own space; it exists as a superimpression relative to the physical and biological domains; it is not inserted between them, properly speaking, but joins them and includes them partially, all while being situated within them”. (*ILNFI* 311)

For Simondon, what we call ‘mind’ is the effect of individuation productive of the biophysical. This is to say that both mind and body pertain to an individuating process. According to this process the mind cannot be taken simply as given, or for granted, but must be understood in terms of individuation. Here mind and body are effects of processes generative of form. Along these lines, mind and body should not be posed in the Cartesian manner of separate substances (‘substantialities’). From a transcendental-empirical perspective, where we encounter substance (substantiality) we should attend to conditions by which it is given. For Simondon, this amounts to a critique of hylomorphism. As we have seen, hylomorphism obscures the process by which form and matter are given. We can also put it that hylomorphism obscures conditions on which the substantialist perspective depends.

Critiquing hylomorphism, we cannot take substance (substantiality) for granted—nor should we accept the Critical-Realist tendency toward dualism. Attending, as disability researcher and activist Tom Shakespeare puts it, to “the independent existence of bodies”, where bodies are taken to be separate from the ways they are understood, Critical Realism posits a distinction between body and mind to address the irreducibility of the biophysical to discourse. Beginning with this distinction Critical Realism fails to account for conditions *for* the psychic and the somatic. Shakespeare takes up Critical Realism to account for biophysical and psychosocial “mechanisms working at different levels”, mechanisms that “cannot be reduced to each other” (2014: 73, 74). The problem with this perspective is that it fails to account for the *genesis* of ‘mechanisms’. While Shakespeare claims that “the experience of a disabled person results from the relationship between factors intrinsic to the individual, and extrinsic factors arising from the wider context in which she finds herself” (74), the Critical-Realist approach cannot account for the conditions for these factors —nor can it articulate their imbrication in experience from the point of view of *genesis*.

From a transcendental-empirical perspective we must account for the genesis of experience, which is irreducible to what is experienced. We cannot rest with what is experientially interior and exterior—we must instead look to conditions for interiority and exteriority. Deployed to articulate the irreducibility of impairment to discourse, and posing impairment and discourse in terms of ‘different levels’, Critical Realism fails to account for their genesis. Rather than beginning with ‘different levels’, we should attend to conditions for ‘levels’. Doing so, we are in a better position to assess conditions for disability and disability experience. We are also in a position to address the *becoming* of disability and experience, which is irreducible to the given forms. One may object to this orientation and make the case that we do encounter forms in experience and that disability experience *is* reducible to forms. I do not reject the fact that experience encounters form—my position is that experience in its very becoming is irreducible to form, that there are processes productive of form, processes irreducible to forms engendered. With transcendental empiricism we see that experience is the result of generative processes productive of form. I see that Critical Realism is not critical enough in its assessment of conditions of experience, that it takes ‘different levels’ of reality, and the real of experience, for granted. It therefore fails to articulate the becoming of forms and, we might say, their becoming imbrication in experience. Critical Realism conforms to a hylomorphic logic that obscures conditions for the given: the individuating process productive of the given.

We should recall that empiricism functions in such a way that, as Deleuze puts it, relations are “*external to their terms*” (D 55, italics in text). From an empirical standpoint, we must investigate conditions by which terms of relation are engendered. We should not take these terms for granted, resting with ‘different levels’ of the real and ‘different levels’ of experience; rather, we should investigate conditions for these ‘levels’. As we have seen, this manner of empiricism, this transcendental or ‘superior’ empiricism, encompasses conditions for the given. It attends to processes effective of experience. As Simondon argues, the “individual individuates and is individuated before any possible distinction of the extrinsic and the intrinsic” (ILNFI 50). This means that individuation is productive of interiority and exteriority and the *terms* on which they depend. From a transcendental-empirical perspective, we should not rest with mind *and* body. We should attend instead to conditions—generative conditions—for the mind/body dynamic. These conditions are irreducible to what is experienced, encompassing the very becoming of experience. Taking this approach, looking to what is in excess of the experiential, we are made sensitive to the becoming of experience. We also encounter the ‘becoming sense’ of disablement, which is irreducible to given experience.

4.5 Transindividuation

Simondon takes up individuation to articulate the process by which forms of interiority and exteriority are given. As he sees it, prior to relations of interiority and exteriority there is a *milieu* for individuation out of which interiority and exteriority emerge. This milieu is for Simondon an “energetic system” (ILNFI 50) or a metastable state necessary to individuation. Here the individual (that which results from individuation) should not be confused with the *individuating* conditions by which it is given. To make sense of this situation we can look to the conditions Simondon considers generative of the psychic and the social. As he understands it, both the psychic (that which constitutes the mind) and the social are effects of individuation. There is from this perspective a *transindividuality* that pervades the psychic and the social. Simondon makes the case that the “complete structures and functions resulting from the individuation of the pre-individual reality associated with the living individual are only accomplished and stabilized in the collective” (ILNFI 179). As we have seen, individuation for Simondon is contingent on a ‘pre-individuality’—an energetic dynamic productive of individuation. Where it relates to the psychic and the social, this dynamic is *transindividual*, conditioning both psychic interiority and social exteriority. Here individuation and pre-individuality pervade the constituted individual, encompassing the *collective*. For Simondon, the

collective, which is a transindividual reality obtained by the individuation of the pre-individual realities associated with a plurality of living beings, is distinguished from the pure social and the pure inter-individual [...]. (*ILNFI* 179)

Neither pre-individuality nor individuation end with the constituted individual. They pass through the individual and through the *collective milieu* that the individual encompasses.

We can put it that transindividuality presents the process of individuation on a larger scale. We are no longer simply dealing with biophysical processes productive of individuals. We are instead looking to processes effective of the social and one's psychosocial being. As Simondon points out, these processes are irreducible to the social—precisely because they are *productive* of the social. What Simondon theorises through his concept of the transindividual are the very conditions generative of the social. On this larger scale pre-individuality is associated with the collective necessary to individuation and the becoming of the social. Here transindividuality is the cause of the social. It describes the transfer of energy from individuals (persons) through the collective constitutive of the social. It also describes the transfer of energy from the collective through individuals (persons). In this scenario the psychic is 'always-already' psychosocial in so far as the individual is *transindividually* constituted. It is from this point of view that the social is posited as the effect of transindividuation.

It is with a view to transindividuality and individuation that Simondon mounts a critique of sociology and psychology (see Scott 2014: 30, 108 and 112). As he sees it, "the [purely] social and the [purely] psychical are nothing but borderline cases; they are not the foundations of reality, the true terms of relation" (*ILNFI* 351). There is *subtending* the psychic and the social a transindividual and transcendental (conditioning) relation. Without attending to this relation the disciplines of sociology and psychology (for Simondon) fail to account for the genesis of the social and the psychological. David Scott puts it that for Simondon, the "human sciences and psychology [...] seem trapped in a vicious logical circularity where the individual is taken as engendering itself on the grounds that it is already given to itself as individual" (2014: 30). This is to say that, neglecting the transcendental, sociology and psychology *begin* with the constituted individual and fail to account for conditions for the individual and the psychosocial. From a Simondonian perspective, without accounting for conditions of genesis, the very functioning of the psychosocial is obscured. Here it may be argued that the distinction between impairment and disability (where disability serves as a social effect of impairment) obscures the relation on which it depends. From the point of view of individuation and transindividuation, one cannot take impairment and disability for granted—one must instead

sound out conditions for their actualisation. Nor should we rest with the commonly accepted dualism of mind and body. Because individuation is productive of the psychic and the somatic, from a transcendental perspective, it is wrong to conceive of the mind and body as separate substances and more accurate to view them as events of individuation.

Attending to the genesis of the psychic and the somatic, Simondon's theory of individuation is useful to analysis of lived experience and ways individuals experience the psychosomatic and the psychosocial. Rather than resting with the 'independent existence of bodies' *à la* Critical Realism, we should investigate relations that make embodiment psychosocial. In this way we will attend to conditions productive of experience. From the point of view of individuation, conditions of embodiment cannot be taken for granted, nor are they reducible to 'levels' or given forms of experience. Here we should not begin with the Ego (Self or 'I') and its confrontation with the social; rather, we should look to conditions that subtend the psychic and the social, conditions that constitute the *psychosocial*. Simondon's understanding of individuation may be posed as a critical alternative to phenomenology and phenomenological accounts of disablement. While phenomenological analysis has been applied to disability research to examine relations between mind and body, impairment and disability (see Abrams 2016; Titchkosky and Michalko 2012; Paterson and Hughes 1999) and to "rethink", as Thomas Abrams puts it, "how disability manifests in our shared world" (2016: 4), as Simondon sees it, phenomenology begins with the given and fails to account for the *individuating genesis* of the given. Like Deleuze (see Chapter 3), Simondon is critical of phenomenology's capacity to account for conditions for experience. While phenomenological interventions in disability research address experience of impairment, they rarely encompass conditions for experience. I do not propose a wholesale rejection of phenomenological disability research. I encourage a critical approach to phenomenology for this research.

For Simondon, phenomenology fails to conceptualise the genesis of form and begins with the form of the person. As David Scott puts it, "phenomenology violates [Simondon's] first principle: it grants an epistemological privilege to the individual subject by taking it as the starting point for its presumed genetic analysis" (2014: 11). For Simondon, even Husserl's transcendental-phenomenological method fails to articulate the genesis of the psychic, beginning instead with the constituted ego (Self or 'I'). It therefore fails to articulate the *individuating* process productive of the psychic and the somatic, upholding the distinction between mind and body, reifying the notion of dual substances. We should recall that, just as Deleuze takes relations to be 'exterior to their terms', Simondon considers terms of relation to

be subsequent to individuation. Individuation is generative of relations and the terms by which they are recognised. Here ‘self and world’ as terms of relation are the result of individuation. The individual does not ‘arrive’ fully formed but is the result of a process of individuation. Individuation subtends the self/world distinction and serves as the condition for psychosomatic relations. From this point of view mind and body are effects of an individuating process irreducible to substance. Accordingly, we should not pose the mind/body relation in terms of dualism but individuation. Nor should we insist on a ‘hard’ distinction between impairment and disability—a distinction that obscures the imbrication of mind and body and the individuating process productive of experience. We will not submit that impairment is simply ‘socially constructed’, nor will we rely on an impairment/disability distinction that takes mind/body dualism for granted. Rather, we will attend to the individuating process (or as Deleuze sees it, the ‘differentiating’ process) necessary to relations and distinctions.

4.6 Transindividual Experience

From a transcendental-empirical perspective, where we encounter relations and distinctions, we should attend to conditions productive of them. Taking this point of view we are in a better position to assess the applicability of distinctions and how they relate to experience. Here we should not begin with the impairment/disability distinction, nor should we pose impairment against its discursive construal. We should look to conditions for psychosocial imbrication. As we have seen, for Simondon, the psychosocial is *transindividually* constituted. The process of individuation productive of the psychic (in common parlance, the mind) also produces the social. This means that individuation subtends the psychic and the social so that the content of thought is always-already socially inflected. Where we encounter impairment, we necessarily encounter the social. This does not mean that impairment is reducible to the social or to ‘social construction’. From the point of view of individuation, the somatic, the psychic and the social are not opposable, rather, they are effects of an individuating process. We can make distinctions between them, but it is only on the condition of individuation that distinction is possible at all. Making a transcendental-empirical approach to disability, we attend to conditions productive of distinctions. In a speculative fashion, we ‘look behind’ the empirical to conditions for the empirical. As Simondon sees it, individuation is productive of the somatic, the psychic, and the social—and it is according to individuation that we can articulate their imbrication in experience. From this perspective impairment is not reducible to discourse (ways of understanding impairment) but neither is it separate from discourse. From a transcendental-

empirical point of view impairment is *immanent with* discourse without being *reducible to* discourse.

We can put it that, from the point of view of disability experience, disability is always becoming. From this point of view, experience of mind and body is always becoming and irreducible to different ‘levels’. We may of course articulate the relation of mind and body in terms of ‘levels’, but we should not take ‘levels’, or dualism, to be constitutive of experience. To do so would be to reduce experience to forms that obscure conditions of genesis. As Simondon sees it, the psychosomatic relation is the result of individuation. For Simondon, and as David Scott writes, “the individual is the phenomenal form signification assumes – it is what being becomes in becoming-individualized” (2014: 94). This is to say that where we encounter individuals (persons), we do so on account of individuation. Just as Deleuze considers sense to be *generative* of signification (or meaning), Simondon takes individuation to be generative of what is *individualised* in experience. He sees that what “constitutes the human concretely is neither pure individuation nor pure individualization, but a mixture of the two” (*ILNFI* 294). For Simondon, in terms of what we experience, things are individualised on the condition of their individuation. This means that while ‘individuation’ refers to transcendental (conditioning) processes productive of the empirical, ‘individualisation’ refers to what is empirically constituted.

Here, rather than taking individuation to be transcendent to individualisation, and in order to account for the affective (change-making) relation between individuation and individualisation, we will submit that individuation is immanent with individualisation. Simondon puts it that the “opposition of the empirical subject and the transcendental subject overlaps that of the subject reached *here and now*” (*ILNFI* 293, italics in text). This means that the subject (or for our purposes here, the person) is both transcendently and empirically constituted. From the point of view Simondonian individuation and Deleuze’s genetic (generative) understanding of difference, we remain in a state of becoming irreducible to the empirical and therefore non-reducible to representation. Thus, the ‘meaning’ of the individual (person) is never complete and always in process. Remaining sensitive to this situation, Deleuze holds that “every time we find ourselves confronted or bound by a limitation or an opposition, we should ask what such a situation presupposes”. For Deleuze, it “presupposes a swarm of differences, a pluralism of free, wild or untamed differences; a properly differential and original space and time; all of which persist alongside the simplifications of limitation and opposition” (*DR* 63-64).

Looking to this ‘swarm of differences’, Deleuze means to bring form into question. As he sees it, the transcendental is composed of singularities rather than forms. Looking to singularities instead of forms, Deleuze brings the transcendental into relation with ethics. As we saw with regards to the Image of thought (Chapter 3), for Deleuze, conditions productive of thought are irreducible to the content of thought. Conceptualising these conditions, we encounter the becoming of thought. From this point of view, form remains in process. Understanding subjectivity in terms of processes, we do not reduce it to established forms or normative criteria. We do not rely on ideas of what the subject ought to be. Instead, we look to processes that make the subject and subjectivity what they are, bringing them into relation with the capabilities and desires of each individual subject. Doing so, we make an ethical approach to subject formation, attending to specific conditions of subject formation. This ethical orientation to subject formation is pursued in the following chapter.

4.7 Disability and the Transindividual

For Deleuze, difference is generative identity. Where we encounter identity there is a ‘swarm’ of generative difference before and after it. Along these lines, Simondon holds that individuation is generative of the individual and contingent on a pre-individual metastability. This means that where there is individuation, there are conditions of metastability irreducible to the individual. Individuation is irreducible to the forms it engenders. Here I submit that people with disability do not experience disability in terms of ‘models’, nor is examination of disability reducible to models. Posing disability research and activism in terms of models (as much as these models may be instructive) runs the risk of obscuring conditions for disability. I do not suggest that models of disability should be abandoned; rather, where possible, they should be posed with a view to conditions for disablement.

While models of disability are useful for analysis and advocacy, they may alienate and even oppress people with disability. I note my own frustration at encountering disability through models that, as I see it, fail to encompass the multivalence of disability and the very becoming of experience. One may argue that models of disability are only provisional, that they are not intended to articulate the gamut of experience but to assist in the development of policy and to abet its application. However, without encompassing the becoming of experience and the genetic (generative) conditions by which disability is given, models of disability may be reductive and obstructive. Articulating social effects of impairment in terms of social models may obscure the always-already social situation of impairment. From the point of view of experience, distinctions between impairment and social effects of impairment are difficult if

not impossible to maintain. If we are to have a ‘social-relational’ understanding of impairment (see Chapter 2), we must have means of articulating the immanence of the psychosomatic with the psychosocial. With his concept of the transindividual, Simondon articulates the imbrication of the psychosomatic and the psychosocial and conditions for this imbrication. As he puts it, the “psychosocial is transindividual: it is this reality that the individuated being carries, this charge of being for future individuations” (*ILNFI* 340). As we have seen, transindividuation accounts for energy that passes through individuals and through the collective constitutive of the social. Transindividuation therefore *trans-individuates*, and it is by this process that the social is produced. As Muriel Combes points out, with his “notion of *transindividual*, Simondon is above all proposing a new manner of conceiving what is very inadequately called the relation between individual and society” (2012: 42, italics in text). This ‘inadequacy’ pertains to the hylomorphic logic by which the individual and the social are commonly understood to relate. According to this logic, content is supposed simply to *assume* form. As Simondon sees it, hylomorphism is implicated in the failure to account for conditions for the individual (person) and the social. These conditions are for Simondon *transindividual* and *trans-individuating*.

Put simply, in order that we have social relations, there must be conditions *productive* of them. It is here that we encounter the transindividual. For Simondon, transindividuation articulates the “unity of interior (psychical) individuation and exterior (collective) individuation” (*ILNFI* 9). This means that transindividuation is that by which the psychosocial is given. It is also that by which social forms (and social models) become. From the point of view of transindividuation, the social is always becoming and irreducible to any single form or organisation. Bringing impairment into relation with transindividuation, we can put it that social effects of impairment are always-already in process and therefore irreducible to any single model. Where there is embodiment, and where we encounter bodies, we also encounter the *transindividual*. In this way impairment is always-already social and also in excess of ‘social model’ organisation. If we are to have social models of disability, they should not be constituted in terms of an impairment/disability distinction. If we are to have a social-relational understanding of disability (see Shakespeare 2014), it should articulate the processes by which form is given. Instead of reducing experience to established forms—instead of relying on these forms to make sense of experience—we should understand experience in terms of processes that are ongoing and irreducible to form. Doing so, we remain sensitive to the generation of experience and changing conditions of disablement.

Seen with a view to the transindividual and Deleuze's genetic (generative) understanding of difference, conditions for disability remain in process. From the Critical-Realist perspective, relations between mind, body and world are posed in such a way that their genesis is obscured. With his theory of individuation and transindividuation, Simondon articulates conditions productive of the psychosomatic and psychosocial. What disability research and the field of Disability Studies stand to gain from Simondon's understanding of individuation and transindividuation, and Deleuze's genetic (generative) understanding of difference, are means of accounting for the becoming of disability, disability research, and the field of Disability Studies. We can put it that, in terms of becoming, the field of Disability Studies is transindividual in nature, encompassing people with disability, conditions through which they encounter the world, and conditions of research. As I see it, disability research is always becoming. It has the capacity to change understandings of disability and to change conditions of disablement. I see that disability research is affective (change-making and force-related), that relations between 'researcher and researched' are mutually affective.

Looking at disability research in terms of its affective capacities, we should be wary of relations between disability and oppression (see Chapter 2). To suppose that people with disability are necessarily oppressed is to impose a "dangerous circularity", as Tom Shakespeare puts it, (2008: 11) on research. It can impose *negative affect* on disability experience where conditions of experience remain to be verified. As I have pointed out—and this should be obvious: people with disability do not always experience disablement the same way. Where some experience liberation and joy, others encounter oppression and sadness. This, for me, highlights the affective capacity of disability research. To articulate this affective capacity, we can conceptualise disability research in terms of *transindividuation* while examining the affective (force-related and change-making) nature of the social. From the point of view of the transindividual, we do not simply confront the social, nor is the individual (person) contiguous with the social. Instead, the individual is immanent with the social in such a way as to be socially constituted. This is what it means to say that impairment is always-already social. It is worth reiterating that from this point of view impairment is irreducible to 'social construction' (we cannot put it that impairment is only social). We can put it that, where there is individuation and transindividuation, there are conditions that subtend the psychosomatic and the psychosocial. I see that these conditions account for the affect capacities of disability research and the *affective* (force-related) *becoming* of the field of Disability Studies.

Recognised in terms of its affective capacities, disability research takes on onto-ethical significance. Looking at disability in terms of how it is constituted, disability research encompasses what can be done about disability, and what people with disability can do. Bringing ethics into relation with individuation and transindividuation, Simondon holds that “[e]thics is that through which the subject remains subject, refusing to become an absolute individual, a closed domain of reality, or a detached singularity” (*ILNFI* 380) Here he is close to Spinoza and Spinoza’s ethical orientation to modal composition (see Chapter 5; see also Balibar 2020). Understanding how beings are constituted, we are better equipped to account for what they can do, and what sort of experience can be had. For Simondon, the psychosocial is not ‘a closed domain’, or a ‘detached reality’—it is instead an *immanent reality* encompassing individuals. From this perspective the social is always becoming. Where there are beings, there is affect: force relations through which individuals engage. Like Spinoza, Simondon sees that Being is expressive of beings and their interactions. Here ontology (the study of Being) takes on ethical dimensions—dimensions further elucidated in Chapter 5.

4.8 Conclusion

Coupled with Deleuze’s critique of representation, Simondon’s critical engagement with hylomorphism works to clarify conditions of transcendental empiricism. What Simondon and Deleuze share is their critical view of conditions for form and representation. For Simondon, without attending to conditions of relation between matter and form (or form and content), we fail to grasp their genesis. For Deleuze, without looking to conditions for representation, we fail to appreciate conditions for representation. While Deleuze understands genesis in terms of difference, Simondon looks to individuation and transindividuation. However, for Deleuze, individuation is a component of differentiation (actualisation), while for Simondon differentiation is the effect of individuation. For Simondon, individuation is contingent on the pre-individual: a metastable state comparable with Deleuze’s understanding of the virtual. The pre-individual is necessary to the physical, the biophysical and the psychosocial, exceeding what it engenders. Bringing Simondon into relation with Deleuze, and outlining a Simondonian approach to disability and disability research, the chapter has shown that while Critical Realism works to demarcate conditions of experience, it fails to articulate their genesis, imposing dualism on experience. Critical Realism fails to articulate conditions for the psychosomatic and the psychosocial, imposing a contiguous relation on the individual (person) and the social. With his concept of the transindividual, Simondon means to articulate the imbrication of the psychic and the social, showing how the psychic and the social are engendered.

From the point of view of the transindividual and Deleuze's genetic (generative) understanding of difference, disability is always becoming. Seen in this light, impairment is always-already social and irreducible to the social model impairment/disability distinction. If disability is to be understood in terms of social relations, and if it is to be conceived as 'social relational', it must be seen from the point of view of its psychosomatic and psychosocial geneses. Bringing disability research into relation with the transindividual, the chapter has gestured to affective capacities of disability research. Understood in terms of affect and changing relations of force, disability research takes on onto-ethical significance, encompassing relations of Being and what beings can do.

The following chapter expands on onto-ethics, looking to Spinoza's understanding of Being and what beings can do. It clarifies Deleuze's 'evental' reading of Spinoza to articulate the relation between ontology and ethics and their application to disability and disability research. Approaching Spinoza in terms of a 'logic of expression' (Duffy 2006, 2016), Deleuze looks to *events* through which Spinozist Substance is expressed. On this reading subjectivity is processual in nature: determined by processes and determining of agency. These processes are both transcendently and empirically constituted, which means that conditions productive of the given exist in affective (change-making) relation with the given. Put simply, where there are persons, there are conditions productive of them that exist in immanent relation with what they do, and what they *can* do. Understanding how Being and beings are constituted bears on what beings can do. This is how transcendental empiricism takes on ethical dimensions. Examining conditions for experience, transcendental empiricism works to determine what sort of experience can be had. Like Deleuze and Simondon, Spinoza offers means of conceptualising Being in excess of the given. Looking to conditions for beings and what they can do, Spinoza foregrounds relations between ontology and ethics and articulates a relational concept of agency. Via Spinoza, Chapter 5 foregrounds the relation between ontology, ethics, and transcendental empiricism, elucidating connections between, Deleuze, Simondon, and Spinoza to show what an onto-ethical and *affective* body of Disability Studies can do.

CHAPTER 5

Through Spinoza, Chapter 5 foregrounds relations between ontology, ethics, and transcendental empiricism. With his *Ethics*, Spinoza conceptualises Being and *affective* (change-making) relations productive of them. By showing how beings are constituted, Spinoza looks to what beings can do. Like Deleuze (who was very much inspired by Spinoza), Spinoza understands ontology from the point of view of immanence. For Deleuze and Spinoza, conditions productive of beings are not transcendent to beings, but neither do they resemble what they produce. Put simply, Being (which Spinoza understands in terms of God *or* Nature) is effective of the empirical (that which is given *in* experience) but it is not reducible to the empirical. Spinoza addresses what is beyond the empirical to account for what is empirically verifiable. Moving from the empirical *back to* conditions for the empirical, Spinoza means to show how beings are constituted, and what they can do. While the term was unfamiliar to him, Spinoza (arguably) participates in transcendental empiricism, articulating relations between the transcendental and the empirical. Understanding conditions of Being productive of beings, we are (for Spinoza) in a position to assess the conduct of beings and to propose how they might act. This brings ontology and transcendental philosophy into relation with ethics and articulates what we may consider an immanent relation between ontology and ethics. Understanding relations between beings—relations that are transforming of beings—we are better positioned to address what and how beings can change.

