STUCKEDNESS

On the Organizational Art of Forbearance

By

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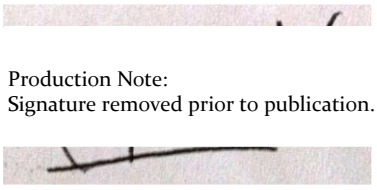
CERTIFICATE OF ORIGINAL AUTHORSHIP

I certify that the work in this thesis has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree except as fully acknowledged within the text.

I also certify that the thesis has been written by me. Any help that I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself has been acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

Signature of Student: 

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If I have forgotten to mention your kindness, please forgive me. I hope you enjoy what follows and thank you for journeying with me. Any errors you come across however, are of course, mine alone.

Kalpana Vignehsa
Sydney, July 2014

In Memory of my Father, Vignehsa Ponnampalam

~ 10 years of loving, 20 years of missing, 30 years and growing ~

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS & ACRONYMS

CEO – Chief Executive Officer

CTO – Chief Technology Officer

DOG – Department of Goldfish

GridLock – Energy company that won tender to run trial for Australian Government

ICT – Information & Communication Technology

IntelliTech – Unit set up by GridLock and the Australian Government to implement the trial

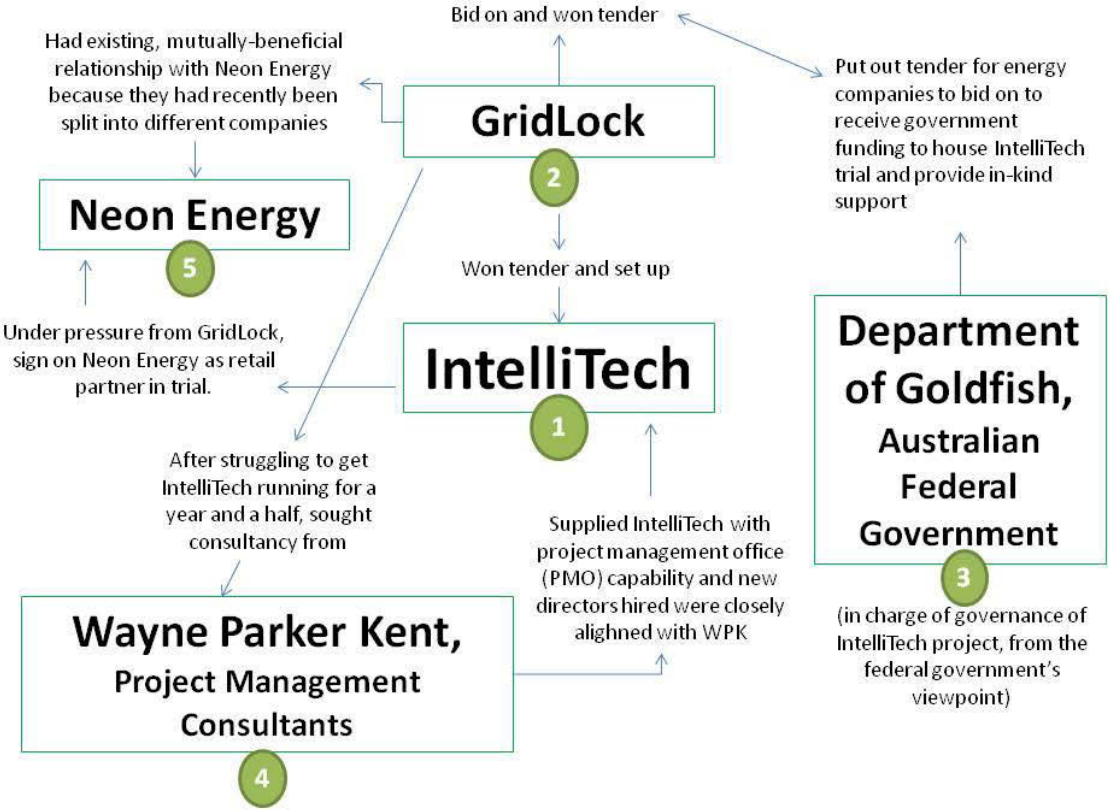
PM – Project Manager

SLM – Stream Lead Meeting

WBS – Work Breakdown Structure

WPK – Wayne Parker Kent

Diagram of Agencies in the Field



LIST OF ACTORS-IN-AGENCIES IN THE FIELD

1 **IntelliTech**	2 **GridLock**	3 **DOG**	4 **WPK**	5 **Neon Energy**
Jackson Hunt (Program Director)	Don Henshall (Chief Executive Officer)	Kent Heller (Senior Bureaucrat)	Henry Loy (Director)	Fred Billing (Head of Neon Energy)
Peter Lewis (Line Manager of IntelliTech, reports to GridLock CTO)	Charles Leidner (Chief Technology Officer and Peter's boss)	Clare Ungerson (Kent's right-hand person)	Steven Naiset (Managing Director)	
Greg Benson (Program Manager)	Toby Shaw (Executive General Manager)	Mike Acker (Graduate role in Kent's team)	Oliver Varsa (Consultant and Head of PMO at IntelliTech)	
Kate Fiske (Admin Support)	Kylie (Communications Specialist)	Bryce Ho (Minister)	Michelle Fischer (Consultant, IntelliTech PMO)	
Sara Evans (Admin Support)	David (Communications Specialist prior to Kylie)		Pradeep Ryan (Consultant, IntelliTech PMO)	
Zilla Hearn (Peter's Personal Assistant)	Gillian Henley (Executive General Manager)			
Adam Green (Program Manager)	Jack Finter (Executive General Manager)			
Paul Elling (Program Manager)	Dennis Pateman (Executive General Manager) →			Connections to Neon
Graeme Whitley (Finance Manager)	Peta Wilson (Executive General Manager) →			
Owen Neil (Program Manager)	Vander Russell (Executive General Manager)			
Malcolm Vinski (Program Manager)	Lawrence Mitchell (ex-Program Manager at IntelliTech)			
Keith Langan (Project Manager, works with Adam)	Damian Pleck (GridLock Engineer and PhD Student)			
	George Ardant (one of 2 full-time GridLock employees (as opposed to contractors) on the IntelliTech project)			
	Rita Langan (Executive General Manager)			

ABSTRACT

Stuckedness can be described as the taken-for-granted advocacy of the continuance with a practice even when such a performance is counter-productive, not fruitful, or non-generative. Indeed, most people will be familiar with experiences of stuckedness as such practices are to be found in acts such as the staunch dismissal of the issue of climate change despite evidence to the contrary, the repeated choice to stay in toxic relationships, the careless pursuit of profit by corporations, the choice to persist with a habit that is likely to result in degenerative disease, etc. It is also likely that most people will at some point become acquainted with feelings of chagrin towards such practices. Yet, the characterization of practices of tacit forbearance as stuckedness remains largely unproblematized and this thesis seeks to understand how and why a social practice reveals itself as stuckedness.

Drawing on the work of Foucault, and then using genealogical and ethnographic methods, namely the techniques of action nets, a reporting style, and problematized confessional tales, I excavate how and why certain elements come together to be problematized by my respondents in those terms which had become for me an index of stuckedness.

This research draws on data from the specific spatio-temporal field of a costly government-funded innovation trial within the energy sector, operating within a continuously complex environment. Focusing on expressions of taken-for-granted advocacy of recursive self-control or unchanging replication, I make connections between different observable elements (power/knowledge relations, historical and cultural conditions, human and non-human agencies, and the practices under scrutiny) to detail and problematize the justification and utility on which the endurance of practices of stuckedness depends.

PART I:

INTRODUCING STUCKEDNESS

Loyalty to a petrified opinion never yet broke a chain or freed a human soul.

Mark Twain

INTRODUCTION

March 2014, final entry into research journal:

It was a clear night in October 2010, the first Andrew Vincent Memorial Lecture. I had to go despite the crazy coursework schedule we have at the moment. Andrew was the academic who most inspired me to consider doing research and he was a great honours supervisor and a fountain of interesting anecdotes from his time as a PhD student in Lebanon. I went, feeling sombre, reminiscing, but also looking forward to seeing my friends from my honours cohort and other Politics classes. However, when I was there, something with altogether more gravitas happened. The keynote speaker, Professor Ghassan Hage, whose work I had read widely for my Anthropology major, spoke about something he called 'Stuckedness'. He described it in terms of his work on racism – this idea that there is a phenomenon where one is resolute to stick with a particular way of doing and being, no matter the cost, a sort of advocacy for a stuck course of action. As Hage spoke, his prose eloquent and engaging, I remember furiously scribbling in my pocket-sized, spiral notebook, dog-eared from a year of hand-bag dwelling and burdened with the hope that one day soon I would find or hear something that I felt compelled to research for my PhD. Hage was talking about a phenomenon that I knew I had experienced and was experiencing in organizations. Indeed, examples were jumping out at me. A simple one: the overwhelming sense that administrative paperwork distracts from the tasks that comprise one's actual role. Or the more complex: at English-medium universities, there are ever increasing numbers of international students whose level of English is not sufficient to pass courses they enrol in, but they continue to be enrolled in such courses with lecturers and tutors told to find ways of helping them pass the subjects. And the big one that I remember looming large as I listened: why is it that women are still so poorly represented in the political and economic domain? It is an interesting side note that as I write this reflection, there are two cases of corruption in the Australian media (AWH and HSU) involving the severe misuse of public funds. Despite their receiving threats for doing so, women first initiated investigations of these cases when they took over the leadership. I walked out of the memorial lecture determined to try and understand stuckedness better, with the conviction that it was a phenomenon I wanted to study churning in me. I didn't realize that it would be the night that tied my academic past and future together in an obvious way.

It makes sense that one should not keep doing the same thing and expect different results. Yet, as I ruminated on this point, it was clear to me that most of us are surrounded by, as well as engaged in, practices that appear irrational but that are adopted, sustained and difficult to shift. Stuckedness is a novel concept that speaks to these curiosities. First introduced into academic scholarship by Ghassan Hage (2009), stuckedness is illustrated in two ways:

(1) As a sense of existential immobility, which is premised against an imaginary mobility, where a sense of 'going somewhere' is a prerequisite for a viable life.

(2) As a form of governmentality that valorises self-control in times of prolonged crisis.

Put simply, this refers to stuckedness being a phenomenon of sticking with a dysfunctional practice despite being aware of doing so. Hage (2009) explains this state of being as one that exists in contradiction to a sense that one is 'moving well'. He attributes stuckedness to a type of self-surveillance in situations where a sense of crisis is pervasive. However, there are several ways in which the concept of stuckedness—an advocacy of enduring (prolonging?) troublesome situations—is underdeveloped. In his chapter, Hage (2009) seemed to be retrospectively applying his conceptualization to empirical work that had been done previously. In itself, this is not problematic, but Hage's chapter does not sufficiently elucidate the theoretical bases it employs. In terms of Hage's (2009) first premise, it is not clear how stuckedness, or a sense of existential immobility, is premised on an imaginary mobility, a sense of moving well. The second premise is also vague because Hage does not explain how he interprets the concept of governmentality, such that the reader can follow how and why his empirical examples demonstrate practices of stuckedness. Without this specificity, the notion that stuckedness is a phenomenon experienced in tandem with a sense of pervasive crisis can only be read as an assumption on Hage's part. Nevertheless, it is an assumption reinforced by his previous empirical work. Hence, I realised that my understanding of the theoretical basis for the concept needed to be developed further. Only then, would it be possible to apply *stuckedness* to an empirical case. Thus, drawing

upon Hage's illustration, this thesis proceeds to ground the concept of stuckedness theoretically such that it can be understood better and applied empirically. My aim is to extrapolate, in a theoretically grounded way, insights about stuckedness as a concept, as well as, how and why participants make sense of the experience of stuckedness.

THE LITERATURE ON 'BEING STUCK'

Before I delved into Hage's (2009) illustrations, it was important to see how else stuckedness may have been characterised. To be or get 'stuck' is defined as being fixed in a particular, perhaps static position, unable to move or be moved, and unable to progress with a task or find the answer or solution to something (Oxford Dictionaries 2014b). It is typically perceived as being tedious or unpleasant, denoting being at a loss, in need of, unable to be rid of, or escape from something. Similarly, to 'stick it out' indicates putting up with or persevering with something difficult or disagreeable. Seen along this continuum of being 'stuck', stuckedness represents more than just being fixed or persevering despite difficulty. It signifies an advocacy for 'sticking it out', even if 'it' is non-generative or counter-productive. Despite its obvious link with managing change, which is both an academic juggernaut as well as a corporate departmental institution, stuckedness has been only sparsely explored academically. Often research on this topic is instrumental, treating being stuck simply as the precursor or signal to change. A thorough perusal of a breadth of scholarly literature reveals just four conceptual renditions on notions relating to 'being stuck'[1].

First, there is scholarship that focuses on stuck routines as anathema to strategic change (Clief 1994). The essence of this thinking is that the solution to 'unsticking' routines is rooted in challenging the taken-for-granted assumptions that underpin

[1] As an aside, the notion of being stuck has been appropriated in creative ways as well. One such example is 'Stuckism' (1999), a radical and controversial art group that was co-founded in 1999 by Charles Thomson and Billy Childish (who left in 2001) along with eleven other artists. The name was derived by Thomson from an insult to Childish from his ex-girlfriend, who had told him that his art was 'Stuck'. Stuckists are pro-contemporary figurative painting with ideas and anti-conceptual art, mainly because of its lack of concepts. Stuckists have regularly demonstrated dressed as clowns against the Turner Prize. Several Stuckist Manifestos have been issued. One of them *Remodernism* inaugurates a renewal of spiritual values for art, culture and society to replace the emptiness of current Postmodernism. The web site www.stuckism.com has disseminated these ideas, and Stuckism has grown to an international art movement with over eighty groups round the world.

routines. While this instrumental conceptualization lacks a theoretical base, the idea that the key to understanding stuck routines lies in the questioning of 'taken-for-granted' assumptions is something that is present in both in gestalt theory and, especially, in governmentality (Foucault 1991a), which are the key theoretical elements of the other conceptual illustrations of 'being stuck'.

A second stream of inquiry theorises the relationship between a linear, chronological perception of time and the 'feeling of being stuck' (Slife 1994). Here, the idea is that if we can see time as a gestalt, we will be liberated to see that cause and effect are not sequential but, rather, have at least some simultaneous elements. Change therefore, can be instantaneous and 'the feeling of being stuck' is revealed as being rooted in a conception of causality bound within the linear time dimensions of past, present, or future, which need not apply. The feeling of being stuck can be changed through changing one's perception of time (Slife 1994). Where this second reading falls short is in terms of its explanatory value because it attributes 'the feeling of being stuck' almost entirely to the individual's adherence to a linear time perspective. In this manner, the second conceptualization is unable to explain the stuckedness of social practices, where many human and non-human elements intersect, thus requiring a theoretical foundation that does not assume stuckedness is simply a mental activity.

A third approach is the notion of applying gestalt therapy[2] to organizations to identify different ways in which they get stuck. Here, the authors provide taxonomic treatment of five different routes to organizational 'stuckness', where organizations are treated as organisms within an environment (Critchley & Casey 1989). The gestalt framework was intended for application to the conscious and unconscious levels of human beings (Critchley & Casey 1989). It builds on scholarship within psychotherapy and family therapy that hold that individuals and families get stuck because an impasse develops between a conscious desire for change and an unconscious desire to avoid change. Fisch, Watzlawick, and Weakland (1974) explain how, in these circumstances, some attempts to change

[2] Gestalt therapy is an existential/experiential form of psychotherapy that emphasizes personal responsibility, and that focuses upon the individual's experience in the present moment, the therapist-client relationship, the environmental and social contexts of a person's life, and the self-regulating adjustments people make as a result of their overall situation.

can actually make things more rigidly fixed. Critchley and Casey (1989: 01) follow Fisch et al. (1974) in defining stuckness as "a person, a family, or a wider social system enmeshed in a problem in a persistent and repetitive way, despite desire and effort to alter the situation". While this third conceptualization of 'stuckness' is the closest in characterization to Hage's (2009) *stuckedness*, it is also problematic. Without understating the practical experience upon which Critchley and Casey (1989) build their case, both Fisch et al. (1974) and Critchley and Casey (1989) are unable to account for the materiality and the micro-processes of the practices that make up their various types of stuck organizations.

Finally, there is Hage's (2009) emergent conceptualization of stuckedness as a sense of existential immobility, which is premised against an imaginary mobility, and as a form of governmentality in the face of a sense of pervasive crisis. Although only briefly developed, through the use of Foucault's (1998) governmentality, Hage's concept retains the ability to be extended. Governmentality also provides a theoretical base that is able to incorporate the workable elements of the other conceptualizations, such as the taken-for-grantedness of stuck practices, its temporal flexibility, and the unconscious desire to avoid change. On a separate but seemingly related note, the literature on inertia in organizations also has different concerns. Hannan and Freeman (1984: 153) argued that structural inertia varies with organizational age and size. Old organizations have had time to formalize relationships and standardize routines and structural stability increases with age. Large organizations are more likely to emphasise predictability, formalized roles, and control systems thus making behaviour becomes predictable, rigid, and inflexible. As highlighted above, while the concept of inertia seemed related to stuckedness, existing literature had an instrumental bias. For these reasons, I pressed on with my aim of negotiating a coherent and theoretically reinforced conceptualization of stuckedness to then apply in an empirical setting.

Navigating this Tale of Stuckedness

This thesis has four parts that follow a coherent plan indicated by the part nomenclature:

PART II – PROBLEMATIZING STUCKEDNESS

In Chapters 2 and 3 I focus on examining and problematizing Hage's (2009) illustration of stuckedness. I will establish the ways in which Hage's budding conceptualization will be used and build my own problematization of what I view as stuckedness.

In Chapter 2, I work backwards from Hage's chapter and put his conceptualization of stuckedness under the microscope. To start, I examine the historical trajectory of the meaning Hage has attributed to 'waiting out' or weathering a crisis situation where the self feels existentially immobile. In providing an account of the origins of Hage's depictions, an explicit account is offered of what Hage is trying to encapsulate with the concept of stuckedness. The second and third sections are devoted to each of his two primary explanations for why and how stuckedness is problematized as the practice of persisting with a particular process even if it is no longer fruitful. The rest of this chapter is divided as per these representations and I examine scholarship that is pertinent to the points of view that Hage puts forth, using the discussion to either demonstrate my defence of his ideas, or alternatively, my re-interpretations.

In section two I engage with the first of the two illustrations, which portrays stuckedness as a sense of existential immobility premised on moving well, a sense of 'going somewhere', with this sense of direction and movement being a prerequisite for feeling well. In this vein, I unpack the underlying desire for moving well through an analysis of social reactions to immobilization. The discussion is primarily concerned with unfurling the in-one-another-ness that connects feelings of mobility and wellness to all the other senses we experience and interpret, particularly the seemingly opposing feelings of stuckedness. The third section of this chapter addresses Hage's second depiction of stuckedness as a form of governmentality (Foucault) that valorises self-control in times of pervasive crisis. I uncover what it means for stuckedness to be a form of governmentality through an in-depth excavation of the concept of governmentality, emphasising its central role in Foucault's shifting analytics of power.

At the end of Chapter 2, stuckedness is problematized as a governmental technology that flourishes when and where a sense of crisis exists, which may be defined as the espousal of persisting with a practice that is non-generative. It combines awareness of the dysfunctionality of practises together with their ongoing repetition. As a self-reproducing practice, stuckedness has an element of taken-for-grantedness that is necessary for its survival. Practices characterized by stuckedness are part of a provisional and versatile melange of multiple governmentalities, meaning that they are not a static technology but instead are dynamic, living, unfolding and evolving. One of the key characterizations of this dynamism comes in the form of viewing stuckedness as one of many phenomena occurring on a 'plane of immanence'. That is, at any point that we problematize certain practices as those of stuckedness, there is a corresponding problematization of practices of moving well, of progressing.

Chapter 3 engages in a comprehensive discussion of the hallmarks Foucault and his commentators have highlighted as crucial to the analysis of governmentality. Thus begins the process of distilling the theoretical tools with which to ground an empirical study of stuckedness. First, I address the notion that any particular person or group cannot possess power; instead, power relations comprise a plurality of conflicting strategies (technologies), structuring the "field of possible action" (Foucault 1982: 221). I also explore how a pervasive sense of crisis may be translated in an organizational setting, where this research was based. Second, I consider what viewing governmentality as a rational technology devoid of morality means in terms of creating an analytics of governmentality. The hallmarks of rationality discussed are Foucault's notion of 'problematization' and the continuous production of knowledge (politics of truth). Last, I address the political investment of the body within governmental technologies, discussing the ideas behind Foucault's (1991a) evocation of a possible "end of politics". Cumulatively, these excavations of what it means to scrutinise a form of governmentality suggest that the most appropriate way to research stuckedness in a theoretically grounded fashion would be further to understand Foucault's analytics around the time he introduced the concept of governmentality. This is the aim of Chapter 4.

Chapter 4 examines certain important but previously unaddressed (or marginally addressed) ideas that Foucault started developing in his early work but continued to use well into his later years, when the notion of governmentality was featured. Hence, this chapter provides a nuanced view of and clearly delineates the theoretical basis for this research. In this manner, this chapter also makes a specific contribution to understanding the wider expanse of Foucault's contribution to non-dualistic analytics. First, I address Foucault's shifting conception of discourse as he made the epistemological journey from archaeologies to genealogies. Second, I consider the underlying themes most apparent (that have not already been examined in Chapters 2 and 3) within his genealogical focus on concrete practices. Specifically, these are the concepts of materiality, *pouvoir/savoir* (power/knowledge), and the idea of the 'subject'.

Materiality depicts the illustration of the social and material worlds as one, where both dimensions are thoroughly and irreversibly intertwined. As an aspect of practice the concept reminds us that all practice is situated amongst people and things. I then demonstrate how Foucault's appeal to images of war and conflict are related to his objections to political and epistemic sovereignty, which he moves beyond by investing a provisional, versatile nature in his concept of *pouvoir/savoir*. In this thesis, power is conceptualised as relational; it is seen as diffused through complex and varied social networks and marked by continuous tussles due to the ongoing attempts to (re)produce certain social alignments, as well as by creating other alignments to circumvent or diminish their effects. As part of the same combined construct of *pouvoir/savoir* in this chapter I also address the dynamism of Foucault's conception of s*avoir* (knowledge).

Savoir articulates the ways statements, modes of reasoning, and various bodily activities, material arrangements, and institutional configurations can align in a field to enable distinctive patterns of intelligibility. Lastly, Foucault's idea of the 'subject' is a concept that divests the individual of privileged epistemological status, enabling the view that he/she is a product of the social relationships between power/knowledge and other elements such as power relations, sexuality, people, things, etc. Consequently, the questions he posed and the concepts he introduced were not based on common sociological categories such as individual,

groups, or organizations. To do this would be to undermine the dynamic nature of the ways in which various elements come together to form a problematization of a phenomenon. Based on this last point I argue that the empirical study of stuckedness needs to focus on practices (not the 'level' of the individual, group, or organization). My intent is simply to understand how the problematization of stuckedness emerges, in the particular field of IntelliTech, through the practices that are enacted.

I explain how, through the theory of governmentality, Foucault brings together these concepts of materiality, power relations, fields of *savoir* and the self. I also highlight how the theoretical device of immanence is a consistent theme underscoring all of Foucault's analytics. As a governmental technology, *stuckedness* therefore must be conceived materially, as an embodied practice, situated within a specific locale, with a particular positioning. It unfolds in relation to the positioning of other material elements such as power/knowledge relations and how it contributes (and is contributed to) within a network of micro-practices (discursive field) has implications for its continuance and countenance.

Part III – Reflections on a Performance

Chapter 5 explains the methodological approach taken in this thesis. In ethnographies, what the processes observed might reveal is often buried in the logical classification of patterned activity thus limiting our ability to understand and present project processes as always already contextualised and ongoing. This chapter encapsulates my translation of Foucault's work to stimulate the process-thinking capacity inherent within the established research methodology of ethnography. Overarchingly, the main points of contention between genealogy and ethnography concern the specific impetus to strive for either explicitly representational or non-representational writing. Related questions of involvement versus distance during the fieldwork process, what it means to enact a discomforting reflexivity, and how the performance of integrating analyses can reveal otherwise unseen insights, are closely related.

The question of the most coherent methodological approach to translate these theoretical questions is addressed through a triad of techniques: presenting the data in a combination of *action nets* conveyed in a *reporting style* and by *problematizing* what van Maanen (1988) termed *confessional tales*. I also describe how I gained access and navigated my research site, where I spent six months conducting fieldwork. My specific spatio-temporal field was that of IntelliTech, a costly (>500 million dollar) government-funded innovation trial within the energy sector, operating within a project environment that was continuously complex. Finally, the chapter ties the theoretical and practical together with a discussion of: (1) the actual tools employed to gather stories, as well as relational patterns, (2) how the genealogically important but curiously silenced textual element of ethnographical work can be unpacked and (3), explains certain important ethical issues necessarily faced.

PART IV – REPORTAGE & ANALYSIS

Chapters 6, 7, 8, and 9 are empirical chapters. Chapter 6 is an intermission chapter where I introduce how, in coherence with the approach outlined in Chapter 5, data will be presented. As per the problematization of viewing stuckedness as one of many phenomena occurring on a 'plane of immanence', when certain practices are characterised in terms of the concept, there is a corresponding problematization of practices of moving well, of progressing. What I noticed was that the phenomena I characterized as stuckedness were mostly discussed in terms of practices that represented an expansion or contraction of stuckedness. An expansion tended to be seen as a bad thing, and a contraction, a sign of progress. Although this canonical problematization of good vs. bad is not part of my expansion of Hage's concept, it reflects my problematization of practices of stuckedness being immanent to practices of moving well. To represent this, I have divided the empirical section of this thesis into one chapter (7) that uses the problematization of practices of stuckedness as they wax as its starting point, another (8) that uses the problematization of practices of stuckedness as they wane as its genesis, and a third chapter (9), which covers in more detail certain entrenched contexts that are relevant to the IntelliTech research site.

Pursuant to my focus on naturally occurring data, I chose to use two sets of meetings, to which I had consistent access and observed over the six-month period of my fieldwork. I used the data collected from these meetings as starting points for the description of action nets as these were two sets of institutional performances that participants consistently problematized as either, an example of increasing stuckedness, or, of contracting stuckedness. The meetings between IntelliTech and DOG (henceforth referred to as DOG Meetings) and the ones that took place between the IntelliTech Program Managers (called Stream Delivery Meetings or SLMs) were thus selected over others and chapters 7 and 8 respectively are written in terms of my observation of these meetings.

In Chapter 7, I start with some background notes on the IntelliTech project. As per the methodological approach outlined in Chapter 5, Chapter 7 is largely devoted to a reporting-style description of the DOG meetings that I observed over my six months in the field. Interposed within this description are key observations about how an expansion of stuckedness is made sense of, namely through (1) the materially available, (2) metaphors and storytelling and (3), the clash of misaligned strategies. It is demonstrated that participants tended to make sense of these practices in terms of 'us vs. them' or, put differently, a 'heroes vs. villains' fashion. In the fourth section, I highlight the additional patterns I observed through these interactions and connect them to other examples not mentioned in the description above. In this way, I problematize the 'why' of these tales, based on the theorization thus far with the aim of understanding what the *data says*, as opposed to merely grasping what the *participants say*. The insight that this chapter highlights is that of the relationship of stuckedness to a mismatch in *savoir*[3].

In Chapter 8, I present the performances problematized as a contraction of stuckedness, which is how participants tended to make sense of the internal dynamics of IntelliTech (not to be confused with GridLock), where they saw themselves as responsible for "making shit happen". Nonetheless, both the tenuous categories of expanding and contracting stuckedness were experienced in opposition to something or someone or a network of people and things. If they

[3] *Savoir* is how Foucault depicted the discursive field of knowledge within which social processes unfold.

had characterised a particular event or routine as a one of diminishing stuckedness, as was the case in the data presented in Chapter 8, it was clear that such a depiction was tangential to other particular habits. We will see that the perception of waning stuckedness by participants is mostly viewed in terms of IntelliTech vs. GridLock, or in some cases, certain individuals vs. GridLock employees, or one professional identity vs. another. As with Chapter 7, there are two parts to this chapter. The first section details two overarching observations about how a wane in stuckedness is made sense of, namely through performances in playing a bridging role and being a passionate project professional. It is clear how certain aspects of the bridging performance, namely that of entrepreneurial passion, positioning-against-the-Other, and facilitating networks, stand out as the dominant ways through which a wane in stuckedness is seen (the how). The second observation examines the key practices comprising passionate project professionalism. Here, the performances that enable the cognisance of the shrinking of stuckedness include the structuring quality of a project-oriented linguistic code, the profitable (both in terms of personal finances and professional/life skills) nature of being project-oriented and the embrace of a new, 'forward-thinking' style of workforce. A discussion problematizing the patterns observed follows.

The main insight offered by the exposition of this chapter is that participants who did not express a 'structurational' view of social unfolding were more likely to feel stuckedness, both in its amplification and diminution. Participants tended to feel they had more agency in the performances described in this chapter, as opposed to seeing that the desire for certain practices was intimately linked to particular subject positions in a given social structure. It follows then, that participants did not see power relationships in a dynamic, circulatory manner. A wane in stuckedness tends to be reified and seen as a stepping-stone of sorts to a further shrinkage of stuckedness, attributed to the heroics of the people involved. Some might see this as change driven by a canonical desire for efficiency and transparency, or an entrepreneurial mindset, or higher profits. Not field actors: being so enmeshed within the recursive cycle of *savoir* that structures the field, including positions on agency and power relationships formed within it, the

reasons why participants characterise certain performances as a contraction or expansion of stuckedness are far more taken for granted, referring to the analysis in Chapters 7 and 8.

In Chapter 9, depth is added to the analytical domain of the IntelliTech trial by elaborating three key contexts (climate change politics, the corporatised public sector and energy reforms within it, as well as the intersection of gendering with other technologies of power/knowledge) that are both institutionalised aspects framing the action nets of which IntelliTech is a part and are seen as embodiments of stuckedness. The primary aim here is to understand how these contexts shape the dynamic *pouvoir*/*savoir* of the field and produce a space-time-specific politics of truth.

I show how denying climate change and dismissing the political manoeuvrings that spawned the trial inspired a deep commitment to a state of being cynical and disillusioned. Self-interest could thus be justified as the driving motivation for conduct at IntelliTech, even when participants expressly conveyed the view that in a public sector organization (a legal-rational bureaucracy) actions should have a broader basis, including the public good and respect for public funds.

The corporatised public sector and the energy reforms that have taken place within it, provide further opportunity to elaborate how self-interest operates within the circulating *pouvoir*/*savoir* relations that permeate the field. I show how justifications for political expedience and a lack of governance are taken-for-granted, without consideration of how these issues cannot occur in isolation.

Finally, my observations on gender establish two outcomes: first, to query one's ability to analyse gendering in the field as an isolated governmental technology of stuckedness and second, to demonstrate how stuckedness of particular conceptions of gendering intersects with particular conceptions of hierarchy. Specifically, this analysis, in concert with data presented in previous chapters, underscores the existence of a seemingly inordinate number of pathways to protect those in hierarchical positions of superiority and, on the other hand, in practice the absence of pathways for complaint from below when it came to issues of workplace misconduct such as harassment, bullying, corruption, misuse of

funds, etc. It is the chapter that most fervently asserts the phronetic worth of this research by showing, how a different problematization of the practices most noticed as stuckedness may expose ways in which we are complicit, and made complicit, in ethically questionable structures.

PART V - DENOUEMENT

Chapter 10 is the summation of this research, including the contributions made and suggestions for future research. Most importantly, this chapter discusses the conceptual insights gleaned about *stuckedness*, as well as extrapolations about the choice (how) and sustenance (why) of practices of dogged replication (stuckedness) over change or termination, and how the conditions supporting these practices grow out of the givens of experience.

The conceptual insight this thesis contributes to stuckedness as a concept is encapsulated as follows:

Stuckedness is a governmental technology that espouses persisting with a practice even when it is non-generative. It combines awareness of the dysfunctionality of practices together with their ongoing repetition. At the same time, the practice of stuckedness is a necessary part of the overall experience of achieving some progress. Stuckedness is self-reproducing and has an element of taken-for-grantedness that is required for its survival. The data demonstrates that a sense of pervasive crisis is not a requirement for practices of stuckedness; however, this does not mean that both stuckedness and a sense of pervasive crisis do not occur in concert.

My second aim was to understand those practices constituting, and constituted by, stuckedness, that is, how and why certain elements came together to be problematized as stuckedness. Of these, there are three related types of practices – inherent, interrelated, and unseen - that were most consistently manifest in the field. Thus, the practices that fall into these categories are amenable to extrapolation, and perhaps represent particular practices of the technique of stuckedness.

The first observed inherent practice was the *expansion/contraction representation*, that is, that stuckedness was mostly discussed as expansion or contraction of the advocacy of being stuck. Second, although participants tended to make sense of increasing stuckedness through an 'us vs. them' perspective, and decreasing

stuckedness through a 'we are the heroes' perspective, this does not detract from stuckedness being known through a *positioning-against-the-other* on both ends of the stuckedness spectrum. Practices of *coping* were the last observed inherent practice of stuckedness. Coping practices were more conspicuous in performances of expanding stuckedness, but they were employed just as often in performances of contracting stuckedness.

The more my analysis breaks down the practices of stuckedness under scrutiny, the easier it is to understand its interrelations with other elements. I identified interrelated practices such as *storytelling* and the *use of metaphors* in the case of waxing stuckedness, and *facilitation*, *professional passion*, a *benefits-for focus*, and an *investment in structure* in the case of waning stuckedness.

Lastly, *mismatched savoir* is one of two unseen practices observed. The data builds to this conclusion because what was seen as normal code of conduct by IntelliTech participants did not match the conduct they witnessed in the leadership at GridLock. This also coheres with the theorization of stuckedness as a governmental technology, underscoring that the way we frame the conduct of others is tied to the way we conduct ourselves and vice versa. The second unseen practice of stuckedness that the data highlights is that of an *anti-structuration-view*. Participants with this view of social unfolding were more likely to feel stuckedness, both in its amplification and diminution. There was a sense that participants had more agency in the performances described as a wane in stuckedness. A wane in stuckedness is thus reified and seen as a stepping-stone of sorts to a further shrinkage of stuckedness, attributed to the heroics of the people involved. Some would call this change, driven by a canonical desire for efficiency and transparency, or an entrepreneurial mindset, or higher profits. However, being so enmeshed within the recursive cycle of *savoir* that structures the field and positions on agency and power relationships formed within it, the data suggests that the reasons that participants characterise certain performances as a contraction of stuckedness are far more taken for granted.

PART II:

PROBLEMATIZING

STUCKEDNESS

The curious paradox is that when I accept myself just as I am, then I can change.

Carl Rogers

2

STUCKEDNESS & ITS DISCONTENTS

In the introduction to this thesis, I outlined several ways in which the concept of stuckedness—an advocacy of enduring (prolonging?) troublesome situations—is underdeveloped. Part II aims to fill these gaps using a Foucauldian orientation to understand how and why certain elements, in combination, are understood, or experienced (problematized) as stuckedness. This understanding will provide a theoretical foundation for my empirical project.

Stuckedness is a novel concept with path (up)setting potential (Alvesson & Sandberg 2013), although the way it has been used thus far is neither theoretically nor empirically grounded. Stuckedness was conceptually introduced and illustrated in Hage's (2009) brief but seminal chapter, *Waiting out the Crisis: on Stuckedness and Governmentality*. Hage (2009) describes the 'waiting out' of crisis, or 'sticking it out' as stuckedness. Stuckedness[4] represents more than just being fixed or persevering despite difficulty. It signifies an *advocacy* of 'sticking it out', even if 'it' is non-generative or counter-productive. Hage attributes this advocacy to the experience of modes of governmentality that encourage an enduring of crisis, causing a collapse in a person's sense of momentum or 'goingness'. He argues that, rather than perceiving being stuck as a condition that people seek to escape, being stuck becomes normalized, becoming the order of the day. The self becomes accustomed to being governed and governing in the mode of stuckedness. Due to the social and historical conditions of permanent crisis confronting many today, Hage holds that stuckedness is now *also* experienced as an inevitable pathological state which must be endured. Being in stuckedness and being stuck in its enduring state becomes a form of governmentality of the self. For Hage, it is this process that transforms stuckedness in crisis into an endurance test, which he explores in his first exposition on stuckedness.

[4] Stuckedness should not be confused with stickiness, which according to Szulanski (1996) connotes the difficulty of transferring knowledge within or between organizations.

Hage's (2009) writing piqued my interest. However, its translation to an academic concept requires some additional work and greater conceptual specificity. In this thesis the work of elaborating the concept is undertaken so that the concept of stuckedness may be understood, used, and further applied in the academic realm of theoretically and empirically grounded concepts.

Being a novel concept in need of theoretical grounding, the story of stuckedness does not readily lend itself to a traditional literature review. There is no clear body of scholarship that a concept like stuckedness claims to belong to, nor is a fitting trope immediately obvious. In the first chapter, I explained how stuckedness differs from domains of seemingly related literature from areas such as psychology, as well as scholarship on inertia and resilience from organizational theory. This chapter, containing three main sections, is devoted to understanding the problematization of stuckedness.

Initially I examine the historical trajectory of the meaning Hage has attributed to 'waiting out' or weathering a crisis situation where the self feels existentially immobile. In providing an account of the origins of Hage's depictions, an explicit account is offered of what Hage is trying to encapsulate with the concept of stuckedness. The second and third sections are devoted to each of his two primary explanations for why and how stuckedness is problematized as the practice of persisting with a particular process even if it is no longer fruitful. The rest of this chapter is divided as per these representations and I examine scholarship that is pertinent to the points of view that Hage puts forth, using the discussion to either demonstrate my defence of his ideas, or alternatively, my re-interpretations.

In section two I engage with the first of the two illustrations, which portrays stuckedness as a sense of existential immobility premised on moving well, a sense of 'going somewhere', being a prerequisite for feeling well. In this vein, I unpack the underlying desire for moving well through an analysis of social reactions to immobilization. The discussion is primarily concerned with unfurling the in-one-another-ness that connects feelings of mobility and wellness to all the other senses we experience and interpret, particularly the seemingly opposing feelings of stuckedness.

The third section of this chapter addresses Hage's second depiction of stuckedness as a form of governmentality (Foucault) that valorises self-control in times of pervasive crisis. First, I uncover what it means for stuckedness to be a form of governmentality through an in-depth excavation of the concept of governmentality, emphasising its central role in Foucault's shifting analytics of power. Both of these tendencies, for moving as well as stuckedness, have within them certain experiences and practices enabling their problematization. The exposition of governmentality will reveal a plane of immanence that holds both our compulsion for mobility and our advocacy to 'wait out the crisis'. The second aim is to engage in a comprehensive discussion of the hallmarks Foucault and his commentators have highlighted as crucial to the analysis of governmentality. Doing so offers a nuanced view of how stuckedness must be examined if it is to be seen as a form of governmentality, thus enabling further theoretical grounding of the concept.

A Short History of Hage's Idea

The historical trajectory of the meaning Hage (2009) attributes to 'waiting out' or weathering a crisis situation where the self feels existentially immobile is predominantly drawn from the work of Jean-Paul Sartre and Alain Badiou. In his *Critique of Dialectical Reason*, Sartre (2004) sought to reconceptualise the Marxist notion of the revolutionary class or masses in terms of 'existential' philosophy. Hage draws on Sartre's rethinking of Marx's differentiation between class-in-itself and class-for-itself, which he terms the difference between the 'series' and the 'fused group'. For Sartre (2004: 257), the series is a collective that appears together only from the outside, "a plurality of separations", an example of which is a queue of people at a bus stop, waiting to check in for a flight, or to be seated at my favourite restaurant.

FIGURE 1: THE QUEUE FOR DINNER AT MAMAK, A BELOVED RESTAURANT IN SYDNEY

He terms the degree of isolation felt by a group of people waiting or working together as the degree of 'massification', which he argues is a law that governs most social organizations at work (Sartre 2004: 292). Foucault later termed this individualization and the internalization of a mode of governing the self an aspect of governmentality (Hage 2009). Sartre however, was most interested in the process that led people to move from an individualised passive state of being in a series, to being transformed into active agents of history within a fused group.

Hage then also draws on Alain Badiou (2009) who, in commenting on Sartre's fused group, sees its fusion as a disruption of the order of the bus stop queue. Badiou invites his readers to consider that for some reason the bus does not arrive for the people in the queue. People start talking to each other, not about the mundane events of their lives but about the unbearability of being subjected to such uncertain conditions external to themselves. In the series, 'the Other' is everywhere; in the fused group, 'the Same' is everywhere. For Sartre, the queue encourages self-government as long as it is moving and functioning as a regulator to accessing something of interest to the individual. When the queue fails, Badiou sees both a social crisis and a crisis of governmentality.

Drawing on Sartre and Badiou, Hage (2009) takes queuing to represent an orderly form of mobility in so far as the buses keep coming and the people in the queue

feel as if they are moving physically and existentially. When the buses do not arrive, a 'crisis' situation emerges and Hage focuses on the 'crisis' that the people queuing experience, where they now feel 'stuck' in the queue. Re-interpreting Sartre and Badiou, Hage intimates that it is this state of stuckedness that triggers the questioning of the existing social arrangement and leads to the social upheaval that transforms the series into a fused group. However, Hage diverges from Sartre and Badiou in the way he approaches this point. He contends that they view crisis as an unusual state of affairs that brings about upheaval – a rethinking of the modality of waiting and the formation of a revolutionary force which, for Hage, is characteristic of the revolutionary optimism of their time. Contrarily, Hage argues that in dominant contemporary perspectives on crisis and order, citizens no longer question the given order in crisis because crisis is no longer experienced as an unusual state of affairs. Rather, crisis becomes normalised, a kind of permanent state of exception in which the better citizen is the one most able to endure the crisis (Hage 2009). Endurance is crucial to the identification of stuckedness in practice. When the aim of the practice that an agent is carrying out is no longer viable or generative, yet the agent continues to engage in that practice, they can be said to be also engaging in the practice of stuckedness. As you will see later on in the thesis, in an organization this may take the form of persisting with practices that sanction harassment or strategies that clearly are not employed in the best interests of the stakeholders they are meant to serve.

Hage offers two primary explanations for why and how stuckedness is problematized as the practice of persisting with a particular process even if it is no longer fruitful. The first illustration is that stuckedness is a pathological state of existential immobility, one premised on imagined mobility, a sense of 'going somewhere', regarded as being a prerequisite for a viable life. The second and connected depiction, is that stuckedness is a form of governmentality that valorises self-control in times of pervasive crisis. The rest of this chapter is divided as per these representations and I examine scholarship that is pertinent to the points of view that Hage puts forth, using the discussion to either demonstrate my defence of his ideas, or alternatively, my re-interpretations.

The Immanence of Moving Well: "The state of my being is walking"

The notion that stuckedness is an existential sense of immobility dialectically premised on a corresponding sense of 'going somewhere' as being a necessary ingredient for living, emerged in Hage's (2009) research on transnational Lebanese migration and white racism in Western countries. For Hage (2009: 98), well-being is repeatedly equated with a sense of mobility. In Lebanon, it is common parlance to ask "*keef el haal?*", which translates as "how is the state of your being?", usually eliciting the answer, "*mehsheh'l haal*", or "the state of my being is walking". This is more than just a metaphoric reference to movement for Hage (2009); it is an example of how feeling well is framed by a person's perception that they are moving well. This imagined/felt movement is what he refers to as existential mobility.

Through recounting an exemplary tale, he makes the argument that, just as there is existential mobility, there is also existential stuckedness. The story begins with the 'established/white' person owning a luxury car and his/her new neighbour, an immigrant 'outsider', who has just bought themselves a new motorbike. Sometime later, the new neighbour upgrades to a car while the better-heeled neighbour still owns the same car as before. Hage indicates that it is at this point that racial resentment starts entering the discourse of the 'established' person: their envy is not centred on the ownership of the car itself; they already own a more prestigious brand of car. Rather, Hage interprets that the implied mobility demonstrated by the move from owning a motorbike to owning a car was the source of envy: the car is no longer a positional good (Hirsch 1977) demarcating the one from the other.

Hage (2009) suggests that people engage in the physical form of mobility, commonly referred to as migration, because they seek existential mobility, or 'going somewhere' as opposed to going nowhere. At least, where the quality of the perceived 'going-ness' is better than the space from which they are migrating. Accordingly, for Hage (2009), voluntary migration is either an incapacity or refusal to endure, to 'wait out' the crisis of existential mobility. Hage does not develop this point. However, from his analogy we can derive that voluntary

migration embodies a practice of striving for 'unstuckedness' because there cannot be the one without the other.

Stuckedness, or advocacy of enduring or "sticking out" a difficult situation, appears a natural opposition to being mobile. However, it is actually immanent to mobility. For example, voluntary migration to a new space, a better 'going-ness', is generally followed by trying to mould the new space to be similar to the familiar old space. When I moved to my new home a few weeks ago, where I perceived that I would be better able to engage in the intensive writing practice that embodies the last stages of finishing a PhD, my first order of business was to set it up in familiar ways. Similar practice is also observed as a common response to the experience of travel, where the familiarity of home is fashioned by positioning one's personal effects and work items across a seat on a train or plane, or within certain familiar configurations with hotel rooms (Watts & Urry 2008; Elliot & Urry 2010). Urry (2007) has termed these practices as dwelling in mobility. Other notable examples include the encapsulating structure of the automobile that closes one off from 'others' (Sheller 2005); the practices that subvert unwanted interaction on public transport by burying oneself in a book or personal technological device, and the creation of a private space through the positioning of one's possessions to prevent others from engaging with their newspapers, games and music players (Goffman 1963; Bull 2007). These are all tolerance-easing tactics, stemming from experiences of moving well, that make stuckedness, or the enduring of troubling circumstances, more likely.

Underlying the discussion of these tactics is the notion that our senses may only be experienced as they are because there is an in-one-another-ness that connects them to all the other senses we experience and interpret. This is a common theme in many ancient Hindu and Buddhist spiritual texts and it has found its way into the academic literature via concepts like Deleuze's (2001) plane of immanence and Spinoza's single substance (Woolhouse 1993). Deleuze employs the term plane of immanence as a pure immanence (existing or remaining within), an unqualified immersion or embeddedness, an immanence which denies transcendence (an outside divinity or force) as a real distinction. For Spinoza, God and Nature are different labels for the same, single substance (that which stands beneath), which

is the universe and within which, all beings (entities) are actually modes or modifications. This single substance, let us call it nature, determines how these modes fit together, causing a complex sequence of cause and effect that can only ever be incompletely understood. In this vein, and to better understand how a sense of 'going somewhere' is a prerequisite for a viable life, looking at the response to immobilization offers insight into the human need to feel a sense of mobility.

The Compulsion to be Mobile

The underlying desire for moving well can be further explored through an analysis of human reactions to immobilization. The eruption of the volcano, Eyjafjallajökull, in May 2010, is remembered as a logistical crisis that caused significant mayhem in the air-travel sector. Along the way, in Ulrich Beck's words (1992: 19), it also unearthed the fault-lines of the "contours of the risk society". Risk society is a term attributed to both Beck and Anthony Giddens to describe the manner in which modern society organizes in response to risk. According to Birtchnell and Büscher (2011), people stranded due to the Eyjafjallajökull eruption generally tended either to 'fight or flight'. Fights were picked with travel agents, hotels, or sometimes, other stranded passengers. Those who sought flight tried desperately to get tickets that would transport them via new and often inconvenient routes. Ironically, those stranded passengers who sought to escape their strandedness were the hardest hit, becoming enmeshed in tightly coupled, interactively complex systems within systems (Capra 1996; Urry 2009). There is something Baudrillardian about the way rescue vessels promised by the British government never arrived or were turned back. Promises of support by insurance companies fell through. Airlines had to wait until the ash cloud had passed before they could help their passengers. Both fight and flight responses resulted in strandedness for passengers and as systems cascaded, immobility ensued.

[Production Note: The figure is not included in this digital copy due to copyright restrictions.]

FIGURE 2: THE EYJAFJALLAJÖKULL ASH CLOUD (GAUTI 2010)

It must be emphasized that *strandedness* and *stuckedness* are not the same thing. 'Strandedness', as I have used the word here, simply refers to being unable to move. 'Stuckedness', on the other hand, refers to the advocacy of sticking with a troublesome practice in the face of pervasive crisis. The nature of the crisis caused by the ash cloud was not pervasive in the way that Hage intimates; it lasted for a distinct period of time and was largely confined to those seeking air-travel in Western Europe. Without a doubt, there were outliers to this depiction[5], but Hage seems to be equating stuckedness with a mode of behaviour (sticking with/enduring a practice) that can be linked to a wider sense of crisis, where we seemingly cannot escape that a state of crisis is a currency of our time. As true as this may ring for some, there is a fundamental lack of specificity with such theorizing. This will be addressed later in this chapter so that it becomes possible to empirically investigate the practice of stuckedness. For now however, reflecting upon the ash cloud event reveals the human compulsion to be mobile.

[5] It bears mentioning that due to freely available 3G internet access that provided constant news feeds and reports on the move (Barton 2011), exposure was given to how distant lives were affected by the ash cloud event. For example, stranded passengers would have had access to the plight of those losing their jobs in a flower factory near Kenya's Lake Navaisha (Jensen 2011) due to the mass dumping of rotted flowers in the Eyjafjallajökull disruption. Accordingly, it goes without saying that there were complex systemic ties at play that affected more than just the mobile, global cosmopolitan elite (Wasserman 2010).

[Production Note: The figure is not included in this digital copy due to copyright restrictions.]

FIGURE 3: AIRLINE PASSENGERS AWAITING INFORMATION ABOUT FLIGHT CANCELLATIONS DUE TO EYJAFJALLAJÖKULL ERUPTION (DENNIS 2010)

Regardless of the systemic logistical collapse due to the Eyjafjallajökull eruption, the desire and need to keep moving did not dissipate. Mobile lives in both spatial and social terms create a compulsion to move (Urry 2007), that provokes new and perpetuates old mobilities and forms of 'mobility capital' (Kaufmann et al. 2004). Stranded passengers persisted with travels, either physically, via expensive, alternative flight paths, or virtually, using cloud storage to access files and VoIP (voice over internet protocol) software to teleconference for work as well as 'be' with loved ones. Efforts directed at achieving a modicum of mobility were in stark contrast to the ease of routines during times of unhindered mobility, the schism between the two revealing the inherently mobile nature of modern society.

Still, if we turn to Defoe's (1719b) *Robinson Crusoe* from three centuries earlier, we see the stranded Yorkshireman (Crusoe) mourning his goodbye to the island he has become accustomed to. As he departs for his original home in his make-shift raft, one may assume that having been stranded for over twenty years, Crusoe would disdain further travel. Rather, in Defoe's (1719a) sequel, Crusoe leaves his farm in Bedford and wanders through a further three parts of the globe. He then revisits his island, before travelling through Madagascar, Brazil, China, Siberia, and Germany, having many adventures en route. Similarly, despite their experience of strandedness because of the ash cloud, upon their return many

travellers found themselves planning their next journey. It could be said that for a traveller, to keep travelling is a sign of their moving well.

Summary

In this last section, I have demonstrated the connection between mobility and wellness, or in Hage's words, a sense of 'going somewhere' being a prerequisite for a viable life. Through an examination of the reactions to strandedness caused by the ash cloud event at Eyjafjallajökull, we can see that being mobile is a fundamental desire. However, the relationship between mobility and wellness is presupposed by the immanence of the advocacy for persisting with a counter-productive practice, and vice-versa. Both these tendencies have within them certain experiences and practices that enable their problematization as such. This thesis seeks to understand how and why certain experiences come together to be problematized as stuckedness. What, then, lies in the interstices between our compulsion for mobility and our advocacy to 'wait out the crisis'?

Hage's second key illustration of stuckedness attributes it to a form of governmentality that encourages more than just being fixed or persevering despite difficulty. It signifies advocacy of 'sticking it out', even if 'it' is non-generative or counter-productive. Although it is not clear in his paper, Foucault's (1991) concept of governmentality provides a robust account for why there is an immanence between stuckedness and moving well, explaining the compulsion for mobility and advocacy of 'waiting out the crisis'.

Governmentality

Based on the depiction of stuckedness as a form of governmentality that espouses self-governance and self-control in times of prolonged crisis, one needs to address: What does it mean for stuckedness to be a form of governmentality? How does governmentality offer an explanation for how stuckedness manifests from the immanent sense that we are going somewhere?

To answer these questions, I first scrutinise Foucault's (1991) notion of governmentality. Next, I reflect upon the two key ways in which the concept of

governmentality shapes and modifies consequent analytics. In doing so, I elaborate upon and discuss some further aspects of stuckedness, such as how it is conceptualised in relation to human agency and routinization.

The Career of the Concept

Post *Discipline and Punish* (1977), Foucault's work appears to fit neatly into two disparate schemes: that of political rationalities and the 'genealogy of the state', and that of ethical questions and the 'genealogy of the subject'. Thomas Lemke (2000) highlights that these two projects are connected by the matter of government, which is precisely the problematic that Foucault uses to analyse the connections between what he called 'technologies of the self' and 'technologies of domination', the constitution of the subject and the formation of the state.

Foucault (1998: 67) referred to this connection as 'governmentality', which links the notion of governing (*gouverner*) and modes of thought (*mentalité*), intimating the impracticality of studying the technologies of power devoid of an analysis of its underlying political rationale. Governmentality was meant as a conceptual aid in his historical analyses that span the Ancient Greek period through to modern neo-liberalism.

Of equal importance to Lemke (2000) is that Foucault's use of the term 'government' defers significantly to its older meaning while also depicting the close relationship between mechanisms of power and processes of 'subjectification'[6]. Foucault (1998) demonstrates that even as recently as the 18th century, the word 'government' had a wide-ranging significance as opposed to its currently narrower political connotation. In addition to being politically relevant, *government* was also discussed in philosophical, religious, medical and pedagogic texts. Issues of self-control, family guidance, and household management, as well as direction of the soul were all problems of government. Following this broader association, Foucault (Foucault 1982; see also Lemke 2001: 191) defines government as "the conduct of conduct", highlighting its appropriateness to the act of "governing the self" as well as "governing others".

[6] Subjectification is a concept coined by Foucault and elaborated by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari (1980). It refers to the construction of the individual subject.

Even a surface reading of Foucault's governmentality reveals its relational nature. By defining government as the conduct of conduct, Foucault demonstrates a processual focus. To explore further what governmentality is and what it might reveal about advocacy of 'sticking it out', even if 'it' is non-generative or counter-productive, I explore the two main roles Foucault's "key notion" (Allen 1991: 431) of governmentality plays in his shifting conceptions on power relations and the self. Firstly, it extends the depiction of power beyond grounding in either consensus or violence. Secondly, it connects one's governance of self with the self's domination of others and vice versa. Based on these schemas of thought, and Foucault's writings on the development of governmentality, I canvass the main qualities of governmental technologies. If stuckedness is to be understood as a form of governmentality that espouses self-governance and self-control in times of prolonged crisis, understanding the analytical processing of governmentality is key to discerning the best theoretical apparatus with which to study stuckedness.

Foucault's Shifting Conception of Power

Until the mid 1970s, Foucault (1998: 15-19), in his critique of the juridical model of power, followed the Nietzschean scheme of locating the central mode of power in war and struggle ("Nietzsche's hypothesis") rather than law and consensus. At this juncture, Foucault wanted the analysis of power relations to be unencumbered by a theoretical focus on institution vs. state, as well as the interest in criteria of legitimacy and consensus. However, his genealogy of power up until *Discipline and Punish* (1977) and the first volume of the *History of Sexuality* (1978) still struggled with two theoretical issues.

First, Foucault only replaced the focus on law and consensus by accentuating war and struggle, investigating relations predominantly from the perspective of confrontation and subjection. It thus became impossible to examine how legitimacy and consensus was generated or gained stability. Second, Foucault's research focused on the microphysics of power and processes of disciplining and the examination of local practices and singular institutions such as the prison or the hospital. As such, his analysis of the macro-perspective of the state and its role in the establishing structures of domination was insufficient; an assessment of

practices of subjectification was limited to that of the formation of disciplined bodies

Essentially, Foucault was attempting to cut off the king's head in political analysis, to render irrelevant "the focus on law and legitimization, will and consensus" (Lemke 2000: 3). Yet, by replacing the location of power within law and contract with war and conquest, rather than cutting off the king's head, he turned the conception that he criticised in on itself. Mitchell Dean (1994: 156), by asking, "How is it possible that his headless body often behaves as if it indeed had a head?", reveals that such a "cutting off" could only be the first step. It can be reasoned that through the introduction of the problematic of government, Foucault takes the next step.

Foucault's first public exposure of the concept of governmentality occurred during the *Collège de France* lectures of 1978 and 1979, where he addressed two problems. First, power relations could be understood beyond a warlike concept; governmentality concerns inquiry into the prerequisites of consensus or the circumstances of acceptance (Foucault 1982: 219-222). In this way, Foucault's (1982: 221) theoretical compass shifts beyond the problematic of consensus and will on the one hand and conquest and war on the other:

The relationship proper to power would not therefore be sought on the side of violence or of struggle, nor on that of voluntary linking (all of which can, at best, only be the instruments of power), but rather in the area of the singular mode of action, neither warlike nor juridical, which is government.

Second, governmentality allows for a more adequate analysis of the state and processes of subjectification. Governmentality holds that power is concerned primarily with guidance and *Führung*, that is, the regulating and moulding of a subject's field of possible action (Foucault 1982). For Lemke (2000), who terms governmentality 'Foucault's hypothesis' (in contrast to Nietzsche's hypothesis), seeing power as guidance does not exclude consensual forms or the recourse to violence. Rather, it simply denotes that coercion or consensus is reconstituted as a means of government among others. They are 'elements' or 'instruments' as opposed to the 'foundation' or 'source' of power relationships (Foucault 1982).

Even as Foucault's (1982) conception of power shifted, his research focus centred on the microphysics of power and anonymous strategies as opposed to the state's macro-perspective and those who wielded its powers. Foucault was interested in the detail that structured and shaped the field of possible action of subjects. However, his focus moved from being about representation to that of constitution. Power relations thus do not have a point of origin (the state) from which they surge forth, infusing the social space. Rather, they account for the creation and functioning of the state and yet, have a life force beyond the state, or perceived 'point' of origin. Here, Foucault reveals a concern for how the modern sovereign state and the modern autonomous individual co-determine each other's emergence.

Foucault's shifting conception of power is also central to his attempt at casting the 'agency' versus 'structure' debate as irrelevant. He does so without succumbing to the notion that an accurate explanation of a social phenomenon requires a demonstration of how that phenomenon is derived from an actor's intent (methodological individualism). As Hage describes stuckedness as a circumstance of reduced individual agency, Foucault's attitude to agency is important both in itself as well as in relation to the machinations of the co-emergence between self and other. This is explored below in a discussion on the second feature of governmentality: the autonomous individual.

The Autonomous Individual

A key aspect of Foucault's (1982) foray into governmentality is his use of the word 'autonomous' in his description of the individual. He then connects one's capacity for self-control to forms of political rule and economic exploitation. These points seed the observation that even though his interest in the processes of subjectification has prevailed, he does not discard the problematics of power. Antithetically, it uncovers a continuity and modification of his earlier work, in a manner that adds precision that was previously missing. Foucault (1985b: 6) himself describes the process as a radical, theoretical shift, not abandonment, which had an impact on his conceptualization of power. As a result, he amends the findings of earlier studies that examined subjectification as predominantly about 'docile bodies' and that overly stressed the processes of discipline. The

assessment of relations between technologies of the self and technologies of domination were replaced with the notion of government (see M Foucault 1988; Foucault 1993: 203-204):

I think that if one wants to analyse the genealogy of the subject in Western civilization, he has to take into account not only techniques of domination but also techniques of the self … He has to take into account the points where the technologies of domination of individuals over one another have recourse to processes by which the individual acts upon himself. And conversely, he has to take into account the points where the techniques of the self are integrated into structures of coercion and domination. The contact point, where the individuals are driven by others is tied to the way they conduct themselves, is what we can call, I think government. Governing people, in the broad meaning of the word, governing people is not a way to force people to do what the governor wants; it is always a versatile equilibrium, with complementarity and conflicts between techniques which assure coercion and processes through which the self is constructed or modified by himself.

In this discussion of the problematic of power, we can see that, for Foucault, the technologies individuals use to dominate one another lead to processes where the individual acts upon the self. Here, again we can see Foucault's insistence on accounting for the processes through which individuals are construed as acting. By the autonomous individual, Foucault also re-emphasises his attempt to re-define human agency, to have a form different from the one that pits the techniques of the self and the mechanism of coercion and domination against one another.

Agency & Routine

A broader discussion of agency is important for the theorization of stuckedness because Hage (2009) notes that it is a lack of agency that defines stuckedness, where a person suffers from the absence of choices or alternatives to the situation at hand or an inability to grab such alternatives should they present themselves. Despite this perceived lack of agency, for Hage, stuckedness also involves a sense of heroism, where it is not what you actively or creatively achieve that makes you a hero but your capacity to stick it out and 'get stuck well' that defines a hero in a 'stuck' situation. Such heroism is attributed to an agency manifested in terms of an ambivalently passive endurance to 'wait out' the crisis, thereby not submitting

to the circumstances that are rendering one a victim without agency. For Hage, it is this aspect that allows stuckedness to function as a governmental tool that encourages a mode of restraint, self-control and self-governance in times of crisis.

Anthony Giddens[7] (1984) is a central figure in the debate on agency and structure. Unlike scholars who treat agency as a synonym for free will or resistance, Giddens, like Foucault, consistently links agency to structure through his discussion of rules and resources, what he calls structuration theory. Social structure is the product of practice, or in Giddens' (1979: 55) words, "a stream of actual or contemplated causal interventions of corporeal beings in the ongoing process of events-in-the-world". Structure is thus created by agents, whose agency is germane only if they are constructed as subjects holding particular subject positions in a given social structure. The position is reminiscent of Foucault, who also describes the enactment of practice as a function of the agent and a product of the structure, which is, in essence, simply the objectification of past actions by agents. Structuration illustrates the essentially recursive quality of social unfolding, where the agent is a product of the structure. This structure is essentially the objectification of past actions by agents, where particular processes in society repeat and reproduce themselves in an ongoing cycle (Giddens 1984; Cohen 2000). Put another way, the immanence of structure to agency and vice versa creates an equilibrium of governmentality. For Foucault, this was always provisional and versatile. In this melange, the relation between harmony and tension is a continuous one, between mechanisms that compel and processes through which the self is self-constructed or modified.

In Foucault's (1993: 203-204) words, one could say that the choice to stick with a non-generative practice is a *contact point* co-determined by the, irretrievably enmeshed, emergence of the self (agency) and structures of domination (structures). For Giddens, such choice affords a heroism that, conceptualized as an element of stuckedness, is 'seen but unnoticed' (Garfinkel 1967) as social practices can be reproduced only if actors are able to take behaviour for granted.

[7] Anthony Giddens launched his praxeological theory of structuration having been grounded in ethnomethodological research and significantly influenced by Harold Garfinkel (1967), and to a lesser degree, Erving Goffman (1956) and Peter Winch (1958). However, where ethnomethodology tended to find the roots of social practice within social order, Giddens embraced a broader conception of practice that synthesised the basic qualities of social life overall.

He calls these practices institutions or routines. Interruptions or breakdowns to these routines are what Giddens calls 'fateful moments', in which reflection and imagination are crucial. These processes of taken-for-grantedness and the subsequent collapse of such taken-for-grantedness are also important in Foucault's work. This highlights the unifying suggestion that an analysis of stuckedness should reside in practices that are routinised or have an assumed regularity.

Routines have long been a staple of organization theory from Taylor (1911) through to more contemporary work. Within current organization theory, there is a broad body of work focusing on routines. This work owes its centrality to Nelson's (1982) seminal book, *An Evolutionary Theory of Economic Change*[8]. To illustrate how agency, structure and routines are crucial aspects of governmentality (the notion that "the points where the technologies of domination of individuals over one another have recourse to processes by which the individual acts upon himself"), an ethnography conducted in an American newsroom is useful.

David Ryfe (2009) explains how the new editor and executive-vice president of the newspaper issued a mandate that reporters produce more enterprise and less daily news. Yet, a year later reporters not only did not produce more enterprise news, their production of daily news actually increased. Ryfe (2009) sees this as a consequence of the deep grooves (structure) of daily newsgathering, coupled with the inability and/or unwillingness (heroic/agentic stuckedness) of reporters and editors to alter their practices. He shows how the routines of daily newsgathering have developed in response to the uncertainties present within the daily newsgathering process and how reporters have a deep investment in these practices. Drawing from Foucault and Giddens[9], we know that conceptual templates such as daily newsgathering routines do not simply inflict themselves

[8] A comprehensive review of this literature, thoroughly covered elsewhere (see Becker 2004), is irrelevant for my argument.

[9] Bourdieu is another social theorist who has written extensively about the immanence of structure to agency and vice versa through his concept of habitus. Eriksen and Nielsen (2001: 130) hold that the notion of 'habitus' captures "the permanent internalisation of the social order in the human body", which for Bourdieu (1990: 13) also comprises awareness of "the agent's practice, his or her capacity for invention and improvisation". Habitus can thus be thought of as the collective individuated through the biological individual, even if it is also a collective phenomenon when similar within groups of people. In this way, the habitus structures the social world and is structured by the social world.

on actors. Rather, it is only when actors invest themselves in conceptual templates of the kind represented by daily news routines that these routines are imbued with a structural force (see Emirbayer & Mische 1998 for more on this point). However, as opposed to experiencing social structures, actors only experience problematizations of those structures as their immediate experience is with one another and not with abstract structures (Joas 1993; Schütz 1978). As such, the structure, saturated as it was with investment, was not confronted by the actors in a vacuum. Their response was therefore also constrained by their colliding interpretations of the structure. They persisted with the practice of producing more daily news: thus, their ability to get unstuck was by no means extinguished. In the case of *The Daily Times*, redirecting these grooves took more imaginative resources than reporters and editors were able to muster.

The intersection of agency, structure and routines can also be related to the example of the bus stop queue that Hage (2009) uses in his chapter. Contemporary life involves the heroic continuance whereby one subjects one's self to governmental instruments, such as queuing. This behaviour is self-reproducing: the more invested one is in waiting, the more reluctant one is to stop waiting - which is how stuckedness becomes infused with taken-for-grantedness. Practices of stuckedness, analogous to continued queuing despite the bus no longer being a viable method of transport, can be seen as constituting (and being constituted by) ways in which we govern others and ourselves as a governmental technology.

To Conclude

This theoretical chapter has focused on how stuckedness has been problematized. Hage's (2009) two main illustrations of stuckedness have been central. They are: (1) 'stuckedness' as a sense of existential immobility, which is premised on moving well, a sense of 'going somewhere', being a prerequisite for feeling well, and (2) 'stuckedness' as a form of governmentality (Foucault) that valorises self-control. However, I have recapped the ways in which Hage's budding conceptualization will be used, thus building my own problematization of what I view as stuckedness.

In terms of the first illustration, through an examination of the reactions to strandedness caused by the ash cloud event at Eyjafjallajökull, we can see that to be mobile is a fundamental desire that does not evaporate with its temporary blockage. This demonstrates that the connection between mobility and wellness, or in Hage's words, a sense of 'going somewhere' is a prerequisite for a viable life. However, what is not clear in Hage's work is how, stuckedness, or a sense of existential immobility is premised on an imaginary mobility, a sense of moving well. I have addressed this fuzziness and have shown how the relationship between mobility and wellness is presupposed by the immanence of the advocacy for persisting with a counter-productive practice, and vice-versa. The discussion is primarily concerned with unfurling the in-one-another-ness that connects feelings of mobility and wellness to all the other senses we experience and interpret, particularly the seemingly opposing feelings of stuckedness. Both tendencies, for stuckedness as well as for moving well, contain certain experiences and practices that enable their problematization. The question of what characterises the space that holds both our compulsion for mobility and our advocacy to 'wait out the crisis', as well as explains our movements along this plane of immanence, is apposite.

Although Hage does not make it clear in his depictions, Foucault's concept of governmentality, which is a key part of Hage's second illustration, provides a robust account of the interstices between our desire to move well and our persistence with difficult practices even if they are unfruitful. To unpack this problematization, the questions I ask are: What does it mean for stuckedness to be a form of governmentality? How does governmentality explain the manifestation of stuckedness in our immanent sense that we are going somewhere?

This chapter has unpacked the significant ways in which the concept of governmentality has framed Foucault's thinking on power. Consequently, we are able to see that governmentality concerns "the conduct of conduct", which highlights that the way we frame the conduct of others is tied to the way we conduct ourselves and vice versa. Put another way, and to employ the link to immanence as a theoretical device, the way we orient to others is immanent to the

way we conduct ourselves and the reverse is also true. Holding actors to be acting on a plane of immanence, governmentality explains how stuckedness manifests from the immanence of our sense that we are going somewhere, and thus, how stuckedness is a governmental technology, or in Hage's words, a form of governmentality.

Where the government of others would ordinarily be thought of as a matter of power, for Foucault, there is no such thing as power *per se*, only power relations. Governmentality holds power to be concerned mainly with guidance and regulating and moulding a subject's field of possible action (Foucault 1982). Coercion or consensus is reconstituted as means of government among others. They are 'elements' or 'instruments' as opposed to the 'foundation' or 'source' of power relationships. Stuckedness as a governmental technology therefore, cannot be seen as a source of power relations but simply as one of many elements that account for the creation and functioning of the government of the self and others.

For Foucault, the concept of governmentality typifies the irrelevance of the *agency versus structure debate* as it specifically contradicts the notion that an accurate explanation of a social phenomenon requires a demonstration of how that phenomenon is derived from an actor's intent. Rather, for Foucault, individuals are autonomous. Foucault describes the enactment of practice as a function of the agent and as a product of the structure, which is, in essence, simply the objectification of past actions by agents. Put another way, the immanence of structure to agency and vice versa creates a melange of governmentality, which for Foucault is always provisional and versatile. In this melange, the relation between harmony and tension is a continuous one, between mechanisms that compel and processes through which the self is self-constructed or modified.

It thus follows, that heroism about the practice of stuckedness is co-determined by the emergence of the self (agency) and structures of domination (structures), which are irretrievably enmeshed. In an analysis of stuckedness therefore, if the heroics of stuckedness were in doubt the practice would miscarry because social practices can be reproduced only if actors are able to take their behaviour for granted. The subsequent collapse of such taken-for-grantedness highlights that an

analysis of stuckedness should reside in the practice that are routinised or have an assumed regularity. It is a behaviour that is also self-reproducing; the more invested one is in waiting, the more reluctant one is to stop waiting, which is how stuckedness is infused with a taken-for-grantedness that is activated, according to Hage's problematization, when pervasive crisis is perceived as having structural heft. Relating such a problematization to the bus stop queue example exposes a problematic analytical issue. How can we establish that the people queuing feel a pervasive sense of crisis as assumed by Hage? How can we know that they have collectively interpreted and imbued this sense with a structural force? This question is addressed in the next chapter, which focuses on applying the concept of governmentality to a theoretically grounded empirical study on stuckedness as a governmental technology.

3

PROCESSING GOVERNMENTALITY

This chapter examines Foucault's views on the main qualities of governmental technologies. The intent here is to establish how governmentality might be processed analytically, thus distilling the theoretical tools with which to ground an empirical study of stuckedness. First, I address the notion that power cannot be possessed by any particular person or group; instead, power relations comprise a plurality of conflicting strategies (technologies), structuring the "field of possible action" (Foucault 1982: 221). This is understood as a dichotomy of seeing being as a state versus seeing it as continually in-flux. Owing to this "field of possible action", analytical acuity demands a level of specificity about the field and it is here that we address the problematic inherent within the *bus stop queue example* of stuckedness highlighted at the end of the last chapter. I also explore how a pervasive sense of crisis may be translated in an organizational setting, where this research was based. Second, I consider what viewing governmentality as a rational technology devoid of morality means in terms of creating an analytics of governmentality. The hallmarks of rationality discussed are Foucault's notion of 'problematization' and the continuous production of knowledge (immanence). Last, I address the political investment of the body within governmental technologies, discussing the ideas behind Foucault's (1991a) evocation of a possible "end of politics". Together, the problematizations scrutinised in Chapter 2 and the analytic clues present within Foucault's concept of governmentality, provide the basis for the theoretical tools selected to guide the empirical investigation of stuckedness.

STATES OF BEING/BEING

"We must distinguish the relationships of power as strategic games between liberties – strategic games that result in the fact that some people try to determine the conduct of others – and the states of domination, which are what we ordinarily call power. And, between the two, between the games of power and the states of domination, you have governmental technologies."

From the passage above, it follows that Foucault (1991c: 19) identifies three types of relational power: (1) strategic games between liberties, (2) government, and (3) domination. Referring to the structuring of the possible field of action of others, the notion of power as strategic games is omnipresent within social life. Examples of these strategic games are manipulation, rational argument, advice, or economic exploitation. It is not implied that power is employed against the welfare of the other party within the power relationship. Neither does Foucault invest morality in strategic games because "to determine the conduct of others" is not an inherently bad pursuit. Furthermore, for Foucault the removal of liberty or options available to individuals could result in an 'empowerment' or 'responsibilization' of subjects, forcing them to free decision-making in fields of action.

Foucault's *government* refers to mostly coordinated, instituted, and reflected modes of technologies (power) that go beyond the unstructured deployment of power over others, precisely because it is borne of a 'rationality' which defines the methods for its attainment, or *telos*. Lecturing on the 'genealogy of the state', Foucault differentiates between the Christian pastorate's governance of souls seeking spiritual deliverance as a type of spiritual government and the rational state as a political government of those seeking livelihoods in this world (Lemke 2001). Accordingly, Hindess (1996: 106) summarises government as the "the regulation of conduct by the more or less rational application of the appropriate technical means". In a similar vein sovereign or punitive power are not oppositional forms; rather they are distinct governmental technologies.

Foucault (1988b: 19) uses the word 'domination' for our ordinary sense of power. A relationship of domination, for Foucault, is one where power is stabilised, hierarchical, and not easily dislodged. This kind of relationship is asymmetrical, and the subordinated person has an extremely limited "margin of liberty" (Foucault 1988b: 12) and little room for manoeuvring. Another way of thinking about domination would be as Goffman (1961) did, as a characteristic of 'total institutions'. Total institutions are made up of processes that etch their domination on particular people, where these practices envelop the person and are inescapable. Taking the example of asylum seekers, the detention centres that

house them are a case of a total institution within the broader apparatus of power. Belonging to a total institution can also be voluntary, in the case of a monastery, boarding school, or army barracks, where a type of normalcy of life is produced and reproduced within the embrace of its boundaries

What Goffman (1961) was more clearly able to convey than Foucault was that domination, or total institutions simply reveal an exacerbated version of similar underlying organizational processes (or organizational government) that are to be found in everyday organizations, much like the electrical company, where the fieldwork for this thesis was carried out. However, it is not the states of domination that cause strategic games to be maintained or inequalities to be exploited (Lemke 2000). On the contrary, domination unveils condensed versions of similar governmental technologies because it too arises from governmental technologies, as well as, systematization, stabilization, and the regulation of power relationships (Hindess 1996; Patton 1998). Clegg (2009) also reflects this in his writing on the total institution of the holocaust. The three reasons offered for how such an institution could exist are that it was: (1) highly authorized; (2) vastly routinised, and (3) the targets were dehumanised; all in themselves, modes of government.

In an organizational setting, authority is the basis for much of the work that occurs. A capable manager is assumed to be acting in the interest of staff and organizational goals and as such, subordinates follow in good faith. Often, the same pattern unfurls through the entire spectrum of management levels within a large organization and at the highest levels, the leader also commands the apparatus of power of the organization. As was alluded to earlier, routinization of processes increase their taken-for-grantedness and does away with the need or stillness for reflection or reflexivity. Routinised actions are easier to enact as responsibility is replaced by automation. A cog in the wheel is unable to see the whole wheel, or how that wheel holds the machine together, or the purposes the machine fulfils. The consequences of the action itself, and those of the organization (comprising many such actions), are distanced from the agent through routinization. Lastly, this distancing between dominators and their subjects is taken one step further through dehumanization. Clegg (2009) discusses

the extreme case of the holocaust, but a similar process also operates within 'normal organizations'. Member categorization devices convince people that there are categories of people who are less worthy of respect, for example, the latter in the following binaries: men/women, managers/personal assistants, senior staff/junior staff, employees/contractors, etc. The distance created between the dominator and the dominated enables the bearing of the loss of dignity as a necessary evil, 'part and parcel of working in an organization'. Co-creating the 'Other' in this manner is the defining feature of dehumanization. The less members share in a common being and meaning, the easier it is for one party to dominate, or be dominated by, the other.

Authorization, routinization, and dehumanization are examples of the systematic use of governmental technologies. They can be employed in domination, or in less macabre settings such as government. To this end, Foucault (1978: 93) tends to articulate his analyses as being about power relations as opposed to power:

One needs to be nominalistic, no doubt: power is not an institution, and not a structure; neither is it a certain strength we are endowed with; it is the name that one attributes to a complex strategic situation in a particular society.

Gridlock, the parent-organization to my research site, is a male-dominated work environment where women had few positions of authority, and there were many instances of disrespectful interactions directed at women in the workplace. However, this did not prevent women from trying to dominate other women, whom they perceived to be in a different member category, such as female managers dominating female support staff. Such relations of domination provide an example of how power cannot be possessed by any particular person or group; rather, power relations spawn a multiplicity of confronting and intersecting strategies and systems of differentiation. Rather than interpreting these strategic games (modes of government) as discrete types of power relations, they are more akin to points on a continuum, or different perspectives on the same issue, as strategies "to structure the field of possible action" (Foucault 1982: 221).

Foucault (1982) emphasised a move away from 'states of being', to simply, 'being'. He uses the notion of 'field' to characterise the co-determined 'being' comprising

the detail that structured and shaped this 'being'. An analysis of governmentality must be contextualised within a specific field of action to grant it a substantive specificity, the lack of which remains a key issue for the empirical study of stuckedness.

In the sub-sections that follow I reinterpret the 'being' of crisis. The resulting specificity will enable a structuring of the field of action in a way that better embodies the way people act upon each other's actions, trying to lead others (*conduire d'autres*) at the same time as struggling to conduct themselves (*se conduire*) in a field of possibilities (Foucault 1982: 220-1) that are both constraining and enabling.

Specificity

A problematic alluded to at the end of Chapter 2, Hage (2009) talks about crisis pervading our dominant sense of the present, thus causing citizens (for example, people in the bus stop queue) to govern themselves while not questioning the given order as being in crisis because it is no longer experienced as an unusual state of affairs. Somewhat at odds with Foucault's (1982) idea that governmentality occurs within a specific field of action, this line of thought interpellates the notion of stuckedness as being philosophical pondering by opposing to it the notion that it might be empirically applicable.

One cannot delineate a particular practice as a case of stuckedness unless one can also show that the agents concerned perceive crisis as pervading their field of action. In this manner, it is difficult to accept Hage's (2009) argument that individuals, who decide to continue queuing at a bus stop despite the failure of the bus to come, are engaging in the practice of stuckedness because it is not simultaneously clear if those individuals also perceive that they are operating within a crisis environment.

In the same vein as the bus stop example, Hage (2009) contends that the problematization of stuckedness can take on a racial, civilizational, and class dimension: the lower classes are the uncivilised, racialised others who do not know how to wait. The civilised, upper classes are those who see the benefit in

enduring, in waiting out the crisis. Regrettably, Hage's (2009) article does not provide enough detail to substantiate his reading of stuckedness as taking on a racial, civilizational, and class dimension. He uses sweeping, vague examples such as the high security alert levels pervading airports, schools and other public venues, to illustrate his view that crisis has been normalised into a kind of permanent state of exception, where the better citizen is best able to endure the crisis.

The idea that stuckedness exists amongst people who consider themselves to be the 'civilised, upper classes' compared to the lower-class, 'uncivilised and racialised others', may resonate in certain social milieux. For example, for people who have experienced living in a war zone the idea that asylum seekers should wait out the crises they face and apply for asylum through appropriate legal channels may be seen as being rooted in stuckedness. Sartre's (2004) idea that in the series, 'the Other' is everywhere, and that in the fused group, 'the same' is everywhere, speaks to Hage's (2009) view on the matter of asylum seekers. As the number of asylum seekers arriving in Australia by boat increases, the degree of isolation of these 'queue jumpers' grows. With this increased degree of isolation, the governmentality behind such a position is also exacerbated and can be said to enlarge the practice.

Recall the ash cloud example. What feels like a crisis situation due to a crowded airport full of stranded passengers would be perceived vastly differently by someone familiar with overcrowded public transport, a common daily transport reality in cities in India and China. Not just in the global South but also in the varied lived experiences of people, experiences of everyday life are extremely unequal. Analysing stuckedness as a form of governmentality calls for an interest not in *states of being* but simply in *being*. For Hage (2009), pervasive crisis is essential to the condition of stuckedness. Given that Hage's illustration of stuckedness is necessarily the starting point of this research, for a practice to be understood as stuckedness, the 'being' of crisis needs to be established as something that pervades the field of action within which the practice of stuckedness plays out among other practices. In the next section I translate the

being of crisis to enable the selection of a research site that is widely perceived as one saturated with a sense of crisis.

Re-interpreting the 'Being' of Crisis

According to Oxford Dictionaries (2014a), a crisis, with its origins in the Greek κρίσις, represents a "time of intense difficulty or danger, a time when a difficult or important decision must be made", or "the turning point of a disease when an important change takes place, indicating either recovery or death". For example, the 'Cuban missile crisis', or 'the current economic crisis', or the 'reaching of crisis point', are all ways crisis tends to depict sudden periods of difficulty or danger in which the threats of existential uncertainty are multiple, confusing and contingent on events that defy extant routines. Hage (2009) perhaps, over estimates the significance of crisis: while the word crisis could be readily used to characterize life in some organizations, complexity better conveys the prolonged essence of intense difficulty or danger that occurs within organizational settings which face not so much death as a seeming horizon of little other than endurance.

Thinking in terms of 'complexity' reinforces Hage's (2009) clarification that he is attempting to characterise the experience of an inevitable pathological state that must be endured. The intention is not to change Hage's characterization of stuckedness as a practice of governmentality. In terms of an appropriate field within which to conduct ethnography, organizational complexity provides a prognostic element of enduring recurrence, ennui, and immobility.

Within organizations, complexity has long been regarded as something that certain organizations continually face. Complexity can frame a sense of persistent, omnipresent uncertainty (Nicolis & Prigogine 1989; Anderson 1999). Springing from the field of complexity science, the concept of complexity is enmeshed with the idea of chaos rather than equilibrium or order, to extremely complex information as opposed to the mere absence of order. The physics Nobel laureate, Murray Gell-Mann (1994: 34) describes the degree of complexity as the:

…length of the shortest message that will describe a system, at a given level of course graining, to someone at a distance, employing language, knowledge and understanding that both parties share (and know they share) beforehand.

The two pertinent implications of Gell-Mann's (1994) account are that first, the experience of complexity is related to the difficulty or lack thereof in the transmission of information that would adequately describe the phenomena being faced. Intrinsic to this is the notion that complexity need not be an external state of being but is contingent on who or what is doing the describing as well as the listening. Hence, there is a recursive element. Therefore, defining complexity becomes a context-dependent exercise. Indeed, Gell-Mann (1994: 33) holds that any definition of complexity depends on a description of one system by the other. Secondly, complexity is associated with the compressibility or otherwise of information. The less succinct the explanation available to depict a phenomenon the more complex it is deemed to be. Ultimately, Gell-Mann (1994) highlights that complexity owes more to the experience of what are perceived to be complex phenomena and how difficult it is to communicate this experience, as opposed to an objective state of chaos, independent of the observing system.