Understanding conditions for the given, we are in a better position to assess and respond to conditions of disablement. From a position of immanence, and following Spinoza, experience is constituted by *affect* (force relations). This is to say that force is productive of the given so that the given is *affective* (change-making) in nature. Like Nietzsche and Foucault after him, Spinoza holds that force is *conditioning*. We are composed of forces that are determining of agency in such a way that agency involves an effort to become active. In terms of affect we are situated between the transcendental and the empirical, yet it is more accurate to say that affect encompasses the transcendental and the empirical. Looking at disability from this point of view, we become sensitive to the immanence of forces productive and affective (changing) of disablement. These forces are psychosomatic (affecting the body and the mind) and psychosocial in nature. One is both affected (changed) by force and productive of force. We can put it that where there is agency, there are relations of force that are *desiring* in nature. For Spinoza, that which one is, is desiring. Here we should understand *essence*—or what it is to be

this or that particular thing—in terms of the capacity to desire.⁵¹ Along these lines (and as we will see in Chapter 6), desire is irreducible to lack (wanting this or that thing). It is instead productive of beings and immanent with the relations they form.

Chapter 5 works to clarify Spinoza's understanding of agency and to bring his understanding of affect into relation with disability research and the field Disability Studies. It looks at Deleuze's 'expressive' reading of Spinoza to make sense of the onto-ethical dimensions of transcendental empiricism. It also makes a critique of disability researcher Thomas Abrams' 'finalist' reading of Spinoza to foreground the role of ethics in Spinoza's philosophy. Contrary to a common misconception, it is not the case in Spinoza's philosophy that beings are made to serve *transcendent* ends; rather, what they do, and how they function, is subject to *ethical* enquiry concerning their best conduct and how it may be realised. In terms of affect (force) and changing relations that constitute life, for Spinoza, Being has no *ends*. Beings are not 'designed' to serve ends. They are instead effects of contingent relations, the understanding of which will improve a being's capacity to make relations and to grasp the relations by which it is made. Bringing Spinoza into relation with disability, disability research and the field of Disability Studies, the chapter begins with Simondon's critique of Spinoza's substantialism, looking to the hylomorphic logic implicit to Spinoza's conception of attributes. There is, so the chapter argues, a problematic dualism associated with Spinoza's understanding of mind and body, one which may be overcome via Simondon's notion of individuation. As Chapter 4 has shown, we should not rest with mind/body dualism. We should look instead to the process that produces the imbrication of mind and body (the psychic and the somatic) *in* experience. Doing so, we come closer to conditions for disability experience—conditions that encompass the social and the somatic.

Looking at disability from this point of view, we avoid the application of forms to experience that obscure the overlapping of the social and the somatic. In order to experience the social, there must be conditions that subtend the social and the somatic—conditions Simondon considers *transindividual*. Like Simondon, Spinoza provides means of articulating these conditions, bringing them into relation with an ethical conception of subject formation. Through Spinoza, the chapter shows how transcendental empiricism bears on ethics and subject formation. It also shows what an affective (force-related) approach to disability research can do. Taking up disability research in terms of affect, looking to the effects it has on people with

⁵¹“Desire is the very essence, *or* nature, of each [man] insofar as it is conceived to be determined, by whatever constitution he has, to do something” (*E* III P56 Dem., italics and bracketed in text).

disability and their affiliates, we become sensitive to its inhibitive and liberatory potentials. We see what it can do to people disability. We also see what it can do for them.

5.1 Simondon and Spinoza

For Spinoza, “*God is the immanent, not the transitive, cause of all things*” (*E I P18*, italics in text). This means that beings are immanent with God, that there is no *Deus ex machina* but an infinity of relations through Being and beings. Importantly, we should not conceive of God as someone or something that ‘stands’ in judgement over what it creates but as the *force* of creation, *immanent with* what it creates. Even the term ‘creation’ is problematic, because, as Spinoza sees it, there are no *ends* to creation and no design to pursue in terms of *ends*. There is no God in this scenario that we can associate with the Abrahamic tradition. God does not resemble Man, nor does Man resemble God (as if God were a figure to resemble). For Spinoza, *God is Nature*, and Nature is in excess of human nature. While existence is contingent on God (*or Nature*), it is *not necessary* that you or I exist (see *E I P24*). Instead, we are the result of relations that are as aleatory as they are natural. However, where there is existence, there is a necessary relation between God and the existent. Put simply, where things exist, God (*or Nature*) is that through which they exist. We can put it that where there are beings, there is Being. Like Deleuze and Simondon, Spinoza understands Being in terms of generative processes. He is, like Deleuze and Simondon, an ontogenetic philosopher, looking to conditions generative of beings. For Spinoza, God is the ‘substance’ through which things emerge, so that God (*or Substance*) is the ‘first principle’ of existence (see *I P14*). While comparisons can be made between Simondon and Spinoza in terms of their ontogenetic orientation, for Simondon, Spinoza’s conception of Substance involves a problematic substantialism. As we saw in Chapter 4, for Simondon, thinking in terms of substance obscures the process productive of the given. The mind and body for Simondon are not separate substances but the effect of individuation. Understanding them in terms of substance, we neglect the individuating process generative of them.

As David Scott shows, for Simondon, substance and substantialism prohibit “raising the problem of individuation” (2014: 103; see also *ILNFI* 4). Simondon sees that substantialism conceals generative processes in such a way that questions of genesis (how things come to be) are neglected. However, what Spinoza understands by Substance is irreducible to substantialism. As Substance, God is everything and in everything. God is, in Deleuzian terms, ‘pure immanence’ and is for this reason beyond what Simondon understands by substance and substantialism. We can put it that a substance that *is* everything is beyond the terms of

substantialism. It is not a ‘thing’ so much as it is a condition for things. To attribute substantialism to Spinoza is to misunderstand how he conceives of substance. Where Simondon’s critique is relevant, and where it may be applied, is to Spinoza’s conception of attributes. For Spinoza, Substance is expressed through an “infinity of attributes” (I Def. 6), two of which are available to humans. Thought and extension are for humans that through which experience is available (see III P2 Dem.). They are, however, *distinct* from each other, only corresponding through Substance. This means that the mind and body (thought and extension) only communicate through Substance, which produces their relation. Spinoza sees that “the human mind does not know the body itself” (II P23 Dem.) but it has, and *is*, the *idea* of the body. This way of understanding the mind/body relation is problematic in so far as it obscures the genetic (generative) conditions for mind and body. Following a hylomorphic logic, it takes the relation of mind and body for granted and fails to grasp in properly *genetic* terms conditions for the given. That mind and body are for Spinoza related through Substance still tells us nothing about the conditions productive of them. Here Simondon’s concept of individuation serves as a useful alternative to Spinozist ‘parallelism’ (or dualism), foregrounding the genesis of the psychosomatic.

Where Simondon and Spinoza can be seen to agree is on the relation between ontology and ethics. Put simply, if ontology examines the nature of Being, ethics concerns the conduct of beings and how best it may be determined. Here there is an ‘onto-ethical’ relation. As Elisabeth Grosz shows, ‘onto-ethics’ is “a way of thinking about not just how the world is but how it could be, how it is open to change, and above all, the changes it may undergo” (2017:1). What Simondon and Spinoza share is their attention not only to how beings might best conduct themselves but to the processes determining of them. For Spinoza, Substance (God, Nature, *or* Being) is productive of beings in such a way that beings are modes of Substance. Modes for Spinoza are “affections of substance” (*E* I Def. 5), and it is from “*the necessity of the divine intellect*” (conceived as Substance) that “*there must follow infinitely many things in infinitely many modes*” (I P16, italics in text). Because Substance (God *or* Nature) is infinite, there is an infinite capacity for ‘affections of substance’. According to this schema, “singular things are modes by which God’s attributes are expressed in a certain and determinate way” (III P6 Dem.). This means that modes are affections of Substance *expressed* through attributes.

5.2 Ethics and Expression

As Spinoza sees it, coming to understand the nature of Being and its relation to beings, we realise that we “share in the divine nature, that we do this the more, the more perfect our actions

are”. Thus, the more we understand conditions for beings, “the more we understand God” (II P49 Schol. [Iv.] [A]). Here it is important to note that Spinoza’s understanding of God does not involve teleology. God *or* Nature “does nothing on account of an end” (IV Preface). Although Spinoza speaks in terms of ‘perfection’, “[b]y reality and perfection” he “understands the same thing” (II Def. 6). What we consider imperfection derives from misunderstanding (see IV Preface). God *or* Nature is perfection, so that imperfection is only attributable to our own lack of understanding. From an onto-ethical standpoint, we should endeavour to improve our understanding of that which *is* perfection: God *or* Nature itself. Endeavouring to understand God *or* Nature, we come to understand the order of ideas contingent on God.

For Spinoza, “[*t*]he order and connection of ideas is the same as the order and connection of things” (II P7, italics in text). Just as Deleuze understands Ideas in terms of a *genetic* capacity (he seems to have come to his understanding of Ideas through Spinoza and Kant), Spinoza understands Nature in terms of an order of ideas. In contemplating God—in looking back from the given to conditions for the given, we encounter the order of *cause*. We can put it that the given is caused by *ideas* in the ‘mind of God’. In so far as God is infinite, there is an infinity of ideas, each idea ‘leading back’ to God. Replacing the word ‘God’ with ‘Being’ we move from mysticism to transcendental philosophy, looking to conditions generative of beings. Spinoza holds that “[*w*]e are acted on [...] insofar as we are part of Nature” (IV P2, italics in text). This means that in so far as we are ‘acted on’, there are conditions that cause us to act. From this perspective there is no ‘free will’; but this simply means that will is *caused*—that there is no will ‘from nothing’. As Spinoza sees it, the more we understand what causes us to act, the more we understand our own capacity to act. Knowing what causes us to act, we are in a position to optimise our actions. For Spinoza, where there is action, there are causes of action. While we are never free from cause, greater understanding of cause enables us to act. It is along these lines that the transcendental is brought into relation with ethics. We can put it that the more we understand conditions for the given, the more we understand our capacity to act. This is how Spinoza’s ontology relates to ethics. To know God (for Spinoza) is to understand Nature in terms of cause and effect. Understanding relations of cause and effect, we are better equipped to determine our actions. Just as Spinoza conceives of God without teleology, he understands necessity without destiny. We are not destined to pursue this or that end, but when and where we act, there are *necessarily* causes by which we act.

There is in Spinoza’s ontology (his understanding of Being) a relation of *expression*. Both cause and effect are expressed through Being (God *or* Nature). Being (God, Nature, or

Substance—we can use these terms interchangeably) is expressed through attributes and modes.⁵² While the attributes have a problematic status from the point of view of Simondonian individuation, Spinoza's conception of modes complements Simondon's notion of individuation (see Balibar 2020). Understanding the body in terms of modal composition, Spinoza holds that "the human body [...] is composed of a great many individuals of different natures, each of which is highly composite" (II Postulate 1). This means that the body is the result of modal relations. It is on account of 'a great many individuals of different natures' that each body is unique. For Spinoza, "*God's idea, from which infinitely many things follow in infinitely many modes, is unique*" (II P4, italics in text). Here we can put it that Being *expresses* difference and that beings are expressed *differentially*. We can also put it that Being *individuates* and that beings are effects of individuation. Looking at Spinozist Substance from the point of view of differentiation and individuation, Substance expresses difference. Along these lines Spinoza scholar Pierre Macherey argues that "[c]ontrary to a tenacious tradition, it must be said that Spinoza was no more a monist than he was a dualist" (1997: 88). As we have seen, Substance is not one thing so much as it is everything. For this reason it is wrong to understand Substance in terms of monism. Seen from the point of view of difference and the infinity of attributes it produces, Substance is in excess of the dualism associated with thought and extension. However, in terms of what—and how—humans experience, there are but two attributes: thought and extension. From this point of view, dualism remains, and remains to be overturned.

Overturing the dualism associated with Spinoza's understanding of attributes, we are in a position to assess conditions productive of form. Taking up his ethical approach to ontology, looking to conditions for beings, we attend to what beings are capable of. We can assess conditions of disablement in relation with conditions for experience. Spinoza's ontology gives us means of addressing the correlation of experience and conditions for experience. It also gives us means of addressing ways beings encounter and encompass the world. It is my position that experience is irreducible to dualism. We do not experience mind *and* extension. This distinction is dependent on a fundamental imbrication that Simondon addresses in terms of conditions for the psychosomatic and the psychosocial. Instead of imposing dualism on experience—as if the experiential simply conforms to dualism—he looks to conditions on

⁵² In Spinoza's ontology (and Deleuze's) Being is both expressive and expressed. This means (for Spinoza) that what God *or* Nature engenders are affections (or states) that are not separate from it but immanent with it. Being (God *or* Nature) expresses its capacities through beings. In this way beings are expressions of Being (God *or* Nature).

which dualism depends. He sees that dualism is the outcome of conditions in excess of it. Articulating these conditions, we are in a position to address the imbrication of the psychosomatic and the psychosocial that dualism obscures. While Spinoza understands the relation of thought and extension through Substance—while he sees that Substance is expressive of thought and extension—from a Simondon’s perspective, he fails to show how these attributes are generated. With the attributes, Spinoza draws us toward dualism without accounting (in a properly genetic sense) for their formation.

Dualism notwithstanding, from Simondonian and Deleuzian perspectives, Being (God, Nature, or Substance) individuates and *expresses* difference. Spinoza holds that, “of each individual [mode] composing the body, there is necessarily an idea in God” (II P15 Dem.). God is expressive of ideas, and is, we might say, Idea itself. Spinoza maintains that “so long as singular things do not exist, except insofar as they are comprehended in God’s attributes, their objective being, or ideas, do not exist except insofar as God’s infinite idea exists” (II P8 Corollary). Here God takes on virtual and pre-individual coordinates. God does not simply ‘make actual’ everything that pertains to it. Instead, there are potentials attributable to God (or Being) that remain to be actualised. These potentials exist in relation with the actual so that, as Deleuze and Simondon see it, the actual and the virtual pertain to Being in a way that renders the pre-individual necessary. Where there are beings, there is *becoming*. Beings are not reducible to the given but exist in relation with virtual coordinates. Understanding how beings are given, we are in a better position to assess what they can do, and how they do what they do. For Deleuze and Simondon beings *are* individuation and difference ‘all the way down’. What they are and what they become is expressed both transcendently and empirically.

5.3 Modes, Individuation, Difference, and Becoming

From the point of view of *becoming*, disability and the world in which it is situated are never entirely given. They are, rather, *in process*. This is what it means to say that disability is in excess of representation. Relations constitutive of the given are never complete and always in process. Here we can put it that, just as the world becomes, experience becomes. For Spinoza, modal relations productive of beings are never complete. Beings have the capacity to enter into and to *produce* new relations. Here again we encounter the relation between ontology and ethics. Understanding relations that constitutive of beings, we are in a better position to propose relations that will optimise experience. For Spinoza, that which is actualised is modally expressed. Bodies are the result of modal relations, so that:

When a number of bodies, whether of the same or different size, are so constrained by other bodies that they lie upon one another, or if they so move, whether with the same degree or different degree of speed, that they communicate their motions to each other in a certain fixed manner, we shall say that those bodies are united with one another and that they all together compose one body or individual, which is distinguished from the others by this union of bodies. (II P13 A"2 Def., italics in text)

The bodies Spinoza refers to here are not simply human bodies but all bodies composed of modes. For Spinoza, Being expresses modal relations ‘all the way down’ so that everything that exists is modally constituted. Articulating Spinoza’s conception of modal composition, Deleuze puts it that each individual “possesses an infinity of parts which belong[s] to [it] in a more or less complex relationship” (*D* 59). Here Spinoza is close to Simondon and his understanding of individuation in so far as individuals (or bodies) are effects of individuation. What Simondon articulates are the ‘transductive’ processes through which individuation is realised. As Simondon sees it, it is the process of individuation that Spinoza fails to account for. For Simondon, Spinoza ‘falls back’ on substantialism by failing to articulate the process of modal composition.⁵³ However, as we have seen, for Spinoza, Substance is not a ‘thing’ so much as it is a *condition* for things. Spinoza scholar Gabriel Albiac argues that since all things “are in substance [,] they cannot therefore be substantive” (1997: 134). This is to say that beings are constituted through Substance and that Substance exceeds what it engenders. From this point of view, Substance cannot be reduced to substantialism. Substance is in excess of beings and relations they maintain. Like Deleuze and Simondon, Spinoza shows that there are conditions in excess of beings that account for becoming. What engenders beings is not separate from them, but neither is it reducible to them. Beings are not separate from Being, but neither is Being reducible to what it produces. Along these lines, modal relations are always becoming. We can put it that what Being engenders are *events of becoming*, events that are irreducible to the given.

It is this ‘evental’ perspective that Deleuze takes up in his work on Spinoza. “What interested me most in Spinoza”, he admits, “wasn’t his Substance, but the composition of finite modes” (Deleuze in Joughin 1992: 11). As Deleuze scholar and translator Martin Joughin shows, this interest is also attributable to Deleuze’s *Difference and Repetition*. As Joughin puts it, *Difference and Repetition* begins “with the plurality of finite modes rather than the abstract unity of substance” (1992: 9-10). In that text, Deleuze looks to conditions for representation

⁵³ Simondon argues that “in the end, [Spinoza] accepts the consequences of substantialism and refuses to place a genesis of substance as the constitution of complete individual notions” (*ILNFI* 368).

and events generative of beings. He sees that Substance is secondary to the event of modal composition, arguing that “Substance itself must be said *of* the modes and only *of* the modes” (*DR* 52, italics in text). As we have seen, for Spinoza, Substance is not a ‘thing’ so much as it is a condition for the generation of things. We encounter Substance through the modes it expresses. This is why, as Deleuze sees it, modes should be given priority over Substance. In contrast to a ‘substantive’ perspective which places emphasis on identity so that the identity of a thing is taken to be in advance of the process that engenders it, a transcendental and genetic perspective looks to processes generative of things. From this point of view modal composition is foregrounded. Rather than simply doing away with Spinozist Substance, Deleuze looks to what it *expresses*.

For Deleuze, “[e]xpression is [...] an unfolding of what expresses itself, [...] the One manifesting itself in the Many (substance manifesting itself in the attributes, and these attributes manifesting themselves in their modes)” (*EPS* 16). He bases this claim on Spinoza’s observation that “the universe is one individual, whose parts, that is, all bodies, vary in infinite ways, without any change of the whole individual” (II Lemma 7. Dem.) We can put it that, for Spinoza, Substance is ‘one thing’ expressive of an infinity of attributes and differentially-constituted modes. Substance is the One *expressive* of the Many. In so far as bodies (modes) ‘vary in infinite ways’, ‘the One’ (Substance) manifests itself in ‘the Many’. Emphasising expression, Deleuze means to show how the One expresses the Many. He does this through the concepts of ‘implication’ and ‘explication’. As he sees it, Substance both *implicates* (inheres with) and *explicates* (expresses) all things. Expression for Deleuze “involves and implicates what it expresses, while also explicating and evolving it” (*EPS* 16). Here it pays to recall that, for Spinoza, ‘so long as singular things do not exist, except insofar as they are comprehended in God’s attributes, their objective being, or ideas, do not exist except insofar as God’s infinite idea exists’ (cited above). This means that all things, whether actual or virtual, exist in ‘God’s infinite idea’. All things, therefore, are implicated in what is actualised. Because everything *is* Substance, everything is both implicated *in* and explicated (or *expressed*) *through* Substance. In this way Substance is both virtual and actual.

For Deleuze, “the virtual must be defined as strictly part of the real object—as though the object had one part of itself in the virtual into which it plunged as though into an objective dimension” (*DR* 272). As we have seen (chapters 3 and 4), the virtual/actual relation describes a process: movement between ‘differentiation’ and what Deleuze calls ‘differentiation’ (see Chapter 3). While *differentiation* accounts for the virtual aspect of this process, *differentiation*

denotes actualisation—or what can be accounted for in observable reality. When something is differentiated, it affects differentiation—changing the organisation of the virtual (see *DR 273*). This movement, from differentiation to differenciation—virtual to actual—is one that *repeats*. It is along these lines that Deleuze understands difference and repetition to be *generative* in nature. In his work on Spinoza, ‘implication’ is comparable with the virtual (in so far as Substance ‘contains’ all things), while explication is associated with actualisation and the expression of Substance.

What Deleuze brings out in his work on Spinoza is the genetic logic inherent to Spinoza’s ontology. Like Simondon, Deleuze is interested in what causes things to be. From this genetic perspective the ideas Spinoza attributes to God are generative in nature. For Deleuze, Ideas are not representational so much as they are generative of representation. Understanding that which is generative of representation, we approach what is in excess of representation: conditions of becoming that affect (change) the given. Understanding how the given is given, we are in a better position to understand what is given. It is from the point of view of genesis that Spinoza takes up the question of ‘what a body can do’. As he sees it, “[*t*]he idea of any thing that increases or diminishes, aids or restrains, our body’s power of acting, increases or diminishes, aids or restrains, our mind’s power of thinking” (III P13, italics in text). Understanding the order of ideas contingent on God, we are in a better position to know the *affective* (force-related and change-making) capacities of the body so that we may harness them. Understanding experience in terms of conditions for experience and in terms of how experience is mediated with the world, we can see how disability is immanent with the world and irreducible to the impairment/disability distinction associated with the social model. For Spinoza, beings are immanent with their surroundings in such a way that *where* and *how* they are bears on what they can do. This focus is fundamental to his understanding of ethics. To understand our power to act, we must understand conditions for action and their relation to our capacity for action. Understanding disability in terms of conditions irreducible to the disability/impairment distinction associated with the social model—understanding disability to *encompass* impairment and its social effects, we see that, in terms of experience, the psychosomatic encompasses the social. The question of what a body can do (taken up in the following section) refers not only to psychosomatic bodies but to conditions in the world that enhance their capabilities.

5.4 What a Body Can Do

For Spinoza, coming to understand causation and what causes us to be, we are in a better position to assess and propose conduct. His *Ethics* sets out to determine what Being is, what beings are, and how conduct may be determined according to such knowledge. It is, for Spinoza, “necessary to come to know both our nature’s power and its lack of power, so that we can determine what reason can do in moderating the affects, and what it cannot do” (IV P17 Scholium). He sees that ‘affectations’ are modes of Substance (particular things) (I Definition 5), while ‘affects’ are “affectations of the body by which the body’s power of acting is increased or diminished, aided or restrained, and at the same time, the ideas of these affectations” (III Definition 3). Affects are *changes* that occur to modes (body and mind for example). Because minds and bodies are affectations of Substance, they are affected (changed) by other modes (other bodies and states of affairs). From here Spinoza asserts that, “[t]he human body [and this also applies to the mind] can be affected in many ways in which its power of acting is increased or diminished, aided or restrained, and also in others which render its power of acting neither greater nor less” (III Postulate 1). The task of the *Ethics* is to determine how minds and bodies are best affected (changed), and to show how we can become the cause of affects.

Bringing Spinoza’s ono-ethical orientation to disability research, we can assess how disability encompasses the psychosomatic and the social. Spinoza’s analyses are geared to the conduct of beings and what they are capable of. He is interested not only in what beings are, but what they can achieve based on what and where they are. This sort of analysis is by no means uncommon to disability research. Social model conceptions of disability show that impairment is affected by situations beyond it. Spinoza’s ethical orientation to ontology foregrounds the relation between conditions for beings and what beings can do. Like Simondon and Deleuze, Spinoza sees that beings are immanent with the world. In terms of the conditions productive of them, beings are not contiguous with the world, rather, they encompass the world so as to be in continuum with the world. Beginning with this orientation, looking to conditions that subtend the self/world relation, we see that impairment is immanent with the world in ways that affect experience. Understanding conditions for experience and the relations they produce, we are better positioned to know what bodies (social and somatic) can do.

To achieve this sort of knowledge, Spinoza turns to ‘reason’. As he sees it, reason is both a power and a process of understanding. It is through reason that we understand that “[t]hose things which are common to all, and are equally in the part and in the whole, can only be conceived adequately (II P38, italics in text). To conceive of things ‘adequately’ is to

understand them in terms of how they are caused and how they pertain to the order of causes. For Spinoza, an ‘adequate idea’ is an “idea which, insofar as it is considered in itself, without relation to an object, has all the properties, *or* intrinsic denominations of a true idea” (II Definition 4, italics in text). An adequate idea is, for Spinoza, an idea necessary to the order of causes. To understand oneself in terms of causal order is to recognise one’s place in the order of causes. Here it should be recalled that, as Spinoza sees it, “the essence of man does not involve necessary existence”. This means is that “from the order of Nature it can happen equally that this or that man does exist, or that he does not exist” (II Axiom 1). It is not necessary that you or I exist, but in so far as we exist, we are caused. Here it is crucial that we do not mistake the order of causes for finalism. As we have seen, for Spinoza, the order of causes is not teleological. God does not intend that you or I exist, nor is it necessary that we exist. Causes are necessary—not this or that particular mode. It is in so far as modes affect and effect (change and produce) other modes that particular things exist (see II P9). Spinoza argues that “[t]he being of substance does not pertain to the essence of man, or substance does not constitute the form of man” (II P10, italics in text). While it is necessary that God exists, the ‘form of man’ is *not* necessary. It is only necessary that if humans exist, they are caused by God (or Substance).

If we mistake the order of causes for finalism, there is no need for ethics. If everything is determined from cause to effect so that I am in no way free to respond to causes and to cause effects, then ethics—indeed the *Ethics*—is irrelevant. Disability researcher Thomas Abrams makes this mistake when he suggests that “[t]here is no space for experimentation [...] in Spinoza’s philosophy. Nothing is contingent [aleatory]. Things cannot be otherwise. We can accept the order of things or deny it—but the show must go on”. (2017: 95) In fact, the whole point of the *Ethics* is to show that things *can* be otherwise. For Spinoza, by coming to understand the order of causes, we are better equipped to respond to it. This means that things can be otherwise. This is precisely what the *Ethics* means to show! What leads Abrams to this conclusion is the mistake of finalism. From the point of view of finalism, he finds that “[i]t is extremely difficult to read Spinoza as a philosopher of subjectivity” (95). Abrams sees that, contrary to ideas of subject formation philosophers attribute to Spinoza,⁵⁴ Spinoza was “a rationalist philosopher without a rational subject” (95). For Abrams, Spinoza is a ‘rationalist philosopher’ in so far as he finds beings to be determined by causes. Making the mistake of finalism, Abrams concludes that there is hardly a place for subject formation in Spinoza’s

⁵⁴ See for example Braidotti (2013) and (2011)

philosophy—precisely because, as he (Abrams) sees it, beings for Spinoza are fully determined. Thus, for Abrams, there is no ‘rational subject’ in Spinoza’s philosophy because (as he reads Spinoza) beings are fully determined. From this perspective there is no agency and hence no free will. As we have seen, while it is true that beings cannot be free of will (see *Ethics* I P21), understanding the order of causes, beings encounter freedom. It is also the case for Spinoza that the mind is “*not simple, but composed of a great many ideas*” (II P15, italics in text). For this reason we do not all act by the same ideas. This means that “[*d*]ifferent men can be affected differently by one and the same object; and one and the same man can be affected differently at different times by one and the same object” (III P51, italics in text). It follows from this that “men can vary in judgment as in affect” (III P51 Scholium). Here we see that, contrary to Abrams’ understanding, there is, for Spinoza, plenty of experimentation attributable to human nature.

Given the fact that, for Spinoza, “[t]he human body is composed of a great many individuals of different natures, each of which is highly composite” (cited above)—the mind being ‘composed of a great many ideas’—it is very difficult not to read him as a philosopher of subjectivity. It is the case that subjectivity in Spinoza’s philosophy is irreducible to the ego and what is (commonly) understood by its contiguity with the world. For Spinoza, subject formation is immanent with the world in such a way that the world encompasses subject formation. The very question of ‘what a body can do’ is crucial to this understanding of subject formation. Spinoza makes the case that:

[N]o one has as yet determined what the body can do, that is, experience has not yet taught anyone what the body can do from the laws of Nature alone, insofar as Nature is only considered to be corporeal, and what the body can do only if it is determined by the mind. (III P2 Scholium)

Because Being expresses an infinity of modes and modal relations, we do not know all of what a body can do, nor do we know the extent of the mind’s idea of the body. Here the question of ‘what a body can do’ can help us understand the relation between ontology and ethics. Since, for Spinoza, “the first thing that constitutes the essence of the mind is the idea of an actually existing body” (III P10 Demonstration), the mind and body are necessarily related—albeit different in kind (recalling that they are expressed through different attributes contingent on Substance). With the question of ‘what a body can do’, Spinoza shows that it is by understanding mind and body through cause and effect that we will understand their relation *adequately*. From here we are better positioned to determine effects from causes. In this

scenario the question of what a body is, and how it is constituted, relates to what it can do. As we have seen, for Spinoza, '[t]he idea of any thing that increases or diminishes, aids or restrains, our body's power of acting, increases or diminishes, aids or restrains our mind's power of acting' (cited above; see also II P13 Scholium). It is via *adequate* understanding of the relationship between mind and body that we are best placed to optimise their relation—becoming, in a sense, cause of ourselves (see III Definition 2).

It is in terms of what a body (and mind) can do that subject formation bears on ethics. We are better equipped to determine our behaviour and actions when we understand how it is we are caused to act. From a Simondonian perspective we may reject Spinoza's attributes, but that should not prevent us from pursuing the question of what a body can do. The question is doubly pertinent when we understand that, for Spinoza, bodies are not simply physical or psychosomatic but *any* composite of individuals (see II A2" Definition). This means that a 'body' can be cultural, political and/or socio-material in nature. From this angle (and this also holds for Simondon's understanding of *transindividuation*), subject formation is both a psychosomatic and *psychosocial* relation. Determining 'what a body can do' is just as much a *transindividual* concern as it is a question of the psychosomatic.⁵⁵ If we follow Spinoza (and Simondon) along these lines, experience is immanent with and becoming through a multiplicity of relations. One is, as Deleuze would have it, 'in the middle' of relations—determined by them and determining of them. As affections of Substance, we are affected (changed) by relations in which we are situated. We are also *affecting* of relations, which means we are capable of making change. Conceptualising an *affective* body of Disability Studies, I mean to foreground relations of affect that are generative in nature. Seen from this point of view, the field of Disability Studies may be conceived as an *affective body of becoming*—one which encounters affects constitutive of disability. It remains to be seen what this body can do.

5.5 Disability, Affect, and Event

Looking at disability from the point of view of affect and in terms of an onto-ethical orientation, it is necessary to determine not only how disability should be responded to, but also what it is. If we take it (as Spinoza does) that bodies are not only psychosomatic but cultural, political and socio-material in nature, we ought to question the impairment/disability distinction that has been foundational to the social model of disability. We should also look to the way 'social effects' *affect* (change) impairment. We should not begin with a distinction between

⁵⁵ On connections between Spinoza and Simondon see Balibar (2020) and Read (2016).

impairment and its disabling effects (and affects), rather, we should begin with conditions by which the psychosomatic and the psychosocial are given. From this perspective we are ‘in the middle’ of subject formation. Following Spinoza (and Simondon), subject formation is the result of processes irreducible to any one of its determinants. As they see it, agency does not emerge *ex nihilo* but is, applying Althusser’s terminology, overdetermined. Here we can put it that disability is immanent with the psychosomatic and the psychosocial. From this vantage, the question of ‘what a body can do’ takes on social significance. We can ask, How can an *affective body* of Disability Studies address its capacities to affect people with disability?

As we have seen, for Spinoza, bodies (psychosomatic and otherwise) are *affections* of Substance. Contrary to the absence of subject formation Abrams attributes to Spinoza, as he (Spinoza) sees it, subjects are composed in such a way as to be ‘in the middle’ of relations. We can put it that the subject is the effect of processes generative of the world. We can also put it that subjects are affections of generative processes that are always becoming. If we approach disability from this point view, we cannot begin with the social model. We must begin with conditions productive and changing of disablement, conditions that subtend the social and the somatic. From this perspective relations productive of the psychosomatic and the social are always-already in process and are for this reason irreducible to dichotomy. We should not pose the individual against the social, we should instead look to conditions of genesis, conditions that produce the imbrication of the social and the somatic. In line with transcendental empiricism, we should look to events constitutive of experience—events that are irreducible to what is experienced. From the point of view of *affect*, we should look to disability research capacity to affect (change) people with disability and their affiliates.

As I see it, disability research has both positive and negative affective capacities. It should be acknowledged that, while instructive, addressing disability in terms of oppression is productive of *negative affect*. I do not submit that oppression should not be addressed. I simply mean to highlight the relation between oppression and negative affect. From a Spinozist perspective, we remain sensitive to both positive and negative affective capacities. For Spinoza, negative affect reduces and inhibits our power to act, while positive affect increases and enhances our power to act (see III Post. 1). The task of the *Ethics* is to elucidate what enhances our power to act, and to show from this perspective what a body can do. Understanding the order of causes by which we are constituted, we in a better position to respond to those causes and to enhance experience. Spinoza understands mind and body in terms of *affect*. They are *affections* of Substance affected (changed) by that with which they are immanent. For Spinoza, the mind

and body are products of *force*. We can put it that God *or* Nature is the force by which life is given and changed. Here we should recall that Spinoza's God does not resemble the God of the Abrahamic tradition. God for Spinoza does not resemble Man, nor is God transcendent to what it produces. Instead, God is the *immanent force* by which things come to be. In this respect God *is* Nature and everything 'in' Nature is force. We are both produced and changed by force. As affections of Substance we are force itself, immanent with a multiplicity of forces.

From this point of view we should remain sensitive to the affective capacities of disability research. Where we encounter oppression we should acknowledge its affective capacity. As I see it, understanding disability in terms of oppression affects disability experience and can negatively affect disability experience. Rather than approaching experience *empirically* (looking to events of experience) disability research can foreground oppression in a way that makes research negatively affective. I do not hold that disability research is reducible to negative affect, and I acknowledge the variety of perspectives that comprise the field of Disability Studies. What I am interested in is the *affective capacity* of disability research and how it effects people with disability. As Disability researcher Nick Watson has argued (2002), not all people with disability identify as disabled, nor do they acknowledge a necessary relation between disability and oppression. This shows that there is not simply one way to understand disability, nor is there one way to experience disability. I see that disability has many affective capacities and that these capacities are *becoming*.

When disability is presented in terms of oppression it must be acknowledged that this has an effect on people with disability. If I am told that I am oppressed, and if oppression is insisted on in such way that what I actually experience is obscured or ignored, then, from a Spinozist perspective, I encounter *negative affect*. Such has been my experience (by and large) with disability research and the field of Disability Studies. Here I do not mean to reduce disability or disability research to what I have experienced. I simply wish to highlight the affective capacity of discourse. I do not experience disability in strict terms of oppression, yet the relation between oppression and disability associated with disability research and Disability Studies is one I have found oppressive. It may of course be argued that analysing oppression is a means of opposing it. I do not disagree. Yet as Tom Shakespeare has argued (2008), oppression should not be taken for granted when this obscures events of experience, reducing them to established forms.

Remaining sensitive to affect, we encounter disability research and the field of Disability Studies through affect. We should acknowledge the effects research has on people with

disability and their affiliates. We should also acknowledge affective relations between researchers and what they research. I see that these relations are *becoming*. The way we conduct research has an effect on research outcomes. This is especially the case when research is conducted between people. Researchers must remain sensitive to *affective relations* of research and the kinds of impact research has. From the point of view of affect, researchers are not beyond (or transcendent to) to what (or who) they research. They are immanent with it in way that demands sensitivity to conditions for experience and the affective becoming of disability research. If people with disability are to participate in research in a way that enhances their experience, their own affective capacities must be acknowledged. It must be acknowledged that disability research can have negative effects, that it has the capacity—indeed the power—to change people both positively and negatively. To enhance its positive affective capacity, research should encompass the desires of people with disability, looking to what they desire from disability research and how desire itself is produced.

Understanding conditions of desire, we are better positioned to assess outcomes of what Deleuze and Guattari term ‘desiring-production’. Following Spinoza, they consider desire constitutive of beings (see *E III P56 Dem.*). For Spinoza, Deleuze and Guattari, beings are what they are according to their capacity for desire. Desire as they see is not simply indicative of lack—it is, rather, fundamental to beings. This means that desire has—first and foremost—positive valences. It is not something by which one lacks. It is instead that which one *is*. As affections of Substance, we are desiring by nature. To make sense of this scenario we can put it that, as force, God (*or Nature*) is the very force of desiring. God is the *expression* of desire, albeit without determined ends. If God (*or Nature*) is everything, then it cannot lack anything. For Spinoza, God is not a thing that *wants*, it is, rather, a thing that *is*. God (*or Nature*) does not desire things so much as it expresses desire and things *affected* (changed) by desire. From this point of view, desire produces life so that life is desiring by nature. Following Spinoza, Deleuze and Guattari find desire to be generative. In this way they see that it is irreducible to lack. Just as Deleuze looks to conditions generative of the given—conditions irreducible to what is given—with Guattari he pursues desire in excess of lack, looking to conditions by which lack (wanting this or that thing) is given. Following Deleuze’s critique of representation we can put it that if lack is representative of desire, there are conditions productive of this representation.

5.6 Conclusion

Articulating the relation between ontology and ethics through Spinoza, Chapter 5 has foregrounded the ethical dimensions of transcendental empiricism. Just as, for Spinoza, God is that by which the given is given, for Deleuze, that by which the given is given is in excess of the given. For both Deleuze and Spinoza, by coming to understand how the given is given, we are better positioned to act. Looking to that by which we are caused to act, we are better equipped to determine our actions. This is how transcendental empiricism takes on ethical significance. The Spinozist question of ‘what a body can do’ refers not only to what bodies are but to what they are capable of. Here we encounter conditions for bodies and how they can change. As we have seen, bodies for Spinoza are modal relations. They are in excess of the psychosomatic, encompassing the social. From a Simondonian perspective we can put it that they are *transindividual* in nature, remaining in a state of becoming. Like Simondon, Spinoza foregrounds conditions productive of the psychosomatic and the social. While his understanding of attributes conforms (as I see it) to a hylomorphic logic, his idea of modal composition complements Simondon’s view of individuation. Modes and individuation are productive of the given in such a way as to be in excess of the given. Despite the substantialism Simondon attributes to Spinoza, modes for Spinoza are not substances but effects of Substance. As he sees it, Substance is not a ‘thing’ so much as it is a condition for things. Where there is Substance (everywhere) there are modal relations that are becoming.

As affections of Substance, modes have an affective capacity which means they are always subject to change. Deleuze and Guattari understand Substance in terms of the desires it expresses. Where there are affections of Substance (everywhere), there is desire. This means that desire ‘flows’ through life in such a way as to be productive of life. Seen from this point of view, desire takes on transcendental (conditioning) valences. As Deleuze and Guattari see it, desire flows through social and cultural institutions.⁵⁶ Looking at disability and disability research in terms of ‘desiring-production’, Chapter 6 clarifies Deleuze and Guattari’s understanding of desire, foregrounding the ethical significance of transcendental empiricism, bringing it into relation with the affective becoming of disability research and the field of Disability Studies.

⁵⁶ “If desire produces, its product is real. If desire is productive, it can be productive only in the real world and can produce only reality.” (AO 26)

CHAPTER 6

Having clarified the relationship between ontology, ethics, and transcendental empiricism, bringing them into relation with an *affective* (force-related and change-making) understanding of disability and disability research, (Chapter 5), Chapter 6 turns to Deleuze and Guattari's notion of 'desiring-production'. Following Spinoza, Deleuze and Guattari understand desire to be productive of beings in such a way that, as affections of Substance, beings are desiring by nature. This means that desire flows through life—through psychosomatic and psychosocial relations. Where there is life, there is desire. We can put it that desire is a power by which things are given, a power in excess of the given. As Deleuze and Guattari see it, desire is irreducible to lack (wanting this or that thing), and irreducible to interpretive schemas that seek to define desire in terms of lack. In *Anti-Oedipus* Deleuze and Guattari make a critique of psychoanalysis, looking to the limits of psychoanalytic interpretation. They find that psychoanalysis reduces desire to lack, failing to account for events of desiring-production. In this way (as they see it), psychoanalysis reduces desire to a representative lack. As we have seen, for Deleuze, representation fails to encompass conditions of genesis. In critiquing representation he does not mean to do away with it but to foreground conditions for representation. Looking to these conditions, he articulates events productive of form. In this way he pursues *transcendental empiricism*, foregrounding conditions generative of experience and generative of form.

With Guattari Deleuze brings his critique of representation to psychoanalysis. The critique Deleuze and Guattari make has ethical implications that go beyond psychoanalysis itself. Understanding desire in terms of production they see that it saturates life, subtending the psychosomatic and the psychosocial. For them, desire is productive of social and cultural institutions through which we live. Pursuing desire in this manner, they present 'schizoanalysis' as an alternative to psychoanalysis. Conceptualising schizophrenia in terms of 'desiring-production', terms that render schizophrenia irreducible to psychiatric disorder and which foreground the productive nature of desire,⁵⁷ Deleuze and Guattari analyse ways desire is affective (changing) of individuals along with social and cultural institutions. Here we can put it that in so far as desire is productive, it bears affective (change-making) capacities.

⁵⁷ That schizophrenia is for Deleuze and Guattari irreducible to a psychiatric disorder *does not* mean that it is for them simply socially constructed. It means that, as they see it, 'schizophrenia' is irreducible to psychiatric terminology. I again acknowledge the problematic status of the term 'schizoanalysis', and I recognise the offence it may cause to people who experience schizoaffective disorder. I can only reiterate that, for Deleuze and Guattari 'schizoanalysis' foregrounds *productive* capacities of desire (see *AO* 379).

Understanding disability in terms of affect, we should attend to desires of people with disability and their affiliates. This brings schizoanalysis into relation with disability and the field of Disability Studies. Analysing disability experience in terms of ‘desiring-production’, we remain sensitive to the affective capacities of disability. Clarifying Deleuze and Guattari’s understanding of desiring-production, bringing it into relation with ethics and transcendental empiricism, Chapter 6 articulates the affective becoming of research and the field of Disability Studies.

6.1 ‘Desiring-Production’ and ‘Schizoanalysis’

With Guattari, Deleuze makes a critique of psychoanalysis, furthering the critique of representation he pursued prior to their collaboration (Hughes 2011). With Guattari, he pursues this critique to explicitly ethical ends. As we have seen, for Deleuze, representation obscures conditions by which it is given. Making a critique of representation, he does not mean to do away with it (as if this were possible) but to articulate conditions for it. Understanding conditions generative of the given, we are better equipped to articulate the genesis of what is given in experience. We are better equipped, therefore, to address events of experience and the kinds of experience we can have. This brings transcendental empiricism into relation with ethics. It also brings Spinoza’s *Ethics* into relation with transcendental empiricism. Looking to conditions for the given, Spinoza attends to Being and the conduct of beings. For Spinoza, understanding the order of causes by which we are given, we are better poised to cause effects. We are better poised, in other words, to determine our actions. Understanding beings as ‘affections of Substance’ Spinoza holds that desire is constitutive of beings, bearing on their *affective capacities* (see *Ethics* III P56 Dem.). This means that desire is, for Spinoza, *generative* in nature. While one may desire for something and in this way *lack* what is desired, desire is, we might say, productive of wanting and therefore irreducible to lack. From this point of view desire is generative of representative lack and in excess of it. From this Spinozist perspective, Deleuze and Guattari look to conditions of what they call ‘desiring-production’ (see AO 46), and what desire produces.

Making a critique of representation applicable to psychoanalysis (the most popular psychotherapeutic practice in France in their day), Deleuze and Guattari hold that psychoanalysis reduces desire to lack in a way that is determinative of what is lacked. What they object to is the reduction of desire to lack, and the interpretive schema psychoanalysis premises upon lack. As they see it, psychoanalysis maintains a power dynamic by which the analyst determines *what* and *how* the analysand desires. In this way the analyst foists desire

(for this or that thing) on the analysand. Determining how desire functions, psychoanalysis (as Deleuze and Guattari see it) determines what the analysand desires, obscuring conditions of desiring-production, reducing desire to established forms. For Deleuze and Guattari psychoanalysis foists normative valuations on desire. It obscures conditions of desire, thereby forcing normative valuations on desire. Put simply, for Deleuze and Guattari psychoanalysis tells the analysand *what* and *how* to desire. They argue that,

instead of participating in an undertaking that will bring about genuine liberation, psychoanalysis is taking part in the work of bourgeois repression at its most far-reaching level, that is to say, keeping European humanity harnessed to the yoke of daddy-mommy and *making no effort to do away with this problem once and for all*. (AO 50, italics in text)

By the ‘yoke of daddy-mommy’ they refer to the Oedipus complex, which, for psychoanalysis, articulates a power dynamic through which one desires. While one may not seek (literally) to couple with one’s mother and to kill one’s father (thereby assuming the father’s position in relation to the mother), for psychoanalysis, it is through this dynamic that one comes to know oneself and one’s position in relation to mother and father. Rather than unfurling this dynamic, as Deleuze and Guattari see it, psychoanalysis compounds it—insisting on it in such a way as to render desire reducible to it. While one may not be consciously aware of oedipal desire, unconsciously (so the argument goes) one is affected (changed) by it. Deleuze and Guattari argue that psychoanalysis makes this desire a conscious one by insisting on its unconscious origins. The important thing to note is that while psychoanalysis does not insist on the Oedipus complex in literal terms (whereby one literally desires to kill one’s father and bed one’s mother), it upholds Oedipus in *symbolic* terms. For psychoanalysis Oedipus has a symbolic function. It is that through which desire is regulated. Along these lines Deleuze and Guattari argue that “[a]fter the family has been internalized in Oedipus, Oedipus is externalized in the symbolic order, in the institutional order, in the community order, the sectorial order, etc” (AO 359). What this means is that, locating Oedipus in terms of unconscious desire, psychoanalysis (as Deleuze and Guattari see it) makes it symbolic of the power dynamic in which one is situated. In this way Oedipus takes on normative dimensions associated with the social and the production of the subject. The analyst begins with the Oedipus complex, associating it with the unconscious and a symbolic (and social) order through which the analysand comes to terms with what they desire. In this way psychoanalysis insists on established forms of desire rather than attending to emerging events of desiring-production.

To be clear, it is not the case for Deleuze and Guattari that this power dynamic does not exist (see *AO* 67). As they see it, it exists in relation to conditions beyond the scope of the family—in relation, for example, to employers, authorities and institutions. For them, oedipal interpellation is very real and relates not only to one's family but to socio-economic and cultural conditions. They argue that the Oedipus complex is symptomatic of power relations in excess of the family. In so far as desire is productive, it pervades states of affairs and is in this way beyond the family. Beyond the family, Oedipus *subordinates* desire to existing social relations and institutions. It regulates desire in a symbolic fashion whereby one recognises one's place in the social order. Deleuze and Guattari find psychoanalysis (with its insistence on the symbolic and normative function of the Oedipus complex) to be complicit in 'bourgeois repression'. With their critique of psychoanalysis they mean to overturn Oedipus, to reveal desire in its broader productive and affective capacities, which goes beyond the family and beyond the Oedipus complex itself. Taking up 'schizoanalysis', they look to events of desiring-production in excess of oedipalisation.

'Schizoanalysis' figures as a means of 'mapping' flows of desire. As Deleuze and Guattari see it, capitalism harnesses these flows. Oscillating between surplus and shortage, capitalism functions in a figuratively schizophrenic manner that affects desire. Here the term 'schizophrenia' relates to contradictions Marxists consider inherent to capitalism that result in surplus and shortage. To balance the relation between surplus and shortage, capitalism must overcome contradiction, pursuing new products and means of production—thereby operating at its limit. For Deleuze and Guattari, this limit constitutes a schizophrenic threshold that affects desire (*AO* 34, 139-140).

Analysing relations between desire and capitalism, Deleuze and Guattari seek to liberate desire from capitalist production. They analyse desire in terms of capitalist production, looking to ways capitalism 'codes' desire. Following Spinoza, Deleuze and Guattari find desire to be productive and affective (change-making) in nature. They see that desire is immanent with life, just as, for Spinoza, God is the immanent cause of things (*E I P18*). This means that desire is, to borrow Simondon's terminology, a *transindividual* phenomenon in excess of what one desires. While Simondon fails to articulate the relation between Spinozist immanence (or Substance) and the transindividual, Spinoza scholar Étienne Balibar associates with them a "continuous circulation or communication of affects between individuals" (2020: 63). For Spinoza, individuals (persons) are constituted by affects (forces). This understanding is

comparable with Simondon's notion of individuation. For both Spinoza and Simondon, individuals are effects of processes productive of the somatic and the social.