Drawing on Gell-Mann (1994), Chia (1998) speaks of the two natures of complexity, taxonomic and dynamic, both of which are present in the way complexity is approached in this research. Taxonomic complexity characterises the propensity to account for the 'essence' of a phenomenon within a general scheme of things. As the variety of experiences accumulated grows exponentially, they are integrated into a 'master' taxonomic register for the purpose of recollection in the future and for mental synthesis. Such systems of differentiation are therefore also always concerned with the integration of their disparate elements. When more 'combinatorial' relationships are noted, complexity is regarded as high, incidences of which grow as the register expands with catalogued experiences[10] (Chia 1998). Dynamic complexity, on the other hand, does not seek to regulate the wax and wane of experience. Rather, it characterises the heightened awareness of the indivisibility of movement and change, where "the continuous progress of the past … gnaws into the future and … swells it as it advances" (Bergson 1911: 5). Thus, dynamic complexity is associated with the 'in-one-anotherness' indigenous to moments of experience, which highlights their non-locatable and interpenetrative nature (Chia 1998).

[10] Indeed, the English alphabet is an example of the ability of, a finite and unchanging set of elements, to result in countless books, each unique, written in the English language (Rescher 1996: 79).

Sketching complexity thus offers to my exposition of stuckedness a basis upon which a prolonged and pervasive being of complexity can be established. This is crucial to the selection of a site for ethnographic enquiry.

RATIONALITY

A second analytical point to emphasise is that Foucault's governmentality specifically denotes coordinated, instituted, and reflected modes of power (a 'technology') because it is born of reasoning (Lemke 2000). Yet, this rationality is devoid of morality, lending itself to the targeted understanding of the conflicting and fluid processes within a field, without the necessity for judgement.

Together with theories from relevant sociologies, as well as advocates of Marxist and post-colonialist theory, governmentality has been primarily used as a framework to critique neo-liberalism, where the critique tends to rely on the very concepts intended for assessment (McKinlay et al. 2012; Rose et al. 2006). Amalgamating knowledge, power, and self, the theory of governmentality enables comprehensive accounts of social transformations. Such accounts do not depict the working out of reason or rationality. Foucault was not interested in the correspondence of practices to a particular level of rationality. Rather, his "main problem" was "to discover which kind of rationality they [subjects] are using" (Foucault 1981: 226). Governmentality not only analyses the practices legitimising domination or cloaking violence; it also focuses on the inherent knowledgeability, as well as systematization and "rationalization", of the mechanisms involved. Rationality is not equated with higher reasoning or normative judgement; instead, it refers to historical practices within social relations. Or, as Foucault (1991b: 79) puts it:

"I don't believe one can speak of an intrinsic notion of 'rationalization' without on the one hand positing an absolute value inherent in reason, and on the other taking the risk of applying the term empirically in a completely arbitrary way. I think one must restrict one's use of this word to an instrumental and relative meaning. The ceremony of public torture isn't in itself more irrational than imprisonment in a cell; but it's irrational in terms of a type of penal practice which involves new ways of calculating its utility, justifying it, graduating it, etc. One isn't assessing things in terms of an absolute against which they could be evaluated as constituting more or less perfect forms of rationality, but rather examining how forms of rationality inscribe

themselves in practices or systems of practices, and what role they play within them, because it's true that 'practices' don't exist without a certain regime of rationality."

Seen this way, rationality is an aspect inherent to government that contributes to the creation of a discursive field in which the exercise of power is "rational". When using the concept of governmentality to assess any field of practice, Foucault emphasises not only (1) the need to ascertain if the field of analysis adequately represents the social situation under scrutiny, but also (2) how it generates forms of knowledge anew and creates novel ideas that contribute to the "government" of new areas of regulation and intervention, which Foucault terms the 'politics of truth'.

Problematization

To ascertain if the field of analysis adequately represents the social situation under scrutiny, Foucault (1991b) presented the concept of problematization. Problematization involves studying something within the context of the thought that develops it as a problem with a range of possible responses. The assumptions are not those of the author but rather of the interaction between reader and text. For Foucault, 'problematization' is intended to demarcate the methodological process of "historical nominalism" in his studies of realistic conceptions and the "nominalist critique" of those of relativistic positions. Foucault (1985a: 115) says:

"When I say that I am studying the 'problematization' of madness, crime, or sexuality, it is not a way of denying the reality of such phenomena. On the contrary, I have tried to show that it was precisely some real existent in the world which was the target of social regulation at a given moment. The question I raise is this one: How and why were very different things in the world gathered together, characterized, analyzed, and treated as, for example, 'mental illness'? What are the elements which are relevant for a given 'problematization'? And even if I won't say that what is characterized as 'schizophrenia' corresponds to something real in the world, this has nothing to do with idealism. For I think there is a relation between the thing which is problematized and the process of problematization. The problematization is an 'answer' to a concrete situation which is real."

Problematization is an important term that Foucault used in his later academic works and interviews. In characteristic style, he does not define precisely the term. Rather, the definition Foucault intends for the concept of problematization

reveals itself in what is excluded from his explanation of the term. There are two comparatively easily defined terms with which Foucault (2000) compared problematization, which show what it is not: 'polemics' and 'deconstruction'. A *polemic* can be understood as a strongly held stance. In other words, it is a lens that predisposes a view to some notion, with no room for modification by encounter with, or perception of, other phenomena. By contrast, deconstruction seeks to uncover the author's basic assumptions and then endeavours to demonstrate that these assumptions constitute part of a viewpoint.

In his study of mental illness, Foucault explained the relationship between practices and problematizations in terms of wanting "to determine *what could be known* about mental illness at a given period" (quoted in Eribon 1991: 214; emphasis added). Beyond traditional sources of such 'knowledge', that is, medical theories and 'opinion', he writes that there is "a dimension that seemed unexplored"—the *actual practices* involving those designated 'mad'. Foucault (as quoted in Eribon 1991: 214) was interested in the "methods … set in place to constrain them, punish them, or cure them; in short, what was the net-work of institutions and practices in which the madman was simultaneously caught and defined". He wrote:

Rather than perusing the library of scientific books, as one so happily does, I had to visit a group of archives including decrees, regulations, hospital or prison registers, judicial precedents. Working at the Arsenal or the National Archives, I began the analysis of a knowledge whose visible body is neither theoretical or scientific discourse nor literature, but a regular, daily practice.

How an issue is interrogated, classified, systematised—the ways in which it is problematized—show that Foucault was interested in studying the emergence of a phenomena by examining the practices that problematize it. However, I am an organizational anthropologist, and not a historian of ideas. As such, I aim to understand how the problematization of stuckedness emerges from the what, how, and why of people's mundane practices, as opposed to outlining the representations of these that the designers of complex organizations intend.

Production of Knowledge (Knowing)

The other point of significance when discovering the kind of rationality that circulates within a field of action under study is that research should account for the production of new modes of subjectivity linked to governmental mechanisms (Lemke 2000). One can see this point exemplified through a study of self-esteem elaborating various aspects of transformation in 'technologies of the self'. Barbara Cruikshank (1999) analysed self-esteem programs run by the government in California and determined that their implementation involved more than just replacing the political by the personal and collective action by personal dedication. For Cruikshank, this movement is not limited to the personal domain, as its goal is a new politics and a new social order revolutionising ways of governing ourselves, thereby manifesting a redrawing of the borders between the private and the public spheres. Whether unemployment, alcoholism, child abuse etc. can be solved through reform of social-structural factors, when seen through the lens of self-esteem it shifts responsibility to the individual-subjective realm. For Cruikshank (1999), self-esteem then becomes much more about assessment of the self rather than about self respect, as the self continuously has to be measured, judged, and disciplined in order to achieve personal empowerment according to collective yardsticks.

For Foucault (1980), the cleavage between the stated objectives and actual outcomes of a program is not an indication of the purity of the program and the impurity of reality, or vice versa. Rather, he simply sees plural realities and heterogeneous tactics not as the realization of a particular agenda but that which lies "in between" these planes. In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault (1977) discusses delinquency - the unintentional product of the prison system. He does not confront reality and intention, nor does he frame the problem in terms of functionality or adequacy. Instead, Foucault (1980: 195-196) concludes that the 19th century process of institutionalization of the prison caused:

"an entirely unforeseen effect which had nothing to do with any kind of strategic ruse on the part of some meta- or trans-historic subject conceiving and willing it…The prison operated as a process of filtering, concentrating, professionalising and circumscribing a criminal milieu. From about the 1830s onward, one finds an immediate re-utilization of this unintended, negative effect

within a new strategy which came in some sense to occupy this empty space, or transform the negative into a positive. The delinquent milieu came to be re-utilised for diverse political and economic ends, such as the extraction of profit from pleasure through the organization of prostitution. This is what I call the strategic completion (remplissement) of the apparatus".

Stripping the intentional character from government makes more visible the conflicts and resistances that present themselves against technologies and rationalities of government. These resistances are not limited to some kind of obstructive capacity, occurring solely in between the start and end of a program. For Foucault the capacity for failure is inherent to the programs, actively represented by the 'compromises', 'fissures' and 'incoherencies' inside them. For the analysis of governmentality failure of a program does not signal its collapse; rather, it forms the very condition of its existence (see Lemke 2000; O'Malley et al. 1997). In this manner, governmentality is seen as producing new knowing (in between the different realities and heterogeneous strategies) or highlighting previously unnoticed knowing (from within). Knowing is then fed back into the circle of production, and thus, of government.

I argue that stuckedness needs to be explored similarly, non-dualistically, by refraining from a 'rationalist conception of rationality' that renders certain practices as intrinsically unhinged or in danger. Instead, just as Lemke (2000) posits with regard to neo-liberalist practices[11], stuckedness may involve waiting out crisis or perhaps some other condition of being. The notion of stuckedness as a practice of governmentality that destroys certain identities is incomplete: it must also account for the production of new modes of subjectivity linked to the mechanisms that constitute stuckedness, again highlighting the productive nature of a governmental technology.

END OF POLITICS?

Processes of governmentality lend themselves to a dynamic form of analysis that is not limited to stating the 'retreat of politics' or the 'domination of the market' but deciphers the so-called 'end of politics itself as a political programme. In his

[11] Lemke (2000) posits that neo-liberalist practices might not be the reason for social exclusion and marginalisation processes. It could well be that relinquishing social securities and political rights serves as the rationale for such practices in the first place.

work on discipline, Foucault (1977) repeatedly states that the power of the economy was vested on a prior 'economics of power'. Inherent to the amassing of capital are technologies of production and forms of labour that engage human beings in an economically profitable manner. For Foucault, labour power must first be constituted before it can be exploited. Stated another way, life time must be synthesized into labour time, individuals must be subjugated to the production circle, habits must be formed, and time and space must be organized according to a scheme before any economic exploitation can occur. This prior "political investment of the body" (Foucault 1977: 25) represents a complement and extension of Marx's critique of political economy with a "critique of political anatomy".

According to Lemke (2000: 10), Foucault in his studies on governmentality and in his lectures at the *Collège de France* on neo-liberal reason, pushed the notion of a 'critique of political anatomy' one step further by combining the 'microphysics of power' with the macro political question of the state. Here, Foucault was interested in the question of how, historically, power relations have been distilled in the form of the state, without ever being reducible to it. Foucault (1984: 21) sees the state as:

…nothing more than the mobile effect of a regime of multiple governmentality […] It is necessary to address from an exterior point of view the question of the state, it is necessary to analyse the problem of the state by referring to the practices of government.

The "governmentalization of the state", for Foucault (1991a: 103), is not a technique that can be employed by state apparatuses; instead, he understands the state itself as a tactic of government, as a dynamic but historic stabilization of societal power relations. As such, Foucault (1991a: 103) holds that governmentality is:

"at once internal and external to the state, since it is the tactics of government which make possible the continual definition and redefinition of what is within the competence of the state and what is not, the public versus the private, and so on; thus the state can only be understood in its survival and its limits on the basis of the general tactics of governmentality".

Foucault holds that neo-liberal governmentality shows that the so-called 'retreat of the state' is in fact a continuation of government, albeit through a transformed politics, that restructures power relations in society. On the one hand, this encompasses the displacement of forms of practices that were formerly defined in terms of nation state to supranational levels and, on the other hand, the development of forms of sub-politics 'beneath' politics in its traditional meaning. Put another way, the conventional cleavages between state and society, and life-time and labour-time, do not function as a basis but as constituent parts and effects of specific technologies of government.

Foucault's evocation of the end of politics is of paramount import in understanding stuckedness. Stuckedness cannot be seen as a form of intentional governmentality attributed to a source of power. It can only be seen as the relational and affective effect of a regime of multiple governmentalities. When practices of stuckedness are identified, be they instances of pointless replication, or relentless self-control, these processes have been problematized as such by those who live the experience. Stuckedness is constituted by practices that cannot happen without prior political investment, which, while it may seem non-generative, is a function of a mode of government.

To Conclude

In this chapter, I have presented a more fleshed out problematization of stuckedness through an interrogation of what it means for stuckedness to be a form of governmentality. Tracing Foucault's explanations of the analytics of governmentality distils the ways an empirical study of a governmental technology such as stuckedness can be carried out.

To recap, stuckedness is immanent to moving well and it is a governmental technology that espouses persisting with a practice that appears to be non-generative. It is also self-reproducing and has an element of taken-for-grantedness that is required for its survival. In this chapter, this problematization of stuckedness was further fleshed out to show that a governmental technology such as stuckedness is also part of a provisional and versatile melange of governmentality which means it is not a static state. Thus, to understand

stuckedness, one must be willing to see it as a dynamic 'being'. For Foucault, paying attention to the lived experience of a governmental technology, such as stuckedness, means treating it not as discrete types of power relation but as more akin to points on a continuum, or different perspectives on the same issue, as strategies "to structure the field of possible action" (Foucault 1982: 221). Foucault used the notion of 'field' to characterise the co-determined dynamism comprising the detail that structured and shaped the 'being' of stuckedness.

Beyond this, Foucault called for a substantive specificity about the possible field of action. It was in the section on specificity that I addressed the previously highlighted problematic inherent to the examples Hage used to illustrate stuckedness. Given Hage's problematization that crisis pervades the field of action within which the practice of stuckedness plays out among other practices, it is important that this investigation of stuckedness selects a research site where pervasive crisis is indeed perceived by respondents. To this end, I argued that within the organizational settings where my fieldwork would be situated, the word 'complexity' better conveys a sense of pervasive crisis.

Next, I discussed rationality as a two-part aspect inherent to government that contributes to the creation of a discursive field of action. First, Foucault emphasises the need to ascertain if the field of analysis adequately represents the social situation under scrutiny (problematization), which suggests that in this research, I need to connect the observed practices of stuckedness to the process of its problematization. Second, through such an analysis of stuckedness, attention must be paid to how new forms of knowledge are generated that contribute to the government of new areas of regulation and intervention. Foucault terms this the 'politics of truth'.

Finally, this chapter considered Foucault's evocation of a possible 'end of politics' through taking into account the synthesis of life-time into the circular production of practices of stuckedness that form habits and occur in specific time and space dimensions, which speaks to the non-dual orientation necessary for this empirical project.

Cumulatively, these excavations of what it means to scrutinise a form of governmentality suggest that the most appropriate way to research stuckedness in a theoretically grounded fashion would be to further understand Foucault's analytics around the time he introduced the concept of governmentality. In practice, this entails examining the key analytical ideas that Foucault may have started developing in his early work, but continued to use well into his later years, when the notion of governmentality was featured. This work is carried out in the next chapter.

4

TRANSLATING FOUCAULT

The last chapter went into the detail of what constitutes governmentality. The ideas that underpin the concept of governmentality were discussed in order to account for the two illustrations of stuckedness: (1) as immanent to a sense of moving well as something that is a prerequisite for a meaningful life, and (2) as a valorization of self-control in times of pervasive crisis. It was established that stuckedness is a governmental technology that espouses persisting with a practice that appears non-generative but at the same time is immanent to moving well. Additionally, stuckedness is self-reproducing and has an element of taken-for-grantedness that is required for its reproduction. As part of a provisional and versatile equilibrium of multiple governmentalities, stuckedness is not a static state but rather a dynamic state of becoming.

The last chapter concluded that a Foucauldian analysis of stuckedness provides a helpful theoretical grounding for the empirical project. This chapter discusses certain important but previously unaddressed (or marginally addressed) aspects of what it means to conduct a Foucauldian analysis of stuckedness, thus providing a nuanced view of the theoretical basis for the empirical sections (III & IV) that follow.

Within organization studies, Foucault's analytic lens of studying *concrete* practices is often viewed as part of practice theory, or the 'practice turn' as Schatzki (2001) put it, which is an umbrella term for a motley crew of theories focusing on the micro-dynamics of situated, embodied action. Although a genealogical exercise[12] for a polyphonic buzzword such as practice is messy, the

[12] Through the 1960s and 1970s, Foucault variously tried to associate his work with structuralism, poststructuralism and a Nietzschean theory of the body. Later, he arrived at a praxeological understanding in his work on ancient ethics through a framework of analysing the relations between bodies, agency, knowledge and understanding (Foucault 1990; 1992). Pierre Bourdieu (1977) has also explicitly pursued a praxeological project, at least since writing *The Outline of a Theory of Practice*. Influenced by Harold Garfinkel (1967) and to a lesser degree, Erving Goffman (1967), Anthony Giddens' (1979; 1984) 'theory of structuration' represents his own rendition of practice theory. Other scholarship that can be identified as belonging to the family of practice theory are Garfinkel's ethnomethodology (1967) as well as Latour's (1992) and Pickering's (1992) science studies. More recently, Charles Taylor's (1993) model of embodied agency and the self-interpreting animal is a practice account that was followed

use of practice theory as an analytical lens has become fashionable in organization studies. A study of 'practice' is associated with a curiosity about the 'everyday', the 'life-world', influenced by an interpretative or cultural turn in social theory. Currently however, it is less common for academic analyses to delve deeply into the analytic schema behind a single theorist such as Foucault. Marx, Wittgenstein in his later years, Alfred Schütz, as well as early Heidegger (but to a lesser extent) are also well known but rarely scrutinised points of reference to practice theory (Bjørkeng et al. 2009; Rouse 2007).

In terms of Foucault, there are a few reasons why some scholars might tend to shy away from using his views as an analytical lens within organization theory. To start with, Foucault's writings are difficult. Often he defined concepts by what they are not and there is a noteworthy flexibility with which he revised his ideas as his thinking developed. Devereaux Kennedy (1979) identified three reasons why Foucault represents a challenge for scholars. First, he makes the American-centric point that because Foucault's work spanned a wide range of detailed original research dealing with a broad array of topics, it was unfamiliar territory for the university-trained American scholar. In his words, "it forces us, initially at least, to approach Foucault as Faulkner suggested we approach Joyce - that is, as the illiterate Baptist preacher approaches the Bible - with blind faith". Second, there's the issue of Foucault's dense style, which Kennedy highlights based on the remarks of "a respected British historian" that "while it was clear that Michel Foucault had something to say, it was equally clear that he made it as difficult as possible to find out what it was" (Kennedy 1979: 1). The final but most important source of challenge posed by Foucault was that he positioned himself outside the confines of the positivism/historicism debate that had been raging for centuries. He was not interested in establishing a set of conditions which, if met, would equate knowledge with truth. Instead, Foucault not only accepts with equanimity the scandal of existing knowledge – namely that people at different times and places have known differently - he makes this scandal the focal point of his analysis seeking to identify its historical conditions of possibility.

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by Theodore Schatzki's (1996) explicitly practice-oriented, *Social Practices: A Wittgensteinian Approach to Human Activity and the Social*.

A Foucauldian analysis is always an analysis translated through the lens of the scholar conducting the study. Perhaps this seems obvious - aren't all analyses conducted through the lens of the person carrying out the study? The irony however, is that as an academy, we tend to reify theoretical frameworks that *seem* easily transferable, that is, are used in a consistent manner, across numerous studies, by a number of scholars. Indeed, it is this precise tendency that Kennedy was suggesting, makes it difficult for scholars to engage with Foucault. In the process we obfuscate the reality that, regardless of how consignable a theory is, it is still always deployed in a situated, embodied, 'regional' way. The choice of focusing on Foucault's analytics as a theoretical frame starkly confirms this reality. For example, it has long been established that actor-network theory (ANT) owes many of its ideas to Foucault (Fox 2000). Yet, as a theoretical frame, a Foucauldian analysis appears far less structured compared to ANT. It is also plausible that because a Foucauldian epistemology is not easily applicable, scholars believe that such a lens is unlikely to attract a significant audience. After all, to use Foucault in a significant way, it would not be sufficient to read a few high quality articles on how a Foucauldian lens is employed. One would need to have read a work highly dispersed through lectures, interviews, and books.

An alternate perspective on why current scholarship shies away from scrutinising the contributions of key practice theorists is that articles that highlight one aspect of studying practices (e.g. strategy-as-practice, communities of practice, learning-as-practice) have gained momentum within the academy, even if they sometimes sit within a functionalist view of the world, in contradiction to a praxeological lens. A focus on concrete practices assumes an ecological model in which agency is distributed between humans and non-humans, where the analytic primacy of actions lies in their performances through a network of continuous and provisional connections. The way practice has been employed within some segments of organizational scholarship distracts from this fundamental notion. For example, as Clegg, Kornberger and Rhodes (2007: 85) note with reference to the 'strategy as practice' strand, it concerns itself with practice but remains within the tradition of mainstream functional research: institutionalization comes at a price.

In this thesis, as opposed to integrating intertwined reflections or basing my empirical excavation on a broad set of interpretations of the notion of practice, I focus on translating Foucault's views about investigating phenomena to examine how and why certain elements coalesce empirically to be problematized as stuckedness. My introduction to the obvious but 'unseen' notion of translation was through the work of Czarniawska and Sevón (1996; 2005), who attempt to understand the circuitutious trajectory of management ideas and practices[13]. They drew on the sociology of translation adopted by Michel Callon and Bruno Latour (Latour 1986: 267):

The spread in time and space of anything — claims, orders, artefacts, goods — is in the hands of people; each of these people may act in many different ways, letting the token drop, or modifying it, or deflecting it, or betraying it, or adding to it, or appropriating it.

In Latour's translation of French philosopher Michel Serres (Brown 2002) translation is a more-than a linguistic affair that can take a multiplicity of forms. For Czarniawska and Sevón (1996, 2005), translation is also transformation and transference. With each act of translation, the translator and the translated emerges re-constituted in some way. They talk about travelling ideas but this notion of translation also marks how one may study concrete practices, whether through observation as they are being established and re-established, or, in Foucault's manner, studied genealogically.

In the empirical study of stuckedness I observe symbols being inscribed, stabilised or objectified by embodied technologies (often linguistic). The conduct of this ethnography and the co-creation of the analysis is based primarily on how I translate Foucault, through a personal ontological lens built up over three decades, infused with ideas of everything being immanent to everything else. From the very beginning, as a child being brought up by parents who were themselves translating the notion of immanence central to Hindu philosophy, such notions were a central part of my life-world. As such, in translating Foucault, I am also translating how I understood the world before I read anything by

[13] They argue that management ideas are translated into objects (models, books, transparencies), find their way to places other than where they were created, and get translated into new kinds of objects, and/or actions, which, through repetition (or recursivity?) may become institutionalised, thereby opening themselves up to being summarized through abstract ideas, and so on.

Foucault. My engagement with scholarship related to translation of the key aspects of what it means to investigate phenomena with a Foucauldian lens started in the previous chapter where, through an exposition on governmentality, aspects of Foucault's analytic schema were covered.

The main aim of this chapter is to fill the remaining gaps of what it means to conduct a Foucauldian analysis of phenomena. In this manner, this chapter makes a specific contribution to understanding the wider expanse of Foucault's contribution to non-dualistic analytics. First, I address Foucault's shifting conception of discourse as he made the epistemological journey from archaeologies to genealogies. Second, I consider the underlying themes most apparent (that have not already been examined in Chapter 2) within his genealogical focus on concrete practices. Specifically, these are the concepts of materiality, power/knowledge, and the idea of the 'subject'. Consequently, we will see that the theory of governmentality is actually how Foucault brings together concepts of materiality, power relations, fields of knowledge and the self, thus providing clear guidance as to how one would carry out an analysis of stuckedness (as a governmental technology).

Discourse: Archaeologies to Genealogies

Foucault's contribution to the study of practice primarily lies in his theorising on discourse, which for Foucault is both constituent of practice and a distinct practice in its own right. Along with his academic purpose, his conception of discourse changed during the course of his scholarship. Comprehension of Foucault's notion of discourse requires an understanding of his approach to methods, namely his archaeological and genealogical periods. His *archaeologies* aim to unpack the historical presuppositions of a given system of thought, while his g*enealogies* are interested in tracing the historical process of descent and emergence by which a given thought system or process comes into being and is subsequently transformed.

STATEMENTS, RULES & FORMATIONS

In the *archaeologies* Foucault investigates the rules of formation of discourses, or discursive systems. Technically speaking, an archaeology scrutinises discourse at the level of statements (*énoncés*), searching for rules that explain the appearance of the phenomena under study (Foucault 1972). Importantly, Foucault highlights the consequence of the functional use of discourse, therefore not equating discourse with propositions or sentences, phonemes, morphemes, or syntagms (Olssen 2009). Rather, he argues that the specific statements that circulate within a discourse only operate as *connaissance* because they belong to a systematically interconnected "discursive formation". Foucault (1972: 16) distinguishes between *connaissance*, meaning "the relation of the subject to the object and the formal rules that govern it" and *savoir*, which refers to the "conditions that are necessary in a particular period for this or that type of object to be given to *connaissance* and for this or that type of enunciation to be formulated". Put another way, *connaissance* is positive knowledge on a given topic or in a given discipline; *savoir* is the field of knowledge or discursive formation at that moment, which makes this positive knowledge possible. Accordingly, as per the specifications of the discursive field, Foucault (1972) structured his investigations by thematically grouping concepts and statements that were comprehensible together, identifying 'serious' statements and those who were authorised to speak 'seriously', and ascertaining the questions and procedures that legitimated those statements.

In the archaeological method, it is rules not of syntax and logic but those that operate beneath the level of consciousness and demarcate the bounds of conception in a particular era and field that govern *épistèmes* or discursive formations[14] (systems of thought and knowledge).

There is a similarity between Foucault and Wittgenstein (1953) in that the central focus is on language. Where Foucault's (1972) interest was informal, official documents, as befits a historian of ideas, in order to accurately chart historically constituted discursive frames, Wittgenstein (1953) deliberated on ordinary

[14] Foucault (1978) maintained that the History of Madness should be read as an intellectual excavation of the radically different discursive formations that governed talk and thought about madness from the 17th through to the 19th centuries.

language and common sense as a form of life. Neither Wittgenstein nor Foucault saw language as an expression of inner states but as a historically constituted system, which was social in both origin and use. Language was for them, a compound of interactional and public norms. Meaning is to be found within the language game for Wittgenstein and the discourse for Foucault. For both theorists, the focus includes an individual's patterns of socialization, the nature of their concepts, the operative norms and conventions that constitute the context for the activity and the origin of the concepts utilised. In this manner, both abandoned the phenomenological subject, moving beyond the dualism of positing the world as a product of the mind. The subject is a product of language, as spoken (*parole*) and as documented historically.

Locating the Social: Relevant Debates

Alfred Schütz's (1967) social phenomenology, as it is detailed in his suitably titled *The Phenomenology of the Social World*, suggests the reconstruction of the order in which 'inside' mental acts of consciousness are implemented through phenomenological 'intentionality' to outward objects to which meaning is attributed by the consciousness. As Husserl elucidated in his fifth *Cartesian Meditations* (1960), the social is thus the *idea* of a world comprising overlapping meaning. Despite the 'mind' not being associated with unconscious cognitive structures but with the ordering of intentional acts in consciousness, the social still resides in the mind. In both classical structuralism (de Saussure 1977; Lévi-Strauss 1966) and Schützian phenomenology, "the idea that mind is a substance, place, or realm that houses a particular range of activities and attributes" endures (Schatzki 1996: 22). The structures or interpretation located are focused on inside causes of outside behaviour. Where they diverge is in their construal of this 'inside' as a structure or a process. What can be witnessed here is a clear, neo-Cartesian inside–outside distinction between mind and body. According to Reckwitz (2002), the body therefore assumes the status of an epiphenomenon, carrying out that which the mind (or consciousness) has stipulated.

On the other hand, poststructuralists and semioticians have 'decentred the subject', locating the social within discourses or sign-systems. As mentioned

previously, Foucault's earlier writings in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1972) best characterise this position, where it is proposed that discourse should not be identified with just the mental qualities assumed to underlie a document. Rather, discourse should be seen as a succession of external events that manifest symbolic structures ('formative rules'). Similarly, Clifford Geertz (1973) outlines a symbolic anthropology, where a 'thick description' of the cultural refers not to that which resides in peoples' minds but to the symbolism culturally attributed to material objects, including behavioural actions.[15]

Geertz (1973) held that the social could be explained without delving into the 'insideness' of mental qualities but rather staying on the level of signs and texts in their communality. Before his genealogies, Foucault (1972) also wrote that the social could not reside at the level of the psyche. Rather, the social was to be found in signs in their 'materiality'. Emerging in the later part of the 1900s the concern with practice and materiality can be seen as a critique of both phenomenological and structuralist theories that reify the mind.

Jürgen Habermas' (1981; 1985) theory of 'communicative action' holds that agents refer to a plane of non-subjective semantic propositions and pragmatic rules relating to how signs are employed in their speech acts. Here, the social is situated in an assemblage of symbolic interactions between agents, where language takes on the characteristics of a Popperian 'world 3' (Popper 1978), with propositions and rules that cannot be reduced to psychological consciousness. Despite interactions being the process through which meaning is transferred, Habermas reveals an affinity for the model of rule-governed linguistic behaviour. He judges the mind to be a creation of social interactions where the outside-to-inside socialization of social rules and meanings results in the mental. In a similar fashion, Foucault's later views similarly hold that mental qualities are more than a 'theme'; they are as 'real' as bodies or discourse, but he diverges from a

[15] A third approach is located at the crossroads of semiotics and phenomenology in the constructivist theory of social systems outlined by Niklas Luhmann (1995), who holds that communication is grounded in systems that convey difference. Luhmann defines cycles of communication as self-regenerating systems, where codes, know-how, and interpretation reside. For Luhmann therefore, the social resides in acts of communication, for they are comprehensible without reference to psychological traits. Here, symbolism is located outside the mind, in sequences of signs, symbols, discourse, communication (in a specific sense), or 'texts'.

Habermasian viewpoint on where the social is located.[16] For Habermas, a focus on concrete practices eschews the logic of different realms; both bodily and mental acts are enmeshed and required constituent parts to social practice.

Foucault's (1972) archaeological method focused on the comparison of different discursive formations in different periods. While such comparisons could establish the contingency of a given way of thinking by showing that previous ages had thought very differently (and perhaps as effectively), no explanation was forthcoming regarding why thought transitioned from one notion to the next.

Discourse as Practice

The genealogical[17] method overcomes the problem of being unable to explain the contingency of entrenched contemporary positions by showing that a given system of thought, or *épistème*, is an offspring of the contingent turns of history, as opposed to some rational outcome of a trend (Olssen 2009). In his genealogies, Foucault (1977; 1978; 1990; 1992) focuses on the specific nature of the relations between discursive and non-discursive practices and on the material conditions of emergence of practices and of discursive systems of knowledge. Where the structure of discourse is more significant for its explanatory prowess within his archaeologies, his genealogies place a heavier emphasis on practices, power, and institutions.

Foucault's enlarging of his understanding is evident as early as 1972. A 'discursive formation' comprises the relationship between "objects, types of statement, concepts, or thematic choices" (Foucault, 1972: 38, 107). For Foucault (1972: 59-60):

"These relations are established between institutions, economic and social processes, behavioural patterns, systems of norms, techniques, types of classification, modes of characterization; and these relations are not present in the object; it is not they that are deployed when the object is being analysed; they do not indicate the web, the immanent rationality, that

[16] Habermas (1981; 1985) is also critiquing structuralist and phenomenological theories. He rejects the radical hermeneutics of early Foucault (1972), Geertz (1973) and Luhmann (1995) by contending that interactions are made by agents, who have minds to internalise and then through speaking, use the contents of this non-subjective realm of meanings.

[17] The term 'genealogy' was intended to evoke Nietzsche's genealogy of morals, particularly with its suggestion of complex, mundane, inglorious origins, i.e. in no way part of any grand scheme of progressive history (Gutting 2011).

ideal nervure that reappears totally or in part when one conceives of the object in the truth of its concept. They do not define its internal constitution, but what enables it to appear, to juxtapose itself with other objects, to situate itself in relation to them, to define its difference, its irreducibility, and even perhaps its heterogeneity, in short, to be placed in a field of exteriority"

Put another way, Foucault's position was that discursive relations are not inherent in the discourse and neither are they exterior relations that can be limited or forced to say certain things in certain circumstances. Rather, for Peci, Vieira and Clegg (2009) as well as this author, the boundaries of a field of objects define a credible knowledge viewpoint and solidify norms for the explanation of thought (Foucault 1977: 199). Thus, much as the products of Bourdieu's habitus, each discursive practice implies a play of prescriptions that designate exclusions and choices. It can be argued, therefore, that through its systemic formation of the objects being discussed discourse is a practice. The set of rules immanent to a practice define its specific nature, revealing the praxeological nature of discourse.

MATERIALITY

In Foucault's later works, the discursive is consistently conceptualised as an ontologically autonomous domain which interacts with the practices of the non-discursive. In this way, Foucault underscores the materiality of the discursive systems, both within themselves and in their relations to the non-discursive.

Deleuze (1986: 124) notes that for Foucault, every form is cardinally a compound of relations between forces[18]. Therefore, the next line of enquiry is necessarily based on what forces propel the form to enter into a relation, and subsequently, what may be the resulting form. Like Bourdieu's (1977) habitus, these forces contribute the form and the form, in turn, contributes to the forces. For example, Foucault observes in *Discipline and Punish* (1977) that punishment is not solely a result of the force of the discourse. Rather, machines and dungeons are material goods for accomplishing torture, which draw meaning from the discourse of punishment. Foucault demonstrates how the social forms of discipline and punishment are embodied by a synthetic and relatively autonomous convergence

[18] Force is tangible, involving material action. Whether the actant is an exploding missile or someone experiencing fear, the effects are material. Human intervention is not necessary for force, as is evidenced by the Big Bang. Force is also relational: it is therefore simultaneously active and resistive.

of knowledge, technique and material objects. Such a problematization, as discussed in the previous chapter, is not the characterization of a pre-existing object or the manufacture through discourse of a non-existing object. Rather, it is the entirety of discursive and non-discursive practices that pushes something experienced into the tussle between fact and fiction, setting the problematic as an object for the mind, thereby making the given a question (Foucault 2001: 118).

Various scholars have expanded upon the focus on materiality in the literature and I discuss below some renditions that have helped me translate Foucault on this subject. In his analysis of the material structuring of human action and the introduction of the concept of habitus as predisposing sets of embodied skills underpinning a logic of practice, Bourdieu channels Heidegger's (1996) earlier emphasis on the primacy of *being-in-the-world*. Reminiscent of Foucault's interest in the flux of being as opposed to a state of being (see Chapter 3, section 1), this can be considered an experience of 'in-dwelling' that is so thoroughly intertwined within that it is not perceived as an object that we apprehend but an extension of us. Ingold (2000), following Heidegger, differentiates between a 'building' and a 'dwelling' mode of engagement. The 'building' mode of engagement presumes an initial *separation* between the perceiver and the world, such that before one acts, one is assumed to have an idea, intention or design in mind and it is this mental content that directs all human activity (Ingold 2000: 178). On the other hand, in the 'dwelling' mode, engagement is about feeling the way "*through* a world that is itself in motion, continually coming into being through the combined action of human and non-human agencies" (Ingold 2000: 155) through everyday mundane activities such as turning on the light switch, eating with chopsticks, manoeuvring a computer mouse, to very involved activities such as a thousand-piece jigsaw puzzle. Extensive practical skill is involved in feeling our way through the world. However, more importantly for Bourdieu (1977) and Heidegger (1996), such background skills do not arise from beliefs, rules or principles. Instead, such skills are passed on by society through our individual habitus, without needing to traverse through our consciousness.

Another body of literature on materiality that explicitly draws on Foucault is that of Actor-Network Theory (ANT), which is increasingly being used within the field

of organization studies (Bruni 2005; Bloomfield & Vurdubakis 1999; Hull 1999; Law & Singleton 2005; Winiecki 2009; Mutch 2002; Dent 2003; Whittle & Spicer 2008; Bergström & Diedrich 2011; Knights & Scarbrough 2010; Fox 2005; 2009). ANT stresses that "there is no society, no social realm and no social ties, but [all that exist are just] translations between mediators that may generate traceable associations" (Latour 2005: 108). These translations are the obligatory passage or nodal points that are in continuous motion explaining how a practice unfolds within any actor-network (Law & Callon 1992). If we retrace our steps through the earlier exposition on governmentality, we see how structuration (immanence of structure to agency and vice versa) creates for governmentality an equilibrium that is always provisional and 'versatile', indicating Foucault's influence. For Foucault, the tussle of harmony and tension between mechanisms which compel, and processes through which the self is self-constructed or modified, is continuous. In this way, translation is not just important to understanding Foucault but has a central role as a device in explaining how and why certain relations come together to be problematized as stuckedness.

Levelling the Field: Human & Non-Human Actants[19]

On the topic of materiality, I specifically want to address how 'things' are often necessary elements of practising. Thus, as far as the production and reproductions of stuckedness is concerned, subject–subject relations are no more germane than subject–object relations. The social, for Foucault, is located, produced and reproduced within the stable relation between agents (body/mind amalgam) and things within certain practices. In this manner, the analysis of stuckedness necessarily eschews seeing objects primarily as objects of knowledge and thus as cultural symbols, or purely as generating symbolic categories or intentional interpretations. In this research, things are not just objects of the knowing subject. They have a materiality but as they are always-already-interpreted, they are also the site of the social.

[19] In this thesis, I borrow the term 'actant' from Actor-Network Theory to escape the anthropomorphism of 'actor' and as it is also used in ANT, to highlight that non-human entities also 'act'; for example, radiation acts upon atomic structures.

ANT approaches consider agencies other than the human in the understanding of these translations. For example, as Fox (2005) points out, Lave and Wenger (1991) illustrate how Vai and Golan Tailors learn their craft through exerting force on the cloth and vice versa, as well as each other. The tailors exert a force on the cloth by cutting, tearing, sewing, etc. Business competition *forces* the masters to *constrain* the apprentices, allowing them only to do the simplest tasks initially, to *ensure* that no cloth is wasted. To remain in their master's employ, the apprentices *must* heed instructions carefully. At every point, there is some modicum of force being exerted; Foucault's emphasis on force simply graduates our perception from thinking of force as one individual curtailing another, to instead thinking about force relations operating at every point in a network.

Building on ANT concepts (Latour 1992; Callon 1986), sociotechnical ensembles (Bijker 1995), mangles of practice (Pickering 1995), object-centred sociality (Knorr-Cetina 1997), relational materiality (Law 2004), and material sociology (Beunza et al. 2006), Orlikowski (2007) played a key role in introducing the concept of socio-materiality to organization studies[20]. By this, I refer to her insistence on speaking of the social and the material together, without ascribing to the dualism that addresses them as distinct, even if interacting, phenomena. In this way, 'sociomateriality' (Orlikowski, 2007) only features certain aspects of ANT; however, it underscores the equally central agency of non-human actants to practising. Drawing on Barad (2003: 801), Orlikowski (2007: 1436) quotes:

"Language matters. Discourse matters. Culture matters. But there is an important sense in which the only thing that does not seem to matter anymore is matter".

She contends that outside of the study of particular instances of technology adoption, diffusion, and organizational use, the considerable amount of materiality inherent to organizing (such as tables, chairs, bodies, clothes, buildings, rooms, cars, computers, phones, pens, paper, as well as the more intangible transmission of material such as electrical systems, water and sewage infrastructure, and data and voice networks) is ignored (Orlikowski 2007). Organizational subjects tend to engage with structures assuming that they have

[20] See also *The Status of the Object* (Pels et al. 2002) and *The Rise of Objects in the Study of Organizations* (Engeström & Blackler 1991).

two dimensions: that of the artefact and that of its use. Rather, far from being preordained, these structures are constituted and reconstituted in the usual, situated practice of certain users using certain structures in certain circumstances (Orlikowski 2000: 425).

Equally, without being labelled as such, the tendency to emphasise the social and the material can also be found in the scholarship of Suchman et al. (1999), who theorize that technologies acquire identities that relate to the conditions and practices where they are embedded. Thus, how they are used must be a key consideration of technology design. Similarly, for Carlile (2002), practical knowledge is structured in relation to the artefacts that are engaged with in everyday work, as well as the outcomes from the creation and manipulation of those artefacts by those actors. Where Orlikowski (2007: 1438) can be seen to extend Carlile's (2002) approach would be in her commitment to the notion that the idea of materiality as "pre-formed substances" must be replaced with that of "performed relations". In this manner, Orlikowski (2007) depicts the recursive entwinement of the social and material that surface in continuing situated practice (Pickering 1995; Latour 2005). Seen this way, a practice has to be a form of 'knowing action' that relates to and connects those resources available and negotiates all the constraints present. For Czarniawska (2004), knowledge of how to align humans and artefacts within a sociotechnical ensemble constructs and maintains an action-net, where every interwoven element has a place and a sense of its necessity in the interaction.

Through the post-humanist notion of seeing practice as socio-material, the term borrowed since its resurrection by Mol (2002) and Suchman (2007), Orlikowski (2007) urges us to explicitly signify, through our language, the constitutive agentic effects of the social and the material in everyday organizational life. Foucault highlights this through the agentic co-determination of governmental processes that decentre the human subject (Knorr-Cetina 1997) and reconfigure agency (Latour 2005) as a capacity realized through the associations of humans and materiality.