What Deleuze and Guattari take from this, and what they propose, is that "desire is always constitutive of a social field" (AO 348). They see that desire produces the social in a way that is 'machinic' in nature. The task of schizoanalysis is "that of learning what a subject's desiring-machines are, how they work, with what syntheses, what bursts of energy in the machine, what constituent misfires, with what flows, what chains, and what becomings in each case" (AO 338). For Deleuze and Guattari, 'desiring-machines' are affective (changing) of subjects and therefore productive of subjectivity. This terminology ('machines', 'machinic') is consistent with Deleuze's evental approach to ontology—to his analyses of processes constitutive of beings. From this machinic/evental perspective, history is "the history of contingencies and encounters" (AO 195). This is to say that history is constituted by events that are *processual* in nature. History is without *telos*, and is, we might say, subject to encounter.

The task of schizoanalysis is to assess processes and encounters (as operations of desire), and what they affect (change). From a schizoanalytic perspective one must look to the 'social field' with which the subject is immanent, and to ways desire is productive of the social and the subject. One should look at the subject and the social from the point of view of the transindividual, which is productive of the subject and the social. Like Simondon, Deleuze and Guattari find that subjectivity is always in process and irreducible to established forms. They look to processes of desiring-production, bringing them into relation with subjectivation. With the word 'subjectivation', subjectivity is brought into the *present*, and our attention is drawn to the process of subject formation. From this perspective the subject is *immanent* with processes conditioning of subjectivity—processes amenable to ethical enquiry. Simondon sees that ethics

expresses the meaning of perpetuated individuation, the stability of becoming, that of the being as pre-individuated, individuating, and tending toward the continuous that reconstructs in an organized form of communication a reality as vast as the pre-individual system. (*ILNFI* 380)

Here ethics encompasses relations between the subject and that by which the subject is given. From this point of view the subject is *immanent* with the pre-individual and what it produces. Like the pre-individual, the social is a vaster than the subject. As we have seen (Chapter 4), for Simondon, the social is associated with a 'trans-individuating' process so that the subject is just as much an effect of social relations as it is contingent on the pre-individual. In this way ontology is brought into relation with ethics. Conduct must be assessed in terms of processes productive of the subject—in terms, we might say, of the very workings of the subject. From a

schizoanalytic perspective, we must look to what desire produces. When I desire, desire does not emerge from nothing. Following Spinoza, Deleuze and Guattari see that we are constituted by desire in such a way that desire passes through us, producing the social. This means that desire is *transindividual*. Because the social is vaster than the subject, desire is irreducible to psychoanalytic interpretation as Deleuze and Guattari present it. Schizoanalysis serves to critique psychoanalysis and to foreground relations between desire and the social in ways that psychoanalysis—for Deleuze and Guattari—does not. As they see it, psychoanalysis insists on the Oedipus complex in a way that reifies its effect on the social. Rather than looking to do away with Oedipus, psychoanalysis affirms its relation to the subject and the social in a way that reduces desire to established forms. With schizoanalysis, Deleuze and Guattari look to conditions productive of desire—conditions vaster than psychoanalysis (as they present it) would allow. Rather than reducing desire to established forms, they foreground the very workings of desire and that which desire changes.

Bringing schizoanalysis into relation with disability and disability research, I make the case that a schizoanalytic approach to disability and research would foreground desires of people with disability and their affiliates, looking to ways disability and desire are, we might say, mutually affective. This approach would bring into relief the productive capacities of desire to show how desiring-production encompasses disability and disability research. Positing an immanent relation of the subject and the social, schizoanalysis brings desire into relation with discourse in a way that is, I believe, beneficial to disability research. With schizoanalysis we can attend to desires productive of disability research. We can also assess the affective (force-related) capacities of disability research. Attuned to desiring-production and the affective capacities of research, we can gauge how people with disability *feel* about disability research. We can also gauge how disability research *makes* people feel. From this point of view we encounter the very *force* of discourse. We also encounter social *affects* (forces) of impairment. If the subject and the social are products of transindividuation, then the subject is changed by the social. This affective capacity demands analysis. We must attend not only to effects of research but *affects* (forces) of research and their impact on people with disability and their affiliates. If disability research has affective capacities—and I believe it does—then it must encompass desires of people with disability and their affiliates and approach them as desiring subjects.

6.2 Desire and the Transindividual

Looking to processes productive and affective (change-making) of the subject and the social, Deleuze and Guattari grant desire generative capacities. They see that desire is not reducible to lack. It is, rather, productive of lack. When I desire this or that thing, desire gives the appearance of lack. Productive of lack, desire is in excess of lack. Desire is not reducible to what I want; it is instead that by which I want. In this way desire is in excess of what I want. Just as the social is vaster than the subject, desire is vaster than the wants and needs it produces. Vaster than want, and vaster than the subject that wants, desire pervades the social. It subtends the subject and the social, problematising traditional *contiguous* conceptions of the individual (person) and the social. As we have seen (Chapter 4), for Simondon, sociology tends to reduce the social and the individual (person) to a contiguous relation, thereby neglecting the processes by which they are produced. It takes a substantialist view of the individual and the social, implicitly or otherwise opposing them as separate substances rather than looking to that by which both are produced. For Simondon, where there are psychosocial relations, there are group individuations. As he sees it, “individuation turns the individual into a group individual” (*ILNFI* 9). Because the individual is contingent on the pre-individual, it is never separate from conditions by which it is given. From this point of view the psyche is a group phenomenon, contingent on processes beyond the individual and in excess of the given. Where there is ‘psychic becoming’ there are group relations productive of it. In this way groups are constitutive of the social so that the social is always-already psychosocial.

Critiquing substantialism, Simondon finds that it “forces us to think the group as anterior to the individual or the individual as anterior to the group” (*ILNFI* 334). This means that, from a substantialist perspective, individuals are defined against groups, and groups against individuals. This (hylomorphic) point of view fails to account for the production of individuals and fails to account for the ‘middle’ on which the group/individual dichotomy depends. There is for Simondon a ‘rapport’ of individual to group. He argues that the “rapport of the individual to the group [...] depends on the simultaneous individuation of individual beings and of the group” (335). He shows that ‘group individuation’ depends on processes irreducible to substantialism. From a genetic (generative) standpoint, there are not groups to which individuals ‘belong’ but group individuations both productive and *affective* (changing) of the psychosocial. Complementing Simondon’s critique, Deleuze and Guattari see that “a social field comprises structures and functions”, but that “this does not tell us very much about the particular movements that affect the Socius” (*WP* 67). By ‘Socius’ they understand collective production

(see *AO* 10, 33). We can put it that the *Socius* is the effect of ongoing transindividuation. It is this trans-individuation that subtends social interaction. The critique of substantialism Simondon, Deleuze and Guattari pursue requires that forms should not be put before processes that are their cause. From a schizoanalytic perspective, we should not rely on a hylomorphic logic that finds the individual and the social to be contiguous: two forms simply confronting each other. We should look instead to ‘desiring-production’ immanent with the social.

6.3 Minoritarian Becoming

If the social is contingent on processes irreducible to form, in terms of its becoming, it is in excess of form. We can put that the social is *metastable* and beyond any single method of analysis. Following this logic, disability is irreducible to socio-economic determinations, encompassing the imaginary and the symbolic. From a schizoanalytic perspective, socio-economic determinations are immanent with the imaginary and the symbolic. This brings desire and so-called ‘libidinal economy’ into relation with political economy. In this respect desire is, for Deleuze and Guattari, beyond psychoanalytic interpretation and *revolutionary* in its very excess. In *A Thousand Plateaus* they conceptualise this excess in terms of ‘minoritarian becoming’ (see *ATP* 123-124). As they see it, minorities are not only statistical. More importantly, they encompass becoming. “When we say majority”, they make clear, “we are referring not to a greater relative quantity but to the determination of a state or standard in relation to which larger quantities, as well as the smallest, can be said to be minoritarian” (*ATP* 339, see also 546). This means that majorities embody standards that are irreducible to quantity. Majorities may be quantitatively smaller than minorities, but the standards they bear are for Deleuze and Guattari ‘majoritarian’ in nature. We can put it that majorities are representational in a way that obscures different ways of living and the becoming of life itself. People do not fulfil standards so much as standards obscure their becoming. There is for Deleuze and Guattari a “becoming-minoritarian of everybody” which encompasses becoming beyond standards. This is to say that there is always something in excess of standardisation, just as there are processes in excess of form. Deleuze and Guattari understand minority in terms of a “becoming or process” (*ATP* 339). This gives critique of representation ethical dimensions by foregrounding what standards obscure. Even disability maintains a majoritarian aspect in so far some disabilities, and some people with disability, are considered more representable and more representative than others. This is returned to in Chapter 8.

For Deleuze and Guattari majorities are modes of representation, below which, individuals become. As they see it, there is no ‘becoming major’, at least in so far as becoming is in excess

of representation (see *ATP* 339). This point of view is consistent with the critique of psychoanalysis set out in *Anti-Oedipus*. Under psychoanalytic interpretation the “unconscious ceases to be what it is—a factory, a workshop—to become a theater, a scene and its staging” (*AO* 55). Psychoanalysis imposes Oedipus on the unconscious, rendering the unconscious representational. In contrast, schizoanalysis aims to “overturn the theater of representation into the order of desiring-production” (*AO* 271). Overturning psychoanalysis, schizoanalysis works to uncover what the unconscious produces and to show how it works. Like transcendental empiricism, schizoanalysis looks to conditions of production and what they produce. It posits the unconscious in excess of representation, attending to conditions for representation. Doing so, it brings subject formation into the here and now. From a schizoanalytic perspective subject formation is irreducible to hylomorphism. Becoming subject, one does not simply assume form. Instead, form is the effect of individuation. Along these lines, the subject is a work in progress—becoming in a way that exceeds representation. This means the subject is always ‘minor’ and irreducible to the ‘majoritarian’.

It is in terms of becoming that we encounter the ‘problem’ of disability representation. While disability cannot be without representation, while it is representational in nature, it is also more than representation—becoming in terms of processes productive of representation. If disability is in excess of representation, it is in excess of any method of representation. There is not, nor can there be, a single method of accounting for or analysing disability. Attending to processes generative of representation, we remain sensitive to the becoming of disability representation. Transcendental empiricism brings experience into the here and now so that it must be assessed in terms of processes productive of the here and now. Via transcendental empiricism, Deleuze shows that experience cannot be made simply to fit form. While there are indeed forms of experience, there are processes generative of form that exceed it. From a transcendental-empirical perspective, disability research must attend to the genesis of form and the becoming of experience. If the social and the individual (person) are the result of generative processes (including desiring-production), disability research must have means of articulating the immanent relation of the individual and the social. With their ‘rhizomatic’ understanding of relations, Deleuze and Guattari conceptualise *lateral emergence*. Like Simondon, they mean to do away with the traditional contiguity of the individual and the social. With the rhizome, Deleuze and Guattari encompass the transcendental and the experiential, bringing the experiential into relation with immanence. With a view to immanence, and from a rhizomatic perspective, that which is experienced is laterally emergent. Here the social and the somatic

are not contiguous. They are instead immanent. Making a rhizomatic approach to disability, disability research is granted an immanent orientation.

6.4 Rhizomes, Immanence, and Disability

For Simondon “the human is social, psychosocial, psychical, and somatic, without any of these aspects being able to be considered as fundamental while others would be judged as ancillary” (*ILNFI* 332). From the point of view of individuation, there are conditions of desiring-production that encompass the psychosomatic and the psychosocial. This means, as Deleuze suggests, that we are always in the middle of relations—never simply before or after them. Here there are not ‘levels’ of experience (‘levels’ Tom Shakespeare accounts for via Critical Realism [see Chapter 4]) but immanence by which experience is *affected* (changed). What we experience of the world is not exterior to us so much as it the effect of an individuating process with which we are immanent. Unlike Critical Realism, Deleuze and Guattari’s ‘rhizo-analysis’ does not begin with established subject/object relations. Instead, it begins with the ‘middle’ by which relations emerge. Deleuze and Guattari show that, “in nature, roots are taproots with a more multiple, lateral, and circular system of ramification, rather than a dichotomous one” (*ATP* 3). Pursued conceptually, the rhizome serves to map becoming from a lateral perspective. As Deleuze and Guattari see it, relations spread and affect beings in complex ways. If we are to have an ontology of immanence—one that finds beings to be immanent with processes productive of them—we must have means of articulating and ‘mapping’ the emergence of relations. In terms of their genesis, relations are irreducible to dichotomy. We should not begin with established relations of interior/exterior. We should instead look to conditions generative of dichotomy, to see how they bear on experience. In order that we have psychosocial capacities, there must be conditions in excess of the social, conditions that subtend the social and the somatic. The very affect (force) of these conditions must be examined and brought into relation with the experiences they constitute. Analysing forms and processes generative of them, we can address questions of why forms appear as they do. Analysing desire in terms of its emergent properties, we can assess how desire functions and why people desire the things they do.

To show what ‘mapping’ entails, we can take Deleuze and Guattari’s critique of psychoanalysis for example. Rather than simply beginning with the Oedipus complex, schizoanalysis maps emerging relations of desire and conditions on which they depend. Where there are conditions of subordination relative to Oedipus, Deleuze and Guattari find that they are irreducible to the unconscious, that they relate in a broader sense to socio-economic

conditions that may be overturned. As they see it, unconscious production is in excess of Oedipus, which means it is irreducible to established forms such as Oedipus. In this way unconscious production is comparable with revolutionary action. It is always in excess of what is established. It is, therefore, in excess of oedipalisation. Pursuing the unconscious in terms of ‘desiring-machines’ (see *AO* chapter 1), Deleuze and Guattari hold that the unconscious constitutes connections. ‘Desiring-machines’ that populate the unconscious connect and disconnect in ways that are *productive*. Along these lines, the unconscious is a factory rather than a theatre for the representation of Oedipus. Whether or not we find the Oedipus complex relevant—whether or not we have ever been oedipal—is, I believe, secondary to the relevance of schizoanalysis and its rhizomatic applications. Rather than simply tracing connections, from a rhizomatic perspective schizoanalysis looks to the genesis of connections, to conditions for desire. It does not rest with established forms of desiring but to the generation of forms of desire.

Mapping disability experience, we should look to conditions generative of experience. We should not start from the contiguity of the social and the somatic. We should instead look to the genesis of the psychosomatic and psychosocial—mapping their affective capacities. If we are to have social models of disability that attend to the disabling effects of impairment, they must also be oriented to affects (forces and change-making capacities) of impairment, which encompass the social. As we have seen, from the point of view of individuation, the psychosocial is immanent with the somatic. The social is therefore affective in ways that bear on the somatic. Because the social and the somatic maintain an affective relation, they are in a constant state of becoming that must be mapped. In so far as impairment is social, it is constantly under construction. This is not to say that impairment is reducible to the social. It means that it is always in relation *with* the social—that, without this relation, there can be no social models of disability. In so far as desire is social, it can encompass social models of disability. In so far as desire produces forms, it is attributable to forms and concepts by which disability is understood. When and where social models (or conceptions) of disability are proposed and implemented, we should attend to the desires that inform them, mapping the affective (force-related) conditions productive of them. Here we see that ideas applicable to disability are as much affective as they are conceptual. This point of view brings into relief agential *assemblages*. Because we are always in the middle of relations, agency is always under construction. Agency is, therefore, in a constant state of becoming, assembled with “semiotic flows, material flows, and social flows” (*ATP* 24). We can put it that agency does not begin with the choices one makes but with conditions that facilitate choice. The so-called ‘rational

subject' does not emerge *ex nihilo* but through relations in excess of the subject (see Braidotti 2011). Where there are choices to be made, there are conditions by which choice is made. In this sense we are always in the middle of relations: determined by conditions and determining of conditions. Disability research must be sensitive to this situation, looking to conditions that affect (change) agency—conditions that encompass the transcendental and the empirical. We can put it that the individual (person) is as much psychosocial as they are somatic. Even when one's psychosocial capacities are affected by impairment so as to be limited, one is always immanent with the social in ways that change agency. In terms of the psychosocial, the individual is always *trans-individual*—always-already encompassing the social. If we are to have a politics of disablement, and if we are to pursue rights-based discourse for people with disability, we must attend to conditions for politics, and conditions (changing) of agency.

6.5 Human Rights and Wrongs

As we saw with respect to Spinoza's ontology (Chapter 5) and his concept of modal composition, individuals are effects of ongoing processes. For this reason subject formation is in excess of identity. As Deleuze shows in *Difference and Repetition*, there are conditions productive of identity—conditions irreducible to identity. From a transcendental perspective, looking to conditions productive of identity and representation, we should ask: What concepts are amenable to the representation of people with disability? How can we conceptualise disability and subject formation in excess of representation? Deleuze and Guattari's concept of the rhizome gives us means of broaching these questions. Because rhizomes as they understand them have "no beginning or end", so that they are "always in the middle" (*ATP* 26), from a 'rhizo-analytic' perspective, identities are permanently under construction. From the point of view of schizoanalysis, representation is permanently under construction. Here we should recall that while representation is inevitable (the very act of writing about conditions for representation is representational), it can obscure the means of its production. To reiterate, in critiquing representation, Deleuze (Guattari also) does not mean to do away with it but to foreground conditions for it. As we have seen (Chapter 3), with his critique of Kant, Deleuze brings into question categories of understanding Kant considers implicit to experience. As Deleuze sees it (Maimon and Simondon also), Kant mistakes conditions *for* experience for what *is* experienced. For Deleuze, from a properly *transcendental-empirical* perspective, conditions for experience do not resemble what they produce. Instead, as he sees it,

singularities preside over the genesis of individuals and persons; they are distributed in a 'potential' which admits of neither Self nor I, but which produces them by actualizing or realizing itself [...]. (LS 118)

For Deleuze, the Self of experience does not resemble conditions of its production—just as for Deleuze and Guattari the unconscious does not resemble Oedipal representation. Looking to conditions for representation, Deleuze finds that, traditionally, “[t]ranscendental philosophy chooses the finite synthetic form of the Person rather than the infinite analytic being of the individual” (LS 121). As we saw in Chapter 3, Deleuze holds that transcendental philosophy (for the likes of Kant and Husserl) begins with the *unity* of the Self, neglecting conditions by which this unity is given. In a similar vein, Simondon shows that forms of perception are not simply assumed, that they are instead effects of individuation. This means that perception is not “the grasping of a form, but the resolution of a conflict, the discovery of a compatibility”, and “the *invention* of a form” (ILNFI 259, italics in text). To be clear, this does not mean that it is I who invent forms of perception. It means that I am the result of individuations both productive and affective (changing) of perception. Simondon sees that perception is the result of an *individuating process*. This process exists below the level of conscious perception and is for Simondon constitutive of conscious perception. Simondon places emphasis on conditions for perception—conditions that are generative of form. To reiterate, it is not the case for Simondon or Deleuze that perception is without form; rather, forms are the result of generative processes. This means that perception exists in terms of *events*. In terms of processes rather than ‘substantialities’.

The social and political significance of this understanding is such that, as effects of individuation, individuals should not be understood simply to assume forms. Attending to rights discourse and human rights, we should look at subject formation in relation to discourse. We should look to conditions of relation between rights and those to whom they apply. Deleuze and Guattari hold that “[h]uman rights are axioms” and that as such they “say nothing about the immanent modes of existence of people provided with rights” (WP 107). Here they do not reject rights (as if people should not have rights), rather, they question the way rights are distributed. Looking at law in terms of distribution, Deleuze argues that “it’s not a question of human rights, it’s not a question of justice. It’s a question of *jurisprudence*” (Deleuze in Lefebvre 2008: 83, italics in text). While the concept ‘justice’ is abstract, jurisprudence concerns distributions of justice and ways rights and laws are implemented. In relation to rights of people with disability, jurisprudence concerns ways people with disability have access to

rights, and ways they are represented by rights. Critiquing representation, we should attend to conditions for representation. Where people have rights, there are conditions by which rights are formed and implemented. Looking to conditions of implementation, we should address ways people with disability encounter rights, and ways rights affect (change) them.

From the point of view of *assemblage*, agency is always in the middle of relations: determined by relations and determining of relations. From this perspective rights are both productive and affective of subjects. Even where one is without access to rights, this situation is affective (changing) of subjectivity. If rights and laws (and rights *as* laws) are determining of subjects, it is also the case that subjects are determining of rights and laws. This relation, however, is not one of equivalence. There are of course ways people are affected by laws without having redress to the law. Where we are represented by rights and laws, it may be the case that representation falls short of what we require from it. We can put it that while rights and laws are productive of representation, they do not always fulfil representation. For this reason we must have ways of articulating *becoming* that complement social, political, and legal action. In so far as we are becoming, what and how we are is in excess of representation. Disability is contingent on multiple factors, social and somatic, that are not static but becoming. Where disability is applicable to rights discourse, and where rights are applicable to people with disability, there are conditions productive of these relations. Disability is not the same thing for every person affected by it. Disability is, therefore, beyond conditions representative of it and irreducible to group representation. This should not be taken to mean that there can be no representation of and for people with disability. It means that both disability and group formation are in excess of representation.

To make sense of this situation, Simondon's understanding of group formation can be taken for example. As we have seen, for Simondon, the psychic is a group phenomenon. It is *trans-individual*, encompassing what is beyond the individual. Here the individual is not contiguous with the social but immanent with it so that the social pervades the individual. In this way the psyche is psychosocial. Simondon understands groups in terms of genetic (generative) processes. From this point of view groups are not representative but *affective* (change-making) in nature. The psyche is affected (changed) by group formation so as to be psychosocial. Groups, therefore, are not 'entities' so much as they are conditions for the development of the psychic and the social. Where there is psychosocial development, there are group relations *affective* (changing) of it. Simondon holds that "the group is not interindividual reality but the complement of individuation on a vaster scale joining together a plurality of individuals"

(*ILNFI* 334). This means that groups are fundamental to psychosocial individuation in the same way that individuation is contingent on the pre-individual. Thus, the group is not an interindividual relation, it is, rather, that through which interindividual relations become. In this way individuals are ‘group individuals’, maintaining a pre-individual metastability productive of the social. Where there are representative groups, there are underlying *group individuations* effective of them. This is, for Simondon, how group representation is possible. It means that group formation is always in excess of representation and always becoming.

While Deleuze and Guattari (and Spinoza) find desire to be in excess of the subject/individual, Simondon finds groups to be constitutive of the *psychosocial*. When he speaks of the psychic life of individuals, he understands it in terms of group individuation. Again, it is not the case that what we think and feel simply arrives *ex nihilo*. There are for Simondon conditions generative of what we think and feel in excess of the individual. Agency is, therefore, in the middle of relations. It may also be conceived as a group phenomenon or the outcome of group relations. In terms of social and political action, there can be *collective* agency, with individuals forming representative groups effective of change. Here the energies by which we are constituted are productive and affective (changing) of the social. In this way we are always-already social, bearing energies productive of change. Just as groups and individuals exist under conditions of metastability, rights and laws are productive and affective (changing) of subjects in such a way that subjects bear on the production and transformation of rights and laws. Conditions productive and affective of subject formation bear on the production and transformation of rights and laws. Where there are rights and laws, there are subjects to which they apply. In terms of conditions productive of rights and laws and subjects to which they apply, rights, laws and subjects bear *transindividual* significance. They are mutually affective in ways that can facilitate both liberation and oppression. Attending to these conditions, we are in a position to address the status (and the becoming) of rights and laws in relation with the subjects they encompass.

6.6 Schizoanalytic Disability Research

Analysing relations between disability research and people with disability, we are in a position to foreground affective (force-related and change-making) capacities of research and effects of subject formation. From the point of view of individuation and the transindividual, individuals are immanent with the social in a way that renders the personal *political*. If we acknowledge that research is not only productive of knowledge but *affective* (changing) of relations for knowledge, and if we proceed from the position that we are always ‘in the middle’ of relations,

disability research may be conceived in terms of ongoing individuations. From this point of view research requires the participation of people with disability. They should not simply be *affected* (changed) by research, they must be productive and *changing* of research. This is precisely the way Deleuze and Guattari intend schizoanalysis to be practised. They acknowledge the affective (change-making) nature of analysis, holding that “[t]he first positive task [of schizoanalysis] consists of discovering in a subject the nature, the formation, or the functioning desiring-machines, independently of any interpretations” (AO 322). The analysand is as much a part of the practice of analysis as the analyst. When they speak of being independent of interpretation Deleuze and Guattari are critical of the transcendence of interpretation and situations where the analysand is made subject to interpretation rather than being immanent with it and productive of it.

Subject to interpretation, the analysand is made to submit to interpretation in ways that can limit agency. Bringing schizoanalysis to disability research, people with disability are invited to address their affective capacities in relation to research. They are invited to express their desires for disability research and to articulate ‘affective effects’ research has on them. Looking to ‘desiring-machines’ and ‘desiring-production’, Deleuze and Guattari examine how desire is ‘coded’ by socio-economic and cultural conditions. Immanent with the social, the subject is changing of (and changed by) the social in ways that are becoming and therefore irreducible to established discourse. The desiring capacities of the subject (capacities Simondon understands in terms of individuation) constitute a *transindividual* relation of the subject and the social. Here interpretation is immanent with social production. Just as the analysand is immanent with interpretive practices rather than simply subject to them, interpretation is immanent with the social in ways that render the social productive of interpretation. Encountering this relation, we must examine conditions between interpretation (hermeneutics) and social situations. The field of Disability Studies must remain critical of its own constitution. To facilitate the becoming of people with disability, it should foreground the immanent relation of the social and the individual, addressing (where applicable) personal dimensions of the political. It should bring materialist analyses into relation with psychotherapeutic analysis to show how libidinal economy encompasses political economy. This may encourage people disability to participate in disability research and to make Disability Studies *their own*. Just as Deleuze and Guattari see that the analyst is not transcendent to the analysand, disability research is not separate from the means of its production. It is, rather, immanent with the social so that the social is its means of becoming. This means that the subject and the social are immanent in ways that change

interpretation. Disability researchers must remain sensitive to this situation, analysing conditions of the becoming of research, and the becomings of people with disability.

Like Simondon's concept of the transindividual, schizoanalysis brings the subject into relation with the social, foregrounding conditions for the *psychosocial*. From a schizoanalytic perspective, desire is as much affective (changing) of the subject as it is of the social. Following schizoanalysis, disability research must attend to *assemblages* through which the subject and the social are expressed. For Deleuze and Guattari, assemblages are the 'scaffolding' necessary to the connection of desiring-machines.⁵⁸ As they see it, desire

is never separable from complex assemblages that necessarily tie into molecular levels, from micro-formations already shaping postures, attitudes, perceptions, expectations, semiotic systems, etc. (*ATP* 251)

While 'micro-formations' pertain to the habits and behaviours of individuals (persons) and their interactions with the social, macro-formations result from the combination of micro-formations and their repeated facilitation. In this way there are assemblages 'all the way down' that make desire as political as it is personal. It pays to recall that for Spinoza, Substance (or Being) is productive of modes and modal relations (see *E II P13 A"2 Def.*). For Spinoza, psychosomatic bodies (our bodies) are composed of modes and modal relations, just social and cultural institutions are effects of modal relations. Following Spinoza, Deleuze and Guattari hold that in so far as desire is productive, it is productive of—and immanent with—social and cultural institutions. While what I desire may be contrary to social and cultural situations with which I am immanent, the very condition of immanence causes me to be affected (changed) by desires that are not my own. Schizoanalysis serves to assess and to navigate this affective dynamic—looking to assemblages through which our desires are inhibited and liberated, and their connections with social and cultural institutions.

From a Spinozist perspective Deleuze and Guattari see that "each individual is an infinite multiplicity, and the whole of Nature is a multiplicity of perfectly individuated multiplicities" (*ATP* 296). In this way there are (and we are) assemblages 'all the way down'. The modal relations of which the psychosomatic is composed are immanent with relations greater than the psychosomatic. Here the psychosomatic is just as affective (changing) of the social and the cultural as the social and cultural are affective of the psychosomatic. This is what makes Spinoza's ontology transindividual. As Balibar suggests, from the point of view of

⁵⁸ On the practical application of assemblage theory, see Buchanan (2021)

transindividuality, “[n]o individual is in himself ‘complete’ or self-sufficient”. Rather, “the *processes* that make individuals relatively autonomous or separate are not themselves separate, but reciprocal or interdependent” (2020: 43, 44, italics in text). While Simondon objects to Spinoza’s apparent substantialism (see Chapter 5), his notion of the transindividual is complementary to Spinoza’s understanding of modal composition. Deleuze and Guattari take up Spinoza’s understanding of modes to articulate the relation between desire, social and political action. As they see it, desire is not only a private matter. It is affective (change-making) in broader terms, encompassing social and cultural institutions. The very processes by which we are constituted are productive and change-making of social situations and states of affairs. They are in this way beyond the individual and immanent with the individual. In this way the individual (person) is always-already social. Agency does emerge *ex nihilo* but with the social. We can put it that where there are individuals (persons), there are always-already conditions of individuation productive of the social. With schizoanalysis, Deleuze and Guattari pursue modal composition in terms of desire, looking to what desire produces and changes. Doing so, they bring into relief the liberatory potential of desiring-production. As they see it, in so far as one *is* desire, and in so far as desire is irreducible to lack, it is productive of change, bringing the personal into relation with the political.

Bringing schizoanalysis into relation with disability, disability research and the field of Disability Studies, the change-making and forced-related capacities of research are foregrounded. Research is immanent with conditions of its production, encompassing desire and its social and political coordinates. Immanent with these coordinates, interpretation is never separate from the ‘interpreted’, and never removed from what makes interpretation possible. As analysts, we are never separate from what we analyse. This means the analysand is just as productive of analysis as the analyst. From a schizoanalytic perspective, analysis is always participatory and irreducible to established discourse. Schizoanalysis looks to the becoming of the analysand in excess of established discourse, bringing into perspective the *becoming* of the social and political. With schizoanalysis we can see how research is affective—how it changes researchers and research. It brings the personal into relation with the political, attending to the affective dimensions of the political.⁵⁹ In so far as impairment is affective, and in so far as experience is both personal and political, how and what people with disability (and their affiliates) desire from and for research warrants schizo-analysis.

⁵⁹ On the political dimensions of desiring-production, see Goodchild (1996).

6.7 Conclusion

Looking to conditions of desiring-production, Deleuze and Guattari associate transcendental empiricism with ethics. Foucault himself considered *Anti-Oedipus* a “book of ethics” (*AO xiii*).⁶⁰ Examining conditions for desire, we can see what desire changes. By bringing conduct into relation with processes productive and changing of it, Deleuze and Guattari bring transcendental philosophy into relation with ethics. They pursue ethics in the same manner as Spinoza, foregrounding the immanent relation of beings *with* Being, showing how this relation is *affective* (force-related and change-making). Their alternative to psychoanalysis (schizoanalysis) attends to emerging conditions of desiring—conditions that, for them, demand a critique of oedipalisation. As we have seen, for Deleuze and Guattari oedipalisation exists in relation with socio-economic and cultural coordinates and is for this reason irreducible to the unconscious. Where Oedipus exists, it exists in terms of subordination to established socio-economic and cultural conditions. Deleuze and Guattari find that psychoanalysis compounds this subordination by insisting on the unconscious dimensions of Oedipus. They see that the power dynamic psychoanalysis maintains is one that upholds Oedipal subordination, linking it to the unconscious without bringing libidinal economy into relation with political economy. In this way Deleuze and Guattari find psychoanalysis complicit in subordination and ‘bourgeois repression’.

With schizoanalysis Deleuze and Guattari make the case that desire is productive in nature and therefore beyond the terms of Oedipus. They see that desire is irreducible to lack, encompassing social and cultural institutions and their becoming. There is immanent with social and cultural institutions and subjects relations of affect (force) that render discourse affective (force-related and change-making). Clarifying Deleuze and Guattari’s productive understanding of desire, Chapter 6 has indicated a ‘schizoanalytic’ approach to disability research, foregrounding affective capacities of research. Showing how desire functions, Deleuze and Guattari bring desire to bear on the social in ways that render the personal *political*. Just as Simondon posits a genetic (generative) link between the social and the individual (looking to processes productive of the social and the individual), following Spinoza and his understanding of modal composition, Deleuze and Guattari pursue relations in terms of ‘desiring-machines’ and assemblages. Where there are desiring-machines, they are assembled in ways that change the social and the political. For Deleuze and Guattari we are all

⁶⁰ In his preface to *Anti-Oedipus* Foucault writes: “I would say that *Anti-Oedipus* [...] is a book of ethics, the first book of ethics to be written in France for a very long time”. Along these lines he suggests that, “being anti-oedipal has become a life style, a way of thinking and living [...]” (*xiii*)

connected to—and by—desiring-machines. Along these lines research participation may be conceived as *desiring* in nature. From a schizoanalytic perspective we can assess ways people with disability encounter desire. We can also assess what they desire from and for disability research and the field of Disability Studies.

For Spinoza, desire is both productive and affective (changing) of beings. In this way desire is a power of existence. Taking up transcendental empiricism, we look to conditions for the given, turning from the experiential to conditions for the experiential. Conceptualising conditions for experience, we are positioned to address what sorts of experience can be had. This is how transcendental empiricism takes on ethical dimensions. Understanding what and how we are, we can address what we are capable of. Where transcendental empiricism relates to ethics, it also relates to epistemology. Conditions formative of knowledge bear on the transcendental in so far as knowledge has conditions. From a Spinozist perspective we can put it that there are forces by which knowledge is formed. Chapter 7 takes up Foucault's understanding of knowledge production, bringing it into relation with transcendental empiricism. For Foucault, knowledge is the effect of force relations. Where there is knowledge, there are conditions for knowledge irreducible to the known. In this way there is a *becoming* of knowledge and a *becoming* of the known. While Foucault's understanding of knowledge production is Nietzschean rather than Spinozist, the force relations he considers generative of knowledge are comparable with the power Spinoza attributes to God (or Being). From a Nietzschean perspective, one which eschews Spinozist Substance, Foucault looks to force relations productive of knowledge. Looking to the history of knowledge and conditions by which people, things and states of affairs have been known, he pursues a genealogy of knowledge that is complementary to the historicisation of disability and the transcendental-empirical approach to disability and disability research this study makes. Clarifying Foucault's conception of knowledge formation, showing how it relates to transcendental empiricism, Chapter 7 brings transcendental empiricism into relation with Foucauldian epistemology to articulate a Foucauldo-Deleuzian approach to disability and disability research.

CHAPTER 7

For Foucault, force relations are productive of power, just as power is productive of force relations. Just as Deleuze and Guattari understand desire to be productive in nature, Foucault sees that there are genetic (generative) processes productive of knowledge. Taking up Nietzschean genealogy, he pursues the history of knowledge in terms of force relations. Like Spinoza, Nietzsche attends to conditions for the given, bringing them into relation with ethics and questions of what can be done. Unlike Spinoza, Nietzsche does not associate these conditions with God. Instead, like Deleuze (who was greatly inspired by Nietzsche), he presents them in an ‘evental’ manner, eschewing Substance entirely. Following Nietzsche, Foucault looks to *events* of knowledge formation. As he sees it, where there is knowledge, there are force relations productive of it. These relations are not representative so much as they are conditions for representation. In pursuit of conditions for knowledge, Foucault mounts a critique of representation, looking—as Deleuze does—to conditions for representation. Like Deleuze, he brings this critique into relation with ethics. Understanding conditions for knowledge, we are poised to assess how truth is produced and what sort of knowledge there can be. Looking to the history of knowledge formation, to various historical situations of knowledge formation, Foucault shows what knowledge is, and what it is to be subject to knowledge.

From a Foucauldian perspective, where there is knowledge, there is subjectivation. As we have seen (Chapter 6), the word ‘subjectivation’ foregrounds the process of becoming subject. For Foucault, subject formation is immanent with knowledge formation. As he sees it, there cannot be one without the other. From the point of view of knowledge formation, Foucault means to determine not only *who* we are, but how we become known to be who we are. Like Deleuze, he is interested in processes productive of thought and how they bear on the content of thought. We can put it that while Deleuze looks to transcendental conditions for thought, Foucault attends to historical conditions for knowledge and subject formation. In this way he brings the transcendental into relation with history and the historical. While he does not pursue knowledge and subject formation in strict terms of the transcendental (focusing instead on ways the transcendental has become an object knowledge⁶¹), his understanding of force relations, particularly as Deleuze articulates it in his work on Foucault, has transcendental bearings. Because knowledge and power for Foucault exist in relation, it is possible to link what he understands by ‘power’ with the transcendental. As he sees it, power is irreducible to

⁶¹ See for example ‘The Limits of Representation’ in *OT*.

institutional powers (juridical power and civil authority for example). It is conditioning of these powers and therefore in excess of them. In excess of institutional powers, there are for Foucault what we may consider transcendental power relations productive of beings and their affiliations.⁶²

Taking up Foucault's orientation to power, Chapter 7 brings it into relation with transcendental empiricism and critique of representation to show (from a Foucauldian perspective) how knowledge and subject formation bear on disability and disability research. Pursuing Foucault from a transcendental-empirical perspective, the chapter takes up Deleuze's work on Foucault and the concept of 'folding' Deleuze associates with him. Deleuze makes the case that, for Foucault, subjectivation (becoming subject) is a process of folding by which 'outside' meets 'inside' (see *F* 78-101). On Deleuze's reading, for Foucault, the subject is always *between* 'inside' and 'out' so that subjectivation is a process of becoming. 'Outside' the subject are conditions for the subject: force relations *conditioning* of the subject and productive of subjectivation. These relations are just as much a part of subjectivation as they are of knowledge formation. Via Foucault, and via Deleuze's approach to Foucault, we can assess conditions for knowledge formation and subjectivation in relation with disability and disability research. We can assess, for example, how knowledge about disability *affects* (changes) people with disability. We can also address how knowledge of disability becomes. If knowledge is always in production, contingent on force relations and 'folds', then there is an *affective becoming* of disability research and the field of Disability Studies we can articulate through Foucault. Clarifying Foucault's understanding of power, showing how he pursues it and to what ends, Chapter 7 makes a Deleuzo-Foucauldian approach to disability and research to articulate their *affective becoming*.

7.1 Archaeology and Knowledge

Pursuing the history of knowledge in terms of an 'archaeology', Foucault looks to situations—ways of seeing, speaking and acting—by which the known is known. From Foucault's archaeological perspective, knowledge pertains to an 'archive': a virtual repository for systems of knowledge (ways of seeing, speaking and acting). With his archaeology, Foucault examines the history of knowledge and phenomena of power relations knowledge formations expose (see

⁶² "The individual, with his identity and characteristics, is the product of a relation of power exercised over bodies, multiplicities, movements, desires, forces" (*PK* 74).

AK 145, 184-185). Like Deleuze (and Simondon), Foucault looks to *events*. He understands knowledge formation in terms of events, independent of any historical telos. “Archaeology” for Foucault “tries to define not the thoughts, representations, images, themes, preoccupations that are concealed or revealed in discourses; but those discourses themselves, those discourses as practices obeying certain rules” (AK 155). What he seeks, then, is to expose discourses (practices) and conditions of which (and in which) they are comprised. For example, the method applied in his *History of Madness*

[consists] in saying: Let’s suppose that madness does not exist. If we suppose that it does not exist, then what can history make of these different events and practices which are apparently organized around something that is supposed to be madness? (BB 3)

Foucault does not deny what people experience in terms of ‘madness’, rather, he attends to discourses organised around this experience.⁶³ In supposing that madness does not exist, we cannot take it for granted. Instead, we attempt to understand how such a thing as madness becomes an object of knowledge—that is, under what conditions it is, and has been, knowable.

Approaching disability this way, we should look to knowledge formations that inform experience of disability. A temporary and theoretical disengagement of knowledge from disability will allow us to examine how knowledge about disability and disability itself come together and also come apart (on this, see Tremain 2002). It will also allow us to analyse components that constitute social models of disability. From a Foucauldian perspective, social effects of impairment bear on it in such a way as to make it knowable. In *A History of Disability*, Henri-Jacques Stiker takes up this perspective looking to conditions throughout history (predominantly European history) that have made disability intelligible. He asks: “[W]hat were the preconditions for differing social treatments of disability throughout history?” (2019: 19) Drawing from the Torah and ancient Judaic practice, he finds that

[l]egal uncleanness was attached to the disabled, who could, of course, participate in cultic observances but never as priests who made sacrifices. The sanctuary could not be profaned. The disabled had the status of prostitutes or of women whom menstruation made unclean. One had to be without defect in order to approach God’s place of residence. (24)

⁶³ “I have been seen as saying that madness does not exist, whereas the problem is absolutely the converse: it was a question of knowing how madness, under the various definitions that have been given, was at a particular time integrated into an institutional field that constituted it as mental illness occupying a specific space alongside other illnesses” (EEWI 297).

Without scrutinising the accuracy of this observation (a task outside the scope of this study), we can use it to approach Foucauldian analysis. Foucault looks at conditions for knowledge (at different times and *through* different spaces) that give us the world that we know. In the situation just cited, disability is mediated by God and the Covenant so that religious rites make disability intelligible. This is not scientific knowledge, but it is knowledge all the same. For Foucault, knowledge is “a group of elements, formed in a regular manner by a discursive practice” (AK 201). Stiker’s analysis exposes a ‘discourse practice’ that is not reducible to texts, one that encompasses *acts* and *spaces*.⁶⁴ For Foucault, discourse ‘fills’ space. Along Foucauldian lines, Stiker looks to conditions that make disability intelligible at different times and through different spaces.

Foucault foregrounds spatial aspects of discourse in *Birth of the Clinic*, looking to medical practice in France during the classical period (roughly 1730-1820). For Foucault, the clinic comprises not only a space for the observation of diseases but a method of observation. He sees that the “formation of the clinical method was bound up with the emergence of the doctor’s gaze into the field of signs and symptoms” (BC 91). The medical practitioner acquires a field of vision—a way of seeing—enabling them to locate and treat disease. Here knowing and seeing coalesce so that the “eye becomes the depositary and source of clarity” (xiii). Seeing, hearing and feeling, the medical practitioner takes on a “sensory knowledge” (121). The space of this knowledge is the clinic itself (see 196). Taking his account of knowledge formation in (and of) the clinic for example, it is clear that knowledge for Foucault has various dimensions, encompassing ways of seeing, hearing, feeling (tactility), and acting. The ordering of bodies in spaces (clinics, schools and factories) is a technique of discipline and normalisation that makes subjects knowable in particular ways. Knowledge encompasses power in spaces where discipline and normalisation operate.

7.2 The Subject of Knowledge

For Foucault, knowledge is not simply language-based but extends beyond language into the spaces we occupy. Although this situation is associable with phenomenology in so far as the subject is situated (situated for example in the clinic, and in clinical knowledge), Foucault is critical of phenomenology when it invokes a *transcendental subject* (see AK 224, and Foucault’s introduction to *The Order of Things*). Like Deleuze and Simondon, he is sensitive

⁶⁴ We should note that Foucault is wary of textual reducibility. Responding to Derrida’s critique of *History of Madness*, he is critical of what he considers Derrida’s “reduction of discursive practices to textual traces” (HM – Appendix II, 573).

to the potential for the empirical to be taken for the transcendental. As we have seen, transcendental empiricism cannot escape representation. Encompassing conditions for representation, it gives us means of understanding how representation is given. Foucault pursues a similar line, looking to conditions for knowledge. Turning to his *Order of Things*, we see that “Man, in the analytic of finitude, is a strange empirico-transcendental doublet” (347). This ‘analytic of finitude’ refers to conditions by which Man as concept has been an object of knowledge. Here knowledge is finite in so far as it is not contingent on God (see *OT* 343). The point for Foucault is that, in so far as the transcendental is an object for knowledge, it is *subject to* knowledge. Along these lines, what we understand by the transcendental is posited empirically. The transcendental thereby ‘takes after’ the empirical. Like Deleuze, Foucault examines conditions of this situation—conditions for the so-called ‘empirico-transcendental doublet’.

If we are not attentive, it can seem as if Foucault thinks there nothing outside of knowledge—that everything is reducible to discourse; but as we saw with his approach to madness, he does not hold that there is no experience attributable to the term ‘madness’. Foucault wants to show what is understood by ‘madness’ and how this understanding arises (see *AK* 201). To clarify this situation, I present my own for example. I am a person with cerebral palsy. My experience of impairment is mediated by medical knowledge, therapeutic practices and technologies, and public policies. The way I know who and what I am is mediated by various discourses linked to the treatment of cerebral palsy. I will not make the case that my impairment is *only* socially constructed, because the condition of my body is such that I do not have full use of my arms and legs. However, I will argue that my experience of this condition is socially, culturally, and medically mediated, that I cannot divorce what I know by ‘cerebral palsy’ from my experience of impairment. If Foucault were to approach my situation, he would not pull my wheelchair out from under me and tell me to stop being ‘socially constructed’, but he might analyse what I understand by ‘cerebral palsy’ and how that knowledge is formulated. In so far as I am situated *in* knowledge, how I know myself is the product of—and is changed by—knowledge itself. Even in making the case for conditions outside of knowledge, conditions that are constitutive of knowledge, I do so by referring to established discourses (within philosophy, with a view to disability and disability research). I do not consider the case futile, because, in order for there to be knowledge, there must be conditions for knowledge, just as there must be conditions for representation. Looking to these conditions, I make the case that disability is irreducible to representation. While it is via representation that disability is intelligible, there must be conditions for such representation—conditions in excess of representation. These conditions

make disability intelligible. In order to understand what it is to be a subject and to be subject to knowledge formations, we must conceptualise conditions for knowledge and representation. To address questions of what can and should be done about disability, we must have means of assessing conditions of disability and conditions for representation. Foucault gives us means of analysing how knowledge encompasses disability. With his generative understanding of power, Foucault shows how knowledge is formed. Understanding how knowledge is formed, we are in a position to address what it can do.

As we have seen, for Foucault, knowledge formation encompasses processes of subjectivation (see *AK* 201). In so far as subjectivation is a process, the subject (for Foucault) “is not a substance. It is a form, and this form is not primarily or always identical to itself”. (*EEWI* 290) To say that the subject is not identical to itself means that it is capable of transformation. One is a different subject in different circumstances and through different activities. Like Deleuze and Simondon, Foucault understands subjectivity in terms of processes. One is subject to knowledges that mediate what one knows of oneself and how one is known by others. For Foucault, to be a subject is to be subject *to* knowledge. In life, we are never subject to only one form of knowledge. There may be dominant knowledges in a given time and space, but knowledge is never completely rigid. Instead, it is transferrable and subject to transformation. Foucault looks to events of knowledge formation to show how knowledge has changed at different times and through different spaces (asylums, clinics, penitentiaries, etc.). In his *History of Disability*, Stiker takes this approach analysing the development of orthopaedic technologies in the nineteenth century. He sees that the “nineteenth century was a great era for orthopaedics”.

Straightening up physically and straightening up behaviorally are put in the same semantic field, a normative one. Educate and rehabilitate, mind and body: draw upward, toward correctness. *Correct* is another keyword that forges a link between medicine and pedagogy. We witness the subtle shift from orthopaedics to prosthetics. (2019: 115, italics in text)

From a Foucauldian perspective Stiker makes the case that orthopaedic therapies and technologies are linked with normative outcomes that regulate knowledge of disability (how disability ought to be understood, and what ought to be done about it). The space of this knowledge is not the ‘sanctuary’ of Judaic tradition (which belongs to a different time), but the hospital or rehabilitation facility. There is *throughout* this space a way of seeing and responding to disability. It is in spaces like this that disability is medicalised. Medicalisation refers not only to specific treatments, therapies and technologies but to ideas that extend beyond medical

knowledge. Outlining conditions of medical knowledge and pursuing its effects, Stiker makes the case that

[r]ehabilitation is situated in the social sphere and constitutes replacement for a deficit. Giving voice to this shift will be one of the functions of the new language of disability. [...] Rehabilitation becomes a generalized notion and will be extended to all the disabled, to all forms of disability. (124)

The ‘new language of disability’ is, in Foucauldian terms, a new discourse (or knowledge practice) applicable to people with disability. It is through this discourse that disability is knowable. There is of course more than one discourse by which disability is knowable, but Foucault and Stiker show that medical knowledge is dominant in particular spaces, in ways that shape general knowledge.