Foucault's change in his treatment of the materiality of discourse over the course of his writing is largely regarded as more of a 'change of emphasis' than an 'abrupt reversal,' or even a serious abandonment of his earlier positions (Olssen 2009). Poster (1984), Dreyfus and Rabinow (1982), Smart (1985) and Barrett (1988) all hold that Foucault's archaeological investigations presumed that the deep structures of human life and culture were explicable in relation to the structures of language. According to Dreyfus and Rabinow (1982), dissatisfied with the achievements of *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, the notion of genealogy places a much greater emphasis on practices and social institutions and on the relations between discursive and extra-discursive dimensions of reality. Similarly, Barrett (1988) holds that in his archaeology period, Foucault expounded a view of the "production of things by words" (Barrett 1988: 130) and operated at an unconscious level that was phenomenologically and epistemologically detached from the discursive formations he studied. However, later in *Discipline and Punish* (1977) and *The History of Sexuality* (1978), "practice is favoured over theory" and "discourse is understood as a way of organizing practices" (Barrett 1988: 134). It is worth emphasising that for Foucault discourse (as a network of practices) comes to represent neither words nor things but the regularities internal to the networks of relations between words and things. Thus, language remains a part of discourse, but discourse is more than language. Language itself employs the use of complex bodily skills and is a social practice that integrally involves a rich practical and perceptual engagement with our material surroundings. In the move to genealogies, Foucault no longer regarded himself as detached from the social practices he studied. In fact, Barrett (1988: 135) suggests that the transition in itself is indicative of Foucault's discovery of the concept of power (force), which is also evident through his development of the concept of governmentality[21]. Active with power, discourse is able to produce, limit, exclude, frame, hide, scar, cut, distort, etc. In this way, discourse is the manifestation of a material relativity: the enabling conditions that define the limits for thought and constitute the historical a priori of an era. It is also through the incorporation of power into his analysis of discursive relations that Foucault makes a central but often unrecognised

[21] While Foucault moves to investigating new problems with new methods and strategies, it must be highlighted that he does not repudiate the central theoretical insights found in *The Archaeology of Knowledge*; rather, he employs them for different purposes (see Foucault 1991c: 11).

contribution[22] to practice theory because as we will see in the discussion that follows, power is everywhere and cannot be discounted in the analysis of phenomena.

POUVOIR/SAVOIR

Discipline and Punish (1977) and *The History of Sexuality Volume 1* (1978) are where Foucault starts to examine the empirical interactions between human and non-human actants, and incorporates the dimension of power as an explicit category. However, even earlier on, Foucault (2001) asserts that the goals of power and the goals of knowledge cannot be separated. It is here that we see the foundations of his *pouvoir/savoir* (power/knowledge) formulation, that is, in knowing we control and in controlling we know.

Well in advance of his querying of power relations, Foucault was writing about the histories of knowledge. However, it was not the particular knowledge claims that he investigated that fascinated Foucault. Rather, as was discussed earlier, in his archaeologies, Foucault was mainly concerned with the epistemic context (discursive formation or field) that enabled certain knowledge to come into being by making it possible to contemporaneously discuss those claims. Further to this, Foucault was also interested in showing how it was possible for such a discursive field to undergo changes such that what counts as a serious knowledge claim at one juncture will be unable to even be considered as the truth in another. For example, when the British landed on Australian soil in 1788, the land was legally defined as *Terra Nullius*, or unoccupied. This meant the Aboriginal people who inhabited this land were not considered human occupants of the land. Some centuries later, grave acts of racism and cultural genocide notwithstanding, this truth claim does not hold anymore. In 1967, 90.77 per cent of Australians voted to change the Constitution to allow Aborigines to be counted in the census and for the Commonwealth to make laws for them as a people.

[22] Indeed, as is evident in the increasing number of conference sub-themes and journal articles using theoretical lenses such as ANT and performativity, the absorption of practice theory into the domain of organizational studies owes much to Foucault's emphasis on power relations in his later work.

[Production Note: The figure is not included in this digital copy due to copyright restrictions.]

FIGURE 4: ARTWORK FROM THE 1967 REFERENDUM CAMPAIGN TO INCLUDE ABORIGINES IN THE AUSTRALIAN CENSUS (AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER STUDIES 1967).

While Foucault's earlier work[23] discusses the morphing of discursive formations through a structural focus on statements in documents, *Discipline and Punish* expanded the scope of Foucault's investigations. Practices of surveillance, elicitation and documentation of inmates makes them more knowable and through knowing this detail, a continuing and growing control of behaviour is possible, which in turn provides new potential for scrutiny and discovery. For Foucault, these intertwining techniques of power and knowledge were born of a two-stage process. Initially intended as a means to exert control over what was viewed as dangerous social elements these techniques became concerned with increasing the utility of those using them. Foucault (1977; quoted in Gutting 2011) highlighted in particular how reform concerned the increased efficiency of the control deployed – "to punish less, perhaps; but certainly to punish better". Additionally, in a process described by Foucault as 'swarming' of disciplinary techniques, this model of control rooted in the modern prison came to be

[23] He proposed that there were important shifts in what counted as serious discussion of madness, disease, wealth, language, or life, shifts that were evident in the historical archives. His aim was not to explain those shifts, but rather to display the structural differences they embody and to some extent document the parallels between contemporary shifts in several discursive formations. Foucault was especially concerned to demonstrate the parallel shifts in several discursive fields in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, through which the modern sciences of 'man' replaced the classical tables of representation that displayed the order of things.

applicable by entire societies through the surveillance and bodily ordering of children in schools, workers in factories, and soldiers in armies. Therefore:

One can speak of the formation of a disciplinary society in this movement that stretches from the enclosed disciplines, a sort of social "quarantine," to an indefinitely generalizable mechanism of "panopticism" (Foucault 1977: 216).

State arithmetic, or statistics, such as a population census can be seen as an outcome of 'swarming'. Foucault does not consider panoptic deployment to be the result of explicit decisions by some central controlling agency or social order. Rather, true to genealogical pedigree, Foucault (1977: 254) demonstrates how techniques and institutions often, for quite unrelated and innocuous reasons, coalesced to create new object domains: "biographical unities" such as homosexuality or aboriginality; significant distributions, such as the heredity of illness, a low-income household, or an 'advanced maternal age pregnancy'; signs of a condition of life, such as cholesterol level or T-cell counts, and child developmental structures, such as reading grade-levels or appropriate age-group attainments. Consequently, new kinds of human subjects were born, producing new forms of knowledge along with new objects to know and new relations of power.

Foucault recognised that the emergence of this comprehensive knowledge of individuals was closely linked with the emergence of the economic and political issue of 'population', that is, thinking of a population as labour, as growth, as resources and as wealth. When one thinks of knowledge about populations, norms are a common representation of a distribution of traits around a mean. For Foucault (1977), 'normalising judgement' and the construction of norms was what connected individuating knowledge with that of a population.

In Discipline and Punish, Foucault studied the development in Europe of the 'gentler' way of imprisoning criminals as opposed to their torture or execution. Briefly summarised, Foucault (1977) argued that the historical trajectory of the Enlightenment, understood as the movement to describe the natural world more accurately and enact a more humane form of social organization should be grasped instead as a series of shifts in the exercise of power. The three primary

techniques of control by Foucault's modern 'disciplinary' society were: hierarchical observation, normalizing judgment, and the examination[24] (Gutting 2011).

Although Foucault demonstrates the connection between an institutional use of knowledge as a means to control, the more important and interesting linkage he develops is how knowledge or a truth can only exist contemporaneously to a specific network of power relations. However, Foucault did not often expand on the way he conceptualised power/knowledge and how that was different to the more conventional views on conceptualising knowledge, that is, that there is such a thing as an authentic truth claim that exists outside a network of power relations. That said, as we saw in Chapter 3, Foucault repeatedly situated his reflections in a break with sovereign conceptions of power in which lies the foundation of his belief in the dynamism and interconnectedness of power relations and knowledge.

Objections to Epistemic Sovereignty

Sovereignty as Foucault (1978) understood it had three key dimensions. First, sovereignty is located above or outside of a conflict, thus providing a unifying system for competing claims. Second, legitimacy, often represented by laws or rights, is what determines which claims are acceptable. Seen in unison, these two dimensions bestow upon the sovereign the mantle of protector of all against all and dispenser of justice. Based on this view, the third dimension of sovereignty refers to the limitlessness of sovereign power. However, in reality, the exercise of

[24] Firstly, Foucault underscores the concern with what people have not done or with their non-observance, i.e. a person's failure to reach required standards. This explains the primary function of modern disciplinary systems: to reform, not revenge deviant behaviour such that it aligns with society's standards or norms (Wartenburg 1990: 150). Secondly, the normalization of precise norms is quite different from the older system of judicial punishment where each action is judged to be normal or abnormal, legal or illegal, etc. Manifestations of normalization pervade our society, indicating membership of a homogeneous grouping such as national standards for educational programs, for medical practice, for industrial processes and products, etc. However, normalization simultaneously individualises by "making it possible to measure gaps, to determine levels, to fix specialities and to render the differences useful by fitting them one to another" (Foucault 1977: 184). Lastly, the examination is the convergence of a hierarchical observation with normalizing judgment, where the "the deployment of force and the establishment of truth" is unified (Foucault 1977: 184). The truth is elicited from those under examination (it reveals what they know or what is the state of their health) and controls their behaviour (by forcing them to study or directing them to a course of treatment). Control is further bolstered through the situating of those being examined within a 'field' of documentation such as absentee records for schools, patients' charts in hospitals, turning the individual into a 'case', both a scientific example and an object of care, where caring presents an opportunity for control.

sovereign power can only be punctuating and negative because it can only be active where a violation has occurred and there is a legitimate need for punishment or restraint. Thus, "power in this instance was essentially a right of seizure: of things, time, bodies, and ultimately life itself" (Foucault, 1978: 136).

Foucault explains that there are two main problems with conceiving sovereignty in this manner. First, the deployment of power to constrain or penalize behaviour that is non-conformist is not restricted to a specific location such as the State.

Whether one attributes to it the form of the prince who formulates rights, of the father who forbids, of the censor who enforces silence, or of the master who states the law, in any case one schematizes power in a juridical form, and one defines its effects as obedience (Foucault, 1978: 85).

Second, although envisaged as a being at the pinnacle of the hierarchy of judgement, no sovereign could realise this formulation in practice. Thus, stripped of any real political location, sovereignty remained a theoretical construction against which political practice is measured. It is on these grounds that Foucault opposed the idea that there was such a thing as a sovereign position that could determine the legitimacy of a struggle. Rather, he held that political critique based on principles of sovereignty misunderstands its targets because even as many forms and practices of sovereign power continue, they are gradually absorbed and maintained through power relations that were dispersed through extensive social networks, where power is circuitous and multi-directional. These practices of sovereign power do not simply punish on the basis of something being legitimate or not. Conversely, they are crucial to the proliferation of different types of 'commodities' such as health, well being, social cohesion, and knowledge. Based on this reasoning, Foucault held that tying the conception of power to sovereignty fails to account for the far more complex ways in which power is nominally deployed through the state.

Breaking free from conceiving of power through the lens of sovereignty and legitimacy, Foucault underscores what is perhaps his most fundamental reason for the juxtaposition of knowledge/power. Taking up a political position amidst a struggle in which one finds oneself is one thing. It is altogether a different act to

seek a point of epistemic sovereignty whilst outside the ongoing conflicts from which such a stance could be validated, which appears to be Foucault's main objection to sovereign conceptions of power and is key to how the production of knowledge is conceived within this thesis.

The traditional view that knowledge comprises internally consistent networks of truths that can be sifted out from a collection of conflicting claims is based on these truths being legitimated through some rational means, akin to the courts adjudicating if a state is behaving according to the norms of sovereign power. Even so, there is no knowledge produced as such. All that this legitimation allows is for a claim to emerge as truth through the suppression of irrationality, that is, those claims that do not cohere with the established order of things. Conceiving knowledge this way ignores the micro-practices through which specific knowledge claims and their corresponding objects are produced. What Foucault originally termed a discursive formation can be viewed as a parallel to this network of micro-practices that he talks about in his later work, which is the locus of the production of knowing subjects and truth claims based on the power/knowledge relations within the network. Critiques conceiving that knowledge is only produced in concert with a particular network of relations are based on a fundamental incompatibility, according to Foucault's view. For example, they are based on either a critique of power based on the idea of what is legitimate, or recognition of power as right; either the validity of knowledge being based on a scientific standpoint (epistemic sovereignty), or the belief that all knowledge claims are of equal stature (Rorty 1985; Taylor 1984). All of these notions of critique are founded on a position of epistemic sovereignty. Additionally, characterizations ascribed to Foucault, such as that of epistemological relativism and/or truth as reducible to domination, are reflections of critical standpoints that seek to adjudicate the claims competing parties can legitimately make by locating themselves externally to the epistemic or political conflict (in a sovereign position). While his critics[25] could not (yet) envision how power or knowledge could exist without sovereignty, Foucault's focus on the dynamism of

[25] See Rouse (2005) for a more detailed discussion of why Foucault's critics found his position problematic.

power/knowledge is crucial to how his account overcomes the issue of sovereignty.

Dynamic Power Relations

To recap what was previously demonstrated in Chapter 3, Foucault rejected the reification of power. Power for Foucault (1978: 94), "is not something that is acquired, seized, or shared, something that one holds on to or allows to slip away", but instead, "is employed through a net-like organization"(Foucault 1980: 98). This idea is key in Foucault's work because he distinguished power as "everywhere not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere" (Foucault 1978: 93).

Power cannot be possessed, have a location in a dominant agent, or a direction towards a subordinate agent; it can only be dispersed through a complex network of elements. In an illustration helpful to understanding Foucault's account, Wartenburg (1990) illustrates power relations as flowing through a coordinated social alignment where "the present actions of a dominant agent count on the future actions of the aligned agents being similar to their past actions". These social alignments essentially denote that even in instances where one agent may be described as exercising power over another, that power depends on other agents or groups of agents acting in harmony with the actions of the dominant agent.

Foucault emphasises the additional point of materiality, that is, the heterogeneity of the elements aligned, through which power is distributed. They include human actants and non-human actants as well as the practices and rituals that engage with all material elements. The dispersion of power relations through interconnected networks is how the 'swarming' of the disciplinary mechanisms is enacted, where a local exercise of force within the confines of a specific network has tentacles that enable its circulation in other, perhaps much grander and more pervasive networks.

As has been highlighted before, Foucault does not think of such a relationship as imposed from top to bottom. Rather, the network of power relations emerges

from "the support which force relations find in one another, thus forming a chain or a system, or on the contrary, the disjunction and contradictions which isolate them from one another" (Foucault 1978: 92). Here we can see that Foucault acknowledges the existence of large-scale structures of power. However, he holds steadfastly to the view that they are the (versatile) result of the dynamic manner that "infinitesimal mechanisms of power have been – and continue to be – invested, colonized, utilized, involuted, transformed, displaced, extended, etc., by ever more general mechanisms and by forms of global domination" (Foucault 1980: 99).

Resistance is also an important part of Foucault's explanation of the dynamism of power relations. That power relationships have a fundamentally relational character suggests that their very existence is predicated on multiple and moving points of resistance (Foucault 1978: 95). In Foucault's words:

one is dealing with mobile and transitory points of resistance, producing cleavages in a society that shift about, fracturing unities and effecting regroupings, furrowing across individuals themselves.... Just as the network of power relations ends by forming a dense web that passes through apparatuses and institutions, without being exactly localized in them, so too the swarm of points of resistance traverses social stratifications and individual unities (Foucault 1978: 96).

We can see that Foucault objects to the idea of a system of domination that enforces its rules on its subjects because every rule is the location of ongoing tension. In organizations contracts tend to be the classical manifestation of a rule-governed power relationship but seen through a Foucauldian standpoint the contract is just an apparatus through which power passes; it cannot possess power that can be wielded by dominant agents against subordinate agents because immanent to the power that flows through such an apparatus, is the flow of resistance, without which the power relationship cannot exist.

Having built upon Foucault's shifting conception of power that was addressed in Chapter 3, we now can see the dynamism of his conception: power is diffused through complex and varied social networks and marked by continuous tussles due to the ongoing attempts to (re)produce certain social alignments, as well as by creating other alignments to circumvent or diminish their effects. In the same

way, as part of the combined construct of power/knowledge, Foucault's conception of knowledge is also dynamic.

Savoir

Foucault's (1980) first conception of knowledge as dynamic lay in his distinction between the existence of a discursive field of knowledge (*savoir*) that capacitates the particular legitimated knowledge claims (*connaissances*) within that field. *Savoir* embraces a way of understanding, of 'knowing how', of desiring, and emoting that are all interconnected within a practice and diffused through the entirety of that field and not to be found within specific claims or groupings of claims (e.g. subjects such as mathematics, philosophy, neurology, etc.). The 'seriousness' and potential claim to truth of any *connaissances* are dependent on their position within the field. Some elements reinforce one another and *connaissances* gain traction, get expanded upon, and reproduced. Said poignantly, they get translated. In other instances, obstacles materialise and conflicts burgeon, and in others yet, *connaissances* become isolated and forgotten. Nonetheless, knowledge (*savoir*) is only constituted (and constituting) of the heterogeneous elements (including *connaissances*) when they sufficiently align with one another in a sustained way. Conflicts however, play an important role in the scrutiny, refinements, and expression of knowledge, that is, the development and reorganization of knowledge. Similar to the circulations of power, without resistance, knowledge is also at risk of becoming irrelevant. However, during Foucault's earlier writing there was a sense that he imagined epistemic fields in a more homogenous fashion, without much emphasis on the temporality of the field.

Later on, we can see that knowledge is determined through the network that interconnects language, animate and inanimate objects, practices, institutions, etc. On its own, each of these elements cannot represent knowledge. Just as power cannot be possessed, Foucault (2001: 12) objects to a logocentric view of knowledge, characterised "by resemblance, by congruence, by bliss, by unity". On the contrary, unified data is not knowledge; a connaissance only gains and sustains its significance in the way it is used and relates to other elements in the

network over time and this depends on *savoir*, which is the practical mastery that is pervasive to the worlds where each actor dwells.

For Lyotard (1987: 78-79), a scholar who has also made a point of discussing the distinction in French between *savoir* and *connaissance*, we work in worlds of 'knowledge (*savoir*)' as opposed to the world of 'learning (*connaissance*)'[26]. Worlds of *savoir* are not forms of knowledge based on authentic statements but rather groupings of knowing that comprise "notions of 'know-how', 'knowing how to live', 'how to listen' [*savoir-faire, savoir-vivre, savoir-écouter*], etc." Conceived like this, *savoir* is evocative of Lévi-Strauss' (1966: 21) discussion of mythical thought as 'an intellectual form of bricolage' as well as the ancient Chinese concept of *tao*, that is, the more-than-mentalised way actions are accomplished, the underlying natural order of the universe whose ultimate essence is difficult to circumscribe. It stems from the notion that 'knowing that' inadequately conveys our 'know-how'. In this vein, the distinction between *savoir* and *connaissance* has also been conceptualised as the difference between knowing and knowledge.

The defining feature uniting scholars that, with Foucault, theorise knowing as a concept, is an analytic focus on embodied action. Influenced by Ryle (1949) and Polanyi (1967), Schön (1983) argues that the skilful practice of professionals is beyond the simple use of a priori knowledge to enact a specific decision or action. Rather, their knowing was intrinsic to their action and "ordinarily tacit", relying on a feel for that with which they were dealing. He observes, "our knowing is in our action" (Schön 1983: 49). The focus on action, "effective action" to be precise, is also a hallmark of Maturana and Varela's (1992: 27-29) work, where they describe all doing as knowing and all knowing as doing.

Orlikowski (2002) has played a key role in introducing this notion into organizational discourse[27]. Her position is that when the primary focus is

[26] Interestingly, Lyotard (1987) juxtaposes the plural worlds of *savoir* with the singular world of connaissance. This dichotomy has been used in other comparative cultural analyses (Dods 2004), an example of which is the plural state of savages versus the singular state of the civilised in Morgan's (1877) classification system of ethnical stages.

[27] Cook and Brown (1999) introduce the notion of knowing into organization theory but they maintain the conventional distinction between tacit and explicit forms of knowledge. For them, tacit knowledge is disparate from knowing and, thus, action. For Yanow (2004: 12), knowledge is distinguishable as either 'expert' or 'local'. The former encompasses the accumulation of clear, theoretical, academic, professional, abstract, and generalisable knowledge and techniques and the latter, the array of tacit knowledge and

knowledge instead of knowing, the centrality of action in knowledgeability is lost, which she counters by taking tacit knowledge to be a form of 'knowing'[28] and thus inherent to action because it is constituted through and as a result of such action. Ryle's (1949: 28-32) contention is that there are two types of knowledge: 'knowing that' and 'knowing how', where the later is read, by Orlikowski, as a capacity to perform or act in particular circumstances. Likewise, Polanyi (1967) is a key contributor through his acknowledgement that it is tacit knowing that enables us to recognise familiarity in a crowd, or to ride bicycles even without the ability to convey how precisely we achieve these. This inseparability is evident in Ryle's (1949: 32) work when he notes:

"Thinking what I am doing' does not connote 'both thinking what to do and doing it.' When I do something intelligently, I am doing one thing and not two. My performance has a special procedure or manner, not special antecedents."

The mutual constitution of knowing and practice also underpins Giddens' (1984) theory of structuration, which Orlikowski (2002) draws on to elucidate using a 'practice lens' to study technologies. A practice lens could, she argued, enable the examination of how people, in their regular practice, by interacting with a technology, enact structures that condition their emergent and situated use of that technology.

The enmeshed composition of knowing and practice has also been reinforced in the field of cognitive anthropology, based on extensive field work by Lave (1988) and Hutchins (1991; 1995). Their findings suggest that cognition in 'the wild' (in practice) is a culturally situated and unending social activity. Based on her 1988 studies that examined mathematics problem-solving activities in adults, Lave writes that "knowledge is not primarily a factual commodity or compendium of facts, nor is an expert knower an encyclopaedia". Instead knowledge takes on the character of a "process of knowing" (Lave 1988: 175). For her, competence in mathematics did not refer to some abstract possessable knowledge. Rather, it

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ways of being that are based on practice and harder to translate, a function of a contextual experience. This notion of knowledge has more compatibility with how knowledge is construed in structuralist thought or even post-structuralist thought, but is less embodied than what *savoir* refers to.

[28] The notion of activating knowledge through the verb of knowing is emphasised within practice scholarship in organization studies through a characteristic practice-based vocabulary that uses gerunds such as strategizing, knowing and becoming (Nicolini et al. 2003; Weick 1995; Carlsen 2006).

signified a situated knowing, a "knowledge-in-practice", which involves an agent acting in specific settings while igniting aspects of the self, the body, and the physical and social worlds (Lave 1988: 180–181). Fox's (2009) account of how western conceptions of quantification were translated by the Yoruba people exemplifies this issue. On the one hand, in English, the image of continuous extension is primary and order is viewed as the linear progression of equal divisions. On the other hand, in Yoruba, the image that is given primacy is a set of units comprising a whole, where order is the nesting of units within other units. As such, they used multiplication as a way of teaching extension.

Knowing and practice have also been similarly mutually entwined by Maturana and Varela (1992) in their exposition of autopoiesis as well as in Lewontin's (1995) constructionist biology. It has also been illustrated to similar effect in Escher's (1948) lithograph, *Drawing Hands* (Figure 1, below), where the right hand draws the left hand while the left hand draws the right hand. This is the intrinsic knowing, the *savoir* that for Foucault (1972) makes a problem tractable or a material safe to handle. It is not 'scientifically' proven fact but rather, the done way of things that needs substantial endorsement from the actor's social group, the holding of which eventually bequeaths some social advantages.

[Production Note: The figure is not included in this digital copy due to copyright restrictions.]

FIGURE 5: M. C. ESCHER'S (1948) ***DRAWING HANDS***

Predominantly, what these authors are emphasising is the fluidity of knowledge. Latour (1999), holds that knowledge resided in the versatile way translation and inscription takes place, and Knorr Cetina (2008: 89) underscores the unending trajectory of movement that objects of knowledge undertake:

They are more like open drawers filled with folders extending indefinitely into the depth of the dark closet. Since epistemic objects are always in the process of being materially defined, they continually acquire new properties and change the one they have. But this also means that objects of knowledge can never be fully attained, that they are, if you wish, never quite themselves.

Interestingly, traversing through these writings on *savoir*, it becomes clear (and part of my translation) that Foucault makes an additional contribution to what a focus on concrete practices means by meshing his accounts of dynamic power and dynamic knowledge. Knowing (or *savoir*) refers to a specific understanding of the

world that includes the appreciation of the interconnectedness of humans, abstract and non-abstract objects, and oneself. By emphasising how power relations are key to the knowing of ethno-methods, Foucault implies that practice is imbued with a specific, recursive mode of wanting some things and creating distance from others, as well as a certain unique emotionality. Foucault's major achievement then, in Deleuze's (1986: 109) words, is "the conversion of phenomenology into epistemology". An analysis of discursive formations, or a network of micro-practices, translates as an analysis of what enables seeing and speaking with authority in a particular spatiotemporal field.

Owing to the complex and pervasive dynamics of knowledge production, both knowledge and power can be viewed as "the name that one attributes to a complex strategical situation in a particular society" (Foucault 1978: 93). Yet, Foucault is not equating knowledge with power, for him:

Relations of power are not in a position of exteriority with respect to other types of relationships (economic processes, knowledge relationships, sexual relations), but are immanent in the latter; they are the immediate effects of the divisions, inequalities, and disequilibriums which occur in the latter, and conversely they are the internal conditions of these differentiations (Foucault 1978: 94).

Foucault is simply recognising that relationships of power are constituted (and constituting) of relationships of knowledge (amongst others) and vice versa, that is, they are immanent to each other. In talking about *savoir*, he says:

"Knowledge is simply the outcome of the interplay, the encounter, the junction, the struggle, and the compromise between the instincts. Something is produced because the instincts meet, fight one another, and at the end of their battles finally reach a compromise. That something is knowledge." (Foucault 2001: 8).

In this way, Foucault emphasizes power relations as an important dimension for the analysis of the formation of discursive fields of *savoir* (or knowing), which indeed, is not made explicit by many theorists who work with a practice lens. For Foucault however, all that can be discovered about knowledge lies in the examination of relations between resistance and power, and how people and things despise, clash and endeavour to control each other. Particular wants, understanding, and emotions thus do not belong to individuals, rather, in the

form of knowing, they belong to particular nets of practices. Since pure knowledge per se does not exist, Foucault holds that instead of seeking to understand truth, we should seek to understand the politics of truth. This brings us to the third and final aspect of Foucault's analytics discussed in this chapter, the 'subject'. If we are to try and understand the politics of truth instead of truth per se, then what represents 'the subject'? The final section of this chapter addresses how 'the subject' of this doctoral investigation is defined, and why this is the case.

The Idea of 'The Subject'

I have highlighted that the thesis is concerned with analysis at the level of practices as opposed to that of the individual, the group, the organization, etc. because this is what dictates the emergence of stuckedness as an object of knowledge, that is, this is how stuckedness is problematized. The rationale for this choice is based on Foucault's idea of 'the subject', which is intricately connected to the immanent, creative, relational and dynamic nature he invested in his concept of power/knowledge.

As we have seen, Foucault did not believe in self-evident concepts; for him, all knowledge is produced and circulated in relation to other elements such as power relations, sexuality, people, things, etc. Consequently, and reflective of both the genius of and difficulty in understanding Foucault, the questions he posed and the concepts he introduced were not based on common sociological categories such as individuals (e.g., managers, employees, workgroups) or institutions (e.g., organizations, the state) (Dreyfus & Rabinow 1982). If they were it would undermine the dynamic nature of how various elements come together to form a problematization of a phenomenon.

Holding the individual or organization as the level that an investigation targets stems from the commonly held view that they are observable realities, figments separate from the spatiotemporal changes, and a unit with an essential personal identity. The thinking is that once you uncover the nature of such a subject, you can then employ procedures to fix problems, motivate change, etc. It is for this reason that research into how change takes place (or fails to take place) generally

builds on previous efforts in order to refine these fixes and make them less subjective for the purposes of cultivating the rational decision-making process. Foucault however, does not see the individual or the organization as reducible to an internally consistent core of meaning.

Throughout his scholarship, Foucault displays a staunch commitment to destabilising the subject and showing how what is accepted as truth depends on the conceptual formation that surrounds it. At the beginning of *The Order of Things* (1970: xv), he quotes the Argentinian writer, Jorge Luis Borges, who cites a passage from a Chinese encyclopaedia citing a list classifying animals in the animal kingdom. These are the categories:

(a) belonging to the Emperor, (b) embalmed, (c) tame, (d) sucking pigs, (e) sirens, (f) fabulous, (g) stray dogs, (h) included in the present classification, (i) innumerable, (k) drawn with a fine camel hair brush, (1) et cetera, (m) having just broken the water pitcher, and (n) that from a long way off look like flies.

Classifications, as we can see, ensure that we operate within a system of finite possibilities that enable certain practices and beliefs and limit us to others. In a similar vein, in *Madness and Civilization* Foucault (1965) shows how madness is an example of an entity that came into being through discourses as both an object of knowledge and a target of institutional practices. Put another way, madness was not a subject to be discovered but rather is a product of a network of discourses. A Foucauldian analysis does not concern itself with the objectivity or subjectivity of this process. Instead, the important question is by which processes does a phenomenon become known? How do these practices become established and gain currency? What effects do they render?

Later still, at Dartmouth College in 1983, Foucault (1997: 199) states that his interest in the governmentality of the self "has been my obsession for years because it is one of the ways of getting rid of a traditional philosophy of the subject". Importantly, Foucault (1991c: 11) affirms that:

If I am now interested…in the way in which the subject constitutes himself in an active fashion, by the practices of the self, these practices are nevertheless not something that the individual

invents by himself. They are patterns that he finds in his culture and which are proposed, suggested and imposed upon him by his culture, his society and his social group.

In his three part *The History of Sexuality* series, Foucault's (1978; 1990; 1992) thesis is that modern control of sexuality parallels the modern control of criminality by making sex (like crime) an object of allegedly scientific disciplines such as psychoanalysis, which simultaneously offer knowledge and domination of their objects. Within the sciences of sexuality, Foucault additionally maintains that control is not just applied through individuals' knowledge of other individuals but also through individuals' knowledge of themselves. In the latter scenario, the norms laid down by the sciences of sexuality are internalised by individuals who then monitor themselves in an attempt to adhere to these norms. They are thus controlled not only as objects of disciplines but also as self-scrutinizing and self-forming subjects of political anatomy.

While governmentality connects the conduct of others to ones conduct of self, the human subject is not a given but rather is constituted and constituting of relationships of power, knowledge, and self amongst others:

Certain bodies, certain gestures, certain discourses, certain desires come to be constituted as individuals. The individual…is I believe one of [power's] prime effects (Foucault, 1980: 98).

As such, instead of asking who has power, or where it is located, Foucault is concerned with the how: the techniques or practices that give power relations effect. His belief that "power is exercised by virtue of things being known and people being seen" (Foucault, 1980: 154) therefore represents how his power/knowledge concept provided an "anchoring device for the unity" of his work (Eribon 1991: 127). Primarily, it is a concept that divests the individual of her privileged epistemological status, enabling the view that the individual is a product of the social relationships between power/knowledge and other immanent elements. Consequently, as Knights and Willmott (1985) propose, identity and identity-securing strategies in the reproduction of power relations is of vital significance because the process by which the individual or phenomenon is rendered knowable is the crux of what a Foucauldian investigation targets.

Having explored some of the approaches that take a similar, material network view as to the effects of power and production of knowledge, there are still other fields of scholarship such as feminist theory and post structuralism, where individual identity is not quite understood as a network effect where all elements are equal, but still, individuality is not seen as fixed in its manifestation (Alvesson & Willmott 1992; Henriques et al. 1984; Gilligan 1982; Keller 1986). Rather, "identities are not absolute but always relational; one can only ever be seen to be something in relation to something else" (Clegg 1989: 159). Within management scholarship, this perspective exists in various forms, such as Brown and Duguid's (1991: 49) stance that "the canonical organization becomes a questionable unit of analysis" because such a well-bounded, pre-formed unit does not exist by decree, but only by nets of recursive and emergent practices. Yet, it is still a viewpoint that is marginal, which is partly why this thesis makes a contribution by presenting an alternative way to understand a phenomenon like stuckedness and its constitutive and constituting effects.

In this thesis, the subject (or the level of analysis as it is commonly phrased within organizational scholarship) is never a particular individual, her consciousness, or purpose. It is the action that takes place within a field. Foucault emphasises the discursive field (network of micro-practices) as the location where the time-space dimension of a practice is situated and appraised. It is in the field that time and space, being and becoming, structure and history, formation and (trans)formation are manifest and the questions of consciousness, being and the subject enmesh and define themselves (Foucault, 1972: 25). Accordingly, this is also where processes of reification and institutionalization occur (Peci, Vieira & Clegg 2009). This is reminiscent of Bourdieu's habitus and his mechanisms of change within his notion of the field: the avant-garde that is recognised, then consecrated; and temporality, that accounts for the unique provisionality attributed to every process within the field. For Foucault, it is the very struggles that take place during the historically situated process of the formation of a field that help to identify the main explanatory features of its current configuration. Within the field, the analytic emphasis is on the practices through which human beings understand themselves and their relations with other actants. The empirical goal

of this thesis is to understand, by studying the concrete practices that enable the knowability of domains and individuals, how disciplinary practices (manifest through the body) operate to create order, knowledge, and ultimately, power effects that get problematized as stuckedness.

To Conclude

In Chapter 3, I discussed what the concept of governmentality offers for understanding Foucault's views on how phenomena should be investigated. In this chapter, the focus has been on the key aspects of Foucault's analytics that were not addressed previously. Specifically, we have seen how Foucault's contribution to practice has significantly evolved between his archaeological and genealogical periods. Ultimately, his conceptualizations involve understanding how a given individual, thought system or process comes into being and is subsequently transformed. Foucault's most holistic attempt at explaining this was through his theory of governmentality.

Prior to fleshing out his thoughts on governmentality, Foucault had extensively written on what I have interpreted as three main aspects of his analytics, namely his views on materiality, power/knowledge, and the 'subject', which has been the focus of this chapter. For the purposes of funnelling the reader towards the points most salient to the empirical sections that follow, this conclusion serves as an amalgam of my discussion of Foucault's analytics from the last two chapters to show (1) how the notion of governmentality accounts for the three aspects of Foucault's analytics addressed in this chapter, and (2) how the comprehensive discussion around these three aspects refines my conceptual translation of the problematization of stuckedness.

To recap, governmentality concerns 'the conduct of conduct', which highlights that the way we frame the conduct of others is tied to the way we conduct ourselves and vice versa. Holding all actants to be acting on a plane of immanence, the theory of governmentality amalgamates elements of knowledge, power, and self. Developing the concept of governmentality expanded Foucault's analytics in certain ways.

Most notably Foucault's conception of power shifted beyond a warlike concept; governmentality concerns inquiry into the prerequisites of consensus or the circumstances of acceptance. Power relations thus do not have a point of origin (the state or any particular person or group) from which they surge forth, infusing the social space with a plurality of conflicting strategies (technologies) that structure (and get structured) by the field of possible action. Rather, they account for the creation and functioning of the state but they have a life force beyond the state, or perceived 'point' of origin. Here, Foucault reveals concern for how power relations and the modern autonomous individual co-determine each other's emergence. Feminist theorists often remind us of the epistemological and political dangers of building militarism and violence into our very tools of theoretical analysis and political criticism (Hartsock 1985; Haraway 1990). In this chapter, we develop an understanding of how Foucault transcends the limits of the view of power as related only to explicit state-centred politics. I demonstrated how Foucault's appeal to images of war and conflict are related to his objections to political and epistemic sovereignty, which he moves beyond by investing a provisional, versatile nature in his concept of power/knowledge. In this thesis, power is relational; it is seen as diffused through complex and varied social networks and marked by continuous tussles due to the ongoing attempts to (re)produce certain social alignments, as well as by creating other alignments to circumvent or diminish their effects.

Additionally and in the same vein, as part of the combined construct of power/knowledge, in this chapter, we also addressed the dynamism of Foucault's conception of knowledge. Conceptualising governmentality points to the insufficiency of concentrating on the destruction of forms of identity without accounting for the production of new modes of subjectivity linked to governmental mechanisms. Stripped of its intentional character, governmentality highlights the conflicts and resistances that present themselves against technologies and rationalities of government. As such, knowledge is continuously produced (immanence) either through new knowing or the highlighting of previously unnoticed knowing, which is then fed back into the circle of production, based on the grander concept of *savoir* that was addressed in this

chapter. *Savoir* articulates the ways statements, modes of reasoning, and various bodily activities, material arrangements, and institutional configurations can align in a field to enable distinctive patterns of intelligibility. Foucault's position was that the knowledge (*connaissance*) characteristic of a truth claim was attributable to their systemic interconnectedness within a 'discursive formation' that highlights those statements that are possible truths as well as other statements relevant to this appraisal.

Like Bourdieu's habitus, this discursive formation is both generative and constraining in that it defines a system of conceptual possibilities that determines the boundaries of thought in a given domain, governed by rules that operate beneath the consciousness of individuals. These historically situated fields of knowledge (or discursive formations or networks of micro-practices) included objects not already demarcated, but ones that came into existence only contemporaneously to the discursive formations that made it possible to talk about them. This field was discussed as a tool for Foucault's nominalist tendencies in Chapter 3, where it enables problematization, that is, to study something within the context in which it develops as a problem with possible responses. Specificity is also highlighted in Chapter 3, where Foucault denotes the discursive field as the location where time and space, being and becoming, structure and history, formation and (trans)formation are manifest. Once again, these ideas are based on Foucault's views on the 'subject' which I addressed in this chapter. He did not believe in self-evident concepts; all knowledge is produced and circulated in relation to other elements such as power relations, sexuality, people, things, etc. Consequently, the questions he posed and the concepts he introduced were not based on common sociological categories such as individual, groups, or organizations. To do this would be to undermine the dynamic nature of how various elements come together to form a problematization of a phenomenon.

A Foucauldian analysis does not concern itself with the objectivity or subjectivity of this process. Instead, the important question is by which practices does a phenomenon become known and become institutionalised? What are their effects? Primarily, Foucault's idea of the 'subject' is a concept that divests the individual of privileged epistemological status, enabling the view that he/she is a

product of the social relationships between power/knowledge and other elements. Through governmentality, Foucault includes the self as one of these elements, which is thus controlled (and controlling) not only as objects of disciplines but also as self-scrutinizing and self-forming subjects of political anatomy. Here, we can see that the synthesis of life-time into the circular production of practices that form habits and occur in specific time and space dimensions draws on his emphasis on materiality, which is covered in this chapter. Materiality depicts the illustration of the social and material worlds as one, where both dimensions are thoroughly and irreversibly intertwined. This aspect of practice reminds us that all practice is situated amongst people and things.

Finally, the theoretical device of immanence underscores all of Foucault's analytics and is a consistent theme throughout the aspects highlighted in the last two chapters. As was pointed out in Chapter 2, structure exists immanent to agency and vice versa, where the enactment of practice is simply a function of the agent and a product of the structure, both of which are irretrievably enmeshed. The same immanence applies to Foucault's dynamic conceptualization of power relations and knowledge production by emphasising how power relations are key to the knowing of ethno-methods. He implies that practices are imbued with a specific, recursive mode of wanting some things and creating distance from others. This immanence is also built into Foucault's analytics through his notion of discursive formations (network of micro-practices/episteme/fields), which translates as an analytical domain that enables seeing and speaking with authority in a particular spatiotemporal field, that is the space-time specific politics of truth. The common separation of body/mind/things (dualisms) needs to be abandoned in favour of embodiment and interconnectedness, the view that the ebb and flow of life (and therefore stuckedness) is made up of networks of connections between material elements and relationships of power and knowledge, amongst others, which are all immanent to one another.

The second point I want to address in this conclusion is how my conceptual translation of the problematization of stuckedness has been refined as a result of this chapter's examination of Foucault's analytics. At the end of chapter two, stuckedness could be seen as a governmental technology that espouses persisting

with a practice that appears non-generative but at the same time is immanent to moving well. Additionally, it is self-reproducing and has an element of taken-for-grantedness that is required for its survival. Even so, it is also part of a provisional and versatile equilibrium of multiple governmentalities which means it is not a static state, but rather, a dynamic 'being'. In essence, this chapter has illustrated a more nuanced view of what it means to be a governmental technology, particularly in terms of how it is conceived materially, in relationship with all other elements such as power/knowledge and how it contributes (and is contributed to) within a network of micro-practices (discursive field). Stuckedness therefore is also an embodied practice, situated within a specific locale, with a particular positioning, in relation to the positioning of other material practices, which has implications for its continuance and countenance.

PART III:

REFLECTIONS OF *A* PERFORMANCE

Situated knowledges are, by their nature, unfinished.
But that is the character of all things human and alive.

E. Doyle McCarthy

5

GENEALOGICAL ETHNOGRAPHY

Rabinow and Rose (2003) point out in the introduction to *The Essential Foucault* that Foucault does not define a particular style of methodology that can be then applied to study various contemporary phenomena. Rather, Foucault sought to use new or combinatorial approaches to investigation. Foucault rendered visible certain taken-for-granted viewpoints of the experience of the modern world. What seemed to be obvious organizational approaches to crime control, such as the use of incarceration, the organization of schools for mass education and of asylums for the confinement and treatment of those with mental illness were revealed as unintentional inventions, apparatuses which, once constituted, displayed certain micropowers that enabled the moulding social life in new and novel ways. Foucault makes us pay attention to the relations between practices of administration and the emergence of novel forms of subjectification in which certain human rights, natures and abilities are constituted. Rabinow and Rose (2003: 3) refer to this exercise as a non-traditional kind of "field work in philosophy". Through painstaking scrutiny of specific practices, in terms of the power/knowledge circulating through the field of their enactment and the creation of conceptual tools that enabled these relations to be seen more widely:

…the very words themselves which are now so familiar – truth, knowledge, power, technology, discourse, practice – were given a new sense and made to do conceptual work that they had not done – that had not been done – before (Rabinow & Rose 2003: 3).