7.3 Ethics and Subjectivation

Looking at knowledge formation from a Foucauldian perspective, Stiker shows how disability has been encountered by medical practitioners and people with disability. Understanding how disability has been known, we are better poised to address how it is now, and how it may be in the future. Taking up the history of disability (a task outside the scope of this study), we can address the becoming of disability and becomings of people with disability. Along these lines, and following Foucault, we encounter an ‘ethics of subjectivation’. As we saw in Chapter 5, for Spinoza, understanding how we are constituted, we may address what we can do and what we may become. With something of a Spinozist inflection, Foucault pursues an “historical ontology of ourselves in relation to a field of power through which we constitute ourselves as subjects acting on others” (*EEWI* 262). The ‘power’ he speaks of here is not reducible to representation. It is in excess of representation and, I suggest, transcendental in nature. Power in this sense is such that the “individual, with his identity and characteristics, is the product of a relation of power exercised over bodies, multiplicities, movements, desires, [and] forces” (*PK* 74). Here the “exercise of power perpetually creates knowledge” (*PK* 52). We should not take this to mean that knowledge is reducible to institutional powers (juridical power for example), rather, Foucault sees that knowledge is the effect of power relations *irreducible* to institutional powers. We can put that the power productive of institutional powers (civil authorities, etc.) is transcendental in nature. It is that by which the given is given.

If power in its transcendental (conditioning) capacity is productive of institutional powers, the case can be made that social effects of impairment vary according to different relations of

power and the discourses they produce. From a Foucauldian point of view we can look (for example) to ‘power/knowledge’ relations that have brought the so-called ‘hard’ social model into effect. We can ask, How is it that Marxist materialism is applicable to analysis of disability? What can it tell us about disability, and how relevant is it to social effects of impairment now? Here we are not simply dealing with the history of discourse. We are looking at discourse in terms of the here and now. Foucault pursues the history of discourse with a view to the present and its becoming. He sees that:

Among the cultural inventions of mankind there is a treasury of devices, techniques, ideas, procedures, and so on, that cannot exactly be reactivated but at least constitute, or help to constitute, a certain point of view which can be very useful as a tool for analyzing what’s going on now [...]. (EEWI 261)

Taking up the history of discourse, Foucault gives us tools for analysing discourse *now*. Looking at power in terms of its transcendental capacity, he shows how (and where) institutional powers emerge. He brings these powers into relation with subjectivations they produce and affect (change). In this way he pursues an ‘ethics of subjectivation’, showing how power (transcendental *and* institutional) produces knowledge. Understanding conditions for knowledge, we are poised to discover not only what knowledge is, but what it may become. As Foucault sees it, approaching knowledge formations and conditions for them, we encounter who and what we are. Analysing power relations, he brings Nietzschean genealogy into relation with Spinozist ethics. By showing what power is and what it affects (changes), Foucault shows how we are changed by power, and how power produces change.

Like Deleuze, Foucault is interested not only in the history of thought but the *becoming* of thought. As we have seen, while Deleuze looks to conditions productive of the Image of thought (see Chapter 3), Foucault examines knowledge formations and conditions for them. For Foucault, where there is thought, there are discourses to which it responds. While Deleuze does not deny this arrangement, his analyses bear stronger resemblance to transcendental philosophy than historical investigation. We can put it that while Foucault pursues discourse in terms of situations it produces and affects (changes), thereby bringing discourse analysis into relation with history and historicism, Deleuze’s analyses of discourse are tangential to his pursuit of the transcendental. If there is a difference of *means* and *ends* between Deleuze and Foucault, it is difficult to parse (on this, see Morar et al. [eds] 2016). They are both interested in conditions for the given and that which the given affects (changes). Like Deleuze, Foucault is inspired by Nietzsche in ways that impact on his own philosophical pursuits. Deleuze and

Foucault take up Nietzsche's understanding of force relations to show how and what force produces. It is via his Nietzscheanism that Foucault's analyses of power can be brought into relation with transcendental empiricism.

7.4 Nietzsche, Foucault and Deleuze

For Nietzsche, force relations are productive and affective, changing human behaviour. The task of genealogy is to expose drives: forces, active and reactive, determining of conduct. Approaching history in terms of genealogy, Nietzsche sees that

anything in existence, having somehow come about, is continually interpreted anew, requisitioned anew, transformed and redirected to a new purpose by *a power superior to it* [my emphases] [...]. (*GM*, second essay, section 12 [pg. 52])

From a Nietzschean perspective, knowledge is a product of force relations. The way we encounter things is contingent on forces. To understand how something is known, we must look to relations of force. Doing so, we bring the transcendental into relation with the empirical. For Nietzsche, force is that by which the given is given. This means that force is productive of what is empirically verifiable. Force is also that by which the given is *resisted*. If force is *resistant* to force, there is a dynamic of force relations productive of the kinds of knowledge (and representation) we have. Foucault takes up Nietzschean genealogy to analyse ways power and knowledge impact on each other. For Foucault, it is "not possible for power to be exercised without knowledge, [just as] it is impossible for knowledge not to engender power" (*PK* 52). Following Nietzsche, Foucault sees that power in its genetic (generative) capacity is productive of knowledge, while power in its institutional capacities (encompassing juridical power, civil authority, etc.) is *affective* (changing) of knowledge. A genealogical approach to knowledge formation shows how force relations constitute power and how institutional powers change knowledge.

From the point of view of Nietzschean genealogy, power in its transcendental capacity is immanent with institutional powers. Transcendental (conditioning) power 'runs through' social and the political formations (institutional powers) in ways that enable their *becoming*. The way Foucault understands power is similar to Deleuze and Guattari's productive orientation to desire and Simondon's concept of individuation and the transindividual. Like desire (for Deleuze and Guattari) and individuation (for Simondon), power for Foucault is that by which the given is given. it is. To say that power is *productive* of knowledge means that there are conditions for knowledge, conditions that change the kinds of knowledge we have. There is, I

believe, nothing controversial about this claim. It is not the case for Foucault that knowledge is simply *relative* to institutional powers; rather, power in its transcendental capacity is conditioning of knowledge and institutions by which it is mediated.

As Nietzsche has it, there is a ‘will to power’ by which the given is given. Like desire (for Deleuze and Guattari), ‘will to power’ is in excess of the will *for* power. It is, I suggest, that by which the will *for* power is given. Deleuze puts it that Nietzschean will to power is not “what the will wants, but on the contrary, the one that wants in the will” (*NP x*). This is to say that power *is* will. Where there is will *for* power (power to control, power to dominate, power to enjoy), there is power by which this will is given. To understand what is *willed for*, we must understand the power by which we *will for*. Just as Spinoza brings the transcendental into relation with ethics showing what bodies are and what they can do, Nietzsche shows how power changes will. To understand how we think, we must look to the drives that determine what we are. Nietzsche holds that, “[h]owever far man may go in self-knowledge, nothing however can be more incomplete than his image of the *drives* which constitute his being”. (*Db*, book II, section 119 [pg. 174], italics in text).⁶⁵ To understand *who* and *what* we are, we must account for the drives we embody.

Bringing drives into relation with thought, Nietzsche presents grounds for approaching the transcendental in terms of genealogy. Taking this approach, and holding to his genetic (generative) understanding of difference, Deleuze finds that will to power is constituted *differentially*—by different forces in combination. For Deleuze, the power one *is*, is the product of differing relations of force (see *NP* 186). Power is the product of active and reactive force, where active force “affirms its difference and makes its difference an object of enjoyment and affirmation”, and reactive force “imposes limitations and partial restrictions” on active force (*NP* 52). In this scenario, “[w]hat constitutes man and his world is not only a particular type of force, but a mode of becoming of forces in general” (158). Like Deleuze, Foucault sees that representative power is the product of force relations. He takes up genealogy, looking to force relations productive of knowledge. Knowledge for Foucault is immanent with power so that knowledge and power are *mutually affective*. Approaching Foucault, Deleuze places strong emphasis on the genetic (generative) capacities of power. As he sees it, knowledge “concerns formed matters (substances) and formalized functions”, while power “does not pass through forms, but only through forces” (*F* 61). This conception of the power/knowledge relation bears

⁶⁴ For a discussion of the relationship between Nietzsche, Foucault and Deleuze where this section is cited, see Smith (2016).

strong resemblance to the force/power relation he sets out in his book on Nietzsche. In his work on Foucault, power is formative of knowledge in such a way that knowledge encompasses ‘formalized functions’. In this equation knowledge is *substantive*, while power in its genetic capacity is *productive* of knowledge. As Deleuze sees it, knowledge *fills* spaces, shedding light on things (see *F* 57).

As we saw in the case of Foucault’s *Birth of the Clinic*, there is a ‘sensory knowledge’ associated with medical discourse that renders the eye ‘the depositary and source of clarity’. The space of such vision is the clinic itself. In this situation knowledge encompasses sight, making disease visible. Deleuze emphasises the difference between seeing and speaking, separating discourse from the visible so that discourse accounts for what is articulable, while visibility accounts for what can be seen. While the visible and the articulable both account for knowledge (what is known at a given time and *through* a given space), they do so in different ways.⁶⁶ “The conclusion we can draw from this”, Deleuze maintains, “is that each historical formation sees and reveals all it can within the conditions laid down for visibility, just as it says all it can within the conditions relating to statements” (*F* 51). The ‘statements’ he refers to here are conditions for *articulable* knowledge. For Foucault, discourse is “constituted by a group of sequences of signs, in so far as they are statements, [and] in so far as [statements] can be assigned particular modalities of existence” (*AK* 121). As ‘particular modalities of existence’, statements account for *regularities* of discourse. Deleuze refers to “discursive formation” as a “family of statements” (‘Foucault’, seminar 9, pg. 4). As he sees it, discourse analysis “must extract from words and language the statements corresponding to each stratum and its thresholds” (*F* 45). The strata he speaks of refer to visible and articulable elements that comprise knowledge. In this scenario the stratum of the articulable is privileged over the visible so that the articulable impacts upon the visible, literally *directing* sight.⁶⁷

Where power comes into play is in the relation between the visible and the articulable. For Deleuze, power is that which brings the visible and the articulable into relation to form knowledge. Perhaps the best way to make sense of this relation is via Spinoza and Deleuze’s reading of Spinoza, where the attributes of thought and extension are separate (or parallel) expressions of a single substance (see Chapter 5). In his reading of Foucault, Deleuze holds

⁶⁶ “Knowledge is a practical assemblage, a ‘mechanism’ of statements and visibilities” (*F* 44).

⁶⁷ “Between the visible and the articulable we must retain all the following aspects at the same time: the heterogeneity of the two forms, their difference in nature or anisomorphism; a mutual presupposition between the two, a mutual grappling and capture; the well determined primacy of the one [the articulable] over the other [the visible]” (*F* 57).

that power is fundamental to both the visible and the articulable, running through both and determining knowledge. Deleuze sees that “[p]ower-relations are the differential relations which determine particular features (affects)” (*F* 62). Here we should recall that power in its genetic (generative) capacity is not representational. The power Deleuze refers to in terms of ‘differential relations’ is not simply the representative power we associate with politics and civil authority. It is instead the transcendental (conditioning) power associated with genesis. This power is generative of representative power (and knowledge). Looking at this situation from a Spinozist perspective, transcendental (conditioning) power is Substance itself—recalling that Substance for Spinoza is productive and affective (changing) of modes. As modes of Substance, we are affections of power. This means that modal composition is always in excess of representative power. It is, therefore, irreducible to representation.

As we have seen (Chapter 5), for Spinoza, modes of Substance are not determined in terms of *ends*. Substance itself has no *ends*, only *means*. As he sees it, reason is a means to freedom. While this orientation holds good for Spinoza, for Nietzsche, reason is a product of drives that constitute beings. For Nietzsche there is no ‘faculty’ of reason beyond the drives of which we are composed. Unlike Spinoza, Nietzsche does not privilege reason. We can put it that, for Nietzsche, reason is not the *modus operandi* of ethics that Spinoza makes it out to be (see *GS*, Book Four, section 333 [pp. 185-186]). However, Nietzsche’s philosophy maintains ethical dimensions in so far as beings for him are products of drives. Where there is reason, it is always the product of drives. Determining how drives function, we see what beings are capable of. In this way we can *affirm* the actions and capabilities of beings. Deleuze shows that, through will to power, affirmation “is the product of a way of thinking which presupposes an active life as its condition and concomitant” (*NP* 95). This ‘active life’ is not reducible to physical activity but encompasses processes of life’s *becoming*.

Just as Deleuze and Guattari place emphasis on the affirmative attributes of desiring, in his approach to Nietzsche, Deleuze understands will to power in terms of its affirmative dimensions. He pursues a similar line in his work on Foucault, underscoring the ethical dimensions of Foucault’s concept of power/knowledge relations. In so far as power is genetic (generative), it is always in excess of knowledge. As we have seen, where there is knowledge, there is transcendental (conditioning) power associated with its formation. Deleuze presents this dynamic in terms of ‘folds’. In his work on Foucault he finds that “[s]ubjectivation is created by folding” (*F* 86). Because power is always in excess of knowledge, and because it is formative, subject formation depends on a relation of ‘inside’ and ‘out’. What is ‘outside’ the

subject is the dimension of its becoming, while what is ‘inside’ is what it has become. This inside/outside relation is the result of a continuous process of folding. Along these lines Deleuze claims that Foucault “does not write a history of subjects but of processes of subjectivation, governed by the foldings operating in the ontological as much as the social field” (F 95). What Deleuze brings out in his work on Foucault is the ethical significance of folding. As he sees it, the subject is the product of folding, which bears on the becoming of knowledge. The transcendental (conditioning) power productive of representative power and knowledge is generative of folds. In this way the subject is immanent with representative power and knowledge. To understand how the subject becomes, we must look to the way knowledge is formed. We must attend to the ‘foldings’ by which the subject becomes. These foldings encompass the transcendental (power in its genetic capacity) and what it produces (representative powers).

For Deleuze and Foucault, there is always a becoming of power in excess of the subject. It is by this power that the subject becomes. Just as Simondon posits the individual and the social in terms of individuation (so that individuation is in excess of the individual [person] and therefore *transindividual* in nature), Deleuze and Foucault find power to be more than what it gives. In this way power is irreducible to institutional powers, encompassing their becoming. This means there is a becoming of knowledge *immanent* with subject formation. To understand what the subject is, we must assess the means by which it becomes. This assessment will be transcendental *and* empirical in nature, encompassing power in its transcendental and representative capacities. We can put it that power is *transindividual*, producing the individual and the social. From a Simondonian perspective, where knowledge is social (everywhere), where it affects (changes) the individual, there is subjectivation. To understand the transcendental significance of Foucauldian knowledge formation, we can turn to Simondon’s account of individuation. In relation to individuation, the pre-individual is the ‘power’ productive of individuation. In so far as knowledge is contingent on individuation, there is a ‘power/knowledge’ relation attributable to Simondon’s concept of individuation.

7.5 Simondon, Power and Knowledge

The Foucault Deleuze presents is not the familiar caricatural Foucault of rigid discourse analysis and discursive reducibility, but the *ethical* and Nietzschean Foucault associable with Spinoza. Power for this Foucault does not only exist in broad relations of domination and

submission⁶⁸ but in complex *transcendental* and *evental* terms that encompass conditions for representation. Foucault does not insist that experience and phenomena are strictly reducible to single discourses—it is more the case that discourse encompasses structural regularities that make knowledge possible. In his *History of Madness* he argues that the “consciousness of madness, in European culture at least, has never formed an obvious and monolithic fact, undergoing metamorphosis as a homogenous ensemble” (*HM* 163). Analysing conditions by which madness has been understood, Foucault does not argue that individual experience is always and immediately reducible to discourse. Instead, discourse accounts for conditions that *illuminate* experience at given times and through given spaces.

Looking to “classical forms of confinement”, he makes the case that “unreason was, in the strictest sense of the word, reduced to silence” (*HM* 441). In this scenario, what we might call first-person experiences of madness are ‘over-coded’ by those ‘in the know’—by those overseeing the confined. This does not mean that first-person experiences associated with ‘unreason’ were not real. It means that this experience was reduced to silence. There are of course similar conditions applicable to disability, where medical discourse and social and cultural discourses effectively silence lived experience of disability; but we should not take this to mean that disability is reducible to existing medical discourse and ‘social effects’. As we have seen, for Foucault, discourse analysis is linked to ethics in so far as what *has been* illuminates where we are now. If we are to change, and if change is possible, there must be something ‘outside’ where we are now, something fundamental to change—to transformation—itself. It is along these lines that Deleuze pursues subjectivation and the becoming of the subject.

For Foucault, subjectivation is the result of force relations (or power) productive of knowledge. This means that “[k]nowledge and power are integrated with one another” (*PK* 52). When Foucault suggests that “the individual, with his identity and characteristics, is the product of a relation of power exercised over bodies, multiplicities, movements, desires, [and] forces” (cited above), he comes close to Simondon’s conception of the transindividual. As Chapter 4 has shown, for Simondon, the transindividual accounts for the “systematic unity of interior (psychical) individuation and exterior (collective) individuation” (*ILNFI* 9). When he argues that “analysis of physical reality cannot be separated from a reflection on the very conditions of knowledge” (*ILNFI* 256), he has in mind transcendental conditions on which knowledge

⁶⁸ Foucault himself goes as far as to assert: “The idea that power is a system of domination that controls everything and leaves no room for freedom cannot be attributed to me” (*EEWI* 293).

depends. According to Deleuze, subjectivation for Foucault is “governed by foldings operating in the ontological as much as the social field” (cited above). These foldings may be understood in terms of Simondonian *transindividuation*. For Simondon, the process of individuation productive of the individual (person) is also productive of the social. There is in this scenario a mutual becoming—or an affective (force-related) becoming—comparable with Foucauldian subjectivation.

From a Simondonian perspective, knowledge is the result of processes in excess of the subject. Where there is knowledge, there are conditions by which it is given. These conditions are in excess of the known. We can put it that between the observer and the observed (for example, the disability researcher and those they research), there are conditions for knowledge—conditions of *formation*. While Foucault understands these conditions in terms of a complex play of forces, from a Simondonian perspective they may be posited in terms of individuation and ‘transduction’. For Simondon, transduction is “individuation in progress” (*ILNFI* 13). It is the ‘spark’ by which individuation emerges from the pre-individual. From the point of view of transduction and individuation, knowledge is always in formation. There is from this point of view an ‘outside’ of knowledge and an ‘outside’ of representation.

Taking up Deleuze’s reading of Foucault, we can put it that the becoming of disability and disability research is a process of folding that encompasses subjectivation. Knowledge is not static but processual in nature. In terms of becoming, it is irreducible to established discourse. In this way (through its becoming) it is in excess of representation. To say that disability is irreducible to representation means that there are conditions for disability by which it becomes (and becomes knowable). While disability is—and must be—representational, it cannot be reduced to existing representations and knowledge formations. The processes productive of representation are irreducible to what they produce. Just as there is a becoming of experience, there is a becoming of representation. It is with a view to the becoming of representation that Foucauldian analysis can be brought into relation with transcendental empiricism.

7.6 Future Relations of Foucauldian Analysis

Bringing Simondon and Deleuze into relation with Foucault, my intention has been to tease out the transcendental and ethical dimensions of Foucauldian analysis. Following Deleuze, I see that Foucault is not only an historian. Perhaps more importantly, he is a *philosopher of history*. Deleuze makes the case that

[w]hat Foucault takes from History is that determination of visible and articulable features unique to each age which goes beyond any behaviour, mentality or set of ideas, since it makes these things possible. (*F* 42)⁶⁹

With his concept of force relations and power, Foucault pursues knowledge in terms of conditions of formation. He turns from an archaeology of knowledge to a genealogy of power relative to knowledge formations.⁷⁰ Foucauldian analysis does not seal us in place. Instead, it incorporates conditions for the becoming of knowledge. Foucault is concerned not only with what has been, and what we have been, but with what we are becoming. Foregrounding conditions for knowledge formation, I gesture to their further application to disability and disability research.

Pursuing the transcendental and ethical dimensions of Foucauldian analysis, I have not focused on his notion of ‘biopolitics’ (with which he “attempt[s] [...] to rationalize the problems posed to governmental practice by phenomena characteristic of a set of living beings forming a population” [*BB* 317]). Examination of the transcendental and ethical dimensions of Foucault’s work is, from what I have seen, largely absent from disability research (a notable exception being Tremain’s [ed.] *Foucault and the Government of Disability* 2015). Disability researchers have taken up Foucault in pursuit of the concept of ‘abnormality’ and knowledge formations distributive of that concept (see for example Davis 1995; Snyder and Mitchell, 2006; Mitchell and Snyder 2018). While such analysis is important, without attending to conditions of Foucauldian analysis, it can obscure what Foucault understands by discourse. Rather than making a critique of ‘abnormality’ and its representative values, I have attended to generative conditions necessary to discourse and *resistance* to discourse. These conditions bear on ‘abnormality’ and what is understood by it. From a Foucauldian perspective, where there is discourse, there is also resistance to discourse. This is because power as Foucault understands it encompasses the capacity for resistance.⁷¹ Where there is power (everywhere), there is also resistance to power. We can put it that disability research—and by extension, the field of Disability Studies—encompasses resistance to disabling discourses (on Foucault’s

⁶⁹ I take the position that power is in excess of—though not transcendent to—established knowledge formations. This is consistent with Deleuze’s argument that, “[i]f knowledge consists of linking the visible and the articulable, power is its presupposed cause”. Importantly, we must recall that for Foucault power in its generative capacity is implicit to its representative forms. On this front Deleuze holds that, “power implies knowledge as the bifurcation or differentiation without which power would not become an act” (*F* 33).

⁷⁰ “If we were to characterise it in two terms, then ‘archaeology’ would be the appropriate methodology of this analysis of local discursivities, and ‘genealogy’ would be the tactics whereby, on the basis of the descriptions of these local discursivities, the subjected knowledges would be brought into play.” (*PK* 85)

⁷¹ “Where there is power, there is resistance, and yet, or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power.” (*WK* 95)

understanding of resistance and its applicability to Disability Studies, see Gabel and Peters 2004). We can also put it that disability research is a form of power. Understanding disability research in terms of force relations and power, it is always in formation. Researchers approaching people with disability should remain sensitive to conditions of knowledge formation.

Looking to force relations constitutive of power, Foucault theorises conditions for discourse. In so far as there are conditions for discourse, there is a becoming of research and the field of Disability Studies. Just as experience is open to change, there are changing conditions of research. Encompassing change, disability research must remain critical of the representations it produces. When disability researchers Snyder and Mitchell make the case that “textually based research is the only *absolute* remedy to the exhaustion of people-based research practices” (2006: 201, italics in text), they bear in mind the fatigue people with disability experience as objects for research. However, if their position is that texted-based research is preferable to ‘people-based research’, they err (dangerously, in my opinion) on the side of representation in a way that reduces disability to text. I do not mean to invalidate their research. I simply foreground the limitations of text-based research. The danger lies in conflating established discourse with emerging experience of disability. As we have seen, for Foucault, discourse encompasses structural regularities of knowledge. Different discourses illuminate different phenomena and different spaces. This does not mean, for example, that my own experience of disability is reducible to established discourse; rather, what I experience is becoming in such a way as to be irreducible to it. What I experience is, therefore, irreducible to existing representations of disability.

The danger disability research faces is in applying discourse to disability in ways that obscure its becoming. We should recall that, as Foucault sees it, confinement reduced experience of unreason (experience attributable to that term) to silence. Lynne Huffer (2009) pursues this argument, looking to LGBT+ experience. She makes the case that, “[o]nly when the question of sexuality can be released from the already captured place of the subject who asks it can a different ethical experience of eros emerge” (2009: 229). Her point is that, in terms of lived experience, sexuality is irreducible to established (and heteronormative) discourse, encompassing becoming in a way that involves ethics. Huffer sees that sexuality remains in formation, existing in Deleuzo-Foucauldian terms of perpetual folding.⁷² From this

⁷² Huffer argues that the “subject is coterminous, contingent, or contiguous with an outside that is in a continual process of transformation and expansion. In this way, the social, historical, political, linguistic, and conceptual

perspective, LGBT+ discourse is in a constant state of becoming, just as the struggles and liberations LGBT+ people pursue are always becoming.

What I propose under the heading of ‘future relations of Foucauldian analysis’ is a sensitivity to the becoming of discourse in relation to experience. This should not exclude established discourse, but it should leave room for future relations of discourse to living things and situations. Attention should be paid to conditions for discourse. These conditions, so the chapter has argued, bear transcendental significance. Subjectivation is not a one-time affair but a constant process irreducible to established discourse. In Deleuzo-Foucauldian terms it is a relation of ‘inside and ‘out’—a constant process of folding. From a transcendental-empirical perspective, there are conditions for representation that exceed what they give. Along these lines Simondon holds that the individual is the result of individuation, which encompasses the psychosomatic and the psychosocial. Where there are subjects, there are social relations and conditions for interpellation. These conditions are becoming in such a way as to change the subject. Here we can put it that the individual is immanent with changing relations that bear on subjectivation. From this point of view there are ‘always-already’ future relations of Foucauldian analysis.