By taking a fine toothcomb through ways of thinking and interacting with things, people, and practices, Foucault sought to question the norms and values circulating in everyday technologies of the self. Each of his studies has its origin in entrenched ways of thinking and acting whose taken-for-grantedness is questioned. Foucault's method was to use history to understand how a certain configuration of problems and solutions had emerged while exposing some of the fault-lines inherent in its constitution.

Rabinow and Rose (2003) remind us that a repetition of this application of critique to history may not be the only (or best) way of addressing the issues that concern us today and perhaps in the future. Foucault diverged from Nietzsche's methods while seeking to disturb convention by anatomising the detail of paths chosen and left behind, uncovering the constitution of taken for granted (and dearly held) objects, subjects, and values. So too, the meticulous labour necessary to disquiet our canons of the present may need to find other formulae to catalyse. From Foucault, one does not so much acquire methodology but rather a frame for questioning that translates, extends, modifies, and makes use of conceptual tools as they are understood in relation to specific practices. Social science researchers have responded to Foucault's invitation to use his theories as a tool of analysis, as opposed to a closed theoretical framework, as well as his belief that there was a need for new genealogies. Incidentally (but not accidentally), it seems that ethnographers, this author included, have been seduced by this invitation (Hill 2009). The practices to be interrogated are those of stuckedness, As such, in this chapter Foucault's analytics for *doing* an empirical study of stuckedness will be explored in more detail.

To start, I address what ethnography is and how it has been used within organization studies. Next, I discuss key contentions in doing genealogical ethnography and outline the methodological approach taken to translate my theoretical leanings. Then, I share stories of how I gained access to and navigated my research site, what tools I used to gather stories, as well as relational patterns from the field and how I navigated the analysis and textual work involved in this ethnography. I conclude this chapter with an examination of the ethical issues faced and how coherence between my theoretical frame and empirical practice was tackled.

A Genealogical Ethnography of Organizing

Ethnography has been widely used within organization studies, going back at least to the famous Hawthorne studies from the 1920s, where ethnographic methods (amongst others) were employed to assess if employees were more or less productive, based on the levels of light at their workplace (Roethlisberger &

Dickson 1939). Even F W Taylor was a kind of primitive, if highly normative ethnographer of everyday shop floor life. Nonetheless, for most of its more recent history the field of organization analysis has had a prolonged focus on quantitative research methods, such as survey research and statistical analyses within a positivist paradigm. Only relatively recently in the 1980s have qualitative methods for researching organizations, such as ethnography, gained purchase (Barley & Kunda 2001; Ybema et al. 2009).

According to Ybema et al. (2009), the researcher's *presence* at the scene of study is paramount within ethnography. She is meant to participate in the life-world of her participants over a prolonged period and build a relationship with them, understanding the taken-for-granted, tacitly known 'rules' of performing in that milieu. Although ethnographies tended to be initially grounded within foreign and unfamiliar (to the researcher) cultures, there is a contemporary trend for culture to be seen far less homogenously and ethnographies on various "cultures" within the researcher's domain are increasingly common. There are synergies between this view and the attitude taken in this research, which is a manifestation of the "constant urge to problematize, to turn what seems familiar and understandable upside down and inside out" (Czarniawska-Joerges 1992: 73).

Increasingly, organizational scholars are applying ethnographic research methods to a variety of organizational settings (van Marrewijk 2010). Typically, they assume the ontological reality of the category 'organization'. However as highlighted previously, Foucault eschewed the idea that an entity such as an organization could be reduced to an internally consistent core of meaning. Karl Weick (1979) is credited with introducing the term 'organizing' to organizational scholarship as an attempt to sidestep the problematic trend of seeing 'organization' as some kind of reified, complete entity. In that vein, to study 'organizing' is to turn the idea of 'organization' on its head, and to accept that 'organizations' are just temporary, reified figments of our consciousness (Czarniawska 2004).

There are a number of examples of studies that have focused on the extraordinary-in-the-ordinary, that is, have considered how, in specific contexts, "work is organized and how that organizing organizes people" (Ybema et al., 2009:1).

Kunda's (2006) exploration of how culture was used and experienced by members of the engineering division of a high-tech corporation; Orr's (1996; 2006), shadowing of copier machine service technicians to understand how they talk about their work; Fine's (1996) rich illustration of the life of kitchen workers; Venkatesh's (2008) immersion into the everyday life of a gang; Lancione's (2011) embeddedness in the life of the homeless in Turin in order to understand their subjectivities, and Smits' (2013) stories of cultural collaboration within the Panama Canal Expansion Program are all contemporary examples of sophisticated organizational ethnographies.

These examples of ethnographic research do not all owe a debt to Foucault. However ethnographers are increasingly indebted to his approach and thus I am not alone in seeing the connection between Foucault's genealogical method and ethnography. In the following section I will discuss how Foucault's genealogical approach has influenced my *doing* of ethnography.

"DOING" GENEALOGICAL ETHNOGRAPHY

Overarchingly, two aspects are pertinent to the genealogical approach to ethnography used in this thesis. Respectively, they concern the (1) specific impetus for non-representation, and (2) developing a set of methodological approaches that cohere with the theoretical viewpoints illustrated thus far. In relation to non-representation, I will discuss the tensions existing between ethnographical and genealogical stances on this issue. Specifically, I will expand upon the questions of involvement versus distance during the fieldwork process, what it means to enact a discomforting reflexivity and ask how integrating analyses takes on a different meaning. Next, I will illustrate the three techniques I employed to develop real-life approaches to collecting, understanding, and depicting data that coheres with these points as well as the theoretical basis utilized. The three approaches involve the use of action nets as developed by Czarniawska (2004); a reporting style inspired by Lancione (2011) and Latour (2005), and the problematizing of what van Maanen (1988) termed confessional tales.

Non-Representing the 'Real' World

In terms of both ethnography and genealogy, the socio-material world cannot be understood in terms of causal relationships. Instead of asking about the discourses that are 'correct' or 'true', the interest is in understanding how actual practices linked to specific external conditions determine the *savoir* in which we find ourselves. Truth, *per se,* is thus not to be found as a result of specific genealogical research but the ways in which, in particular settings, the members of these make claims about what constitutes the 'truth' can be researched. Ethnography can "offer a more complicated version of how life is lived" (Britzman 1995: 231) and can bring to the fore how "some powerful groups are able to impose their definitions of reality on others" (Hammersley & Atkinson 1983: 12). In this way the natural terrain of analysis occurs at the micro level, by looking at micro operations of power and the local struggles and solutions that evolve.

Accordingly, both the ethnographic and the genealogical approach introduce scepticism about universal claims to unfolding 'truth' in their adoption of context-specific perspectives[29]. Conventionally, ethnography has its roots in modernist science, where it is assumed that the 'findings' of ethnographic work will lead to the achievement of systematic knowledge that directs social progress. In recent times, by rejecting universalistic notions, ethnography appears to be becoming more genealogical (Tamboukou & Ball 2003).

The distinctions between the two perspectives have to do with the different ways in which each conceives power. In ethnography, power is seen as sovereignty, where domination is exercised over individuals and/or social groups, from "above" (Brennan & Popkewitz 1998: 18). As has been extensively discussed, for Foucault, power is relational and it circulates, so the interesting questions are not about who has power so much as in the relations of power that connect people, things and practices. Conducting a genealogical ethnography means attending to the

[29] Research shows that context dependent knowledge is what catalyses people's ascent from being rule-based beginners to virtuoso experts, and the case study generates this type of knowledge (Flyvbjerg 2006). It is this know-how and proficiency that forms the crux of the case study as a research and teaching method. Harvard University represents an exemplar of an institution that has taken this to heart, where both teaching and research is widely cognisant that case knowledge is essential to effective learning (Christensen & Hansen 1987; Cragg 1985). For Flyvbjerg (2006), tangible, context-dependent experience is fundamental to this goal and case study research affords concrete experiences through the consistent propinquity to the practice studied, including feedback from actors within the practice.

complex ways in which people, practices and things are constituted in networks of historically and culturally specific sites. Foucault was interested in isolating the contingent power relations that enabled certain truth claims to gain ascendance, thereby revealing discontinuities, recurrences, and unexpected resistances as well as continuities (Tamboukou & Ball 2003). Ethnography allows one to engage with and "explore 'events', [and] spaces which divide those in struggle" (Ball 1994: 4) and is thus an appropriate approach for genealogical analysis. Such an analysis will be more suspicious of representational claims to accuracy in reporting sites of investigation than a traditional ethnography: it will bracket any claims that the members of the setting make about its character as such. What is of interest is how such claims are made; what makes them possible, rather than their putative accuracy. Genealogy is essentially non-representational.

Another way of looking at issues of non-representation is through McWilliam's (2003) counterpoising of authenticity to irony, attributing the former to the ethnographic method, and the latter to that of genealogy. For McWilliam, irony is par for the course when one is problematizing concepts, ideas, and notions that have been long taken-for-granted, which means simultaneously using and interrogating notions that have moulded our intellectual, social, and political identities, such as stuckedness, it will be argued.

On entering the research field one does not know what to expect even if one already has a conceptual clue as to what one might find: empirically, I was oriented to what I called 'stuckedness' by the consultants who acted as my gatekeepers to the field. However, I knew that my task was not to accept their version of this world or word. Instead, my approach had to be one of researching how the field was a possible world: what made it possible, how it was constituted, and so on. Not anticipating what to expect influences the design of the research, the questions raised, and the types of analysis undertaken. Indeed, Foucault (Michel Foucault 1988) did state that he would never start any work if he knew the outcome prior to beginning. Counter to this is the orientation to discovery so entrenched within ethnography, the idea that there are truths of the field to be unearthed and recovered. Drawing on Rorty's (1989) influential work, McWilliams

(2003: 62) argues that in a genealogical approach, it is most important that "the possibility of a final vocabulary of explanation is diminished".

Ethnography, with its long claim to transparency of representation and immediacy of experience (Clifford 1986: 2), contains a tendency to fetishize "being where the action is". Being present for the action goes hand in hand with the sense that the ethnographer is building theory about the 'real world' where no such theory existed before. By contrast, as was highlighted previously, Foucault's work has been critiqued for failing to use recognizable methodologies. Rather, genealogies tend to conjure their own methodological rhythm, premised around questions that demarcate unexplored or even un-thought areas of investigation. Evading classification, decidedly non-representational, they do inspire new questions with which to interrogate the presumed truths of our worlds (Tamboukou 1999: 215).

For example, the ethnographic interview (Spradley 1979) with its style of repetitive, open and extensive interviews aimed at achieving an account of organizing efforts differs from the questions that I ask. My performance is that of an ethnographer but my approach and analysis is that of a genealogist. I strive to be constantly sceptical about what I do and how I do it. Being genealogically driven influences one's choices: the elements, people, practices, and networks that attract one's attention; the way one moves in the field (not trying to be everywhere), and the observations one makes, what one notes, and the relationships one sees. In this way, genealogies seek to "tell us who we are, what our present is…today" (Foucault 1996: 407), thereby making this 'real world' more fragile.

By courting non-representation, the traditional ethnographic question of how the author can deconstruct her data and make sense and meaning of it is conceived differently in writing genealogies. Rather, she must think about the conditions under which and in what forms, she may appear in the order of discourse. How should I reveal myself in the discursive context I am writing about? What performances will I admit to? What institutional constraints do I accept and what rules do I have to obey? The problem I face is not how I should excavate the

hidden meanings behind the data; rather, quite contrarily, I must consider how I should navigate the plurality of meaning that surrounds the data and find a way to arrive at a stance that can stand as "open findings". The genealogist is seen as following the "principle of thrift in the proliferation of meaning…a functional principle by which in our culture, one limits, excludes, and chooses" (Foucault 1998: 221).

How a genealogical ethnographer makes sense of her data is related to her analysing *subjectivities* as opposed to *subjects*. Traditionally, as mentioned, ethnography foregrounds the intents and purposes of actors, whose agency is seen as crucial to the making of history. In the present ethnography subjects are divested of their privileged epistemological status, enabling the view that the individual is a product of the social relationships between power/knowledge and other immanent elements. However, the individual is simultaneously able to reflect upon constitutive relations in some networks of action and is able to resist and choose from the clash between contradictory positions. While the subject cannot be a heroine, the approach taken here is that there is a network of subjects deriving "its essential meaning from the co-presence of other communities [or elements], all seen as agencies" (Bauman 2003: 36).

Involvement/Distance/Reflexivity

Ethnography is defined by the tension between involvement and distance, zooming in and zooming out (Nicolini 2009). It is a 'blurred genre' (Coffey 1999) of technique and self, bringing with it "tangles of implication" (Britzman 1995) of both doing and being in the research, which calls for reflexivity. Reflexivity is a concern for genealogists insofar as they need to identify socially shared "discomforts", while retaining, in Nietzsche's words, the "pathos for distance" (Diprose 1993: 6). While participating in the field I had regularly to retreat to a transitional space that could accommodate both my involvement and my need for detachment and reflection. Sometimes this would be an empty meeting room or on occasion, the female toilets. Other times I would go for a walk around the block. I felt I was still in proximity to my site but it gave me a chance to digest what I was hearing and observing. That being said, Foucault's work is also quite

clearly sceptical of the possibility of ever standing *outside* 'the socio-material'. Giddens (1982: 15) echoes this in holding that:

"the condition of generating descriptions of social activity is being able in principle to participate in it. It involves 'mutual knowledge', shared by observer and participants whose action constitutes and reconstitutes the social world".

The above quote reflects the issue of the will to speak of a 'real world' that is 'out there'. Dreyfus and Rabinow (1982: xii) address this issue by thinking of genealogy as interpretive analytics:

While the analysis of our present practices is a disciplined, concrete demonstration which could serve as the basis of a research program, the diagnosis that the increasing organization of everything is the central issue of our time is not in any way empirically demonstrable, but rather emerges as an interpretation.

The centrality of the social problem (stuckedness) *emerges* as an interpretation and therefore should be contested by other interpretations growing out of other peoples' concerns. Hence, this account is not interested in representing *the* 'real' world, just some 'real' problematizations that an idiosyncratic sensitivity detected, based on the relational patterns engaged with. Foucault (in Rajchman 1985: 36) described his work as "several fragments of autobiography", springing from his experience of "something cracked, dully jarring, or disfunctioning in things I saw in the institutions in which I dealt with my relations with others". One cannot but agree: it is also my view that our disciplines and processes produce the problems that they address.

Uncomfortable Reflexivity

It is worth saying something further about reflexivity at this point. Reflexivity is invoked in almost all qualitative pieces of empirical work. Commonly, we are reminded that scholars have a personal repertoire of interpretations and thus the researcher's 'positionality' is vital (Schwartz-Shea & Yanow 2009; Ybema et al. 2009). The proactive reflection on the meaning making processes (of the analyst) and description of personal characteristics is seen as de rigueur for ethnographers as these have an impact that generates (or blocks) access to fieldwork sites and

can mould the doing of collecting, analysing and making knowledge claims based on the data.

Trinh (1989: 28) asks the crucial question of how we should "inscribe difference without bursting into a series of euphoric narcissistic accounts of yourself and your kind"? Likewise, Lather (1993:685) points out that "to attempt to deconstruct one's own work is to risk buying into the faith in the powers of critical reflection". These issues exist because it appears that we have come to take comfort in common usages of reflexivity. As Pillow (2003: 187) argues: "relying upon reflexivity as methodological power and listening to and desiring only certain kinds of reflexive stories". No doubt influenced by the genealogical imperative to slice understanding in uncommon ways, I ask how can one engage in a "possibility of critique beyond a certain kind of paralysed reflexivity"? (Varadharajan 1995: xi) In this thesis, I follow the work of authors who are thus "interrupting reflexivity – rendering the knowing of their selves or their subjects as uncomfortable and uncontainable" (Pillow 2003: 188). This is an "uncomfortable reflexivity – a reflexivity that seeks to know while at the same time situates this knowing as tenuous" and thus not able to be seen as constitutive of outcomes in any absolute sense.

I seek to problematize my own 'positionality' as both insider and outsider in the field. In Villenas' (2000: 75) essay, "This ethnography called my back," she brings attention to how "as women writers of culture, we often struggle against our own complicity in adopting and gazing through Western male eyes – eyes of objectivity, eyes of reason, eyes that are accustomed to taking pictures of the Other bare-breasted woman". As a researcher I was often aware of the necessity of bracketing my disdain and discomfort at many of the taken-for-granted expressions of casual masculinity and domination that I witnessed. Below is an excerpt from my research journal that encapsulates my own tentatively troubling thoughts on my experiences as a female within my particular research site:

Being situated within the male dominated environment of GridLock was an unusual experience for me. In all my previous academic and industry postings, I was either in a female-dominated workplace, or in one where there was a more equitable blend of men and women. At IntelliTech, often the only women I came into contact with were administrative staff and I was almost always

the only female in the room while observing (and shadowing) the program directors and PMO staff. There were three ways I noticed this affecting me. First, even though I was familiar with the corporate dress code in Australia, I quickly learnt to match the formality of how the men around me dressed as I felt that it made them more likely to discuss their professional lives with me.

Second, as it was unusual for them to have a female in the room, when I had been there for some time and become "a part of the furniture", they would sometimes say things (not directed at me) that made me feel very uncomfortable and I was constantly masking facial expressions that might reveal my discomfort with what was being said. (Why? Why was I instinctively trying to hide my discomfort?)

Third, there were a few instances where I was asked out on a date by some of the participants and I politely declined. This often made me feel like I had to work harder to re-establish the friendly-professional relationship between myself and these people because I did not want them to stop talking to me or accommodating my questions or requests for shadowing. No respondent ever crossed a line with me personally, nor did I feel threatened at any stage. Yet, these occasions sometimes reminded me of my strangeness to them and there were days where I felt tired because I felt like that meant I needed to work that much harder to fit in to this workplace as compared to all the other ones I had previously been a part of.

Without a doubt, I also felt that there were moments when my appearance gave me a possible advantage. For example, being a young-looking female in an otherwise male dominated space meant that the administrative staff members, who were close to my age range, felt comfortable disclosing some very personal aspects of their professional lives. Similarly, there were cases where directors who were difficult to meet with would eventually relent and say "how can I keep such a pretty face waiting?" Nonetheless, while I believe it made a difference, I will never know to what extent my difference as a female, my distinct looks, or simply the fact that I was a friendly female face in a mostly male dominated environment, enabled me to gain access and persuade people to speak with me.

In a similar vein, my perceived age among the participants had important implications. At various points participants asked what my age was and when I responded I was 28, they often acted surprised. They would say that it was a relief that I was older than I looked but still, remarked "isn't 28 too young to be doing a PhD?" As people who had worked in the corporate sector their entire lives, many participants perceived a PhD as something to be done towards the end of a career. The exceptions to this were people who had exposure to young academics and these participants responded to my age positively, assuming that this meant I was "an intelligent young woman", whose opinion was worth hearing.

Villenas (2000: 75) also underscores that this "we" of women anthropologists "are not all the same 'we'". On this subject, I wrote:

As a brown-skinned, dark haired, third-generation Singaporean woman of Ceylonese descent living as an immigrant in Sydney, I cannot escape my own multi-site experiences of marginalization and dislocation. At the same time, I cannot run away from the 'privilege' I have felt being raised in a cosmopolitan city that is neither entirely 'Western' nor 'Eastern', but decidedly modern. In this city, I received an education that was British in its orientation and conducive to allowing me to take up opportunities in places like Sydney, where I perhaps not so coincidentally, ended up writing my political science honours thesis on the Sri Lankan diaspora and their relationship with the civil war, then ongoing in Sri Lanka. Now I find myself, happily dressed according to Western corporate fashion, using my international background as well as my experience within management consulting to start conversations and form bonds with the people I am shadowing and spending a lot of time with.

Having moved countries a few times in my life, I knew that my best chance to blend into a new environment was to make the people I was interacting with feel like we had things in common. As such, I tried to judge each circumstance and reveal select things about myself that made different people open up. Sometimes this had interesting side effects, with two participants trying to offer me employment in other businesses they were aligned with. Again, I politely declined these offers but they were a timely reminder of both the evolution of an action net, and also how it really is impossible to "know" myself or the people I am with. Every attempt to deconstruct simply spins more compulsive questioning. How do I date the rupturing of my ethnic identity? How do I explain that having had a long-term relationship with a Caucasian male whose parents very much adhere to the norms of corporate Sydney, I have learnt how to "be" in a way that appears to make some of my participants feel at ease? How can I explain the unease and complete ease I simultaneously feel that I am able to do this?

Visweswaran (1994: 78) distinguishes between two common understandings of ethnography. First, there is reflexive ethnography, which is "normative, declarative" and seeks to transmit "knowledge to a reader whose position is stabilized by invisible claims to a shared discourse". The contrast is to be drawn with deconstructive or interrogative ethnography that "disrupts the identity of the reader with a unified subject of enunciation by discouraging identification". Where self-reflexivity tends to prompt the questioning of how we think we know, I want to highlight that what we know is "neither transparent nor innocent" (Visweswaran 1994: 80). In the same vein as Foucault's casting of his work as

several fragments of autobiography, St. Pierre (1997: 186) asks us to "consider why we read and respond in the ways we do". For St. Pierre (1997: 178), these are self-theorising practices, where we interrogate the lens through which we understand the world while acknowledging that as we recognize and are reflexive about the shifting boundaries of our subjectivities, we "will find that much else begins to shift as well".

It is a type of reflexivity that constantly questions one's performance in a performance of which one is ineluctably a part, a role whose performance was not what one would normally accept but one realized that this performance was a necessity for this ethnography to be accomplished; as Britzman's (1995: 158) notes, what results is "something far less comforting" than being able to act on these performances from the position of an authentic self. Uncomfortable reflexivity does not concern a better method of representing one's self and other people (indeed that is explicitly not the point in this work). Rather, it is about whether we can be accountable to the struggle for self-representation and self-determination, both of others and ourselves.

Integrating Analyses

In terms of how analysis is done, ethnographers tend to generate codes, concepts, theoretical models, and typologies in an attempt to represent themes, patterns and relationships. Strauss (1978: 170) refers to this as diagramming, which is used for the integration of "separate, if cumulative analyses". Contrarily, Meadmore, Hatcher and McWilliam (2000: 466) hold that genealogical "procedure is very much a matter of knowing what would be inappropriate" based on the epistemological and ontological assumptions the Foucauldian scholar makes. Deleuze (1992) however, saw genealogy as a cartography of social diagrams, the crux of which was a system of power relations that the researcher elaborates, looking at the smallest and seemingly most insignificant details. Perhaps another way of understanding the analytical differences between the two is to note that in ethnography the aim is to "penetrate beneath the surface appearances and reveal the hidden realities there concealed" (Woods 1986: 91). Genealogy, on the other hand, rejects the search for such final, albeit hidden, truths. As opposed to looking

behind, the aim is to look more closely at the workings of the practices investigated, constructing a "polygon or rather a polyhedron" (Foucault 1991b: 77) of the minor processes that surround the problem.

To recap, stuckedness has been problematized as a governmental technology that espouses persisting with a practice that appears non-generative but at the same time is immanent to moving well, the experience of achieving some progress. Being a governmental technology, it is self-reproducing and has an element of taken-for-grantedness that is required for its survival. As part of a provisional and versatile melange of multiple governmentalities, it is not a static state but rather a dynamic 'being' that draws its problematization from how it contributes (and is contributed to) within a network of material and non-material micro-practices (discursive field). Stuckedness is therefore an embedded governmental practice, situated within a specific locale, with a particular positioning, in relation to the positioning of other material practices, which has implications for its continuance and countenance.

The more my analysis breaks down the practices of stuckedness under scrutiny, the easier it is to understand its interrelations with other elements, though unlike the notion of theoretical saturation in ethnography, there is no absolute conclusion to genealogical analysis. In Foucault's (1988: 51) words, this is reflective of how he believes "too much in truth not to suppose that there are different truths and different ways of speaking the truth". Working with this stance, we can see how Foucault developed the notion of problematization and why practice in his thought "is not some mysterious agency, some substratum of history, some hidden engine; it is what people do" (Veyne 1997: 153).

Tamboukou (1994: 214) notes, "despite or perhaps because of his continuous criticism of categorizations, Foucault turns out to be exceptionally effective in forming structures, groups, and categories and placing them in an order". What this ordering enables is the systematic interconnection of *pouvoir*/*savoir* relations, historical and cultural conditions and the practices under scrutiny, all the while exposing the limits placed by social conditioning on the cultivation of practices of the self. In this ethnography, I follow convention in that I draw on what I have

heard, seen, written, performed, and shared, but my purpose is genealogical: I aim to understand the ways in which stuckedness constitutes and is constituting of the network of practices, relations, and the material.

Apparatus

Foucault used the notion of an apparatus (or dispositif[30]) to view life from a lens different to the more common categorizations of institutions, classes, and cultures. The notion of apparatus helps analyse the articulations of complexes of concrete practices of organizing. The connections that emerge, because of the level of detail, seem to be malleable to understanding, action, and transformation. "Substitute the logic of strategies for the logic of the unconscious…replace the privileged place accorded to the signifier and its semiotic connections with an attention to tactics and their apparatuses" (Foucault quoted in Rabinow & Rose 2003: 10). Here Foucault appears to be using 'apparatus' in its regular French reference to tools and devices. Later, in the 1976 introduction to a collective work, the *Politics of Health in the XVIIIth century*, Foucault highlights the productive capacity attributed to the notion of apparatus – a device aimed at managing certain characteristics of a population. Foucault (quoted in Rabinow & Rose 2003: 11) also explained that it is the grouping of heterogeneous elements, "the said and the not-said", into a net (*réseau*) that is the defining feature of an apparatus. These elements could refer to anything, so long as they were joined and disjoined by a strategic, albeit flexible logic, changing positions, and modifiable functions, all operating against a background of discursive fields of power/knowledge relations.

Coherent Methodological Approaches

Non-representation, uncomfortable reflexivity, and the need to be able to convey how elements are interconnected within a spatio-temporally diverse net of actions, are all vital to this study. Methodologically, I seek to do this in a manner

[30] Foucault first used the term in 1975 in an interview following the publication of *Surveiller et Punir* (Discipline & Punish). After years of extensive documentary research, Foucault felt that it was unnecessary to search for anything hidden when it came to the intentions and projects of the 19th century bourgeoisie. Their reality was accessible at the surface and Foucault thought 'symptomatic readings' associated with a certain interpretation of Marx's method or the text of *Capital*, were redundant.

that coheres with the preceding discussions by presenting the data in a combination of action nets conveyed in a reporting style and by problematizing what van Maanen (1988) termed 'confessional tales'.

Action Nets

Czarniawska's (2004) 'action net' is a concept tailored for the study of organizing that has helped me translate Foucault's notion of the apparatus. Although she expresses the caveat that action[31] nets are not yet an ontological element of her social reality, Czarniawska suggests that studying action nets involves two interlinked questions: what is being done, and how does this connect to other things that are being done in the same context? In this manner, I am able to capture aspects of the past without holding them to ransom in the future, because action nets, even strongly territorialized ones, continue to be re-established and revitalized.

As a concept, action nets[32], if only for comparison to the lay meaning of an apparatus, that is, a device, seem to better underscore that a *réseau* of elements is the starting point, not end point for the study of a phenomenon. The action net concept enables me to refer to a space-time specific set (not a system) of institutions (not necessarily coherent) relevant to a particular period, while simultaneously preventing any reliance on self-evident concepts such as 'actors' or 'organizations'. These are simply temporarily reified products of organizing, constituting and constitutive of the action *reseaux* and the notion of a net primes my openness to the unexpected, and/or the Other, allowing me to follow (and be followed) according to the unique methodological rhythm that a genealogical foundation lends.

In her studies of city management, Czarniawska (2002) describes such action nets in terms of how particular actions (some institutionalized, some innovative) were

[31] 'Action' is a term laden with connotations. Following Czarniawska (2004), who reiterates Harré (1982), I take action to mean a movement or an event to which one can attribute intention through the relating of the action to the social order in which it takes place; a posteriori interpretative attribution.
[32] Owing to a joint heritage in the sociology of translation, an action net is similar to the concept of 'actor-network'. However, action nets try to sidestep the difficulties of the latter.

interconnected. A given unit[33], with its own internal actors and artefacts, may be considered a legal entity but many other actors and artefacts, including whole networks, are usually involved in an action net. Such action nets generally cascade beyond a given 'organization', in the way that a university requires services from a cleaning company to maintain its daily operations. These connections may take the form of formal contracts, hierarchical subordination, and also friendship and as these connections are rejuvenated, new connections continue to emerge through the process of translation. For example, I may make friends with the cleaning staff; having done so, they may well be more amenable to responding to an irregular issue that would have further follow on effects if not attended to swiftly, even though instrumentalism did not drive affability.

Unlike traditional ethnographic settings that are bound to one place, contemporary organizing takes place across spatio-temporal borders, which the notion of an action net, or *reseaux,* highlights. Action *reseaux* cater to capturing practices over the multiple contexts, different locations, and fragmented temporal settings. As will become clear in subsequent chapters, this has particular resonance because shadowing was my primary methodological tool and the concept of an action net helps me convey to my readers the experience of for example, shadowing a person who is on the phone to someone in a different building or state, who is interacting with a completely different set of networks. Much akin to Strannegård and Friberg's (2001) aptly titled study, *Already Elsewhere: Play, Identity and Speed in the Business World*, the people I observed were frequently 'already elsewhere'.

Reporting style

To understand the networks of practices and elements that constitute and are constituting of how stuckedness is performed, I was inspired by Lancione's (2011) thesis on the constitution of the homeless subject, where he uses a reporting style (as one of his approaches) with the aim of harnessing his findings to a theoretical scheme while not trying to over-explain what he found. The approach is also

[33] A unit is a way actants try to stabilize 'their' segments of a net in order to form powerful actor-networks (Callon 1986). An example of the latter would be an entire set of relationships and actants representing themselves as a single actor: 'the Marketing Department,' 'the Green Movement,' etc.

relevant to being able to trace things and their connections and allows the connections to speak for themselves, as opposed to attributing meaning to what is found. Such a journalistic reporting approach stemming from the early Chicago school that has been described by Lindner (2006: 29):

"As an explorer, the reporter develops research techniques which correspond both to the image of the adventurer and to the altered conditions in the world of the big city: observation and interview, on-the-spot investigation and undercover research…Just like the ethnologist, the reporter has his sources, "key persons", like the concierge, the hotel porter, the bartender and his "native" informants in the ethnic quarters."

In this manner, the journalistic reporting style helps me trace the relational patterns present in the field. It does so without trying to attribute a prior value to any such pattern and allows one to convey to one's audience patterns without being enslaved in an attempt to 'represent' what is ongoing in the field. Lancione (2011) based on Latour (2005: 147), echoes this point, explaining in a nutshell the power of description versus explanation.

Student: But descriptions are too long. I have to explain instead.

Professor: See? This is where I disagree with most of the training in the social sciences.

Student: You would disagree with the need for social sciences to provide an explanation for the data they accumulate? And you call yourself a social scientist and an objectivist!

Professor: I'd say that if your description needs an explanation, it's not a good description, that's all. Only bad descriptions need an explanation. It's quite simple really. What is meant by a 'social explanation' most of the time? Adding another actor to provide those already described with the energy necessary to act. But if you have to add one, then the network was not complete. And if the actors already assembled do not have enough energy to act, then they are not 'actors' but mere intermediaries, dopes, puppets. They do nothing, so they should not be in the description anyhow. I have never seen a good description in need of an explanation. But I have read countless bad descriptions to which nothing was added by a massive addition of 'explanations'.

Put simply, this means I describe how elements (human and non-human) in the field connect to one another as I have observed, without adding any explanation. A genealogical approach is more of a methodological tool as opposed to an explanatory device, in which the possibility of a *final* vocabulary of explanation is not the goal.

Problematized Confessional Tales

Adding to the ethnographically gained and journalistically presented material is how I use what van Maanen (1988) calls confessional tales in a way that allows for an uncomfortable reflexivity to germinate. It was important for me to pay attention to what participants were saying *as* they were saying it to *me* and although I have tried to the best of my ability to acknowledge the sense my participants conveyed *exactly*. This does not counter the "ontological implications [that] requires scholars to understand research participants as reflexive subjects whose self narrations and indeed identities are constituted in relation to their own in a field that encompasses and entangles both parties" (Butz & Besio 2009: 1668). My problematizing of confessional tales (both my participants' as well as my own) essentially translates not only as the telling of stories about gaining access to the field, being in the field, and eventually leaving the field, but also as stories that would be the basis for problematization by the thesis' emerging argument.

Before proceeding to the second half of this chapter, where I focus on my time in the field, it is pertinent to highlight a few things. In culmination, these three methodological approaches (action nets, reporting style, and problematizing confessional tales) enable me to capture how the positioning of my participants interacts with other elements and practices present within the field. I wish to leave my interpretation open for further translation with the acknowledgement that while non-representation is attempted from the beginning, the original narratives that follow are always already contextualized and needless to say, human, alive, and unfinished.

Gaining Access to an Organizing Apparatus

Situated within a business school, attached to an Australian Research Council (ARC) grant on complex temporary projects[34], wanting to study a social and material phenomenon as opposed to something exclusive to organizational settings, I faced two challenges. First, within management research, gaining access to a specific site often involves the researcher being able to convey how the

[34] The grant was entitled *Governance matters: Identifying and Making Sense of the Antecedents to Project Blow-outs*.

outcomes of the research would benefit the organization. Without a doubt I was prepared to make the case that I wanted to study stuckedness within a specific field but to the ears of seasoned managers with access-granting rights, this did not have the same ring as saying that I intended to develop a five-step plan for how they could be more efficient at XYZ process. Second, there were endless possibilities for where I could have conducted my study, as all I needed was a site with complex interactions between people, things and practices, my site had to have some connection to complex projects, given the research grant that sponsored it. Nonetheless, the lack of instrumentality in my research purpose would still apply.

Any complex project was likely to exist within a large bureaucracy, with heightened complexity, and articulated project management practices and control policies (Arrow 1964; Greiner 1997). In chapter 2, I established that the specific site of my fieldwork should be one pervaded by a sense of complexity. In this sense, the stipulation that I conduct my research on a complex project was a convenient imposition. At the start, there appeared to be several site options, through the ARC project I was working on, such as some major Australian banks or the Defence Materials Organization, all operating within project-based environments. However, these organizations were clients of the industry partner we were working with (on the ARC project), a project management consulting firm. Approximately two years into our collaboration, I realized that the project management consulting firm did not see helping me get access to these sites for ethnographic purposes as politically expedient or viable. At this point, despite the conventional pathway of PhD students attached to ARC projects being able to access the organizations that are part of the project for their doctoral research purposes, my supervisors and I were aware that we would need to secure access to a research site independently.

Thankfully, this process was less drawn out than it might have been. Indeed, we only needed to explore two options. The first one was with a personal contact of one of my supervisors who held a very senior role at the Australian headquarters of a large global bank. On a rainy Monday afternoon, my supervisor and I walked over to the cafe at the base of this contact's office building and we had an

engaging discussion about my research, at the end of which, he said, in a kind but firm manner:

This research would be hugely beneficial for our organization, but I will not be asking senior leadership to consider granting you access because I know their answer will be no. The banking industry is highly insular and very protective of their respective brands; the people at the top would not be willing to give an outsider access to shadow the key people working on any major project.

Ironically, I would later regularly bump into this contact as the project organization I finally gained access to, IntelliTech, was located in the same building, with the same local coffee vendor, which meant that I sat at the very same table where this conversation occurred many times over the six months that followed. Nonetheless, this rejection was a considerable blow to our process of gaining access as we had come up with only one other option that would fulfil the requirements of the ARC project. The second option was another professional contact of one of my supervisors, who was a director at a project management consulting firm (different to our industry partners) and asked if they were consulting on any projects that could grant me access.

Wayne Parker Kent (WPK) is an Australian project management consulting company that, according to its website, has been in operation since 1965 and has delivered over 7000 projects for a diverse range of clients in industries such as building, infrastructure, ICT (Information and Communication Technology), mining, transport, defence, energy and the environment (see page 120 for diagram explaining agencies, and page xii for a list of actors-in-agencies). On this occasion, one of my supervisors and I met the director who was his contact in the WPK offices on a sunny Wednesday afternoon. I wrote this in my journal about the visit:

Met Henry Loy today, a grandfatherly old man really. Larger than life. Sat at a massive wooden desk overlooking the harbour bridge and he talked with Shankar and me for hours. He does have some linkages with universities and has taught some classes, so he is not entirely unfamiliar with academic work, which made it easier, but the thing he seemed to want to talk most about was Singapore, and my being from there. I guess people tend to latch on to some piece of information about you that makes you more relatable. But really, I have never stayed at Raffles Hotel, nor

have I ever lived some of the luxurious experiences that Henry was regaling Shankar and I with. Nonetheless, I reminded myself that I needed to be the version of myself that was most likely to inspire Henry to speak with his colleagues, to see if there was a complex project within which I would be able to study how and why the practice of stuckedness emerged and sustained itself in a specific context. This issue of being a particular way someone needs me to be has always been a sore point for me, it has always seemed too instrumental for my liking. Yet, I suspect that I will have many more instances of this throughout my fieldwork. Before we say our goodbyes, Henry asked that I revise my proposal to make it less academic and email it to him.

Two days later Henry got back to me, asking me to come back and meet him in his offices but this time, he specified, he would prefer that I came alone. I felt this was odd but I decided to let Shankar know of his request and meet Henry as he asked. This is what I wrote of that second meeting:

It was a strange but productive outing for me. Henry postponed the time of our meeting such that it ended up being after office hours and the first thing he said was, "I hope you don't feel uncomfortable, a pretty girl like you being asked to come and see this old man alone". I felt both mildly discomforted as well as comforted to hear him say that because as I was waiting in between the original appointment time and the time we eventually met, it did cross my mind that I was feeling a bit weird. It also occurred to me how my gender cloaks me even when I think it doesn't, because somewhere along the way, I have been conditioned to think I should not meet men I do not know, by myself, in non-public spaces. However, after that one line that made me grip the chair a little tighter than I would normally, he proceeded to take me into the offices of Steven Naiset, the recently appointed Managing Director of WPK. Turns out, Henry was MD for decades and stepped down when he turned sixty. Henry made the introduction, saying "Steven, this is Kal, a beautiful Singaporean girl whom I think might get something out of being embedded within the IntelliTech project for awhile. Have a chat to her and see what you think". By the end of the meeting, Steven had given me enough information to understand that WPK consultants were functioning in a PMO capacity on the IntelliTech project and that they thought it was a disaster, full of stuckedness based on their own problematization of stuckedness. This is very interesting on so many levels because the problem is real in some sense, as Foucault would say! The meeting ended with Steven saying he wasn't sure if he could help me get access but that he would see what he could do and that I should ring him in two days time. His own academic background (he wrote an honours thesis) meant he was familiar with the research process to some extent and he said that he would be happy to help facilitate my gaining access. Fingers crossed, maybe this will pan out.

The next two days passed in a haze and before I picked up the phone to call, I noted that I was feeling nervous, almost akin to having asked someone if they would move in with me and waiting for them to give me their decision. Steven then told me that there was a chance that I would be able to embed myself within IntelliTech, but that chances are the parent organization, GridLock, would not be informed of my presence. I asked how this was possible and Steven clarified that IntelliTech was located across the street from GridLock and even if I may be able to access the program directors of IntelliTech, my doing so would not be obvious. He then gave me the number of the most senior WPK consultant on the IntelliTech project and asked me to call him to organize a meeting. As quickly as the phone call started, it ended and I felt thoroughly out of my depth. Was this ethical? (*How ethical is any research?*) I knew that the only way to understand my own ethical boundaries was to explore this option further. The next day, I rang the consultant Oliver Varsa and made arrangements to go and see him at IntelliTech. He sent me a few tables showing the project structure and said he would introduce me to the people who were responsible for IntelliTech when I got there. Interestingly, from the point that Henry had asked to see me on my own, my relationship with WPK had become my own as opposed to one that was intermediated by Shankar, my supervisor. A few months into my fieldwork, something happened that made me reflect back on this matter, a story still to come.

From that first meeting at IntelliTech, even before my access was granted, I was entering an action net and there were some relations between myself and the other actants within the net that were visible and I am certain there were many that I missed. What follows is simply what was intelligible to me at the time. I took the lift up to level three and gave Oliver a ring as he asked me to; I would need him to enter the offices because everybody needed a security pass to tap in. Oliver was a slim, tall man, who looked younger than he was but also more serious than he actually proved to be. He introduced himself and took me into the office of Jackson Hunt, the second-in-charge at IntelliTech and also the person with whom I would have most interaction. Jackson, however, was not there because his son had been hospitalized with appendicitis. The office was a small

room with yellow walls and a large fibreboard desk. I often wondered how Jackson not being at the meeting that day affected our relationship. In my view it helped him reveal much more about his personal life to me when we eventually did meet, because I opened our conversation with a query about his son's health.

As Oliver started talking to me, more WPK consultants came in to join us and Peter Lewis popped his head into the room. He was introduced as the person in charge of IntelliTech. During this meeting, I asked lots of questions about the project and explained that I wanted to conduct an ethnography, which would involve me being around and shadowing the program directors and PMO staff for about 6 months. At the end of the meeting, Oliver confirmed that I could indeed do my research with them but that it was a tough time and that I would need to tread carefully, as well as sign some non-disclosure agreements. With that, I had a loose fieldwork arrangement. This made me feel like I was on shaky ground but it was the closest I had come to getting access and I would come back the next day, to 'start'.

Navigating IntelliTech

Below is a diagram of the various agencies I encountered in the field, which has also been attached (along with names of actors attached to each agency) ahead of the abstract of this thesis, for easy reference as one reads through the data chapters.

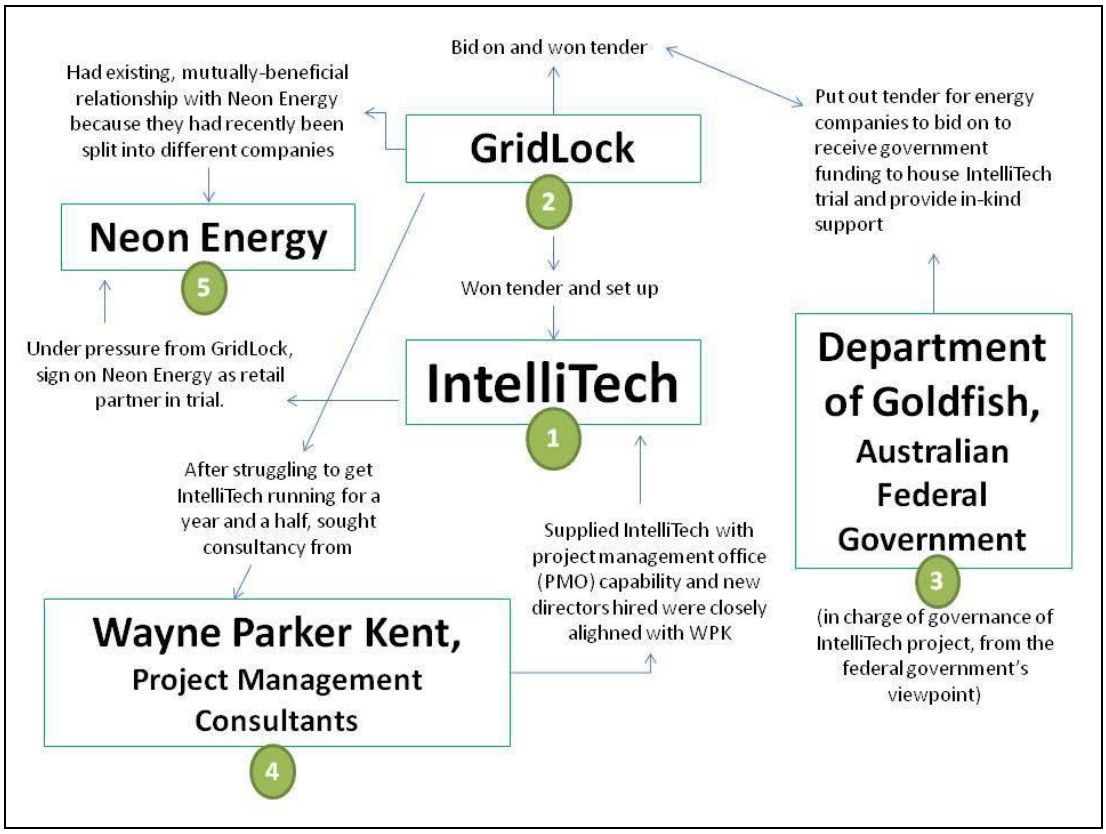

FIGURE 6: DIAGRAM OF VARIOUS AGENCIES ENCOUNTERED IN FIELD.

My fieldwork within GridLock took place between May 2012 and November 2012, after which, I kept in touch with developments at the IntelliTech project through the people I shadowed. I was able to access all central parties to the project organization, although in some cases people declined to speak to me at all, or they never returned my requests for contact. Although it was not made obvious, I realized that I was in the unusual position of having gained access to the IntelliTech megaproject through the firm that was consulting to GridLock, the organization that had bid and won the government tender to conduct the IntelliTech trial. Over the course of my fieldwork, this was an issue that caused various challenges, particularly in terms of my being able to speak with senior management of GridLock. In essence, my presence within IntelliTech had a subversive element to it. On the one hand, WPK consultants ensured that my presence was certified. I had to sign a non-disclosure agreement, albeit one that needed to be modified because the original stated that my work would then belong to GridLock. It was also imperative that I have my own security pass created, not just for ease of access (until then, one of the consultants always

needed to let me in every time I slipped outside the office) but also because this meant that all the bureaucratic boxes that needed to be checked, were checked. My access to the site via WPK also raised many questions for me, most of which I found answers for, particularly as to how WPK managed to have so much sway with IntelliTech that they could grant me access.

This vagueness about my position and under whose auspices I was allowed to be present seemed to follow me around for the majority of the six months I spent in the field. Once participants felt more comfortable with me, some of them revealed that Peter Lewis had, in fact, sent out an email at the start of my stint saying that while IntelliTech employees should be hospitable to me, that he was not pleased that I was going to be around. This caused many hurdles for me in my attempts to build trust in the first two months, and in my recording notes in my journal, I repeatedly termed my experience as being within a 'hostile environment'. I even had the experience of people running away from me, or asking me to return the ethics agreement they signed so they could rip it to shreds in front of me. It did not help my case that a few weeks into my fieldwork, staff were informed that there was a restructure pending and they became even cagier than before.

My technique to overcome this mistrust was both outward and inward. Outwardly, I accepted every invitation that came from the tentative friendships I created. This often led me to fancy lunches and after work drinks. Sometimes I had to knowingly put myself in mildly uncomfortable positions but I tried to diffuse the situation by inviting other like-minded people along. During office hours, I tried my best to assimilate and fit into the office environment. I made sure I was friendly with the support staff because I was curious about their performances within the project but it cannot be escaped that I also knew that having a good relationship with them would make my job easier because they were tasked with keeping me informed about the changing locations at which the various directors would be.

Often I tried to eat with someone or other; the only exceptions to this was when I felt sufficiently overwhelmed that I needed some time away from the project to process events in my head. I noticed that people often left the office earlier than

was normally prescribed and after a while, I too made a habit of packing up and leaving with them. Thankfully for me, despite these contradictory behaviours of support and hostility, I found my 'ambassadors'. These included Greg Benson, Jackson Hunt and Michelle Fischer, who cleared paths for me, often without realising it. However, winning them over was not straightforward because each had their own reasons for wanting to befriend me and I was aware of the fact that I needed their help but I was also not willing to compromise the code of conduct I wanted to adhere to.

For the six months that I was at IntelliTech I had a few key places at which I could hot desk so that the people around me got used to my presence. Often I was walking around and there was a lot of walking and talking, reminding me of Aaron Sorkin's portrayal of his White House characters in the highly popular television series, *The West Wing*. Mostly, I was spending time with program managers or program directors observing them in their meetings. It is important to note that I do not have a technical background, nor have I ever worked for a consolidated period of time on any kind of temporary megaproject. This was beneficial to the extent that often I did not understand what the project managers (mainly with engineering backgrounds) were talking about and my repeated requests for help in understanding their conversations aided me in winning over their confidence. On the flipside, the burden of my ignorance became more apparent as I found my notes did not always explain things fully that seemed obvious in the field but seemed less so when I re-read them at a later date. The main advantage of my unfamiliarity in this instance was that it enabled me to do what Marjorie DeVault (1990) termed a 'novel reading'. This is essentially a depiction of an event by one who is not from the same interpretative tradition but who knows enough to recognize her unfamiliarity.

My non-technical background, gender, and age were the three main ways in which I was strange to my participants. Yet, being a stranger in the field has been noted as a strength within ethnographic research as it helps with being able to identify instances of remarkableness, which may be missed by those on the inside (Czarniawska 1998; Ybema & Kamsteeg 2009). These same characteristics limited me in some ways as detailed above. Most profoundly, I felt limited in not being

accepted as “one of the guys”; I was always “the PhD” or “the headshrinker” or “the psych”, regardless of how often I repeated that I was none of those things, but just a researcher interested in how work unfolded within GridLock. Here are some snippets from my notes at some of the initial meetings I had:

When Greg and I enter the meeting room, some people are seated already. It’s about 11am and the meeting should start as soon as the management team arrives. We take seats at the imposing wooden meeting table, and Greg neglects to introduce me for the next two hours. I am unsure as to whether I should introduce myself to these people.

I enter the conference room and people say hello. I say hi and repeat, for the benefit of the people who have not yet met me, that I am Kal and that I am the researcher who’s going to be around for awhile. People laugh and say I have come to the right place, the most “dysfunctional place on the planet”.

I walk into the room with Adam and Keith, both look nervously at each other and say actually they don’t want to talk to me anymore. “It’s too dangerous” they say, even when I reassure them that everything they say is private and confidential. It’s a “trust no one environment”, they say. I smile and say that it’s ok, that that too is an observation. They look defeated.

At the end of my six months in the field however, I was no longer a stranger to my participants and they even hosted a going-away party in my honour, attended (and personally paid for) by the program directors and consultants who had originally deeply resisted talking to me. It was not lost on me how much the experience of being in the field had evolved over the six months. On that last day I flicked through my notes from my first two months and chuckled at how every day I dreaded walking into what I felt was a hostile environment, resulting in my cultivating a motivational ritual of “getting a coffee, walking round the block and talking myself into just doing it!” At the party, many of the participants expressed the sentiment that they would miss having me around and some of them had noticed that they had started to turn to me for advice, which I repeatedly declined to respond to, always saying, “I’m here as an observer”. To me, this was a type of indication (outside of what the data was telling me) that I had been in the field long enough. It was gratifying to have this acknowledgement because the six-month cut off point was a matter of practicality as much as I would not have wished it to be the case. As such, I could not attend the close-up phase of the

project. That said, I continued to keep in touch with the people I shadowed and was invited to observe at key points, even well past my last day in the field.

Methodological Tools

In synchronicity with the three methodological approaches already illustrated (action nets, a reporting style, and problematized confessional tales), I developed a few different methods to grasp the positioning of the various elements within a net and trace the relational patterns of stuckedness. Primarily I used the techniques of shadowing accompanied by ethnographic interviews and being attuned to non-human and human elements of the practices observed. Below I present these methods before addressing the way in which I analysed the materials accumulated.

Shadowing

Shadowing is a technique that owes its pedigree to people from diverse backgrounds such as the crime writer, Truman Capote, and Henry Mintzberg (1979) in organizational scholarship. In this study, shadowing certain key players allowed me to be on the move with them and observe their movements and interactions from one action *reseau* to another. This was crucial for the collective construction of the nets I was able to observe.

During observation I was alert to the narratives embedded in and communicated as part of the organizational practice of stuckedness. Czarniawska (2000) depicts this process as involving three different types of stories. First, stories that are casually repeated by agents involved in and/or carrying out the practice. Second, stories pregnant with internal and external insights of the practice's official narrative. Third, stories shared between agents that carry a stake in the practice. Put simply, the observer experiences 'what is happening' within or in relation to the practice, with a particular emphasis on what actions are performed and what behaviours occur in the flow of time.

Shadowing is a type of observation[35], "which involves a researcher closely following member(s) of an organization over an extended period of time" (McDonald 2005: 456). I closely shadowed a total of 15 people and interacted with over 100 people who were all connected to the IntelliTech project over a period of six months, on average shadowing each one of them about once every week. Like McDonald (2005), I found the shadowing activity to be as various and complex as the job of the individual being shadowed with varied approaches being taken to the time spent on shadowing. For example, sometimes the shadowing was done on consecutive days, at other times it was not.

At some stages, my method would simply involve *participant observation*, where I would sit in certain meetings and record the conversations that took place on my inconspicuous phone, albeit with my participants' prior consent. At other stages, for example, when I was observing a teleconference and the other side was unable to hear what was being said on the IntelliTech side, I was able to prompt a running commentary from persons being shadowed for reasons of clarification (e.g. what was being said on the other end of a phone call, what an in-joke means, etc.) and understanding (e.g. the reasons for the pursuit of a particular line of argument, or what the current operational priorities are). Sometimes I would switch from participant observer to someone instigating a chat over what was observed.

In particular, as with Simpson (2009), I found that project managers used symbols or practices that compromise verbal, emotional and physical actions. These significant symbols are used for individual meaning making and thus difficult to understand and explore by pure observations and need clarification. These casual instances of provoked storytelling resulted in a co-construction of meaning between participants and myself. According to Argyris and Schön (1974) this constitutes the key aim of understanding how participants reflect upon their everyday practices and work life.

[35] McDonald (2005) uses the term 'qualitative shadowing', implying that there is such a thing as quantitative shadowing. As far as I know, this is not the case. As such, I have simply used the word 'shadowing' in this research.

I tended to use my judgement to decide who the people were, who were comfortable being recorded and with whom. On some occasions, it was better just to take notes because, as both Silverman (2009) and McDonald (2005) caution, using audio devices could detract more from the naturally occurring data I could be observing and recording. I found this to be more often the case when I was talking to people one on one. In group situations as well as instances when I was recording meetings that would take place regardless, participants seemed to forget to be conscious about their being recorded.

I kept an almost continuous set of field notes that recorded participants in terms of times and contents of conversations, as well as my observations of how people where interacting with each other and things. From shadowing, I acquired a deep, multi-dimensional and rich set of detailed data of the roles played, things interacted with, philosophies held and tasks undertaken, embedded with which were various practices of stuckedness, for all of which I was gaining an experiential sense.

As part of my shadowing, participants made time to have a mixture of informal chats as well as ethnographic interviews with me. *Informal chats* were critical to the building of trust and were conversations that were devoid of any desire on my part to steer talk in particular ways. Yet, the trust element of these chats made them significant to my study and without them, I would not have the same understanding of the participants' action nets. Interestingly, compared to people whom I only had the opportunity to interview, those with whom I had frequent informal chats were the ones who were able to see me as something other than a "headshrinker". They also enabled me to collect information that would otherwise have been impossible to collect, particularly about preferences and desires of individuals that helped to explain some relational patterns that were enacted and re-enacted, making them worthy of noting.

Where I was unable to shadow certain individuals (because I can only be in one place at a time), I applied the classical method of the *ethnographic interview*. Doing so meant that participants made time to spend with me and I thus had to think of some key aspects about which I wanted to enquire. Often they were

candid and very familiar with me because they were already used to my presence at many of the director or project manager meetings which I regularly sat in on. Unlike informal chats, these interviews did not build trust quite as easily. However, owing to their somewhat long and rambling nature (I tended to let participants go off on tangents if they expressed a desire to), it was a method that was useful at unpacking how these actors positioned themselves and how they felt they were positioned in relation to some of the other enactments that might have been discussed in meetings I was observing.

Artefacts & Things

The collecting of narratives through analysis of how both discursive and non-discursive artefacts are engaged within the practice of stuckedness was also essential. Artefacts are ready to be studied as far as they are accessible and therefore provide an opportunity to unwrap the ways that discourse orders things within organizations (Alvesson & Kärreman 2000), adding new perspectives to the grander narrative on the practice of stuckedness and the process of interpretation. Such an approach sits under the umbrella of a progressive interpretation of discourse analysis. As did Gagliardi (1990: 16), I include an explicitly material take on discourse based on the notion that organizational artefacts "are pathways of action". Founded on Bourdieu's (1994) position on the impact of social architecture and geography on the structuring of society, Gagliardi (1990: 18) holds that the physical setting is able to shape the behaviour of actors because, first and foremost, the physical bounds of a setting allow us to do some things and not others. This sets the scene for particular eventualities as opposed to others.

At IntelliTech the use of project management tools such as maps, plans, schedules, reports, 'best practice guidelines', and project diaries are a significant part of practising within the project. Additionally, my sensemaking of my participants' life-worlds involved being alert to how their practice was constituted and constituting of things. How did they use their office space? How did they use their choice of clothing in their day-to-day conduct in the office? *How* did they use the technology around them? One interesting experience that reminded me of the importance of how things, people, and practice intersect is when one of the

participants wanted to show me an email that incriminated another party. He told me about it; then he let me know he did not want the conversation about it recorded. Then, after we had finished our conversation, and we had both exited his room, he said to me, "It's up on the screen if you want to go and have a look while I'm out here talking to these people". The physical attributes of a computer screen and how the office was set up were germane to how I managed to view and make a record - by reading the email while recording myself, with the participant's permission. In a similar vein, the material configuration of my recording device made it easy for me to record thoughts even when I was unable to write a reflection while some incident was fresh in my mind. In this way, the *use of artefacts and things,* while not a separate method per se, was an important characteristic of my practice of shadowing.

Beyond the documentary study of artefacts and things relating to and being produced within IntelliTech, plenty of contextual information was available on the IntelliTech program and how it fitted into the government's wider environmental policies. This involved the *reading* of much narrative material that attempted to position the project in order to understand their substantive content and to illuminate deeper meanings revealed by their style and coverage (Schwartz-Shea & Yanow 2009).

Finally, I conducted some *photo analysis* based on a few photographs I was allowed to capture during my six months in the field as well as image artefacts produced by IntelliTech. I cannot claim to have used this method consistently and I knew I would not be able to use any photographs in my presentation of the data for confidentiality reasons. However, photo analysis certainly had an illuminating effect in terms of helping me remember some of the physical positioning of people and things and feel more connected to my encounters whilst writing up the research.

It bears mentioning that although I immersed myself in the project organization, my access to the tightly meshed nets of actions at IntelliTech was still limited. Some interesting events were closed off to me for political reasons and would later be mentioned to me in passing. Of course, this is not unusual because access is

never unlimited. There was a constant negotiation and re-negotiation that I performed such that I could develop and maintain my own position in the field (Schwartz-Shea & Yanow 2009). Finally, although in this last section I have somewhat separated the methodological devices I employed, in my actual practice, they blended one into the other. There was a constant attuning to artefacts and things and how people interacted with them.

Analysis & Textwork

Using the methods explained, I gathered an abundance of empirical data. There were observational notes, over 70 documents of recorded and transcribed interviews and meetings, pictures, photos, newspaper articles, presentation documents, brochures, white papers, memos, and so on. The organization and analysis of all this data has been a winding journey conducted through different tentative approaches to analysis. In the end, I opted for the means most coherent with the theoretical and methodological approaches that form the basis of this study.

To start with, I had to find a way to process the bountiful cache of documents I was developing and collecting. I saved each document according to its date of publication, general topic, and the type of data source within (for e.g. interview, meeting, research journal, media, etc.). Doing this helped me to catalogue the vast amount of information I had in such a way that I was able to locate documents when I was referring to them at various points after the fieldwork period.

Beyond a simple filing system, my first attempt to analyse these documents involved using various CAQDAS software such as NVivo 8, Dedoose, and Atlas. ti (version 7), in that order of trial. Of the three, I found myself most comfortable with Atlas. ti, which prompted me to buy the program as the university did not provide access to that particular CAQDAS software. Initially, I was enthused by the sheer number of ways I could code and link text with audio, video, and images. Having uploaded all my documents to Atlas. ti, I read each text sequence (a phrase, a few sentences or as much as a few paragraphs) from each of my documents such that I could assign a label to it. Labels emerged intuitively and I was jumping back and forth between documents to decide on which labels to use

for what sequences and whether the sequence deserved a new label or could fit with one that had already emerged. As the list of labels grew, I added memos to explain the meaning of my labels to keep them comprehensible. Similarly, with the growing number of labels, I was able to see linkages between labels and classify them under categories, which I then tried to find connections between, keeping in mind the practices I observed. By the end however, with such a vast amount of information, I found that I was unable to maintain a grasp of my research; it was running away from me in a burgeoning number of codes and quotes. I seemed to be building a rigid and standardized schema of understanding, in complete contradiction to my aims. Nuances and emotions were hard to articulate or highlight in any meaningful way and, discomfittingly, the relationality between human and non-human elements was difficult to illuminate. It started to dawn on me that Atlas. ti, for all its capabilities, was instrumentally codifying the context of my analysis, as opposed to helping me see the relational patterns within the experiences I had catalogued through the fieldwork.

At this stage, I asked myself what the most intuitive method of analysis would be. The process that emerged was organic and involved three simple stages: First, I reviewed all the material and divided it not by genre (text, image, audio) but by reference to this or that topic (institutions too). Doing this helped me to see where the major narratives of the data lay, enabling me to delve into certain key moments to understand the problematization of stuckedness. Coincidently, this seemed to be also how I had stored the data from my experience of *doing* ethnography; once a narrative started becoming obvious to me (based on the data), I found that I easily remembered other stories relevant to the narrative and would know where in my data set I needed to go to further unpack the stories. This process suggests that in handling data from sustained ethnographical enquiry, it is important to follow an approach that allows the researcher to best connect her varied and many memories as opposed to trying to codify *all* the data gathered. I found the latter process to hinder, rather than help, with explaining a phenomenon.

Second, I engaged in a weak codification and identification of the interrelations between elements within each topic. Such relational analysis provides me with the 'worlding' (Haraway 2003) that cannot occur when elements are not connected. It is precisely the enmeshment of the individual human and non-human elements that is able to characterize the 'ongoingness. To connect the elements, I report stories which allow me to understand how, by whom, and through what, stuckedness is constructed and (re-)constructed, as well as how such constructions alter or stabilize other elements.

Finally, in an ongoing manner, through the writing of chunks of text, I condensed, in a narrative style, the different aspects of analysis as highlighted above, adding my own remembrances and comments, which collectively underscored the most important stories that the empirical sections needed to recount.

Through this less fixed and technologically driven mode, I was able to identify the most insistent stories of stuckedness that unfolded during the course of my fieldwork and create links between different instances that were moments of a larger narrative arc. Clegg and Ross-Smith (2003: 85-98) depict narrative research as "gathering, analysing, and disseminating knowledge about people working in concert with things, technologies, and each other and the means through which these relations are coordinated and controlled, for what ends". In this vein, I used the above analytical process in deference to the reporting style elucidated earlier, for the capturing but not representing of action nets. I focus primarily on depicting the patterns and connections that I saw, heard, and know, believing that in most cases, the events themselves reveal the ends. My task as a genealogical ethnographer is to go past the ends and ask what is it within our *savoir* that enables such performances?

With regard to van Maanen's (2006) call for the disruption of the curious silence surrounding textwork, I will say something about how little my writing process had in common with van Maanen's fictional day. I sometimes wrote in physical isolation and at other times I wrote amongst a crowd, but my writing never occurred in a vacuum. I continued to read other writers every day that I was writing out my own text and took part in a steady stream of discussions about my

work with supervisors, colleagues, friends, and relatives. Indeed, some made suggestions that I built upon in the chapters ahead, while in other cases, I 'borrowed' ideas from television programs and documentaries. It is pertinent to highlight (and appreciate) this collectivity that is 'encoded' in my grammar, tone, voice, genre and figures of speech.

Similarly, although the activities of gathering, coding, analysing, and writing have been described in discrete terms in this chapter, in reality, these activities are interwoven with one another. As was highlighted before, at what point does a prior experience stop bleeding into a current one? Being in the *field* may appear to be a specific activity cloistered by particular spatio-temporal brackets but the conceptualization and interpretation of this piece of work started when I first heard Hage (2009) speak of stuckedness. Recollections of past memories and events seeped into the subsequent analysis that then fed into preparation for fieldwork, being in the field that ensued, and the eventual analysis, writing, and presentation of the research.

Ethical Issues

Ethical issues abound in most kinds of research and this research was no different. In the course of this chapter, I have recounted some of the ethical issues that arose during the course of my fieldwork, many of which did not have neat solutions and are part of the open-ended and sometimes contradictory nature of how I, or any other similar researcher, would make sense of the world. Nonetheless, there are some matters that I tackled in a more direct fashion, both in terms of the doing of the fieldwork, as well as in the writing up of the research. These were some of the codes of conduct I adhered to:

- Do not speak of someone's affairs or opinions in their absence (as well as presence).
- Where participants were discussing ways in which they felt they were shirking their responsibility, I would always be neutral and if prompted, would assure them that I do not say anything about anyone to anyone else, regardless of their hierarchical positions.

In this way, I was able to maintain the privacy I promised participants and it also built a sense of trust between participants and myself. They observed that I did not discuss their colleagues with them and thus assumed that I could be trusted not to discuss their desires and motives with others.

- When asked, refrain from commenting on any organizational affairs.

During the later part of my fieldwork, I was often consulted for my opinion on things; especially on matters which participants felt I had experience. I drew the line at this point because it helped me remain neutral about the actual work that was being done and its purpose. It also enabled me to focus on observing how participants practiced as opposed to needing to feel like I should make a practical contribution in the present.

- I made clear that there should be no expectations of this research, that I do not know the audience it would reach and that it may, in their view, have no tangible impact at all.

I had to explain this a few times because this is a very non-functionalist approach to research and participants had trouble accepting it. Yet, it was my position and I felt that they should be made aware that I was not trying to make their working lives easier or more efficient. However, owing to the fact that I was doing research and trying my best to allow the participants to represent themselves, I did discuss my thoughts and ideas about my research with them in an invitation for the research to "talk back" to me.

In terms of analysing and writing up the fieldwork:

- I have changed all the names of the organizations and of the people who are present in my writing.
- I have not used any photos where a participant may be recognisable.
- I have written most of the text in the past tense to underscore the constant motion of the 'social' and that what I observed was simply a snapshot in time.
- The gendering of people is a key problematic that I wrestle with in this work and for this reason, I have tried, where possible, to use gender-sensitive language, such

as using his/her (where I was not discussing a person who identified with a specific gender) or eliminating the need for the pronoun altogether.

The purpose of this code of ethics is twofold. First, as I have highlighted, I have placed a premium on reading the 'unseen'. If the researcher does not take precautions to avoid falling back on common stereotypical narratives of certain groups of people, for example, contractors, consultants, government servants, etc., this is more difficult. Second, and relatedly, I feel a deep respect for the trust that was bestowed upon me by participants and these were some of the ways in which I endeavoured to show them as the truly complex 'subjects' they are. These practical decisions are thus necessarily more of an ethnographical than genealogical concern; there is no way to evade the issue of how the researcher interacts with the animate beings in her research when the research is conducted 'at the scene' as opposed to through historical recordings of the present.

To Conclude & Cohere

Martin O'Brien (1993) compares social theory to a sort of kaleidoscope, with which the world under examination changes shape when the theoretical perspective is altered. The selection of methods one chooses to investigate phenomena is necessarily a theoretically loaded choice (Silverman 2009). In the case of this research project, I have followed the theoretical trail that the concept of stuckedness prepared for me, namely the methodological approach of genealogical ethnography.

The chapter has discussed the key questions involved in doing a genealogical ethnography. Non-representation is a hallmark of genealogical research because the analytical eye is trained on scrutinising subjectivities as opposed to subjects. If this genealogical ethnography aims to be an interpretive analytics, or a history of the present, my problematization of stuckedness is one interpretation that can, and indeed should, be queried by others' interpretations that grow out of different idiosyncratic concerns to the preoccupation of this thesis. The chapter then made the notion of reflexivity problematic so that I could examine what an 'uncomfortable' reflexivity might entail. Using experiences from my fieldwork that imbue a liminal and tenuous character, I problematized my own 'positionality' as

both insider and outsider in the field, setting the expectation that the reflexivity employed in this thesis is discomforting in its accountability for self-representation and self-determination, both that of others and one's self. Also examined is what the integration of analyses may look like within a genealogical ethnography. Guided by Foucault's concept of the apparatus, that is the focusing on minor processes that surround the practice of stuckedness and the grouping of heterogeneous elements into a net (*réseau*), my analyses require methods that account for complexity, non-linearity, values, multiple perspectives and the nitty-gritty of social processes (Cicmil et al. 2006; Flyvbjerg 2006).

The question of what were the most coherent methodological approaches with which to translate my theoretical leanings was addressed through a triad of techniques for collecting, understanding, and depicting the data. I drew on Czarniawska's (2004) action nets to apply Foucault's apparatus to organizational settings. Action nets are a device that highlight that a *réseau* of elements is the starting, not end point, for the study of a phenomenon. The concept enabled me to refer to a space-time specific set (not a system) of institutions (not necessarily coherent) relevant to a particular period, while simultaneously preventing any reliance on self-evident concepts such as 'actors' or 'organizations'. As long as elements are joined and disjoined by a strategic, albeit flexible, logic, changing positions, and modifiable functions, all operating against a background of discursive fields of power/knowledge relations, they are part of an action net. If the action net serves to attune me to the positioning of different types of elements that are netted together, the second technique, the reporting style, guided by Lancione (2011) and Latour (2005), help me trace the relational patterns present in the field without making them value-laden. Additionally, it helped me convey to my audience these patterns without being enslaved to an attempt to literally 'represent' the occurrences in the field. The third technique, developed to achieve coherence with theory, is the use of problematized confessional tales, adapting what van Maanen (1988) termed simply confessional tales. By questioning both my participants' and my own confessions, I used an uncomfortable reflexivity to add to the ethnographically gained and journalistically presented material in this thesis.

In this chapter, I also shared more practical stories of how I gained access to and navigated my research site, the complex project of the IntelliTech trial. Project-oriented scholarship is currently dominated by positivist and realist research, characterized by a model-based, instrumental approach aiming to generate universally applicable theory (Cicmil et al. 2006). The downside of lapsing into this type of a "closed technical-logical perspective" is that projects fail to invite investigation that is cognisant of both their depth and width (Dehlin 2008: 142). For Cicmil et al. (2006: 676), the solution lies in the empirical shift of employing methods that take "into account different contexts in which project management is enacted, thus addressing complexity, non-linearity, values, multiple perspectives and social processes in project environments". Using shadowing, ethnographic interviews, participant observation, informal chats, and a focus on the material elements immanent to the performance of stuckedness, this empirical shift is essentially what I attempt in how I gather stories and relational patterns from the field, do the analysis (ethically), as well as enact the text work of my ethnography.

In the end, this chapter shows how and why, in practical terms, I use certain carefully chosen methods to join the dots systematically between different elements (power/knowledge relations, historical and cultural conditions, human and non-human agencies, and the practices under scrutiny) within an action net. While the methods are ethnographical, the purpose is genealogical; it is focused on exposing the limits placed by our *savoir*, on the cultivation of practices of stuckedness (and of ethnography), which are undoubtedly, also practices of the self.

PART IV:

REPORTAGE & ANALYSIS

Your hand opens and closes, opens and closes. If it were always a fist or always stretched open, you would be paralysed. Your deepest presence is in every small contracting and expanding, the two as beautifully balanced and coordinated as birds' wings.

Rumi

6

INTERLUDE

Having now discussed the rationale behind and some reflections on how I studied stuckedness, the next three chapters (section IV) focuses on the performances I was involved in whilst in the field. To help orient the reader to what follows, I have included on pages x, xi and xii, a list of acronyms and their corresponding long-form terms, a diagram of how the different agencies in the field interact with one another, and a list of all the actors as per their affiliation to these agencies. Also, it is worth briefly stating the main organizational issues that will be examined in this thesis, as an orientative measure. Specifically, I present material and analysis on:

(1) The clash of strategies between the corporatized public sector and the private sector in project implementation

(2) The clash of strategies between project professionals and business-as-usual professionals

(3) Climate change politics in Australia in relation to the delivery of this project, and

(4) How conceptions of gender intersect with conceptions of stuckedness.

By focusing on the material *pouvoir*/*savoir* of the field, I shall examine how these issues contributed to an empirical but unfinished understanding of stuckedness, particularly in terms of a re-conceptualization of *stuckedness*, as well as extrapolations about the choice (how) and sustenance (why) of practices of dogged replication (stuckedness) over change or termination.

At the end of Chapter 2, stuckedness was problematized as a governmental technology that flourishes when and where a sense of crisis exists, which may be defined as the espousal of persisting with a practice that is non-generative. It combines awareness of the dysfunctionality of practises together with their ongoing repetition. As a self-reproducing practice, stuckedness has an element of

taken-for-grantedness that is necessary for its survival. Practices characterized by stuckedness are part of a provisional and versatile melange of multiple governmentalities, meaning that they are not a static technology but rather, a dynamic, living one.

One of the key characterizations of this dynamism comes in the form of viewing stuckedness as one of many phenomena occurring on a 'plane of immanence'. That is, at any point that we problematize certain practices as those of stuckedness, there is a corresponding problematization of practices of moving well, of progressing. Just as the desire for security and the feeling of insecurity are two sides of the same coin, so too is the desire for moving well and the feeling of stuckedness. In the field, my aim was to understand those practices constituting stuckedness, how and why certain elements came together to be problematized as stuckedness. What I noticed was that the phenomena I characterized as stuckedness were mostly discussed by participants in terms of practices that represented an expansion or contraction of the state of being stuck. An expansion tended to be seen as a bad thing, and a contraction, a sign of progress. Although this canonical problematization of good vs. bad is not part of my expansion of Hage's concept, it reflects my problematization of practices of stuckedness being immanent to practices of moving well. To represent this here, I have divided the empirical section of this thesis into one chapter (7) that uses the problematization of practices of stuckedness as they wax as its starting point, another (8) that uses the problematization of practices of stuckedness as they wane as its genesis, and a third chapter (9), which covers in more detail certain entrenched contexts that are relevant to the IntelliTech research site.

As a genealogical ethnographer who has set out to describe, as opposed to interpret realities, I grappled most persistently with how I would describe the field when it is impossible, in one thesis, to tell all the stories of the IntelliTech project, or even of all the lived experiences of stuckedness that I encountered. I knew that the thesis would focus on the practices by which stuckedness was most insistently embedded in the IntelliTech project. However, even with a narrowed intent, the question of how best to describe these practices remained. Pursuant to my focus

on naturally occurring data, I chose to use two sets of meetings, to which I had consistent access that I observed over the six-month period of my fieldwork.

I used the data collected from these meetings as starting points for the description of action nets. Previously, I presented the rationale behind my choice to use action nets as a device that highlights a *réseau* (net) of elements as the starting point, not end point, for the study of a phenomenon such as stuckedness. As long as elements are joined and disjoined by a strategic, albeit flexible logic, changing positions and modifiable functions, all operating against the background of a discursive field of power/knowledge relations, they are part of an action net. Within the scope of an action net one can refer to a space-time specific set (not a system) of institutions (not necessarily coherent) relevant to a particular period, while simultaneously preventing any reliance on self-evident concepts such as 'actors' or 'organizations' (Czarniawska 2004). There were two such sets of institutional performances that participants consistently problematized as an example of increasing stuckedness and one of contracting stuckedness. The meetings between IntelliTech and DOG (henceforth referred to as DOG Meetings) and the ones that took place between the IntelliTech Program Managers (called Stream Delivery Meetings) were thus selected over others and chapters 7 and 8 respectively have been described through observation of these meetings.

As with most starting points, the choice of these meetings serve the purpose of conveying a space-time-specific, yet organic measure of the action nets that permeate the field. They can thus be seen as a device that illustrates how various performances (sometimes outside the context of the meeting but nevertheless connected to) are woven together. I am not suggesting that all the practices described in either chapter have been problematized as either an increase or decrease in stuckedness. Rather, I simply use the insistent problematization that one meeting is a manifestation of the expansion of stuckedness and the other, vice versa, to excavate how and why certain elements come together to be problematized by my participants in those terms which had become for me an index of stuckedness. By describing meetings verbatim, interpolated with the meaning-making patterns I observe, I analyse how the people in the field make sense of what I characterize as stuckedness and beyond this, in each chapter I

problematize my participants' views (the why) by marrying the theoretical work performed earlier, with the empirics of genealogical ethnography. Often what is revealed is that, despite varying problematizations conceived as either an amplification or antidote to stuckedness, similar elements, albeit perceived differently, are at play. As a final point of vivification, I want to highlight that the elements at play in the action nets I was a part of during my research were innumerable: what I present is just a selection seen through my ethnographic relevancies.

7

STUCKEDNESS IN WAX: HEROES AND VILLAINS

In this first empirical chapter, I start with some background notes on the IntelliTech project. The chapter is then largely devoted to a reporting-style description of an average DOG meeting, where I draw upon certain events that transpired in these meetings and explore them in some depth. Interposed within this description are key observations about how stuckedness is made sense of, namely through (1) the materially available, (2) metaphors and storytelling, and (3) the clash of misaligned strategies. The fourth section of this chapter is where, based on the patterns observed, I problematize related tales that I have been told and events I have witnessed to interrogate why stuckedness was as it was in this study. I conclude the chapter with a summary of my analysis.

BACKGROUND NOTES

As was briefly outlined in the chapter on genealogical ethnography, how I got access to the IntelliTech project was itself an exercise in problematizing stuckedness. I had to discuss my theoretical ideas with Henry, who subsequently told me to be less academic when I explained them to Steven, the Managing Director of WPK. Based on the premise that I was expanding upon Hage's problematization that stuckedness went hand in hand with an environment of pervasive crisis, which would accurately describe numerous project (and organizational) environments, the idea was to let Steven know what I was interested in studying and ask if he had any ongoing complex projects I could get access to. As soon as I started talking to Steven about the notion of persisting with unfruitful practices, before I could even make my request for access, Steven exclaimed, "there is a project, that is an epitome of stuckedness in its entirety!" 'IntelliTech' was its name.

I had not anticipated that problematization and access would be so concurrent. It is commonly understood amongst ethnographers that getting access is almost always difficult. As such, I was quietly thankful that I was researching a

phenomenon that I could likely observe in most complex organizational settings. However, this turn of events resulted in the unique effect of understanding that the problematization of the most senior directors at WPK was that IntelliTech embodied stuckedness. Even so, it was only looking back, doing the reflection inherent to ethnography, that I can say that IntelliTech as a project, an event, an institution, a practice, was a key catalyst by which stuckedness was recognized. The initial encounter with Steven was just the first suggestion that this would be the case.

IntelliTech was a government-funded, public-facing, innovation trial within the energy sector focused on trialling technology aimed at reducing Australia's carbon footprint. The Australian Government announced a $100 million initiative in its 2009 Budget, which subsequently came to be known as IntelliTech. The ownership and execution of the IntelliTech trial was bid and won by the state-owned energy company, GridLock, which together with the project consortium, committed to fund more than $400 million in cash and in-kind contributions. What this meant in real terms was that GridLock needed to fund and implement certain programs within its own organization that were contemporaneous to the rollout of the IntelliTech project but were also beneficial for its own business-as-usual activities.

There is an ethical difficulty that I must address at this juncture because of the public nature of this project, which is applicable to all the empirical narratives presented within this thesis. As trials such as IntelliTech have been conducted in a number of locations, to maintain the anonymity of my participants, I refrain from mentioning which Australian state this trial takes place within. I have also changed the funding amounts and the name of the Government Initiative that was the germination ground for IntelliTech so that the stories told herein cannot be traced back to any particular institution. Additionally, I do not disclose the names of the various technologies developed as part of the IntelliTech project or of the specific projects undertaken for the GridLock organization as part of the in-kind contributions to IntelliTech. Finally, fictitious locations have been created to depict where trials and meetings were conducted.

These changes and omissions do not have an impact on my ability to convey what I understood about the way stuckedness was problematized, which was the primary interest of my ethnography. In fact, affording my participants this protection is vital especially because information about the outcomes of the actual project is in the public domain. If this was a study on stuckedness as manifest in the discourse surrounding the IntelliTech project, I could have conducted the research entirely based on materials available to the public. However, I was interested in observing, primarily through naturally occurring data, how and why stuckedness was problematized in one specific context (the IntelliTech trial).

Agreeing to protect my participants through modifying/excluding the names, amounts, and locations was crucial to gaining access to the research site. Given the sensitive information I present in this thesis there are a few points about this that need to be explained. First, even though the process of genealogical ethnography sometimes felt like investigative journalism, I was investigating stuckedness and not reporting on whether what I was observing was 'right' or 'wrong'. Second, while some of the stories present may be startling, shocking even, the phronetic value of this research lies in its presentation of a way of life, through the exploration of a particular life-world. Third it is not my intention to perform the job of an auditor, reporting what I observed, with outcomes that may affect the people who allowed me to observe them. Fourth, the larger contribution of this work lies in the discussion of the *pouvoir*/*savoir* within which the problematizations presented originate and the consideration of how these problematizations may change if the field of *savoir* is expanded. On that note, the next section delves into the world of IntelliTech through the lens of DOG meetings, which I came to consistently label as performances of stuckedness.

Meetings with the Department of Goldfish (DOG)

There was a small group of government bureaucrats who were responsible for monitoring the governance, that is, the interests of the government, of the trial, based primarily on the funding agreement that was signed in 2010. They interfaced, primarily through bi-monthly teleconferences, with both senior members of the IntelliTech team as well as key WPK consultants. I was in

attendance at these meetings as an observer and what I learnt watching and listening was far and away more insightful than what I gleaned from talking, particularly to employees at the DOG.

Kent was the most senior bureaucrat who was involved in the IntelliTech project, and he was very proud that his was the only sustained involvement in the project from its inception in 2009. When he spoke to me, he was always positive about everything that I asked. Everybody was doing a fantastic job, despite certain entrenched "rigidities". When pressed to explain what these rigidities were, all he could muster was, "oh you know, these are risk averse cultures we are dealing with". The irony of this "sanitization" was lost on Kent, especially since he was aware that I was present at these teleconferences. In my notes, I wrote:

Midday on Wednesdays is a funny time. It is a time of scrambling amongst the people I shadow. They are running back and forth between their desks and Jackson's office, checking to see if they have done everything that was requested of them by Kent and his team. Kate and Sara (secretaries) are being called in to format documents and emails are flying back and forth between Pradeep (the WPK consultant who handles most of the action items) and Clare*, one of Kent's underlings at DOG. At 12.30pm, the DOG meetings start and in my six months at IntelliTech, there has not been one DOG meeting that people are not frustrated to be at. It appears that nobody has indifferent, let alone positive feelings about these meetings and it was never necessary to ask people why, because the proceedings of the teleconferences make this perspicuous.*

From the point of view of seeking rigorous research material, the abundance of strong, observable emotions was a positive for me, because when people did want to talk about their feelings, it served as a confirmation of what they had revealed within the context of an official meeting. Interestingly, the reverse was applicable to my casual chats with DOG employees.

Coping is Materially Negotiated

The other remarkable thing about being able to witness these teleconferences also marks my first observation about how my participants made sense of a practice they problematized as an expansion of stuckedness. In my notes, I wrote:

The main coping strategy employed by the participants involved in the DOG meetings, who problematized it as an expansion of stuckedness, was to use the sheer material nature of a teleconference. This allowed for an official meeting to transpire, while simultaneously, for people to provide a running commentary of their emotional responses to the content of the meetings. However, no participants seem to recognize that this is the case. As a purely telephonic interaction, these meetings enabled participants to make sense of what they problematized as stuckedness using humour or complaint and there was a sense of camaraderie that existed amongst the group who had to "endure" these meetings. This would not have been able to germinate if the meetings took place in real time. In most cases, a large chunk of the 2-hour block allotted for the teleconference involved muting the secondary conversation happening on the IntelliTech side. In all likelihood, this was happening on the DOG end as well. In fact, on one occasion Kent admitted that, in a teleconference between DOG and some other group, the latter had unsuccessfully muted the secondary conversation they were having. These meetings provide a bird's-eye view of many of the issues that IntelliTech faced because it was Kent's job to highlight them and the IntelliTech team are caught in between the government's agendas and GridLock's agendas. It's a fight and was repeatedly emphasized to me that these were performances of stuckedness as problematized by my participants at IntelliTech.