7.7 Conclusion

Pursuing knowledge in terms of conditions for it, Foucault brings the transcendental into relation with the empirical. He foregrounds the genetic (generative) processes productive of knowledge. In so far as they are productive of what is empirically verifiable, these processes are in excess of the empirical. They are, as Deleuze puts it, that by which the given is given. Like Spinoza, Foucault finds that power is in excess of the given. While Spinoza pursues power in terms of Substance, taking up Nietzschean genealogy, Foucault sees that power is the result of force relations. Where there is institutional power (civil authority etc.), there are conditions for it. To understand what institutional power consists of Foucault looks to power in its transcendental capacity. Taking up power in terms of this capacity, he looks to conditions of knowledge formation, bringing them into relation with the becoming of knowledge. For Foucault, knowledge formations are not static but transforming. In so far as these formations change, subjectivation remains in process. Just as there are conditions for subjectivation, there are conditions for representation. Making a critique a of representation, we should not (and

borders—the edges we tend to think of as defining the boundaries of the contextual containers that hold the subject—are continually contested and reconfigured” (2009: 31).

cannot) reject it out of hand. Instead, we should be sensitive to conditions for representation and how they bear on the becoming of subjects.

The concluding chapter takes up critique of representation with a view to social and political action. While it may be argued (plausibly) that there cannot be politics without representation, the case can be made that change is in excess of representation. The very becoming that social and political action enacts is contingent on processes in excess of the given. If we are to have representation (and we must), we must have means of articulating its becoming. As I have tried to make clear, while we cannot be without representation, in order for there to be representation, there must be conditions productive of it. Transcendental empiricism is a means of accounting for these conditions. With his genetic (generative) understanding of difference, Deleuze theorises conditions for the given. Without abandoning this concept of difference, with Guattari, he looks to desire and its genetic and *affirmative* capacities. Throughout his work, Deleuze remains sensitive to conditions by which the given is given. Following Spinoza and Nietzsche, he brings the transcendental into relation with ethics. Looking to conditions for the given, we encounter what, and *how*, we may become. In this way transcendental empiricism can be brought into relation with social and political action.

Theorising social and political action in terms of Simondonian individuation, Chapter 8 looks to *transindividual* action. As we have seen (chapters 4 and 6), for Simondon, groups bear a genetic capacity in relation to the psychosocial. Where there are psychosocial relations, there are conditions on which these relations depend. In their genetic (generative) capacity, groups are productive of the psychosocial. In this way groups are not representative so much as they are generative. We can put it that where there are representative groups, there are conditions for representation. When people organise groups, when they pursue social and political change by forming representative groups, there are genetic (generative) attributes of group formation. Like Spinoza, who understands bodies in terms of modal composition, Simondon finds the psychosocial to be *transindividual* in nature. Like Spinoza (Deleuze and Foucault), he looks to what is in excess of the individual. It is in terms of modal composition that group formation is affective (force-related and change-making). In so far as groups are composed of bodies, they affect (change) bodies. Even online communities have the capacity to change psychosocial relations with which the human body is immanent.

Looking at social and political action in terms of affect (force), Chapter 8 returns to the affective becoming of disability research and the field of Disability Studies. Bringing affect into relation with becoming, I mean to foreground the affective capacities of disability research,

social and political action. Where there is social and political action, there is, as Deleuze and Guattari would have it, 'desiring-production'. As I see it, disability research must encompass desiring-production, looking to desires productive of social and political action. My contention is that people with disability are not simply 'objects' for research. Instead, from a Foucauldian perspective, the very forces they embody bear on research so as to change it. Here, in so far as bodies are productive of social and political action, they are always-already social, and always-already affecting (changing) research.

CHAPTER 8

The reason for making a transcendental-empirical approach to disability and the field of Disability Studies is to articulate their becoming with a view to experience of disability. Critiquing representation, Deleuze finds that conditions for the empirical—conditions by which the given is given—are *different* from the empirical. Along these lines, difference for Deleuze is irreducible to representation. Difference is not simply *between* things, so that one thing is simply different from another. Instead, difference is productive of the given in a way that is irreducible to representation. Difference for Deleuze is generative of representation so as to be more than representative. Taking up transcendental empiricism, theorising that which is productive of the empirical, Deleuze foregrounds conditions for becoming. Even if we reject his genetic (generative) understanding of difference, we must accept that there are conditions by which things are given. In so far as there are conditions productive of form, from a transcendental-empirical perspective, these conditions are irreducible to form. With his critique of representation Deleuze finds the categories Kant considers conditions for experience are not conditioning so much as they are experiential. Following Maimon, Deleuze sees that Kant conflates experience with conditions for it.

Mounting a critique of hylomorphism, Simondon attends to conditions productive of form. As he sees it, matter and form (or content and form) do not simply ‘meet’. Instead, they are both results of individuation. Hylomorphism obscures the ‘middle’ by which things become. This middle is the very ‘ground’, we might say, of individuation. Where there is form, there are conditions of formation irreducible to form. Pursuing formation in terms of individuation, Simondon finds that the conditions by which the individual (person) engages with the social are irreducible to what they produce. This means that, in terms of individuation, the individual (person) is more than individual. The individual is *transindividual*. It is via individuation and transindividuation that the individual is immanent with the social—and it is on account of individuation that the psychosomatic is always-already *psychosocial*. Encompassing the individual and the social, for Simondon, individuation is that by which the given is given.

The study has argued that looking to conditions for beings, we encounter what beings can do and what they may become. Bringing transcendental empiricism into relation with disability, disability research and the field of Disability Studies, I have attempted to articulate their becoming. The Deleuzo-Simondonian framework this study presents foregrounds conditions for disability and experience. If disability research is to attend to conditions of disablement, it must do so with a view to conditions for experience. From a transcendental-empirical

perspective, experience is irreducible to form. Where we encounter form, we must look to conditions for form. Where we encounter forms of experience, we should look to conditions for experience.

Foregrounding these conditions as Deleuze and Simondon understand them, the study gestures to the becoming of form. As for what forms disability should assume—for the time being, I leave the question open. This study articulates conditions for form (and representation). It makes the case that in so far as disability is representational, in terms of conditions for representation, it is in excess of representation. I have brought this argument into relation with Deleuze and Guattari's notion of desiring-production to substantiate my own desire for a critical approach to representation of disability. Doing so, I do not seek to render disability non-representational (as if this were possible). My intention has been to underscore conditions for representation in relation to disability, disability research, and the field of Disability Studies. While the study problematises 'social-model' conceptions of disability, while it shows how established 'social-model' and 'social-relational' conceptions can obscure the imbrication of the social and the somatic, it does not set out (in a fully determined sense) a new methodology for research. Making an approach to representation, foregrounding conditions for representation, the study gestures to the becoming of disability and disability research, but it does not determine *exactly* how disability should be responded to. It does not place strong emphasis on the practical application of the concepts it works to clarify. I see this as a task for further research. The object of this study has been to clarify conditions for such research. Theorising the affective becoming of the field of Disability Studies, the study foregrounds affective dimensions of disability and disability research in relation with desiring-production, but it does not make a case for what people with disability (and their affiliates) ought to desire. It shows that in so far as people are desiring, and in so far as they have affective capacities, there is an affective becoming of research, and an affective becoming of the field of Disability Studies.

Rather than attending (in a strong sense) to the practical application of Deleuzian and Simondonian concepts, the study brings them into relation with disability and disability research to facilitate their further application. While there are fruitful applications of Deleuzian concepts to disability research (showing for example how research may be taken up in 'rhizomatic' terms, and in terms of 'assemblage' [see Chapter 2]), the study foregrounds the metaphysical and transcendental dimensions of Deleuzian and Simondonian thought. I put it

that if we are to apply concepts in ways that change experience, we must look to conditions for experience.

In so far as experience becomes, it is in excess of form. As we saw in Chapter 7, for Foucault, power is productive of discourse. In so far as it is productive, power is in excess of established discourse, encompassing *resistance* to discourse. Where there is power (everywhere), there are force relations. In so far as these relations are in excess of what they constitute, they are *transindividual*. From this perspective, where we encounter the social, we encounter change. There is a becoming of the social, the conditions of which must be examined. These conditions are not separate from what they engender, rather, they encompass the individual and the social. In this way the individual is *immanent* with the social. Attending to conditions for experience as Deleuze, Simondon and Foucault understand them, we see that the individual (person) is not contiguous with the social. As Simondon sees it, individuation is in excess of the individual. In this way the individual is *transindividual*—becoming *with* the social. From a Simondonian perspective, where there is impairment, it is always-already social. Just as individuation is in excess of the individual, it is in excess of the impairment/disability distinction associated with social conceptions of disability.

With Simondon's notion of the transindividual I mean to foreground the social dimensions of the body and the *affective* dimensions of social and political action. Following Foucault, it is my contention that discourse is as affective (force-related) as it is ideological. My position is that discourse *works* on the body and the mind. In this way knowledge is force related. For Simondon, the mind and body are extreme terms of an individuating relation. He sees that, "the substantialized terms of soul and body [or mind and body] can be nothing but artifacts that stem from [the] effort to know the being by way of [the hylomorphic] schema" (*ILNFI* 351). Relying on the distinction between mind and body, we neglect the middle by which they become. From the point of view of individuation, the mind and body are effects of generative processes. They are not simply forms to be assumed, they are, rather, effects of individuation. More often than not, we do not experience the mind *and* the body. More often than not, experience is irreducible to the mind/body distinction. Even when the body contradicts or counteracts the mind, and even when this situation is reversed (the mind counteracting the body), there is a *psychosomatic* relation that makes this possible. As we saw in Chapter 2, for Merleau-Ponty there are conditions on which the mind/body distinction depends. Simondon pursues these conditions in terms of individuation, positing individuation *before* and *after* the individual. Contrary to traditional phenomenology (or what they understand by it), Simondon

and Deleuze find that the ego (Self or 'I') is not a unity so much as it is an effect of processes irreducible to unity. In so far as there are beings, there are processes by which they become. These processes are in excess of form. In Chapter 5 we saw that, for Spinoza, Being (God *or* Nature) is in excess of beings. As he sees it, to understand what we are capable of, we must look to conditions by which we are engendered. As we saw in Chapter 7, this is also the case for Nietzsche. While Nietzsche rejects Spinoza's privileging of reason and the God he associates with it, there are for Nietzsche force relations by which we become. Understanding the force relations we embody, we are poised to assess what we may become.

In chapter 6 we saw that, following Spinoza, Deleuze and Guattari find that desire has genetic (generative) and *affirmative* capacities. Just as Nietzsche sees that we *are* relations of force, Spinoza sees that we *are* desire. Along these lines, in so far as desire is productive, it is irreducible to lack. From a 'schizoanalytic' perspective, we attend to conditions of desiring and what desire produces. For Deleuze and Guattari, desire is productive of the social and cultural dimensions with which we are immanent. In this way libidinal economy is immanent with political economy so that the personal is political. Pursuing desire along transindividual lines, social and political action is as personal as it is public. We can put it that the changes we pursue in terms of social and political action begin with the forces we embody. Even when we are not politically active, the forces we embody bear on politics. This is what it means to say that bodies are always-already social—that impairment is always-already social.

What I mean to foreground here are the affective (force-related and change-making) dimensions of social and political action and disability research. It is my contention that disability research has affective (change-making) capacities that bear on bodies. We should be sensitive to the power of disability to affect (change) people with disability. As I see it, disability research can have negative effects and is in this way *negatively affective*.

If we do not attend to conditions for experience and emerging conditions of disablement—if we insist, for example, on a necessary relation between disability and oppression, we run the risk of compounding this relation. If we insist on a binary relation of 'abled' and 'disabled', and "internalised ableism" (Campbell 2009: 121 [see Chapter 3]), we obscure conditions of disability experience. While disability research must attend to oppression where and when it exists, it must have means of opposing oppression that bring into relief conditions for experience in relation with disability. From a Foucauldian perspective, where there is discourse, there is resistance to discourse. The power productive of discourse is the same power by which there is resistance to discourse. For Deleuze and Guattari there are minoritarian

resistances that contest the uniformity or universality of dominant discourses. In so far as there is resistance to discourse, there is becoming of experience.

With transcendental empiricism we attend to conditions for experience, bringing them into relation with what is experienced. How we understand experience bears on what sort of experience can be had. Understanding processes productive of experience, we encounter the becoming of experience and its irreducibility to form. Here I do not submit that experience is without form. Following Simondon, my position is that there are conditions in excess of form by which form is generated. I see that just as there is resistance to discourse, there is resistance to established forms of experience—resistance generative of new forms of experience. We can put it that, when and where there is resistance to disability research—to the theories and forms of research that Disability Studies embodies—there is a becoming of experience. Resistance to established methods of disability research encompasses the becoming of disability research. Critiquing disability research and conditions for it, we address how it can change and to what ends. Turning to my own experiences with disability research, drawing attention to the negative effects it has had on me, I have looked to the affective capacities of research and the affective dimensions of the field of Disability Studies. I do not see that disability research should be abandoned because it can have negative effects. I simply draw attention to its affective capacities. These capacities are not unknown to disability researchers (see for example Goodley 2007; Goodley 2009; Braidotti and Roets 2012), and I see that they encompass the becoming of the field of Disability Studies. The field stands to benefit from clarification of conditions for affect and affective dimensions of research. These conditions are by no means reducible to how Deleuze, Simondon and Foucault understand them. With this study I have endeavoured to show how they understand them, contributing to the becoming of disability research.

With this final chapter I gesture to a methodology for transcendental-empirical disability research and outline a transindividual orientation to social and political action. The chapter shows in a preliminary way how transcendental-empiricism can be practised and how it bears on social and political action. Making a transcendental-empirical approach to disability and the field of Disability Studies, the study attends to conditions for transcendental-empirical disability research—showing what it can address and how. Looking to conditions of transcendental empiricism, this chapter articulates a framework for research practices.

8.1 Transcendental Empiricism and Disability Research

As we saw in Chapter 3, with his concept of generative difference Deleuze posits that diversity is contingent on difference. There is a becoming of diversity that difference *makes*. From a Deleuzian perspective we see that things are diverse according to the diversity that difference *makes*. Deleuze does not simply praise diversity. He finds that difference is the cause of diversity. In so far as intensive distribution (the distribution of intensities) is the cause of diversity, it causes life. Taking up difference in terms of its genetic capacity, I do not seek simply to praise diversity. I do not see that disability is ‘good’ because it is an effect of difference. To praise things according to the difference they make can be dangerous, and neglectful of the difficulties difference can cause. Taking up difference in terms of its genetic capacity, we see that life is diverse—that diversity is the effect of difference. Here we should remain sensitive to effects of difference. From an onto-ethical perspective, determinations of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ can be made with a view to cause and effect. In so far as difference causes, we must attend to what it changes. We must be sensitive to conditions for disability and effects of disablement. Attending to disability from an onto-ethical perspective, we remain sensitive to relations by which it is caused and effects it brings into play.

Instead of simply imposing forms on disability experience (forms that can obscure conditions generative of experience) we should look to emerging events of disability experience and conditions generative of them. Looking at experience in terms of the here and now (and how the here and now is generated), we remain sensitive to emerging conditions of disablement. Empirical disability research (research on conditions of disablement as they appear) stands to benefit from this orientation. Brought into relation with conditions of disablement, *transcendental* empiricism shows that experience is the effect of changing (individuating and different/ciating) conditions. For Deleuze and Simondon these conditions are productive of categories and forms of experience. While experience can resemble forms and categories, from a transcendental-empirical perspective, it is irreducible to them. Making a transcendental-empirical approach to disability (inclusive of impairment), we remain sensitive to changing conditions of disablement. Attending to conditions for form, we can address how impairment is formed, and how disability (as a social formation of impairment) emerges. I have taken up transcendental empiricism to show that, in terms of conditions generative of it (conditions that subtend the social and the somatic), experience encompasses the social in ways that defy the impairment/disability distinction associated with ‘social’ conceptions of disablement. While applications of Critical Realism to disability research work to foreground the ‘social-relational’

dimensions of disability, I see that they obscure the imbrication of the social and the somatic—reducing the social and the somatic to forms without attending to the generation of form. One could argue that, making a transcendental-empirical approach to disability (and disability experience), I have imposed form on conditions for experience and disability; but transcendental *empiricism* looks (albeit in a speculative fashion) to conditions for experience in terms of emerging *events*. Granted, this is not empiricism as it is commonly understood. The events theorised via transcendental empiricism are not events we can see. Nonetheless, they are events considered conditioning of experience—and there must be conditions for experience.

From a transcendental empirical perspective, the subject remains in formation. The subject is not reducible to *one* form, and subjectivity is considered emergent (see Bignall 2011) Agency is not reducible to established forms but encompasses the becoming of form. Just as experience is the effect of transcendental (conditioning) events, subject formation is the effect of events *here and now*. We can put it that subject formation is just as affective (changing) as experience. If subject formation is understood in terms of events (events this study theorises in terms of force relations, or affect), attention must be paid to events productive and affective (changing) of the subject. Understanding how the subject changes, we can address how subject formation may be optimised. While this study does not focus on what the subject (interpellated through disability research and the field of Disability Studies) ought to become, it foregrounds conditions Deleuze and Simondon (along with Spinoza and Foucault) consider necessary to normative valuations. Bringing onto-ethics into relation with normative ethics (what ought to be done), we see that how subjectivation (the process of subject formation) can be optimised depends on conditions with which the subject is immanent. How the subject should be responded to depends on how it is understood. How it is understood will depend on how and where it is situated.

Rather the focusing on what the subject interpellated through disability research and Disability Studies ought to become, I have focused on conditions for becoming. I am not opposed to normative ethics (after all, this study makes a case for how disability researchers can optimise research), I am simply sensitive to questions of how disability *ought* to be responded to. I see that *ought* is contingent on (or more accurately immanent with) *how*. How we understand disability bears on what ought to be done about it. I also see that questions of what ought to be done about disability (and responses to them) are affective, which means they can have positive and negative (liberatory and oppressive) effects. Theorising the affective

dimensions of subject formation, I have brought them into relation with affective dimensions of research and the affective (force-related) becoming of the field of Disability Studies. Beyond that, I have not made a strong case for what disability ought to mean. Following Deleuze, with this study I attend to *how* it means.

Taking up a transcendental (conditioning) notion of sense, Deleuze sees that sense is conditioning of meaning. Just as difference is irreducible to representation, sense encompasses the becoming of meaning so as to be in excess of it. Where there is meaning, there are conditions for meaning. For Deleuze, sense is that by which meaning is given. If there is a becoming of meaning (and there must be), then as the condition for meaning, sense is irreducible to meaning. It is for Deleuze that by which meaning becomes. He puts it that sense “is always presupposed as soon as *I* begin to speak”. For this reason, he goes on to say, “I would not be able to begin without this presupposition” (*LS* 35, italics in text). In so far as *propositions* convey the meaning of declarative sentences, sense *inheres* in propositions (see *LS* 22). Where there is *denotation* (that to which the proposition refers), *manifestation* (which refers to the speaker of the proposition) and *signification* (referring to relations the other three terms produce), sense is immanent with them and irreducible to them. We can put it that sense *envelops* them so that there is a ‘sense-event’ in excess of them (see Bowden 2011: 27-30).

In so far as sense is in excess of meaning, it encompasses the becoming of meaning and serves as a condition for meaning. In this way sense conditions meaning. Where there is meaning, there is sense by which it is given. Here we can put it that the meaning of disability is always becoming. Just as experience is irreducible to form, disability is irreducible to existing meanings. There is a becoming of experience and disability to which we must remain attentive. Looking to the becoming of disability and experience, we pursue them in an ‘evental’ manner which brings the transcendental into relation with the empirical. Looking to processes by which the given is given, we see that the empirical (what we see, hear and feel) is constituted in terms of events. To conceptualise these processes, we require a ‘superior’ empiricism. From this ‘superior’ perspective, the processes productive of what is empirically verifiable (what can be seen, heard, felt) are events. Taking up transcendental/’superior’ empiricism, we remain sensitive to events conditioning of the empirical, and to events that are empirically verifiable. For Deleuze, whether it be in terms of difference, desire, or sense, there are events ‘all the way down’.

This study argues that, instead of simply imposing forms on experience, we should look to conditions productive of experience. We should attend to the diversity of disability experience

without reducing it to established forms. Empirical research requires that events are not reduced to forms that obscure them. From this perspective I see that disability experience is emergent. While forms are encountered in experience, experience itself remains irreducible to form. With transcendental empiricism we remain sensitive to the becoming of experience and forms it assumes. Following Simondon we see that there is a relation of genesis to form that form itself obscures. Without attending to conditions for form, it looks as if form is simply assumed—that genesis (or becoming) simply conforms to form. Simondon argues that the “Western philosophical tradition [...] has ignored the knowledge of the real individual because it could not grasp the latter in its genesis” (*ILNFI* 87). What philosophy requires, then, are means of addressing the genesis of form. Transcendental empiricism theorises the genesis of form in terms of events. Looking to subject formation from this perspective, we remain sensitive to effects of subjectivation and affects with which it is immanent. We can bring transcendental philosophy, which attends to conditions for experience, into relation with empirical research to locate events of subjectivation and to assess how subject formation and agential relations may be optimised.⁷³

With transcendental empiricism Deleuze turns from the “finite synthetic form of the Person”, to the “infinite analytic being of the individual” (*LS* 121). He theorises conditions productive of the Self and makes the case that these conditions do not resemble what they produce (see *DR* 305). In this way he brings production of the Self—and what is understood by the ‘Self’—into the here and now. Just as there is an ongoing genesis (or becoming) of the Self, there is for Deleuze a genesis of truth. He sees that “truth is a matter of production” (*DR* 201). This does not mean that truth for Deleuze is something we simply ‘make up’. It means that, just as there is genesis of life, there is a becoming of conditions for truth. Attending to conditions for truth, we make an empirical (or ‘evental’) approach to it. Like Foucault, Deleuze sees that truth (what is true) can only be determined in relation with conditions for it. While Foucault attends to spaces (clinics, penitentiaries, asylums) and the truths they produce, in *Difference and Repetition* and *Logic of Sense*, Deleuze attends to the metaphysics of truth and *how* truth comes to mean. As we saw in Chapter 3, for Deleuze, empirical reality exists in relation with virtual coordinates necessary to its becoming. Simplifying greatly we can put it that, in order that there are things, there are conditions for things in excess of them. From this point of view truth remains in process. Attending to the *process* of truth, we remain sensitive to the becoming of truth and conditions for it. This sensitivity has *empirical* dimensions. Analysing truth (and what

⁷³On Deleuze and Guattari in relation to research methodology, see Coleman and Rose (eds.) (2013). On assemblage theory in relation to the health sciences, see Duff (2014).

is true) in relation with the genesis of truth, we remain in the here and now. Bringing this empiricism to disability research, we can assess disability in terms of conditions for it—which would include analysis of subjectivation in relation to disability research and the field of Disability Studies. We can ask, *who* is the subject that disability research addresses, and *what* conditions of subjectivation does disability research rely upon?

Taking difference to be generative of diversity, Deleuze pursues becoming in terms of differential distribution. If difference is ‘that by which the given is given’, then things are given in terms of difference. There are for Deleuze “differential relations between genetic elements” (DR 212). He sees that genesis or (or becoming) is differentially constituted. It is the “synthesis (or coming together) of differential relations” that is “the source of the production of real objects” (230). This is consistent with his conceptualisation of the ‘infinite analytic being of the individual’. Just as there are transcendental (conditioning) singularities necessary to the Self and how we experience it, there are ‘intensive distributions’ (differences of intensity) effective of the elemental world. Deleuze sees that we are “made of contracted water, earth, light and air—not merely prior to the recognition or representation of these, but prior to their being sensed” (96). This means that the elemental world is the effect of contracted (or combined) intensities. While we do not recognise these intensities—while we do not experience differential intensity as such—they are productive of what we experience. Deleuze makes the case that:

Every organism in its receptive and perceptive elements, but also in its viscera, is a sum of contractions, of retentions and expectations. At the level of this primary vital sensibility, the lived present constitutes a past and a future in time. (96-97)

As we saw in Chapter 3, there is for Deleuze a synthesis (or combination) of intensity productive of the Self. The compounding (or contraction) of intensity is essential to experience. Intensity is productive of what we experience, encompassing the past (memory), the present, and their bearing on the future. From a transcendental-empirical perspective, the Self is not an *a priori* unity. It is the effect of intensities and processual genesis. Understanding the genesis of experience in terms of differential intensity (different intensities), we remain sensitive to the diversity of experience. We approach experience empirically, looking to conditions for experience and diversities resulting from them. Bringing this orientation to disability research, our sense of the diversity of disability experience (and conditions productive of it) is heightened. Differential ontology (understanding Being in terms of difference and differential distribution) helps us remain sensitive to difference and what we may consider the becoming

diversity of experience. I consider this orientation essential to empirical research. Rather than simply imposing forms on experience, and rather than taking the subject of disability research (the subject interpellated through disability research) to be simply *given*, we should look to processes of subjectivation and affective capacities of research.

With Deleuze and Simondon we see that the subject (and what Simondon understands by the individual *qua* person) is the effect of processes that are ongoing and eventual. Like Foucault, they see that the subject remains in process. In so far as the subject remains in process, social and political dimensions of life remain in process. These dimensions are affective in so far as they bear on the subject. There is, then, a social and political becoming of the subject. As we have seen, for Simondon, individuation pervades what it produces so that, in terms of how it is produced, the individual (person) is really more than individual. The energies that pervade the individual effect (produce) and affect (change) the social. Looking to conditions productive of the social, we remain sensitive to the becoming of social and political action. We can address how social and political action is produced, and how it is affective. Remaining sensitive to the becoming of the subject and conditions for this becoming, we can address the becoming of the social and the political.

8.2 Transindividual Methodologies

For Simondon it is via individuation that the individual (person) becomes. Individuation pervades the individual so as to encompass (and affect) the social. In this way individuation is *transindividual*. Just as power for Foucault is the outcome of force relations, for Simondon, the social is the outcome of transindividual relations. He sees that “individuation turns the individual into a group individual”. Here the “pre-individual reality that the individual bears [...] *individuates into a collective unit* (ILNFI 9, italics in text). We can put it that there is a group becoming of the individual in excess of representative groups. Conditions of individuation are such that they pervade individuals. In so far as individuation pervades individuals, it is productive of the social. As we saw in the case of Foucault, where there is institutional power (civil authority, etc.), there are force relations by which it is produced. Power in its transcendental (conditioning) capacity is generative of institutional power. Where there are representative groups, there are force relations (from a Foucauldian perspective) and individuations (from a Simondonian perspective).

It is in terms of force relations and individuation that social and political action bears on bodies. When and where groups emerge, they are composed of bodies that Spinoza understands

in terms of modes. As he sees it, not only is the psychosomatic composed of modes, social, cultural and political bodies are modally constituted. For Spinoza, there is an affective (force-related) becoming of things. Jason Read points out that, along Spinozist lines, it is through affects (force relations) that “we can see that the individual, both the individual person and object, cannot be separated from relations with others” (2016: 31). Force relations productive of the individual are in excess of the individual, encompassing social relations with which the individual is immanent. In this way the social has the capacity to change the individual, just as the individual bears the capacity to change the social. For Deleuze and Guattari there are libidinal attributes (drives *as* forces) immanent with social and political action. They see that the political is ‘personal’ in so far as it encompasses the individual (person) and forces (or drives) the individual embodies. From a Simondonian perspective, group dynamics necessary to the psychosocial bring the individual into relation with social and political action. In so far as there is individuation, there is a becoming of the social and the political. This becoming is in excess of representation, which means that, in terms of becoming, the social and the political are in excess of representation.

Deleuze and Guattari pursue this line, positing minoritarian becoming in excess of majority (see Chapter 6). As they see it, ‘majority’ does not refer only to quantity but to representation. For them, representation can obscure the diversity of experience. People with disability will be aware of popular representations of disablement. For example, the so-called ‘super-crip’ image associated with the Paralympic Games, and the technologically modified, transhuman ‘super-hero crip’ associated with science fiction.⁷⁴ On several occasions I have been asked by passers-by if I am “training for the Olympics”. While I encourage people with disability to pursue whatever healthy activities they are inclined to, not all people with disability are interested in athletics (some may even resent the association). In short, representation has both liberatory and oppressive potentials. Disability research can be oppressive (imposing forms on experience that obscure what it is and how it becomes), and liberatory (addressing the diversity of experience in relation with service implementation and policy development). Just as representation can obscure conditions on which it depends, it can obscure the diversity of experience and alienate people. Overturning majority, Deleuze and Guattari foreground diversity and conditions for it. Taking up differential ontology, they see that there is a “becoming-minoritarian of everybody” (*ATP* 123). In so far as we are differentially constituted—that is, in so far as difference make us what we are—there is a becoming of

⁷⁴ On this, see McRuer (2018)

diversity that problematises the status of majority. We can put it that, beneath the edifice of majority there are conditions productive of representation—conditions in excess of representation. Deleuze and Guattari do not seek simply to make difference representational or to celebrate representations of diversity. They mean to show that difference is generative and essential to life. In its genetic (generative) capacity, difference is productive of representation. Productive of representation, difference exceeds what is represented. In this way there is becoming in excess of representation. In so far as we become, what and how we are is irreducible to representation. Deleuze and Guattari do not reject representation—as if all representation is ‘bad’—rather, they attend to the becoming of representation and what exists in excess of it. Theorising the ‘becoming-minoritarian of everybody’, they look to what representation obscures and to how it can be harnessed to address diversity.

With a view to becoming minoritarian, rather than imposing forms on experience, thereby *tracing* form over experience, we *map* experience in terms of *events* and in terms of *becoming* (see *ATP* 12). Taking up schizoanalysis, the analyst remains sensitive to their relation with the analysand, to the forces through which analysis is conducted. From a schizoanalytic perspective, desire is in excess of form. In this way it is irreducible to forms of interpretation applied to it. Unlike psychoanalysis (as Deleuze and Guattari understand it), schizoanalysis does not impose form on desire. Instead, it maps desiring-production, attending to conditions of desiring-production. Mapping desire, it brings agency into relation with the social and political.

The aim of schizoanalysis is not simply to show that libidinal economy is immanent with political economy, social and political action. The aim is to show how agency *affects* (changes) the social and political. Just as transcendental empiricism has ethical dimensions that encompass what beings can do, schizoanalysis tends to agential relations and their becoming. Schizoanalysis does not reduce analysis to established interpretative schemas. Instead, it looks to the becoming of interpretation, bringing the analysand into relation with this becoming. The analysand is not subject to interpretation so much as they are involved in it. Including the analysand in the process of interpretation, schizoanalysis fosters agency, attending to the *becoming* of the analysand. As I see it, if disability research is to have an affirmative impact on people with disability and their affiliates, it must involve them in interpretation. Rather than imposing forms of research, thereby reducing disability to existing conceptions and interpretive schemas, it must bring research into relation with people with disability and their affiliates. Mapping with them instead of tracing over them.

Mapping instead of tracing, we make connections with existing discourses to test their utility. While there are resistances to discourse, resistance can involve the fine-tuning of discourse. We can adapt existing discourse to benefit the practice of research. Here I want to point out that I do not reject the Marxist-materialist approach to disability research associated with the ‘hard’ social model (see Barnes and Oliver 2012). My position is that political economy is immanent with libidinal economy. As I see it, the social and the individual (person) are irreducible to dichotomy. From a *transindividual* perspective, one must attend to complexities of relation between capitalism and disability. I do not see that capitalism is simply oppressive of people with disability. Schizoanalysis shows that desire is immanent with the social in ways that render capitalist production immanent with desiring-production. Even where we are oppressed by capitalist practices, our desires may still be linked to the kinds of consumption associated with them.

Critiquing Critical Realism, I do not overlook its utility. My position is that it is simply not critical enough. Positing a distinction between the somatic and the social, it fails to account for conditions of their imbrication. From a transindividual perspective, there are processes productive of the social that pass through the individual. While Critical Realism may help researchers define terms of analysis, positing a distinction between the body and the social, it obscures their imbrication, reducing them to forms without attending to conditions for form.

Following Deleuze, Simondon and Foucault in critiquing phenomenology, I do not reject phenomenological analysis. From a Deleuzian perspective we can take up what Joe Hughes calls ‘genetic phenomenology’ in pursuit of the ‘genesis of representation’ (see Hughes 2011). Hughes links Deleuze’s approach to the transcendental with Husserl’s transcendental phenomenology. Hughes points out that Deleuze goes further than Husserl, pursuing individual elements (or singularities) by which the given is given. As we have seen (Chapter 3), Deleuze finds that Husserl’s analyses rest with the form of the ego (Self or ‘I’) without attending to the individuating process by which the ego is given. Along these lines, phenomenology (as Deleuze, Simondon and Foucault see it) does not go far enough in accounting for conditions of genesis, resting instead with established forms. While it may be the case that phenomenology does not go far enough in accounting for the transcendental, it articulates experience in ways that foreground immanence. From phenomenological perspectives, the individual (person) is immersed in the world so as to be immanent with it. Phenomenology gives us a sense of the affective (force-related) dimensions of disability. Taking up

phenomenology, we gain an affective (force-related) understanding of the world complementary to the articulation of disability experience.

Critiquing Fiona Kumari Campbell's concept of internalised ableism (see Campbell 2009), I do not reject it out of hand. My position is that we should be wary of imposing ableism on people with disability. I do not see that disability experience is reducible to dichotomy, but I recognise that people with disability can experience dichotomous relations. As I see it, disability is irreducible to binarism. The word 'disability' (dis-ability) has a binary quality, but disability experience is not reducible to binarism. There are many ways of encountering (and having) disability, just as there are many ways of encountering ability. Disability cannot and should not be reduced to so-called 'textual-traces' and binaries that language produces. In so far as language is representational, it can obscure what is in excess of it. Experience is irreducible to binarisms implicit to language. In this way it is irreducible to representation. If we reduce disability to representation (neglecting conditions for representation), we obscure its multivalence and its becoming.

Foregrounding the becoming of disability research and the field of Disability Studies, I see that they are irreducible to any single methodology or interpretive practice. Bringing Deleuze, Simondon and their interlocutors into relation with the field of Disability Studies, I do not seek to make Disability Studies 'Deleuzo-Simondonian'. I do not seek to reduce the field (or the research practices it embodies) to the approach I have made. Looking to the becoming of Disability Studies, I encourage a pluralist approach that encompasses *transindividual* conditions for experience—conditions that representation often obscures. Following this line, I have not brought this study into relation with the edifices of poststructuralism, postmodernism and posthumanism. Instead, I have attempted to articulate the contents of Deleuzian and Simondonian philosophy, which are—as I see it—irreducible to these edifices. Following this line, I do not see that this study belongs necessarily to the domain of so-called 'Critical Disability Studies' (on Critical Disability Studies, see Shildrick 2012; Meekosha and Shuttleworth 2009; see also Chapter 2). While Critical Disability Studies attends to ways language and cultural coordinates bear on disability, I do not see that it has a monopoly on being 'critical'.

Attending to the becoming of disability research and the field of Disability Studies, I have tried (albeit in a preliminary fashion) to bring them into relation with the becoming of experience. There is a becoming of experience that encompasses the becoming of discourse. This does not mean that experience is reducible to discourse. It means there is a becoming of

experience necessary to the becoming of discourse. There are conditions for experience necessary to the development of discourse. These conditions are what make discourse *affective*.

Disability research has force relations. In this way it *is* power. One can contribute to it as much as one may resist it. Looking to the becoming disability research and the field of Disability Studies, I do not see that they are relevant for all people with disability. Perhaps paradoxically, I see value in resisting disability research. In so far as research imposes forms and concepts on disability, it is understandable that people with disability may resist it or simply avoid it. Life for people with disability is irreducible to disability, just as experience of disability is irreducible to forms and concepts. This is precisely what disability research must encompass. If we insist on a necessary relation between disability and oppression, we prepare grounds (as I see it) for negative affect. If we insist on ‘internalised ableism’, we neglect ways people with disability encounter ability and express their own abilities. Disability research exacts an emotional toll. In so far as it is affective (force-related and change-making), there are grounds for resisting it. Resistance to disability research can be as liberatory, I think, as contribution to it. I see that the becoming of disability research must encompass resistance to research. If there is paradox here, it exists only on paper. In life, there are combinations of resistance and submission (and collusion), acceptance and rejection. Remaining sensitive to affect (force relations) we see how resistance and affirmation can combine. Turning to affect, we see that things can be messy and irreducible to the (sometimes, or perhaps all-too-often) ‘clean lines’ of representation.

8.3 Ethics and Representation

As I have tried to make clear throughout this study, critique of representation does not equal rejection of representation. Taking up transcendental empiricism, we look to what makes representation. Doing so, we do not escape representation. Conceptualising conditions for representation, we remain sensitive to the *becoming* of representation, while also attending to the limitations of representation. Critiquing representation, we see what it is to be subject to it. Representation has benefits and detriments, liberatory potential and oppressive effects. Defining disability in terms of oppression can be liberatory and advantageous in exposing (and opposing) effects of impairment. Social model conceptions of disability show that disability is irreducible to impairment and medical discourses that define it. In this way they bring disability out into the world, granting people with disability (and their affiliates) means of opposing social effects of impairment. While social models of disability have liberatory potential, they can also compound disablement. There is of course more than one way of experiencing the social, and

we cannot define social effects in terms of any one discourse or any single means of opposition. To insist on any single approach to disability, and any single means of opposing it, is, I think, disabling itself.

In so far as critique of representation encompasses the becoming of representation, it looks to the ways representations are made. It also looks to what representation can do. Just as affect (force) has liberatory and oppressive effects (sometimes simultaneously), representation can be both availing and inhibitive. An ethical approach to representation looks to its effects *in context*. We can see, for example, how a social model of disability that takes on political economy has been empowering to those emerging from rehabilitative institutions, moving beyond medical discourse. We can also see how this orientation can obscure impairment and occlude the psychosomatic. What matters here is what representation does, and how it works. Just as difference is neither good nor bad in itself, the value of representation is context dependent. In critiquing representation, I do not see that it is simply bad, nor do I hold that it is necessarily good. What matters is what it does.

Remaining sensitive to conditions for representation, we look to effects of representation. With his concept of generative difference, Deleuze encourages sensitivity to the diversity that difference *makes*. In so far as difference is generative of representation, we must remain sensitive to its capacities to occlude and enable diversity. We must look to what it does, and how it works. Generative difference encompasses ethics to the extent that it demands sensitivity to the function of difference and what difference engenders. Like representation, difference is neither good nor bad in itself. Where there is ‘good’ and ‘bad’, there is context. ‘Good’ and ‘bad’ representation can only be determined according to the function of representation. Taking up generative difference along with Simondon’s ideas of individuation and the transindividual, applying them to disability research and the field of Disability Studies, the case can be made that we do not know all of what representation can do.

Looking to conditions for representation, I have rendered representational what is in excess of representation. This is not paradoxical so much as it is unavoidable. The task of transcendental empiricism is to account for conditions for the given. Transcendental empiricism cannot escape representation, but it can help us understand conditions for representation. Conceptualising processes productive of the individual and the social, Simondon looks to the *transindividual*. He sees that individuation emerges from a ‘pre-individual’ potential immanent with individuals. The *becoming* of the social pertains to individuation, which is in excess of the individual. In simpler terms we can put it that the

energies by which we are made pass through us to produce the social. In this way we are ‘always-already’ social, encompassing the becoming of the social. For Deleuze, difference is first and foremost generative in nature. The different intensities we embody affect (change) the world with which we are immanent. In so far as we are desiring, and in so far as desire *makes* change, desiring-production is affective.

Whether or not we accept Simondon’s account of individuation and Deleuze’s generative understanding of difference, we must accept that there are conditions by which the given is given. We must also accept that there are force relations and powers effective of change. Where there is desire, and in so far as we desire, there are conditions for what we desire. Deleuze’s genetic account of difference helps us remain sensitive to differences of affect (force). If difference is that by which the given is given, then everything is diverse. We need not praise difference, but we must remain sensitive to what it makes. This is where empiricism comes into play. From a differential perspective, in so far as everything is diverse, everything is *event*. Our thoughts, motions and emotions are differentially constituted so as to encompass individuation. From a transcendental-empirical perspective, there is a world of difference and individuation with which we are immanent. Everything is intensity so that life becomes by way of different intensities. While the intensities *by* which we think and feel are not representational, they are generative of representation. Pursuing transcendental empiricism, we endeavour to represent the generative—to make sense of conditions for the given. Doing so, we remain sensitive to conditions for representation and effects of representation. In this way we bring critique of representation into relation with ethics.

8.4 Summary

Bringing transcendental empiricism into relation with disability, I have endeavoured to articulate the becoming of representation. Foregrounding becoming, looking to conditions for the given, is good. It helps us understand not only what we are but how we are and what we may become. In so far as disability encompasses becoming, it changes. We should not hold that it is simply reducible to change, but we must accept that it is subject to change. Along these lines, disability research must encompass change, looking to conditions for change. Taking up Deleuze and Simondon, I have brought them into relation with their interlocuters, endeavouring to make sense with their ideas. My hope is that this study has gone some way to bring new meaning (however slight and incremental) to disability, disability research and the field of Disability Studies. I want to live in a world where the becoming of disability is acknowledged. I do not hold that becoming—that change itself—is good. My position is that,

looking to conditions for change, we are poised to assess effects of change. I see that this point of view is good.

Foregrounding force relations by which disability and disability research become, I have conceptualised the *affective becoming* of the field of Disability Studies. Remaining sensitive to affect (force, and the change it makes), we see that disability research can have negative effects so as to be negatively affective. I do not see that disability research is negative in essence. I see that it has positive and negative (liberatory and inhibitive) valences that must be analysed. Concepts and forms associated with disability research may be right for some people (and states of affairs), and not for others. Bringing people with disability and their affiliates into relation with research, mapping with them instead of tracing over them, we remain sensitive to affective (force-related) dimensions of research. Doing so, we bring social and political action into relation with conditions for becoming. From a transindividual perspective, the processes and affects by which we are made pass through us, generating the social. In this way we are not contiguous with the social so much as the social encompasses our becoming.

In terms of the transindividual, disability is irreducible to the psychosomatic, encompassing the *psychosocial*. From this perspective we need not rely on the soma/social distinction (*à la* Critical Realism). We should attend instead to conditions of immanence and imbrication. Doing so, we bring conditions for experience into relation with social and political action. Pursuing the transindividual, we see that there is a psychosomatic becoming of the social and political. Deleuze and Guattari take up this becoming in terms of ‘desiring-production’, bringing political economy into relation with libidinal economy. Like Simondon, they attend to conditions that encompass the social and the individual (person). With their concept of desiring-production they foreground immanent relations of the social and the individual, showing how the personal is political. Taking up schizoanalysis, attending to the becoming of the personal and the political, we see that, in so far as the personal and the political become, they are irreducible to representation. Because they are irreducible to representation, we do not always know what they will become—or by what *assemblages* they will become.

Following Spinoza, Deleuze and Guattari see that the individual (person) exists in immanent relation with the world. Like Simondon, Spinoza holds that conditions for the given are in excess of what they give. For Simondon, individuation is contingent on the ‘pre-individual’, while for Spinoza, affections of Substance (God *or* Nature) are immanent with Substance so as to be produced through it and changed by it. In this way we are not separate from what makes us and what changes us. In so far as we are immanent with change, we are capable of change.

Following Nietzsche, Foucault sees that we *are* force relations effective of change. With his analyses of knowledge formations, he does not seek to reduce us to discourse. He sees that force relations encompass discourse in such a way as to produce resistance to discourse. Like Spinoza (and Nietzsche), Foucault attends to force relations by which we become. In this way his analyses encompass ethics, providing means of assessing what discourse may become.

Closing this section, I want to reiterate that, just as there is more than way of encountering (and having) disability, there is more than one way of researching it, and more than one way of resisting it (when and where it needs to be resisted). It follows from this that resistance to disability is becoming. When and where disability must be resisted, we must attend to conditions for resistance and their becoming. In this way there is a becoming of research, social and political action. Pursuing transcendental empiricism, we look not only to conditions for experience. We look to what experience may become.

8.5 Closing Remarks (Returning to Literary Studies)

I came to the field of Disability Studies looking at autobiography in relation to disability. Via Deleuze, I tried to articulate becoming through self-reflection and the practice of writing about oneself. I saw that self-writing (autobiography) is not simply a means of repeating what one is and what one has done. It is a means, rather, of encompassing and articulating becoming. “Writing”, Deleuze remarks, “is a question of becoming, always incomplete, always in the midst of being formed, and goes beyond the matter of any livable or lived experience” (*ECC* 1). With this study I have taken up becoming, bringing it into relation with disability and disability research. I have tried to show that disability is irreducible to ‘textual traces’, that the very conditions for these ‘traces’ are in excess of them. Taking up transcendental philosophy, it may seem that I have moved away from the discipline of Literary Studies. I consider this move strategic but by no means conclusive. Colleagues and supervisors have asked me why, with this study, I have not pursued literary representations of disability. My first response, hardly enlightening, goes like this: In so far as philosophy is text-based, I have pursued literary analysis. I know this response is unsatisfying for literary scholars (and perhaps for philosophers), but it is satisfying enough to end an informal conversation. My second response speaks to the content of this study—to the becoming of experience and disability.

As I see it, analysing literary representations of disability can foreground ‘textual traces’ in ways that reify representation. I realise I’m painting with a wide brush. Suffice it to say, I am wary of the complementarity of text and representation. It is very easy to reduce experience to

representation *when we read about it*. Taking up textual analysis we are easily seduced (as I see it) by the idea that there is only representation. From this perspective, Zeno's Paradox is the law of the land. As should be clear by now, my position is not that representation is bad, nor do I see that it is inherently good. In so far as it is unavoidable, it simply *is*. There are bad representations, and poor means of representation. This study provides means of accounting for conditions for representation. This way of looking at things is, I believe, applicable to analysis of literature and literary representations. It brings affect (force) into relation with text and shows that there are affective dimensions of textual analysis irreducible to representation.⁷⁵ There is a becoming of interpretation that bears on the production of literature. How we interpret texts, and how we *feel* about them, changes how literature is produced, and to what ends. Just as discourse becomes, language itself remains in a state of becoming. How we use it (and how we are used by it) changes. Along with Foucault, Deleuze and Guattari see that language can contest dominant discourses. There is a becoming of language that encompasses resistance to discourse.⁷⁶

Conceptualising a 'minor' literature, Deleuze sees that the "literature of a minority is not defined by a local language that would be its defining feature, but by a treatment to which it subjects the major language" (*ECC* 55). He looks to uses of literature and how language can change according to who is using it and how it is used. With Guattari he made a study of Kafka's oeuvre. A "Czechoslovakian Jew writing in German" (*ATP* 120), Kafka's use of German (so Deleuze and Guattari argue) modifies that language. There is a 'becoming-Czech' and a 'becoming-Kafka' brought to bear on German. Kafka adapts German, bringing it into relation with his ethnicity and ideas uniquely his own. Via Kafka, Deleuze and Guattari make the case that a "minor literature doesn't come from a [statistically] minor language; it is rather that which a minority constructs within a major language" (*K* 16). Moving against the grain of Kafka criticism, Deleuze and Guattari find that his work is more than an expression of personal crisis. It is an exploration of desire and an event of desiring-production. "Kafka", so they claim, "opens up a field of immanence [that functions] as a dismantling, an analysis, a prognostics of social forces and currents" (*K* 55). Kafka's work encompasses social forces, articulating their becoming. In so far as it encompasses the becoming of forces, his work comprises a 'minor literature' that involves a 'minor' use of language. As we have seen, for Deleuze and Guattari there is a 'becoming-minor of everybody' that encompasses change. Everybody is 'minor' in so far as they bear capacities for change, and in so far as they are subject to change. Writing

⁷⁵ On the limits of critique and uses of literature, see Felski (2015).

⁷⁶ See the 'Postulates of Linguistics' chapter in *ATP*.

and literature are 'minor' when they make novel use of language (even standard English) to articulate becoming.

Foregrounding conditions for change, taking up transcendental empiricism to articulate them, this study looks to the becoming of disability, disability research, and the field of Disability Studies. The conditions it theorises are by no means exclusive to disability or disability research and may be pursued with a view to literary criticism and the production of literature. In so far as there is a becoming of literature (and a becoming of criticism), there are conditions for literary representation irreducible to text. Taking up Deleuze's understanding of 'minor literature', we remain sensitive to the becoming of language and becoming uses of language. So-called 'minor' uses of language work to articulate becoming, yet they cannot fully encapsulate becoming. There is always becoming in excess of language (and representation) that writing can only gesture toward. If there is a minor literature, looking to conditions for becoming, this study belongs to it.

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