In the preceding paragraphs to this excerpt, I describe various scenarios selected from my transcripts and put together in concert with my notes on the DOG teleconferences, which also illustrate some of the key action nets in which IntelliTech was involved. What follows is an interpretation of these action nets, grounded in the data.

Michelle (WPK consultant) walks into the room, looking through her notes from last week's meeting. Her brows furrowed, her tongue sticking out a little as she concentrated. She has been responsible for the minuting of these meetings and she leaned towards me saying, "I tried to keep it PC [politically correct], some of the discussion was quite disturbing if I had written what they said. Some of it was a bit like, I told you guys to do this and, you haven't done that". My mind wandered back to the last DOG meeting. Michelle had said to me, "It should be noted that it [i.e., what had to be done] is their most critical priority". She was referring to how that statement was made in reference to one of Kent's requests and she made it clear that Peter, the head of IntelliTech, also thought this. As such, she and Adam wrote it word for word and now, she was looking at their reply notes, which stated that they didn't have a recollection of the request. "I

don't agree with that comment. If they don't have a recollection, they obviously weren't listening, and now they try to take it out of the minutes – they can't", she said. Jackson soothed her, "it's alright, they're gold fish", he said, "they swim around the tank and go, 'look there's a man, there's a man, there's a man'. It's my whole experience with these guys". Everybody else is laughing and Michelle starts to make a joke of it, swivelling her chair in a circle and pointing while she repeats, "there's a man, there's a man". As Sara, Jackson's assistant pops her head in to update the team on the meeting's timing, Jackson says to Sara, "it's all cool, yeah and I'm going to get you over to feed the goldfish in the tank so they die". Michelle chimes in, "so he floats upside down". Jackson teases, "can you do that?" and Sara responds, clearly uncomfortable, "probably not". Everybody else is laughing and Jackson says, "I'm going to train you eventually Sara, okay?" And right at that moment, Kent came online.

METAPHORS: STARTING WITH A GOLDFISH

The second observation of how stuckedness was problematized at these DOG meetings is through the use of metaphors, which illustrate the abstract constructions that participants use to make sense of how they see (problematize) a situation or practice. According to Sackmann (1989), participants will generally sew together cognitive, emotional, and behavioural meaning and this is what I observed. Indeed, the participants used metaphors and stories to give coherence to their thoughts and make vivid their mental images. Heracleaous and Jacobs' (2008) metaphor analysis enables access to participants' first-order conceptions of organizational dimensions, thus revealing how they are connected for the participants and offering possible vantages of identities at play. In this manner, the many metaphors found in the data presented in this thesis offer an interesting understanding of the unique organization of the IntelliTech project. In the description above, we see Jackson and Michelle compare DOG employees, specifically Kent, to goldfish. In my notes, I wrote:

Jackson uses the goldfish metaphor to calm Michelle down and suggest that she should not take her dealing with DOG too seriously because they are goldfish and cannot be expected to remember actual details. Jackson is also emphasizing their inability to perform their job because they are unable to stay on top of the detail or deal with regular fluctuations in a project in a way

one would expect. There is also a sense that Jackson wants to imbue DOG with an insignificance, which he does by using a goldfish that not only has a very short-term memory but also is very small. In fact, the goldfish are so small that in his use of this metaphor, he can get Sara, who is diminutive herself, to kill all the goldfish. Michelle's comment about them floating upside down is almost like the flourish on the metaphor. Animal metaphors come thick and fast at IntelliTech, there are many, and mostly used to connote negative attributes.

With almost theatrical timing to Michelle's comments about the meeting, Kent pipes up and says that they want Michelle to send the minutes through in advance so he can "clarify" what is written into posterity from the previous meeting. On the IntelliTech side (offline) the room erupts into groans. The general feeling is that Kent focuses on all the wrong things. He wants the minutes to look good so that he looks good.

Jackson wants to move things along and says, "I went and saw Don on Friday, it is the first audience I've had with Don in six months. It is our first time to be able to confirm anything with our executives and we took a very long list of actions which (sic) we went through. We presented the status to the whole program, and we got an insight to his conversation with Bryce. So now they know that we are going to communicate to you and Don has agreed to that, so we will get you an official position, and I'll commit to get that out to you by COB on Monday". Pradeep chimes in with a supportive view, "it is a heavy document Kent, with lots of information and is up to like fifty nine pages, with pictures and case studies as well". Kent likes the sound of this. Jackson makes the point that "Bryce can just pick up the phone and ring Don" to push certain issues with the GridLock executive. Kent agrees, and says, "we can put it on their agenda for the quarterly meeting, once I get an official response to say Kent please get us some of the details from GridLock". This is a running theme. Kent wants documentation before doing anything and, as will become clear, this greatly frustrates Jackson. Peter (Head of IntelliTech) then makes a request that the meeting is brief because he has a heavy schedule today. Kent is not happy. He repeats back Peter's request and then says, "Um, we've got lots to talk about today". As was usually the case, Jackson jumped in and says, "I'll be here, Peter is just saying he needs to go".

THE CLASH OF MISALIGNED STRATEGIES

The third observation of how stuckedness was problematized at these DOG meetings was the regular clash of strategies between the IntelliTech Program Director (Jackson) and Kent, who headed up the team within DOG. In my notes, I wrote:

I feel like I'm re-living Groundhog Day over and over again at these meetings. The clash between Jackson and Kent is insistent and as much as there is a clear deference to Kent by Jackson (officially, at least), Jackson, and to a lesser extent the other IntelliTech attendees suggest various ways of achieving certain necessary aims and often Kent agrees, but he always falls back on his strategies and concerns which are remarkably different to those put forth by IntelliTech participants.

The conversation then drifts to Neon Energy, a company that IntelliTech (and GridLock) had signed on as a Retailer for the trial. I notice that the choice of Neon is frequently problematized as an event emblematic of stuckedness. This can be contrasted with the DOG meetings, which were problematized as a process of expanding stuckedness. As such, the relationship between IntelliTech, GridLock and Neon deserves some background explication as it was an issue that repeatedly came up in discussions both, internally within the program delivery team (most senior) at IntelliTech, and between DOG and IntelliTech.

NEON ENERGY

In my very first encounter with Adam, who was the Program Manager for the stream of work that was most consistently "red and a basket case" and encountered the most roadblocks, I was told the story of how IntelliTech, under pressure by GridLock, selected Neon Energy as its retail partner for the trial. Adam called it an example of "poor decision making and sometimes, non-decision making". After six months, they apparently exercised the "terminate for convenience clause" in their contract and, according to Adam, "skipped out, thinking that it was too late to sign anybody else up". IntelliTech subsequently set up a tender again and found some other viable parties.

Adam explained "[Peta and Dennis (both Executive General Managers at GridLock)] have a lucrative contract with Neon Energy so they get a lot of money

into GridLock through the contractual relationship with Neon". As such, Peta asked Neon Energy if they realized they were "going to lose twenty thousand customers if…you let these other retailers come and steal this off you?" At this point, IntelliTech had found two other retailer alternatives and Peta and Dennis added Neon back to the list of viable options. Adam described a structured decision making process that involved a clear recommendation and a selection committee made up of Charles Leidner (CTO and Peter's boss) as the Chair, Peter (Program Director of IntelliTech), Gillian Henley, and Jack Finter. Of these four people, Adam went on to say that "Peter put in a dissenting response, Jack said he didn't agree with the decision, and Gillian didn't turn up". Despite the fact that they had two dissenting votes, Charles put it forward as the selection committee's report (not as his personal recommendation), that Neon should be once again selected as the retailer. When I asked Adam what Charles's relationship with Peta was and why he thought Charles's action was one of "turf protection and fear", he said that Peta "deliberately and publicly declared that she was withdrawing from the selection process but as soon as she withdrew from the selection process, she no longer needed to be independent so she could home very strongly for the Neon outcome. So it was basically the executives who got together and selected Neon in order to protect their revenue base".

In Adam's view, this was an issue systemic to the way GridLock operated. He made the point that Charles's actions would be an acceptable business response in the private sector but that GridLock was a public sector organization and they are not "here to make money out of selling services to Neon Energy". The stream of work Adam was responsible for was intimately tied to working with the chosen retailer and even though I was forbidden from having any contact with the GridLock Executive, by shadowing Adam as well as Jackson and Peter I got a chance to understand the interaction between GridLock and IntelliTech.

These interactions will repeatedly come up in the next three chapters but before we go back to the DOG Meeting I was describing, I will share a story that Adam told repeatedly, not just to me but at meetings, one that other staff members with similar experiences concurred with:

Let me give you a little anecdote which I've given a few times recently. I visit my doctor from time to time. I went to my doctor; too long ago, now I'm due to see him again. Last time I visited him we were sitting and chatting, he's been my doctor for a long time, we're good friends now; we're just sitting and chatting and he said you know Adam you seem very stressed and I said, yeah. Yeah I'm stressed. He said, what's going on? What's going on? Let's have a chat. So we had a chat for a while. He said, what's happening at work? So I think work, don't get me started. And he said where are you working? I said GridLock. He said what sort of problems are you experiencing and I started rattling off all of the problems. And he laughed and he laughed and he was roaring with laughter and I said, I don't understand, Richard, why is this so funny? (Chuckles) He said well, my father was an Electrical Engineer and he used to work for the organization that, many incarnations ago, was what GridLock is now. He said that when I was a little kid, five or six years old, he came home at night sat at the end of the dinner table with my family and dad would go on and on about all these issues you describe. They have just been endemic for a hundred years in this organization. Yes, it's all about the culture.

Metaphors & Stories Continued

Staff discussions at IntelliTech were characterized by a strong use of metaphors and storytelling as sensemaking devices. In my notes, I wrote:

Adam, is by far the biggest storyteller of my participants and it is part of his identity. What is interesting is how his stories have become part of the collective sensemaking of how the team problematized stuckedness. His stories and metaphors are frequently referred to in meetings, both providing relief and reinforcement of how GridLock is viewed culturally by IntelliTech participants. Of course, some of his terms are more common project metaphors, such as a project stream being "red". What is being referred to here is that it is like a red traffic light and therefore needs to be in some senses halted, such that at least some elements can be reassessed. Other metaphors are less common and by "skipping out" he tries to imbue Neon with a total lack of responsibility, like a child. The other metaphor used here is that of "turf protection" which is to suggest that some of the GridLock Executives behave like animals protecting their turf, both with a primal whiff of inspiring fear and reacting in fear.

These metaphors are clearly woven and exemplified in another story that I have included later on in the chapter. However, first I go back to my description of the DOG meetings and as Neon generates discussion I am reminded that Kent told me, independently, that he is very impressed with Neon and said, "They are quite pro-active and they don't appear to be patiently waiting or anything like that". Meanwhile offline, Jackson says, "Neon are fucking retarded and are not doing any

of those things", but he does not want to discuss Neon, so he does not push the topic further. Based on the patterns of these conversations, I am certain they will revisit the Neon issue in this call.

The conversation drifts to communications and Kent goes on to affirm that he is happy with a communications process that has been taken on by Kylie, "she is making regular contact with me and making sure that everything happens the way it should be happening". Jackson is happy that media communications is no longer an issue that Kent is harping on about but he cannot help but make the offline comment, "I'm sure that the fact that she is quite attractive does help!" It reminds me of a previous meeting when David, the person previously handling communications, was in attendance and Jackson said to Kent, "David is my human shield for today mate".

The Inefficacy Feels Like War Metaphor

The use of metaphors continues and in response to the scene above, in my notes, I wrote:

Gender is a much larger issue that needs its own section in the thesis, but in this particular case, Jackson, who is probably the most uninhibited respondent, is suggesting that dealing with Kylie is agreeable to Kent because she is attractive, which is to suggest that if she wasn't, Jackson would still need to be hearing Kent's complaints on the communications process for the publicity of the trial. Jackson's feelings about the complete waste of time discussing this process with Kent is epitomized when related to how he dealt with the issue in the past, by inviting the prior communications person to this small meeting and telling Kent that David was his shield. Jackson is much bigger in stature and personality than David and this is what really provides the context for what Jackson means by his use of the phrase "human shield". He is not trying to say discussing communications with Kent is hard like going to war, he just finds it to be monumentally stupid and a waste of his time.

As expected, they start discussing Neon again and Kent is blunt: "Neon have taken full control of the retail project delivery, so the question from me is, why are we paying IntelliTech all this money?" Jackson cannot hold it in any longer, and he lets loose, "well, sorry, have they Kent? They are delivering the trial mate, using seconded resources from GridLock, that's how they are delivering this trial. They have got a delivery head on their side, but day-to-day the whole thing is run by

GridLock. I'm happy to walk you through all of the resources we have assigned that Neon are using, and at the end of the day they are only delivering the service back to us, so all the communication should be, effectively internal to GridLock. Could you just furnish me a list of names of people that you are dealing with at Neon, and I'll sift through it?" Jackson wants to let Kent know who he has no business talking to. Kent calls it a "lack or loss of control for IntelliTech" and has hit a raw nerve in Jackson, who stammers, "I, I, I find that very interesting Kent. Let's take that one offline". During these teleconferences I learn that Jackson talks to Kent regularly in the evenings, in a bid to keep him posted and comfortable because Kent likes having a lot of information.

The conversation however stays on Neon; it is a sore point within the IntelliTech-GridLock-Government-Neon nexus. Jackson tells Kent that he has "chopped down a bloody tree and supplied that to Toby Shaw", who is an Executive General Manager at GridLock. A "bucket load of information has gone across and fundamentally, you know, isn't it time for you guys to wade in?", Jackson says. From Jackson's perspective, he is unable to get traction with the GridLock Executive Team because IntelliTech doesn't have direct access to the senior leadership, nor does it have a sponsor with the power to clear the paths necessary, as is evidenced by the decision to allow Neon to re-assume its role as Retailer despite the majority vote within the selection committee vetoing the idea. Or, as Pradeep very candidly put it to me at a different time, "so Kent goes to Jackson, why do you think there are delays mate? And Jackson goes, 'because our executives are a bunch of fucking retarded idiots'". At that point Pradeep was trying to tell me that Jackson is very inappropriate, but in terms of the relationship between DOG and IntelliTech, Jackson's perspective was key because he was the trial's middleman between DOG and GridLock.

As was the case with many other interactions that followed a very similar pattern, Jackson's next strategy is to ask DOG to put pressure on GridLock. Kent tells Jackson that they have to have yet another meeting between DOG, Neon, GridLock and IntelliTech, but then yields to Jackson and agrees with him, "in the end you are right Jackson, the decisions that came out of the pre-deployment study have been on the table for forever and a day…but, we have just got to make sure that we

provide them perfect information and then make a decision and move forward". Mike, another person on the DOG team responds that Neon's concern is that they will need to work outside their "business model".

Again, this hits a nerve with Jackson, who says, "My only concern Kent, is whenever I'm in a room with these people I end up talking about their business model, and nothing to do with the trial, and to be perfectly honest mate I couldn't give a flying stuff about their business model. Kent I am going to press on this, it is a point that you insisted on, them being educated very clearly about the whole trial through that contract negotiation process…I was happy just to cut a retail agreement and tell Neon nothing, because I knew they were a pain in the arse. And Fred had to be briefed by their internal legal and all of those things were done before that agreement was even executed. I regard it just as malicious and malevolent behaviour to raise bloody letters after you have committed to the contract. I just think it is BS…it really ticks me off, and now all it's doing is chewing through Don's time, Toby Shaw's time, Charles's time, Peter's time, my time, Michele's time, and you know, it is just ridiculous".

As soon as Kent finds that Jackson has spoken his mind and then calmed down, he makes his point again, "but we are going to do due process to recover, we need to gather and then we can say we are going to do it and go and do it". Jackson tells Kent he finds this infuriating, to which Kent agrees but then says, "we've got to do what we've got to do".

Jackson responds by saying, "right now we are at a point where you know we are not going to derail IntelliTech you know? We need to get this thing done, and everyone has spent a lot of money and a lot of effort, this thing has to go over the line, and you know, they need to grow up. Anyway, sorry, I am quite passionate about it". Pradeep leans over to me and whispers jokingly, "one day Jackson will tell you what he really thinks". This reminds me of another conversation I had had with Jackson a few days prior, where he was lamenting his frustrations while sighing, "I just wanted these guys to actually do what they were supposed to instead of fucking around, four months into it, still banging our heads against them and I've actually tabled it for the steering committee – not for any action but

um… just as an FYI. So what I take from that is that it's taken twelve months of tinkering and dicking around and re-mediating and fixing, you know, their stuff ups, to arrive at the conclusion of the culmination of twelve months of effort is basically stuffed and they've got to start again. Some of these resources are $1,100 a day. It's just like, where we got to in the four months since we've taken over the project. In a normal organization you'd probably be there in about four to six weeks".

Next, they start discussing a future meeting between Bryce (minister) and Don (CEO) and Jackson asks if just as Bryce will be briefing Kent after this meeting, that Bryce asks Don to brief the team afterwards, as opposed to sending briefs through "the bloody chain of management". Kent responds in the negative, "yeah I don't think Bryce would do that mate. He wouldn't get involved in how he does and doesn't" and he trails off. Jackson pushes, just a "polite gentle shove", but also admits, "I don't like managing through layers mate".

Misaligned Strategies Continued

The Neon issue most clearly manifests the clash of strategies between the IntelliTech Program Director (Jackson) and Kent but also between IntelliTech and GridLock. In my notes, I wrote:

For a moment, I was surprised to learn that Jackson spoke to Kent, a man he considered a complete intellectual lightweight and mismatch to himself, almost every night, in a bid to make Kent feel comfortable about the ongoings at IntelliTech. I asked Jackson about this once and he said, I'm paid to grease the wheels and sometimes the wheels have to be greased often and off the clock. I could understand why Kent would make the time—he was hungry for information and control and very proud to be the longest member on the project. It is clear that he has political aspirations, but at a company (GridLock) where there's hardly a soul to be seen at 4.30pm on a Friday, Jackson's behaviour may be seen as unusual. But really, it isn't. His worldview, his savoir, is totally different. If you paid Jackson a lot of money to go to the desert and work on a tough job, he would, and he would inspire a lot of brashness in his peers along the way. So, every now and again, I find myself feeling sorry for him because he is like a fish out of water trying to get all the land animals to go to the sea. He wants Kent to help him get a better outcome by applying some ministerial pressure on GridLock but Kent has a very set way of achieving his tasks and that is by employing strategies that are strictly within the proverbial rulebook. I sometimes question myself as to whether I am being swayed myself, by Jackson's talk of "making shit happen", but I

can think clearly when I'm away from the hustle of IntelliTech. I can see that Kent and Jackson; IntelliTech and GridLock – they speak different languages, perhaps by design. Nevertheless, it is very clear to me that these are the biggest spokes in the wheel of moving well, or put another way, expanding feelings of stuckedness.

They then start discussing something both Kent and Jackson agree on, that it is likely that "retailers do not want this level of interference in what they consider their sovereign domain" and Jackson lets Kent know that the unproductive correspondence and letters coming from Neon just validates the government's approach to IntelliTech, in wanting to separate out the network and retail trials, as that would prove a more fertile ground to change energy consumption behaviours. Happy to have some common ground, Jackson starts dropping names about discussing this issue with heads of energy, who share this same view, in the consulting practices. Offline, Jackson then starts talking about a consultant who will be visiting IntelliTech shortly, "he moved to Berlin to be with his boyfriend, he's so gay, it's just hard-core weird, I'm just putting it out there [laughter]". He looks at Michelle and says, "You will stand between me and him in the office okay?" Everybody is laughing and Michelle says, "I don't want to". As I watch this turn of mood, I'm reminded of how Michelle recounted to me in one of our informal chats how Jackson has the power to make people want to be brash like him.

There are a few more odds and ends and the call finally comes to an end. Jackson says, "That was 1 hour, 31 minutes and 37 seconds of pain". Peter pipes up and asks, "Is he under the impression that we've rolled out 15,000 meters?" Jackson answers in the affirmative and Peter states, "But six of them work". Jackson says, "That's irrelevant" and the room erupts in laughter. Jackson looks over at me and asks, "Was that a unique insight into gross executive incompetence and the fact that Kent hasn't understood a single message? Only the government can hire people that are this incompetent", to which Peter adds, "They don't hire them that incompetent; they train them". Once again, people laugh, and the built up pressure in the cloistered room dissipates.

GOING OFFLINE

I have mentioned going offline a few times thus far, but most of the teleconference conversation, heated as it was, was what they called online – part of the official teleconference. Of course, the language is not captured in the meeting minutes nor is the emotion and the fact that the participants are intimately dependent on the material attributes of a teleconference, particularly the mute button, is definitely just an afterthought. How these meetings are conceptualized in hindsight is what they call "sanitized" and only reflects what further actions have been agreed upon. But, there was a wealth of information that I found in the "offline" conversations that happened when the mute button was switched on, or just after the teleconference was over.

On one occasion, as soon as they had said goodbye to Kent and the other DOG staff on the call, Michelle exploded, "For fucks sake! The minutes are based on what people said. I don't care if you have a problem with 'there will be a delay', because, there will be a delay. That's why it was minuted, you fucking idiot!" Then she apologized for her language. Jackson tells her not to and says, "You know what the funniest thing is? When we are standing here on the 1st of December, and they haven't rolled any of this shit out, and they are going oh-oh-oh-oh-oh. It's like well, how weren't you informed? You pathetic fucking bureaucrat."

On another occasion, Jackson is trying to get Kent to get a Change Order signed off. Kent's frustrated response is, "no I can't – I can't get it signed off internally Jackson until I've got an explanation in detail behind what the $2.2 million is going to be spent on". He says all he has at the moment is that "we're going to give GridLock $2.2 million to do a monitoring measurement report". Jackson jumps in and says, "Kent, Kent what I'm saying is I'll remove the line and it'll give you $2.2 million funds, surplus funds and I'll just call it 'surplus funds'," or 'additional funds' or 'contingency funds', so we can sign the work order off and then I'll give you a proposal for the monitoring and measurement report and then I'll show you the budget behind that…then at least it's consistent, because otherwise we're going to have a proposal sitting inside a change order and it's all out of whack". Peter adds, to further assure Kent that their suggestion is purely to create a more

efficient workflow: “I would have thought normal program governance would be that if we're de-scoping some elements, they're being de-scoped so we have to account for the money. Through the change order what we're saying is we are now moving $2.2 million from allocated spend to unallocated spend and therefore contingency. So GridLock theoretically can't go spend that on anything without permission. Because the change order is saying that unless you sign off a subsequent change order to allocate it to something, then it must be returned at the end of the program. It's sitting there as uh… unallocated contingency at your discretion to tell us what to do with”. Kent agrees, and then proceeds to restate his point that he wants the details behind the expenditure for the $2.2 million.

Offline, everybody groans. Adam is speaking from a different location and keeps talking. Peter, still offline at the IntelliTech site, says, “slowly like a child so that Kent understands”, indicating that he is turning the mute button off. This reminds me of Pradeep’s first description of Kent, “oh he is a nice guy, he is just you know, really stupid. Telling things to his face, he agrees, he understands” and this point Michelle jumped and said, “then he forgets”. Pradeep nods and sighs. Back in the teleconference, Adam wants to talk about the requirements documents about how the retail trial solution is going to work. Kent does not know what he is referring to. Jackson jumps in and puts things in context for Kent and tells him exactly where he can find the information they are referring to in a related contract document. Offline, they continue talking and laughing out their frustrations:

Jackson

[Laughter] “What day of the week is it? Who’s the current prime minister? What year is it?”

This is a senior executive in the Federal Government.

Oh my goodness, we’ve got no fucking chance against the Chinese [laughter].

It’s an enlightening experience Michelle.

Michelle

No it’s not.

Jackson

Look it's why I have a healthy dislike of most senior executives in most companies because I realize that they're not there by skill or ability.

Peter

Are you sure it's most?

Jackson

Yeah, pretty much all. I've only met five CEOs or MDs that have impressed me in my whole life and our current executive [laughter], they're like children.

Peter

In the joint meeting with Neon Energy the other day, had three GMs, there was a punnet of strawberries on the table, so what do they do? They get their iPhones out and they start taking photos and then having a giggle about that.

Jackson

Because there's a no policy on food in the meeting room, on buying food. Someone brought in their own punnet of strawberries and they panicked.

Peter

Rita decided to share her punnet of strawberries [laughter].

Jackson

Well that's so she could have plausible deniability that there was a strawberry inside the human being, so she ate the human being. That was some lunch. You know Langan (Rita) don't you? (To Michelle).

And mate, she was sitting there, I sit beside her and she goes, and shoots her hands up, she got a whole pile of menthols, she'd taken all of them and she's got her hands out and she ploughed through the whole fucking lot and I got two [laughter]. She just didn't want the mint flavours, all the others – gone, just took all of that out.

Peter

Sugar.

Jackson

Yeah.

Project management was deeply personal in IntelliTech: the characteristics of stuckedness were anthropomorphized in part. Their colleagues became the butt of often ribald and sometimes savage humour that expressed frustration at the sense of immobility they experienced.

Discussion: Problematizing the Why

In the above section, through the lens of one set of meetings that I was able to observe consistently, I have described some of the key action nets implicated in studying stuckedness within the IntelliTech trial. Through a reportage style, it is clear how certain elements, namely that of the material, the metaphor, and the misaligned, coalesce such that participants problematize DOG meetings as an expansion of stuckedness. In this section, I highlight the additional patterns I observed through these interactions and connect them to other examples not mentioned in the description above. Accordingly, I problematize the why of these tales based on the theorisation thus far with the aim of understanding what the data says, as opposed to merely grasping what the participants say.

The narrative that I would come across time and time again during my fieldwork was that of public sector malaise, which was the reasoning attributed (the why) to the processes engaged in by the people I shadowed at IntelliTech. In the next chapter, we will delve further into more internal scenarios that were problematized in this manner, but in this chapter, Jackson's very strong feelings about the inefficiencies of government bureaucracies are very evident. He summed his perspective up well by saying to me one day, "if your items all relate to fuzziness, window-dressing, marketing spin on a project, ministerial involvement and that, then we're really at a severe disconnect because the important things really are getting the deployment of a trial that, you know, is on a perfect commercial scale and coming up with some valid data which gives us an insight to future business cases so this can be deployed nationwide". To him, Kent's only concern is that there is "an audit trail behind everything" because, so long as the process is documented, "I can't get in trouble. And if I can't get that documentation, then I'll go audit him and I'll establish the evidence I need so I have it documented and on the record".

Jackson's commitment to IntelliTech was remarkable, he was able to stay on top of the multiple streams he managed and speak in depth about the specific issues of each stream. However, there was a severe disconnect between how he thought a project like this should be run and the circumstances he found himself in. Many times, he would admit that so much more could be done with the government funding but that most of it was being wasted because of the systemic inefficiencies that exist in running a trial such as IntelliTech through a corporatized public sector organization such as GridLock.

What was clear, however, was that this narrative, for many of the IntelliTech Executives I shadowed, has to do with the notion that private enterprise, as opposed to governmental intervention, is a better solution to most problems being pervasive within their field of knowledge, their *savoir*. In fact, many of them believed that government-run projects are constantly poorly run because, among government employees, there is a fear of doing something wrong and a fear of making decisions, especially decisions that are not unilateral. As one of they put it, "engaging three external consultant firms to tell you that that is the right decision will ensure that you can then have the high moral ground". This view coloured their view of the world and this extended to their voting preferences, and even their employment choice to be contractors, such that they were paid to "cut through the noise" and get a job done.

While it was obvious to me how and why their IntelliTech experience was reinforcing this view, they did not seem to see that their own taken-for-granted behaviours were rooted in their *savoir* of free enterprise. For example, a few months into my fieldwork, I learned that the only reason I even gained access to IntelliTech in the first place was that Jackson was essentially a trusted advisor to Henry and Steven at WPK and although this association was never spoken of within IntelliTech, all senior WPK staff knew that Jackson, who in this instance was working as their employer, was very much part of the WPK family. In fact, it is my assessment that granting me access was a testing ground for WPK as they were looking for someone to help them set up their Singapore office and saw me as a potential candidate. This assessment is based on comments Jackson made 3 months into my fieldwork, where he suggested this and expressed his desire for

me to work for WPK. Of course, I turned him down, saying there would be a conflict of interest but it was interesting to understand that what to me was access and fieldwork, was to GridLock, an exercise in severe risk (which was why I was forbidden from ever meeting them in person), and to WPK, a chance to vet a potential employee. In ways that were not clear to me at the time but became apparent with hindsight, chance played a crucial role in making this thesis research possible.

The events with Neon being reinstated as the Retailer were also explained as examples of public-sector malaise. Adam, the avid storyteller, liked to compare the stove-piped GridLock executives to sled dogs. He told the following story many times, in many different forums I observed:

I went skiing for Christmas. We went to Colorado and my wife organized for us to go on a dog sled ride. You've been on a dog sled ride? No? So the buses picked us up, lots and lots of people, I think eight sleds. There were four people per sled plus the musher. The musher is the guy who stands in the back, works the company. Twelve dogs in the sled. When we got there all the sleds are laid out. There's a stake in the ground and the front two dogs are chained to the stake and then they're stretched tight and you've got the sled at the back and the sled is chained to a pole so the dogs are in pairs. And all the way down these dogs can't get to the dogs in front, can't get to the dogs behind but they can get to each other and they are snarling and snapping and the dogs are bleeding profusely from the face, the ears, the legs. They're savaging each other constantly. Now these dogs have been carefully handpicked over a long period of time to be the most compatible pair of dogs to put at each point in the chain, they are optimized. So there they are just savaging each other, while we're waiting to go. No reason, no beneficial outcome for anybody, just savaging each other. I came back here and I went to an executive steering committee and I watched the behaviour of the executives and I said to myself, they are just so much like the dog sled team. For no reason just savaging each other, just behaving disgracefully. That is the group of executive that reports to the Chief Executive and then from the group, from that group downwards, the behaviour flies.

Adam's reasoning is that the public sector environment paid poor incomes and did not draw people who are highly dynamic and outcome oriented. So these executives are very status driven in the organization, making decisions based on fear. However, this is a problematization that does not add up. GridLock executives are well paid but their performance is only "loosely score-carded but then no one holds or pushes that". They are part of a corporatized public sector

that is not as required to be detail driven but is making more and more decisions based on their bottom line rather than the public good. This was particularly clear in the decision to reinstate Neon as Retailer which I discussed above.

One example of this came in the form of the AER submission (industry regulator), which happened every five years, as the organization applied for funding. The contractor in charge of writing up some of the papers for this submission, Greg, showed me his submission and said, "the various entities go through a process of working out what their five year costs are going to be and all these things get put into a major submission that goes to the Commonwealth, and they go that's preposterous. You're not going to have a hundred gazillion dollars. We'll give you 90 gazillion dollars. They ask for the moon and the sky and they get 90% of it, but nobody is checking to see if they have achieved the goals they intended to with the funds they ask for".

Another example of this was what came to be known as the million-dollar-change-of-mind amongst WPK consultants and contractors who knew of the case. There was a large piece of work that was undertaken relating to the firewall for the project infrastructure and they were using and purchasing Klintex equipment. It was going into data centres and it had been approved and the project managers had received confirmation and had prepared all the design documentation for the servers. It was explained to me that this was no small job because when you build a server for a data centre it requires a document with pictures of how the network operates to be prepared, complete with little pictures of computers with lines drawn to other network areas that explains to technical people how the network is built. They had reached the stage where they knew what the firewall environment was going to look like and the documentation was done. And this was how Michelle described what happened next:

"Um…the CTO for some reason sends an email to the PM and says, "Oh I've changed my mind, we're going to go with Saturn equipment", to which the PM replies, "but that has a huge impact, I have to call Klintex and get everything stopped. Some of the stuff is en route, um…I have to send back stuff that is already being shipped. There's going to be a penalty for that, and we're going to have to rewrite all the documentation. It's going to cost the project a million dollars. The CTO replies, "I don't care that's my decision".

As far as the WPK was concerned, this was a very strange thing to say. Yet, like many other decisions, it was explained away as "it is just the way it is". However, while the participants tended to see this type of behaviour as something that separated them from GridLock Executives, it will become clear in the chapters that follow that this was not the case.

Some other patterns that can be identified through the descriptions of the DOG meetings were the notions of gender politics and powerful actants. I will be addressing these at length in Chapter 9 but the above description of DOG meetings, has within it a sense of what was the normal within the confines of an IntelliTech environment. These patterns sometimes combined in an interaction such as one that I had with Jackson where he told me that he saw the GridLock Executives as weak. "I want to take the executives to an island and just hang them." Somebody else chimed in with "shoot them", to which Jackson responded, "I won't shoot them, I'll just deal with them like a man. You know? Yeah I mean like, you might as well just make it messy. You've got nothing else to do. Cook fish and then in between it's just like oh I've got a lot of energy" and he trails off, looking at me. Like many other interactions, this one made me severely uncomfortable and yet, I just kept my calm, being careful not to show reactions like disapproval or alarm lest participants modify behaviour when I was around.

Although it is impossible to isolate the impact of power relationships at play and how this translates as agencies colliding within an action net, the question that this chapter highlights is that of the relationship of stuckedness to a mismatch in *savoir*.

8

STUCKEDNESS IN WANE: "MAKING SHIT HAPPEN"

In chapter 7—the first empiricial chapter—I discussed practices problematized as an expansion of stuckedness, and how participants tended to make sense of these practices in an 'us vs. them', or 'heroes vs. villains' fashion. In this second empirical chapter, I present the performances problematized as a contraction of stuckedness. This can be described as participants making sense of the internal dynamics of IntelliTech (not to be confused with GridLock), where they saw themselves as responsible for "making shit happen".

The presentation of this chapter is slightly different from the previous chapter. Although much of the data is observed through what was termed "Stream Lead" Meetings (SLMs), the space constraints of a chapter do not lend themself to the description of all the meetings where all the issues are covered in this chapter. Rather, the SLMs were the starting point through which I observed a different but overlapping action net to the one described earlier and most of the observations detailed in this chapter were either witnessed during or confirmed within an SLM.

During my time at IntelliTech, GridLock's new incoming CEO ordered an external audit of the complete IntelliTech program. One of the findings, to the great chagrin of the IntelliTech staffers who saw the process as purely political, was that IntelliTech was to cease using the word 'streams' to describe the various projects that came under their auspices. No explanation was given for this particular language game but it was perceived as one of the numerous ways life was breathed into the power relationship between GridLock and IntelliTech.

Each SLM took place on Tuesday morning at 10am and lasted for two hours. These meetings were organized by Jackson (as the Program Director) and attended by Peter (IntelliTech Line Manager), the Program Managers for each of the streams, as well as the key WPK consultants who functioned as the project management office (PMO) for IntelliTech. At these SLMs, I was introduced to these people who ended up being participants that I shadowed. As a result, I was privy to their

interactions both with each other and with others not involved in the SLM . As a result of observing these interactions many of these people not involved in the SLM also became participants in this study. There is a large amount of recorded data, both from the meetings and many other conversations that were on the record but it is not my intention here to pack as much of this data as possible into this chapter. As a result many of these participants will not be quoted verbatim or discussed at length. Nevertheless, this does not detract from the ethnographic value of these conversations as they were critical to the way I problematized the how and why of the practices by which my participants exemplified stuckedness.

Although I will make a distinction between participants tending to make sense of increasing stuckedness through an 'us vs. them' perspective, and decreasing stuckedness through a 'we are the heroes' perspective, this does not detract from stuckedness being known through a positioning-against-the-other on both ends of the stuckedness spectrum. Stuckedness, as was problematized in Chapter 2, is a phenomenon perceived in opposition to moving well. This is true in the IntelliTech case, even when stuckedness was viewed to be on the wane.

To recap, stuckedness is also not a static state of being but is always in flux, tenuous in its relationship to other governmental technologies, chiefly that of the desire to be moving well. In the field, this was observed in performances categorized by participants as amplifying the pursuits of unfruitful, ungenerative practices, as well as in cases where the sense of being 'stuck-ed' was contracting, where some resolution to the practices of stuckedness (or at least the perception of it) was in development. Nonetheless, both these tenuous categories were experienced in opposition to something or someone or a network of people and things. If they had characterized a particular event or routine as a one of diminishing stuckedness, it was clear that such a depiction was tangential to other particular habits. Particular practices of moving well did so compared to other practices that epitomized moving less well. Interestingly, this was evident even in the performances characterized as being of increasing stuckedness. In those cases, being stuck-ed was compared to instances of being even more stuck-ed.

For example, in the last chapter we saw how IntelliTech staff positioned their engagement in a performance of stuckedness in relation to the federal government representatives at DOG as well to the public-sector employees at GridLock. This positioning-against is also consistent with their view of performances of stuckedness as shrinking. In this chapter, we will see that the perception of waning stuckedness by participants is mostly viewed in terms of IntelliTech vs. GridLock, or in some cases certain individuals vs. GridLock employees, or one professional identity vs. another.

As with Chapter 7, there are two parts to this chapter. The first section details two overarching observations about how a wane in stuckedness is made sense of, namely through performances of playing a bridging role and being a passionate project professional. This is followed by a discussion section based on my analysis of the patterns observed. That is, I problematize related tales that I have been told and events I have witnessed to interrogate why participants 'saw' a contraction of stuckedness in this way.

Performances of Waning Stuckedness

In the introduction above, I make the point that participants established boundaries between themselves and other people, things and attitudes and these boundaries were key to their experiences of stuckedness as well as of moving well. The technique of positioning-against is important in the context of understanding some of the significant ways in which participant's categorized practices as a contraction, or a wane, of stuckedness. In this section I elaborate two types of performances that consistently fell into this category, the first being the playing of the role of a bridging actor, and second, being a passionate project-professional. Further to this, within each section, I highlight 'the how' behind the problematization that these are performances of reducing stuckedness.

A Bridging Act

There were certain people within IntelliTech whose job it was to build bridges between different parties who had to work together. It is not the people per se, who represented a wane in stuckedness but it was their performance of some

bridging capacity that they, as well as others within IntelliTech, saw as a shrinking of stuckedness. The concept of bridging actors, or middlemen, has been used in economic research as well as within several organizational research projects. For example, van Marrewijk (2004) illustrates that middlemen are deployed to overcome cross-cultural differences between Dutch and Indonesian employees in the telecom sector. In van Marrewijk's work however, the middlemen are hired explicitly for their ability to bridge gaps between parties. The way bridging actors were used in this study is more closely linked with how they are used in the work of Smits (2013). Smits shows how middlemen, while not hired to play that specific role, evolved to occupy the role of a bridging actor in the collaborative process for the Panama Canal Expansion Project.

I observed that there were a small number of people who inhabited these roles at IntelliTech. Of these roles, Jackson played by far the most pronounced bridging act; his was the performance that was unanimously agreed upon by IntelliTech staff, even by the staff that had misgivings about his demeanour, as being the lynchpin to the eventual delivery of the IntelliTech trial. It could be said that Jackson's role occupied a central position within the overlapping action nets that were connected to IntelliTech during the course of my fieldwork. It is not always the case that one actor has such a large impact on a megaproject but in the case of the IntelliTech trial this was emphatically the case. Next, I explore the three observable dynamics of how Jackson's role as a bridging actor was perceived as a reduction in stuckedness.

Jackson Hunt, Changemaker

It was a wintery afternoon during my first month at IntelliTech and I was shadowing Jackson. As I looked up from my notes, Jackson caught my eye and we both made a silent note of Jed walking past Jackson's office, looking in, and then nodding. Jackson then said quietly, "everyone kind of just nods. Everyone looks through this door." This, for me, was an accurate early marker of what Jackson's role at IntelliTech was and would be. At one point, he summed his role up in this way, "there are challenges everywhere because, at the end of the day I sit here trying to balance everyone's expectations: what the business gets, what rate of

change, what vendors get, the level of transformation, and you know the government's drivers are different again. The government's drivers are all about the customers which then lead back to Ministers who lead back to votes. Now you know they're all – it's all one joint contention model. Now what you got to do is make sure that everybody gets enough to be happy. That's right that is my job. My job is to sit here and make sure that everyone is happy".

Entrepreneurial Passion

Despite his frustrations, Jackson viewed his role as an intermediary as crucial to the possibility of the IntelliTech trial to be seen to be moving well. Hence, he saw the performing of this role to be one that had to achieve a contraction of stuckedness, a view that also fitted suitably with his view of himself as an agent of change. In my notes, I had written, after a conversation with Jackson about how he had ended up at IntelliTech:

Of course, Jackson characteristically responded at length, "I was doing a very interesting exercise firing 650 people at HP. Yes, so, I, looked at an opportunity. I'd heard about IntelliTech from somebody that I've worked with previously and is working here and they said, 'you should ring this guy up and speak to him'. So, I got a phone call, I came in, bit of a chat with him. To be honest, I wasn't really that taken by them at first. I was interested in the idea and I suppose the whole concept that they were incubating something new. But when they explained the challenge and problem to me, I thought, it sounds like a network management system – they just don't have a mature provider to provide them with a network management system and then a whole bunch of data which gets batted out of that to make, you know, planning and control decisions in their network. Well, that first view that I formed in 30 seconds still holds true. For them to change their business or to operate on any different level, that's all based on a lot of best guessing. So, a lot of good desktop mathematics which says in theory here's a model and I apply it. And you can try to take into consideration whether it's a hot or cold day, you know, seasonal time of years, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah…but it's still only a desktop model to model up what a network should look like. We then actually deploy a whole bunch of instrumentation you go from looking at an analogue dial and taking a reading one time, once a year and then looking at the seasonal peaks. For winter and for summer, and you go to a real-time model, even information recorded at a ten-minute interval. Suddenly you start to form a very, very different view. Suddenly start to form the views that you could do load sharing, that you could turn things off, you could influence the environment and ecosystem. So, my interest in coming here, to answer your question…if you look at how things are done and how archaic they are and how much

variance there is in the data, what I believe is, is that, you know, somebody with strong, management skills that comes in from externally can help them actually transition that path and find great management. I suppose where I've got the track record is in bringing change. I've done big change programmes. Outsourcing in New South Wales Department of Community Services, outsourcing of ABN AMRO bank, outsourcing of Qantas airlines, outsourcing of, you know, a lot of parts of Telstra. Then, through outsourcing, I helped restart Jet Star Airlines and ran that for five years and did that as my own private business, which I then turned around and sold. I then, when I left that, I thought, oh well, I know outsourcing management services and change management stuff and HP had just bought EDS and when you put two together you end up with all this stuff you don't need. So, I went into the job and trimmed them down and thought well, it's time for a real change and that's why I came into this. I saw that this was a business on the beginning of a transformation which would be lasting for a decade and that this was the first commercial demonstration project of a trial which would let you find out enough about what you need to do to deploy this stuff long term, wide term".

Jackson undoubtedly sees his own role not only at IntelliTech but also just generally as that of a change maker, someone who has a skill set that can seduce the 'change genie' out of the bottle. At many different points, he has let on that his personal fulfilment (and a sense of moving well) was closely linked with his being able to achieve difficult change tasks, that he likes being in charge of implementing difficult but groundbreaking ideas. This entrepreneurial passion seems key to how Jackson's bridging act is viewed as a contraction of stuckedness.

Although there is plenty of evidence that Jackson sees himself in this way, it was interesting that he was not alone in seeing his role as that of a saviour at IntelliTech. It bears mentioning that along the course of my fieldwork it became clear to me that Jackson was, in fact, leading a team of program managers and consultants with whom he had a history of working. As such, it would be fair to say that everyone's view of his role was biased by historical interaction with Jackson. However, this does not impinge on the extrapolation that their history with Jackson was actually a factor in how they made sense of their work at IntelliTech, nor does it discount their view that the bridging role Jackson played was integral to nudging the project closer to a successful completion, that is, increasing its momentum of moving well and shrinking its stuckedness.

In a conversation with Paul, a program manager in charge of one of the streams at IntelliTech, I am made aware of just how central Jackson's role is. Paul says that although Peter, as the Line Manager of IntelliTech, and Charles, as the Chief

Technology Officer, who Peter reports to, should bear responsibility for the implementation of the trial, this accountability is not visible nor is it part of the governance structure at GridLock. He said, "It's not that they don't care, I think they have accessed their accountability that they're not capable to really run this program. Jackson runs it; Charles and Peter hang on. They're hanging on, they're piggy-backing on Jackson. He's just got the attitude that can make things happen. He is a lot smarter than them, a lot faster. They're just piggy-backing off him a lot, they're both not savvy at all. I mean they might have been but their work has been in network power, the works have been a little bit complacent, very low rate. Ah…but they're certainly not leadership material. In my view, they're not visionary about how work can be done. They don't have deep understanding of how to manage people nor technology". After asking me again if our conversations were confidential, he reiterates, "they've got close to two hundred people working for them and I don't think they understand the level of complexity of what we're doing or where we're going to be in the next five years time. Or what needs to happen to get to – to get there in five years time. There is no reason for a CTO not knowing where you want to be in five years time. Plans change, plans change from day to day but if you don't have a plan, you know from a cultural point of view, from a system application, you're never going to achieve anything. They don't really understand the finances, from a financial standpoint of how to manage what we've got…I don't think – they're not doing anything illegal or anything like that but they just lack ability".

Positioning-Against

The performance of positioning-against is another technique strongly employed by Jackson in the data that has been presented thus far, but also in how people relate to Jackson. Considering, as mentioned earlier, that stuckedness seems to be 'seen' through boundaries, the extrapolation could be made that the sense that Jackson's bridging act was a contraction of stuckedness was related to his intensive use of positioning-against. In fact, after my conversation with Paul, I wrote in my notes:

It was interesting when Paul asked me the rhetorical question: "If I had a three hundred billion dollar company would I get the CTO to run my IT? No." At this point, I asked, "Would you get

Jackson to run it?" and Paul replied, "Ah, there wouldn't be a doubt". Then laughing, he says, "I've actually used Jackson before. I've known him for ten years and counting. So you know I do see the strength in him, I like the way the way he gets things done. He stirs people up and that's a good thing. Where I find it a little bit hard is that he doesn't care, you know, he's pushes people to limits sometimes…he needs to temper that off a bit, he needs to focus who to do it on. I think and he's got a lot of great characteristics but people either hate him or love him…and he's a control freak and that really gets off, people, all across the organization, off-hand. But he's smart and he knows what he's talking about and other of people find that really offensive". Laughing, he says, "they find that very hard to argue against and they get frustrated 'cause he knows his topic. But Jackson talks like that all the time, even before I knew him. It's always us against them".

In fact, even when participants were less than enthusiastic about an interaction with Jackson, it is clear how his positioning-against has an effect on the way participants relate to him. I once witnessed an instance of this during an SLM and had made a record of it in my notes, less because Jackson had said it, but because of how Oliver, the head consultant from WPK, a very quiet, circumspect person, had responded:

Today Jackson was making his usual quips about politics, totally paying out the Labour Party, which he does on a regular basis. Then, Jackson apologized, he said, "oh I'm sorry, you know if that hurt or was offensive to anyone" and Hamish laughed and said, "'that's the first time I've heard you say sorry". The whole room laughed, and it sounded like a tangle of being funny and come-upping.

As mentioned earlier, these views are included here because they were repeatedly confirmed, not just by participants stating their view, but also in the performances I observed. In his role, Jackson was the problem solver for each of the program managers and could speak with confidence about the minutiae of each of the streams. This did not mean that Jackson made no errors. There was one incident, where I witnessed Pradeep squirming because of a careless comment by Jackson. When we all had driven to Newcastle (separately) to attend a full-day DOG meeting, Jackson said to Kent, "oh I saw the wind turbines on the way over" and the room was echoing his confidence: Kent says, "oh great" and Peter says, "Really? Awesome". I noticed Pradeep's face fall and when we walked to get coffee for everybody that mid-morning, I asked him if something was not right with the wind turbine situation, and he said, "there are still two to do and they are not

going to be done for months because they are in DA. [Developer Approval] That's a council term. Basically we've got to get approval from the council to do it. Takes months. Takes years sometimes. It's not like we can fudge that, yet he's told them that we have done it. We have not done it. We are not actually even close to doing it. So it is going to come back to me in a month. In a month, I can tell that is going to be a thorn in my side". Yet, even Pradeep, who was easily the participant who was least charmed by Jackson, readily admitted that he was central to turning IntelliTech into a trial that was marginally deliverable. He said to me after the audit, "Without Jackson, they would have been in real trouble, real strife, not pretend strife. Real strife. The audit exposed holes, but because of the changes that have been made, we've closed a lot of them. There are still some big holes, there are definitely faults, but the final outcome was pretty good I think – passable".

Jackson managed the various IntelliTech streams but it was Peter who was the full-time staff (not contractor), who was meant to bear responsibility for IntelliTech. Peter often looked to him for guidance and spoke with a deep reverence for Jackson. After three months at IntelliTech, having become used to having me around at SLM and various other meetings, Peter finally gave me his first audience, where he apologized for being so elusive and admitted that Jackson had been instrumental to his finally granting me a one on one conversation. After this meeting, I wrote in my notes:

It was a nervous experience to take the lift up to Peter's office in the main building. He has been sitting there for the last two weeks because Charles is on holiday and he is acting CTO. I was aware that the nerves were because I had been rebuffed by Peter so many times and also because I had been told that Peter had sent out an email telling people to not be too friendly with me. However, within the first few minutes of the meeting, I realized that he was nervous too. So nervous he said, can we just meet up outside and I'll tell you what I really think then. I said ok, but managed to get him to open up within the interview anyway. It is remarkable how much he echoes Jackson's views.

In this meeting, Peter makes the distinction that there is a "real version of events", it is what he is reluctant to talk about, but eventually says:

We've had a whole bunch of people who undermined the outcomes. That is what it comes down to. It is a weird culture. Jackson has put it quite simply, he said, he's worked in places where the rates are lower for contractors, the deliverables are a lot tighter, there is a clear expectation of what they have to do. So he is confused about what drives management here, he said "he doesn't understand because the rates are good. The tenure's long. And the work is pretty easy. So maybe that's why a lot of the spare time is what drives bad behaviours and people to protect that easy work life. It is a remarkable wastage of time. Imagine what it was like before you got here. Now you see the conference rooms are empty most of the day? When I got here that boardroom [where the SLMs are held] was full nine to five. You could not book it. For two weeks out you could not book it for anything else and it was always full of twenty or thirty people. Just collectively hallucinating about what the hell it is that they are doing. I'm serious. That's how we took over. Nobody was clear about what it was, it took a whole putting in, a standard military chain of command. Charles's role was program Director. Lawrence was Program Manager, but those two have no project management skills. And so they said oh we are going to get all these managers, which is what I was, there was me and Vander. So what do you call the people you bring in to do the real work like the Jackson's? Oh we'll call them Project Delivery Managers. And have Project Managers under that. I said once at an off-site meeting, this is ridiculous none of us in the room are actually Project Managers. Things have changed, Charles is now CTO and I run IntelliTech, but I'm a GridLock Line Manager, I don't call myself the Program Director, Jackson is the Director. Project Managers who have the skills and experience to do anything they want. Line Managers to create an environment that they can succeed. So I think fundamentally it was just wrong from the start with people. I think my one skill is that I have brought in and recruited all of these people. I remember when I interviewed Jackson in a coffee shop, you know in fifteen minutes I knew I was going to hire him. I am looking for people, with whom if I throw out some of my problems, they take me through a structured process about how I should think about them. Many people want to bring people on who validate their own narrow view of the world as opposed to people that challenge it. That's not me. That's how I think I have been able to build a good team. A professional network as well. Guys like Jackson. It is a small industry so I bring in vendors and there are only a few people of a very high calibre who have been around and done this sort of this.

Networks of Facilitation

The final observation about how Jackson's bridging act was problematized as a contraction of stuckedness was in the form of networks. Without being prompted, there was one instance where Zilla, Peter's PA, said to me, "Jackson is about bringing in results and not getting personal and that's how it works. Some people would be like, 'oh he's only getting friends'. Not the case. Not the case at all. He's

brought people in who know what to do, like Cyrus". Cyrus was another program manager at IntelliTech. When Zilla said this to me, I was mostly unaware of Jackson's connections to the people he worked with. However, this changed dramatically over the six months at IntelliTech and continued to change even after I was no longer on site. This is what I wrote about Jackson's connections and ability to connect people:

Today Jackson said to me, "Have you met up with Damian Pleck who works here? Damian is a young guy, I'd say late twenties, just about to finish, he's got like two months left to go I think to finish his PhD? So he is in the whole wrap-up phase. Just be worth you guys touching base, he is normally down here on a Tuesday or Wednesday morning". I never know with Jackson, what his intentions are with these introductions, because sometimes I feel like he's trying to get Peter to ask me out on a date, and I definitely don't want that, so I just nodded, trying to seem non-committal. He continued, "Lovely guy. Really tall. Really tall". More nodding on my part and then he adds, "I'll introduce you if you are around on Wednesday or whatever". I say, "ok". But he doesn't drop it, and says, "You'll be in Wednesday because you are coming to my weekly aren't you?" I just smiled and was reminded myself that he means well. After all, despite the fairly intense pushing for me to take Peter out for a drink, which made me feel uncomfortable, but still was what eventually yielded some time to talk to Peter, maybe I'm being too sensitive. I am so tired of being the only female in almost every room I'm in. With the Peter situation, I remember how Jackson badgered him to meet me, he rang him while I was present and said, "Hey, how are ya? Just arranging for you to have a drink with Kal. I've got her here in my office because you have blown her off so much, so I said look, the best way to get your attention is to actually go out and have a drink, because you are the only Muslim guy I know that actually has the occasional glass of red wine". Later on, even Peter admitted to me that Jackson had a role to play in persuading him to open up to me. In fact, Peter told me that Jackson had expressly said, "Kal is doing some really good stuff, give her a hand, she is a very smart young lady, just go for a drink, sit there, pour your heart out and give her your opinions on the program". Despite my discomfort with the process sometimes, I have to say, if he thinks it's a good idea, Jackson finds a way to connect people.

Another network of facilitation in which Jackson was central involved his desire to get me to work for WPK. Jackson did not have a formal relationship with WPK but over the entirety of my time on site, I slowly found out that he was connected to WPK by having done over two billion dollars worth of programs for WPK's customers. Jackson was a trusted advisor to Henry and Steven, the directors at WPK, through whom I gained access to IntelliTech. Initially, Jackson pretended to

have nothing to do with the decision, he said, "oh Steven, in Steven's style, just mentioned it in passing". Then, as time went on, he revealed just how connected he was to TBH. He said:

I spent a lot of time with Henry the other night…he looks like he is ready for retirement. Yeah he is ready to go the bastard. You should write up his memoirs and then you can prise Singapore out of his hands". When I said I had no interest in that, Jackson launched an attack of persuasion, by first announcing to the group of people that, "Kal is going to run the WPK business in Singapore", and then in private he said, "I know you are doing your PhD but don't you want to go out and taste blood in the industry and do something tangible. Run a tangible business, bottom line, bit in the eye, you know? You gotta do that, it is part of your growing experience. You need, you can't mentally masturbate about all this stuff and a day, you actually have to do it at some point in time. You know? I had a simple plan, I wanted to be a CEO by the time I was thirty-five. I achieved it at thirty-two. So, you know, you've got to set yourself goals and going to get them. And you do it for a period of time, and then you go back and you do something else. So, you know, I think as a part of your journey, you need to, you know, say I am going to go and do this business as a project, I am going to build it up, I am going to make a truck load of cash, I am going to sell it, by masterless and ruthless, alright? And then I am going to go back to just being nice. Come on. You can do it. I will make you step up, I will turn you into something that's tough. You know? Alright. You'll be doing National Service for me. Okay? It is your duty. I've got to toughen you up, learn some of those Australian management skills. Rough and tough and, there is no finesse to any of it. I think you get the point. Unorthodox but, effective.

Of course, in this case, Jackson did not achieve his aims, but he had an idea and I found out over time that he had spoken to various key people within the WPK action net, to try and realize this plan. In fact, by the end of my time at IntelliTech, it did dawn on me that it was perhaps this aim that drove my being able to get access in the first place.

Aside from the above scenario, which was very personal, Jackson's way of making the IntelliTech trial feasible also was an exercise of network facilitation. He was the point of contact for WPK being hired as a PMO function for IntelliTech, which on the one hand is seen as something that IntelliTech badly needed, while on the other hand, it allowed WPK to break into the ICT market, which is, as Oliver and then later, Jackson himself, admitted to me, was what was crucial to their growth. Through this example, it is evident that networking and facilitating are not just 'how' aspects of a performance of bridging. They are also intimately linked with

passionate project professionalism, which is the second overarching pattern I observed as being characterized as contributing to a sense of moving well, or put differently, to some resolution to practices of stuckedness. This is explored in the following section.

Passionate Project Professionals

There are several field observations that were categorized by participants as a wane of stuckedness or an indication of moving well and they can all be considered to be performances of passionate project professionals. Put another way, these observations were related to how participants' made sense of being project professionals, which they unanimously viewed as a positive, forward-looking practice. Simultaneously however, within each such problematization also lies the performance of positioning-against the non-project oriented counterpart to each practice. Often, being project oriented was contrasted with being a business-as-usual professional, who was not trained in project management, particularly that of large, complex projects. Indeed, this is observable in the way Peter spoke of how Jackson had made a difference to IntelliTech, presented in the section above. In this section, I describe my observations that my participants, both through words and actions, conveyed as epitomising a sense of moving well in relation to their project orientation. In the process, I explore the observable dynamics of how the performances of passionate project professionalism came to be known as a diminution of stuckedness.

The view that a project orientation was necessary to the successful completion of the trial was not unique and was spoken about repeatedly, by many of the participants I shadowed. Graeme Whitley, the Finance Manager at IntelliTech explained that the IntelliTech program: "doesn't function on its own, it is dependent on other services from other divisions, and it is difficult to have large divisions of the same company to be on the same page as they have different processes. This program is a very dynamic thing, it changes everyday…especially the massively large projects like Retail and Towers, where it is not just one or two divisions, there are like seven big divisions within GridLock that actually work on those projects, so to actually co-ordinate the whole process, it is a massive task".

In the previous chapter, we encountered some of the issues that the retail arm of the trial was experiencing precisely because of its dependence on other divisions within GridLock. Here however, I examine how a project orientation was seen as a requirement for IntelliTech, and in many cases, participants made the case that the organization as a whole needed to develop a project-orientation to be able to perform their duties with efficiency and regard for the public purse.

At a later stage of my time at IntelliTech, Owen Neil, one of the Program Managers I shadowed explained, "GridLock is a very stovepiped organization. Each division has to manage itself; so it runs its own financial group, it runs its own procurement group, and even those divisions even go down into sub-divisions of the main division. For managing small pieces of work, like small projects, you can still manage those. If you look at the group that manage all of the installs, as well as building its own transformer stations, installing transformers, laying cable over the air or in the ground, they are multi-hundred-million dollar programs of work. They've actually built within their organization a really big human section; they've got a big data warehouse section, they have a project office, etc. You know, they've got quite a bit support infrastructure in place. Whereas, other divisions haven't got much of a supportive structure in place. So, when we took on IntelliTech, in terms of the programs that the group that 'owned it' had managed, it was 10 times any one in terms of complexity and dollar value. So, Jackson was brought on board, and he first of all set up a PMO for the project managers, and to assist with the scheduling, ordering, and managing of financials across the program. It was quite a big change for this program, because it didn't really exist. This particular division within GridLock being as it is, most people like to not spend money when they think it's not important. So, they see a PMO as not being beneficial – they may not have seen the benefit of a PMO at that point, but I think now they see the benefit of PMO at this point. Jackson came in and did quite a big, big change – brought in WPK to do the PMO work. He put in a lot more structure in reporting, the project management reporting, and the financials. Also, Jackson brought in some strong direction, given to teams to drive the project forward".

Pradeep, explained this point more colourfully, “There is just no ‘we are doing this, we’ve got to deliver this, that’s it’. And it’s because we are in strife you know? And the only reason why we even know we are in strife is because Peter has taken over, everybody else has been removed. Just every day we are doing something new, we’ll turn the page and someone else can go: ‘did you know we were meant to do this?’ ‘No.’ ‘Well we signed the contract.’ ‘Shit. Shit.’ There is another piece of work. It’s been like that for months. Why? Because the people that ran it before are just incompetent. They are not project people, they are engineers or people that call themselves project people because they have been involved in a project and they looked after finances. So then they go into the market and they go ‘Yeah we’re program managers. I looked after a hundred million dollar program.’ And everyone goes ‘Yeah, that’s awesome. Let me call your references.’ Yep, they did? Great. Thanks. But it was like, the finance arm. Or the marketing arm, they are not actual program managers. Then you bring in people like Adam or Jackson who have run hundred million dollar programs, who do come in and they ask simple questions. The basics. Where are any of the basics? I have been for a year and a half trying to get basics in. First thing people do? Where is your WBS? [Work Breakdown Structure] Can’t have a project without a WBS. That’s it. Black and white. Rule 101 of project management. So I’ve created one after two thirds of the project’s finished. Now, that’s not even to a very good level. But I just had to get one done, because no one in the program had done a plan. First thing the auditors ask, where is your WBS? Now luckily we had created it. Here you go. Oh, it doesn’t go into enough detail. True. Just accept the fact that we had one.”

In the passage above, Pradeep is speaking about the external audit that was ordered by the incoming CEO and this reminds me of an earlier conversation where he said, “when I first got here I created a delay-notification. No one wanted it. Because all these things give people the opportunity to be able to, put a formal document down, that goes in front of someone very senior that says, ‘I am delayed. This is why I am delayed. This is the cost of the delay. These are my options to fix it. This is my preferred recommended approach. Please approve.’ No one wants it. Decision. Same questions. Not at all. The decision process in here is deplorable. No one wants to put their nuts on the line. No one wants to be

exposed but when you get to a level of management that is the sort of risk that you take. That is why you are manager. The reason why you are paid is to make that call."

During the period of the external audit, I had written about a conversation I had with Pradeep:

Pradeep is probably the WPK consultant who is doing the most PMO work for IntelliTech and he seems to be very experienced. It is interesting that although he feels that IntelliTech is infinitely better off and more likely to achieve its aims because it has adopted a project orientation, albeit at a late stage, he makes the comparison between ICT project managers and construction project managers. He said that it was hard to find project managers driven by outcomes to the same extent within ICT, which is the field that the IntelliTech project managers fall into. In his words, "they are a dime a dozen in construction because in construction, when you do something wrong somebody dies. So the project management there is taken very seriously. In ICT if you don't put a switch in, odds are, something went down". I remember Michelle chiming in, "no one dies". Pradeep continued, " and you know what? You can get a switch from Dick Smith, plug it in, get it up and running until the proper switch comes, and the systems are running again. There is a very, there is a massive difference between the two. Construction PMs, hate with a passion IT PMs. And IT PMs think they are as good as construction PMs, and they are not. They are not even close. So where WPK struggle is that we come in and say: this is what you do, to run your projects. So I do this bit and you do that bit. I do this bit and you do that bit. And then I do this bit, this bit and this bit and then we end up with this and then we've got the plan and then we can go and do it. We come into an ICT environment and they are like, 'I think we need switches.' And where are you ordering them from? 'China' 'and how long does it take to get them? 'Oh shit I don't know actually. Oh, three months! Oh, I've got to deliver this thing in three months. Oh okay. Oh, I wonder where else I can go. Let me call Dick Smith. Do you have any of these? No? Can you get it? Yes? Oh okay. How long? Two weeks. Double the price. Yeah, I've got to think about that. See, in construction they buy X amount of material per metre squared or cubed. Have to, it's the law. Then, you must lay the slab first. Then, you must build the walls. Then you, when you lay the slab you've got to put the switch in and it must be put at a certain angle. Because it's the law. ICT have none of that. So, for WPK to say plan, plan an eighty-story building, might take them six weeks. Yet when they are in ICT projects they are there for years".

Structure: A Language of Confidence

The first observable dynamics of how the performances of passionate project professionalism came to be known as a factor making for the waning of stuckedness has to do with the structure inherent to a project orientation. With the example where Pradeep positions ICT against construction project orientations, it is clear that structure and planning are vital to the sense that a project orientation has the capacity (or the perception of having the capacity) to resolve feelings of stuckedness. However, in the field, I observed that the percolation of such a sense seems to rely heavily on a particular project management language that is imbued with a structuring quality as well as the power to enhance the current state of structuring in a project. In the above text, the two examples of this are the terms 'work breakdown structure' and 'delay notifications'. These phrases have, to differing extents, a structuring quality (when they first became implemented) and then, in the aftermath of an external audit, they became imbued with authority.

A conversation I had with Jackson reaffirms this point: "Eventually your customer works out what is going on. You can't have Chinese walls, and just pretend and pretend and pretend and pretend, because at the end of the day the results and the actions are not being achieved, and in the summary reporting it's really very simple. You can see the Retailer stream is as red as red is, so you have two streams which are completely grand and delivered everything they meant to, all the assets are in, it is very clear that you are getting data that is reporting and you know, you can put up graphs, you can put up something that is real. And you can take them down the road and show them. There is something sitting on a bowl. Oh my god. You know? There is a working control system. So it's very, very powerful as opposed to the Retailer stream. It just hasn't happened. And it's all politics for not launching it. If you look at the reporting of that it is very clear, it was after I signed the customer agreement. You were expecting them to get moving and you know, it was just not mobilized. And we've got the technology to do it, we've got the in-hand displays and that sitting in a warehouse, and we are not deploying them, they are not going out the door. They are refusing. And people now want to argue around tariffs and information, it's pathetic. Just endless stalling tactics, and

government can see that pretty clearly so. I have a duty to be honest and transparent, I'm not going to sit there and deceive them, it's just not acceptable. You can only go through so much BS before the thing just gets to be in an untenable position. It's taken the government about the last eight weeks to figure this out though. They can't read project reports, which is just disgraceful…but you know, they could employ some people that can".

With this conversation, we can see that project reporting is cast as being imbued with the power of truth and transparency. However, being privy to conversations between Oliver and Pradeep, who are both WPK consultants tasked with writing up many of these reports, a different tale is told. In one instance, they are talking about the easiest way to fix the costing-rent problem, which is something the auditors have picked up. Oliver's solution is to "just lift your percentages (from 15% to 20%) when you have high risk projects" and the term that they used for this practice was "tolerance". Interestingly, Pradeep doesn't once actually agree during this conversation, he just punctuates Oliver's suggestions with 'umms' and 'ahs'. Oliver says that this lifting of percentages would "probably clean up the reports. We basically just need it in writing from Jackson or Peter to say yes, please do this". He then says, "a lot of the reports that are red will turn green, but at the end of the day, it's actually normal. In high risk projects sometimes they're 30 or 40 per cent and what we've got is a high risk project; what with 20 or 30 technologies that have never been trialled all happening at once". He then repeats himself, "it's a high risk project. It's as simple as that". In another instance, Oliver pops his head into a room where Pradeep is telling me about the audit: "I think we are going to come out of the back end of it. There's a tide of shit, and it is probably going to piss a lot of people off, but, you know I've been asking for a long time for us to do variations correctly. No one wanted a part of it. Yeah, yeah, yeah, no just change it. Just change it, it's all right. You know was the attitude before. These guys (the auditors), they've changed that. Already today we've printed out about three or four requests. Just got to do it. You know?" Oliver then comes in and says, "oh Adam doesn't want this in the schedule". Pradeep responds, "it's a contractual deliverable, in contract, signed. It doesn't matter if he wants it in there. He doesn't

want it in there because it is going to expose him. I understand that's bad but these guys have got to learn".

Lucrative Employment for the Outcome-Focused

Without detracting from the increased governance that arose from adopting a project orientation within the IntelliTech case, in the data and discussion above, we can see the positioning of a project orientation against that of a business-as-usual orientation in linguistic, and as a result, governance terms. Similarly, participants, most of them project-oriented contractors, overwhelmingly positioned themselves against non-contracting as a mode of employment. In my very first meeting with Adam he explained the dichotomy in this way: "All organizations have a culture and tend to exhibit the majority of those cultural characteristics whether they are heavily contractor based or not. You very often find a high percentage of contractors where there are large complex projects; typically because contractors tend to be free of some of the shackles that bind employees or the intransigents. But there is another issue, which, which might sound a little bit strange or arrogant or something: culture begets culture. So you will tend to find a difference in the ability to deliver amongst the employees than you do amongst the contractors. Now, the employees are still very intelligent but the people who are prepared to work in this environment and give their life to this environment tend to be less outcomes focused than they would in a very dynamic private sector environment and most of us contractors, um, have worked most of our career in the private sector ..... and in very dynamic environments where you only survive as long as you are delivering and getting the outcomes and so we tend to be very, very, very delivery, very outcome focused and driven and we are prepared to, we do, get things done. I just managed to get a contract signed a half an hour ago which has being waiting for two months simply by walking in to the office of my boss's, boss's, boss's, boss and asking him to sign. People here don't do that. So that's kind of breaking out of the mould, the vast majority of the people here are terrified to go outside of the hierarchy and uh, they get jumped on for the greater part if they do go a little higher up".

In the paragraph above, Adam seems to be making sense of his role as a contractor in terms of how it is a boon for equipping him with a different mindset that is very outcomes focused. This was not an unusual view for participants to hold and it was often complimented with the view that as contractors, they earned far more than the executives with GridLock and thus, the trade-off was that of dynamism cannot be that important to people who are willing to work for less than what a contractor makes in an organization like GridLock. Paul's take was that most executives were "promoted internally, most of who are engineers who never had any management training. They've worked – the average – the average need to stay is twenty years, up to twenty-five years. You know people who want to work in a government organization, they are not dynamic. Everybody stays nine to five, nine to four- thirty mostly, nothing is ever urgent". Indeed, offices were empty by 4.30pm on most days.

Notwithstanding the commonly held view that personally, participants saw contracting as a practice for diminishing stuckedness, they still felt that within GridLock, and for GridLock, this was a disadvantage. Within GridLock, almost all IntelliTech staff were disadvantaged because they were 98% contractors. This meant that they had very little administrative authority. As Adam put it, "neither Jackson nor I have any signing or authority whatsoever. I can't order a pencil here. Contractors are not allowed to approve anything. So if there is a person to be hired, we have no authority at all to participate that process. If it's to select a vendor to provide a service, we are not even allowed to sit in on the evaluation". When I queried this because there were only two people within IntelliTech who were full-time staff, Adam excitedly said, "You hit it on the head! You hit the nail on the head. So, regardless of whether it is a contract to buy transformers or pencils, Peter and George and maybe somebody else I'll scrounge up, will have to sit on the evaluation committee. Now I'm allowed to sit on the side as a subject matter expert, and if I'm asked, to give an opinion, but I'm not allowed to be a part of the evaluation process. Plenty of other government situations have contractors who are allowed to sign. At GridLock, no. It is just insanity gone wrong. A very perverse attitude to life."

Another worry that was discussed by participants on this subject was that GridLock would lose all the intellectual property, and good practice would have it that such intellectual property remained with the organization. There was a phronetic sense with which participants talked about this as it did not affect them monetarily but there was a real sense of disappointment that what 'should' happen was not happening. Jackson also highlighted that GridLock was thus not going to benefit from the project orientation of the IntelliTech team. He said, "I mean, the project organization dimension of GridLock is crap. There's no other way to put it. You just sit there and the people who are running the projects and programmes aren't even reasonable practitioners of project management methodology. And then executives who have no project experience sitting over it. The thing I have to laugh about is that I don't see a single executive that I engage with right now that could run a project right. And that's saying something. So you're forced to rely on the concept of contractors and contracting and subcontracting as opposed to the concepts of performance management, KPRs, dashboards, frank and honest feedback to people."

Participants also tended to attribute their success to their unique contracting skill set, which they positioned against those without such skills. Paul was once describing a scene when he had to walk across the road to the GridLock headquarters. He said, "hardly anyone – hardly anyone ever speaks in the lifts. I mean I always have a chat to people, I do that, you can talk about anything and have a laugh. One day I caught the lift with a couple of senior managers, they didn't say boo. I tell you they didn't even say hello – it doesn't take much to make somebody smile. I think this particular project is quite different to the rest of GridLock and predominately it is because we're all contractors".

Passion for a New Style of Workforce

This view is also connected to the passion that is revealed for a development of a new style of workforce.

STORY OF A SATELLITE TOWN

I had heard the term, “satellite town”, bandied about in my time at IntelliTech and thus decided I would ask the SLM group if they felt IntelliTech was a satellite town of GridLock’s and the response I got was animated and lengthy. These were some of the responses:

It is. Absolutely.

And not only that. We're not a satellite town that came from Earth. We crashed in.

Through the orbit. We went straight through the atmosphere and we smashed into the deck and people are going, 'Darling, we think there's a meteorite over there?' And we think it's alive. All right? Just watch them.

When I asked them to elaborate, the responses that I got were:

Jackson

It makes it different. Makes us feel like we're an outsider. Erm, almost as like we're something... it's like kids being around a rock pool at the beach and they see a sea anemone and they sit there and they poke it with sticks. They don't understand whether they're hurting it or...well, I suppose when bits are flying off of it, it retracts inside of itself and they're not allowing to a sea anemone to blossom, come out and sit there and do what it does, which is catch a few bits of food in the water and generally look pretty but... yeah, so... so, erm, there's no appreciation for this pretty little thing called IntelliTech. And the benefits it can bring to the business.

Greg

But the disconnect now is between here and the management. Management don't really like having a highly dynamic, highly competent team on board. They feel threatened. You can see it, they feel threatened. So, they continue to pervert the course of governance by not inviting key people to meetings, excluding people, inviting people who are further down the food chain into meetings and then driving things out of context and not informing the management sitting between. You know, it's all of these bad behaviours which shows that you've got effectively an inert executive who are charged with the execution of developing green technology but disempowering those who are key in delivering it.

At this time, I asked if management had any accountability to the delivery of the IntelliTech trial and Jackson responded, “Not really. You know, you can't turn around and say that person has a $50,000 bonus tied. They've got their

reputational fear of not delivering it but they've also got the ability to be put in charge of something, cast it off to the side, and then be allowed to get on the bandwagon of making excuses of why it didn't work or why it wasn't delivered or why it failed".

Greg jumped in to add that, "there's almost a consensus mindset that, you know, you've got this layer of people in a semi-government organization, they're all out to behave like that. It's very typical management. At the end of the day, I believe it comes down to something called acceptable rate of change. That, you know, this is very, very confronting and when you go and look at these technologies, we go right through the whole network, incredibly change the business. Not the fact that it just goes and changes one small part which might be controllable. The change that you're underlining changes planning functions and what you tell the regulator, etc".

Everybody else in the room is nodding and going, "yeah, yeah" and Jackson elaborates, "it affects everything" and then he starts talking as if he was management. "Then, you know, and then I might have to make some brave policy decisions. I'd rather somebody else made the decisions for me". Then reversing back into his actual role and voice, but speaking from the point of view that he thinks Management should be speaking, he says, "Well, not really, when we know we're bolting renewables into the network, we know that we're sub-retailing the market, we know that to do capital deferment, we've got to work on control of renewables and work out when to switch them on and off to smooth out impacts on our network. When we know that we would like to control air conditioning units and pool pumps to shed load, and these would be key capital deferment tools, why wouldn't we be coming up with acceptable time-of-use tariffs which we would give to our retailers to deploy so that we could truly influence the grid?"

What Jackson is describing was many times explained to me as the stovepiped structure of GridLock. In fact, one respondent illustrated this for me with a picture while we were talking one day, but I cannot display it as the picture contains information that I cannot anonymize. Once he finished, he looked back at me with what looked like accomplishment in his eyes and he went on to

pronounce, “this is why the only way change can take root here is to gut the whole thing, renew it totally, new structure, new people, new thinking”.

Back within the meeting, where we were discussing if IntelliTech was a satellite town, Jackson was still holding court and went on to position IntelliTech as an “incubated think tank which can come up and think of a business holistically” in opposition to “that stove-pipe across a whole bunch of EGMs”. Shadowing as well as speaking independently to other participants who all appear to echo Jackson’s view in the meetings does not yield any differing points of view. The program managers and WPK consultants echo the view that the ideas percolating within IntelliTech are very confronting for management at GridLock. As Malcolm put it:

You've got a group of young people who are becoming highly empowered through all the knowledge they're gleaning and again, you feel that level of “I quite like you because you're confident and you've got these grand ideas, but what would it mean to me? My power base is all derived from the number of people I have, my head count that I manage. You really are confronting because you're talking about automation, which means I don't need people. If I lose head count then heavens above, you're also pointing to efficiency models which means I don't need the union labour that I've acquired internally. Perhaps I could source it from a panel because you guys have done those things inside of your programme, you've set panels up, you draw off of them and in actual fact, we notice that your organization has almost no permanent personnel in it”. All of those would be true observations. All of those things are factual.

In my notes I wrote:

It seems that GridLock is seeing a new style of workforce emerge out of the IntelliTech trial, one that they had not foreseen, one that they are both in awe of but also at odds with, because IntelliTech was meant to be “their” trial, and it was not meant to make them go where they did not want to go. The proud narrative of how they won the bid for IntelliTech sits uneasily with how confrontational IntelliTech feels now. As much as I am kept away from management, I have managed to talk to enough people to understand that there are people within GridLock, who have joined as a graduate and have had 35-40 years tenure. In fact, just the other day Jackson was telling me how when he first joined IntelliTech, the first people he was introduced to were people who had served 35, 37, 38 years. This same point was echoed by Graeme, the IntelliTech finance manager. There is a constant attempt by IntelliTech staff to position-against the entrenched style at GridLock and while this characterizes their struggle, there is a definite sense that they draw a sense of moving well from considering their own work style to be at the vanguard of styles

appropriate for achieving both complex transformational projects, but also creating an efficient environment within a state energy company.

Discussion: Problematizing the Why

In the above section, through an exploration of the action net stemming from the starting point of the IntelliTech stream led meetings, I have described the two overarching practices through which participants 'saw' or understood a collapsing, albeit slow, stuckedness. Stated differently, it was through these practices that participants felt a sense of moving well because some resolution (or at least the perception of) to the practices of stuckedness was in motion. The first observation was focused on the performance of bridging, presented in a reporting-style examination of the particular bridging role played by Jackson. It is clear how certain aspects of the bridging performance, namely that of entrepreneurial passion, positioning-against-the-Other, and facilitating networks, stand out as the dominant ways through which (the how) a wane in stuckedness is seen. Relatedly, the second observation examines the key practices comprising passionate project professionalism. Here, the performances that enable the cognisance of the shrinking of stuckedness include the structuring quality of a project-oriented linguistic code, the profitable (both in terms of personal finances and professional/life skills) nature of being project-oriented, and the embracing of a new, 'forward-thinking' style of workforce. In this section, I address how participants made sense of why these performances were crucial to their 'seeing' a contraction of stuckedness and I problematize these stories by asking what is unnoticed about how participants understand why they feel as they feel?

The examination in the chapter throws up the interesting situation where some of the 'how' elements are also 'why' elements because they relate to certain beliefs that participants shared. Examples are a desire for efficiency and transparency (through the structuring effect of a project orientation), entrepreneurial passion (as a mindset that is open to new, more structured and outcome-driven workforce styles as well as personal entrepreneurial drive), and the lucrative nature of project management contracting at IntelliTech.

With the example of efficiency and transparency being the drivers behind a project orientation we can see from the earlier discussion on project linguistic codes that the way these are applied in practice tends to be conditioned by other factors such as how it is thought that the project *should* appear. In thinking about how IntelliTech could shield itself from the scrutiny of an external audit, Oliver and Pradeep had a conversation about 'tolerance'. Adam often requested redactions from schedules because his stream was struggling (Retailer) and he feared further exposure. Meeting minutes, as we encountered in the chapter before, were always sanitized to some degree and often there was a tussle between parties in desiring more or less sanitation. Finally, there were also further issues that will be addressed in the next chapter that, even within IntelliTech, engendered an "it's just the way it is" response. In this way, transparency was always conditional and the discussion of *savoir* from the last chapter can be applied here. Perhaps being a project-oriented professional highlighted certain knowledge that enabled performances to be taken more seriously. As Oliver said, in an excerpt that encapsulated both the *savoir* of having a project orientation while also positioning that project orientation against the public-sector mentality, "It is extraordinary. I've never seen such organizational dysfunctionality in, the in-fighting is extraordinary. I think here you just hear so many examples of, 'why are we doing that?' People stopping things for no real reason. I think it is that public sector mentality where you've just got to watch your back all the time. And, because everyone fears someone else is there to take over your job, so they put up roadblocks. And also, no-one really wants to make decisions. I guess the two main things are the fear and the inability to make decisions". The overriding narrative that is presented here but is evident throughout the data is that of having increased or reduced agency. The subtext in this case is that having a project orientation eases the fear and politicking because people tend to be outcomes-focused. In this chapter, we can see how often a project orientation is associated with being more productive, having the clarity to make good decisions, and overarchingly, having the basis upon which to make decisions and act. It was seen, as "a political carrot-and-stick approach". This approach creates rules where there are none, and from this flows, the perceived agency to perform the next 'correct action'.

Entrepreneurial passion being a driving force for why participants problematized certain practices as a waning of stuckedness can be understood through a similar trajectory: the *savoir* that structures their fields, through an emphasis on projects and private enterprise enables the belief that being entrepreneurial is an advantage. In fact, many key contractors brought on board had a personal history of business invention and entrepreneurship. The recursive networks that brought these participants together were also a factor assuring a degree of stability in terms of the *savoir* that pervades their fields. However, again, it was clear that there was a spectrum of experience that at some point tipped over, to result in the requirement for being entrepreneurial to be viewed negatively. Jackson eventually resigned because he arrived at a point where what he was earning and the drive to implement a good idea were no longer enough. He said to me in our last meeting while he was still at IntelliTech, "It's in crisis. And it's not being managed; people don't understand the responsibility that they have been entrusted with. The executive level and the current level and the focus they need to be giving this, and the number of people who have no interest in it actually succeeding". Sighing, he then said, "but what I don't understand Kal, is that I feel like it's a very, very lonely fight here because also it is left to me, like I am the last line of defence in this place, it is always me, left to me to hold the high moral ground. Absent executive. Risk adverse. They don't understand how to react with their peers. And I find that odd, because they should be able to just say 'this is of national importance and this is what I'm going to do and fuck you.' This is what happens when you cross contaminate something, where you have sold somebody an asset and it is such a high symbiotic relationship, but Neon Energy was the worst partner that could have been picked. And these idiots looked at them as least risk, risky. Wrong answer. Should have picked somebody who was at arms length who would have committed to the trial, by going I understand what I am signing up to, I understand my commitments".

When I probed Jackson about feeling lonely and how he related to Peter, he cocked his eyebrows at me and asked rhetorically, "What are your observations? I think you can conclude…I bet you can see. He is a lovely guy, he's got years of experience in engineering, he has worked in one organization, he doesn't have

delivery background. He doesn't have emotional maturity to deal with the difficult questions, so he has got to be pushed and coaxed and mentored so hard that the time lag and the ability and then total disconnective fear of dealing with his own executives is hamstringing the program. And you know even when we went to steering committee [an important meeting because the Retailer agreement was being re-negotiated for the third time] he had probably a hundred words to say and I effectively chaired the steering committee. Even the CEO didn't chair the steering committee, which was odd, so it was the Adam and Jackson show. Well, the Jackson and Jackson show". Jackson went on to elaborate that people were also getting increasingly frustrated with Adam because "he has given up. And he is a lynch pin and we rely on him. And what he has done is become that fish which lies at the bottom and lets the enemy nibble at him, what's happening is they have nibbled a lot off him. So I feel that at the end of the day, I pulled off the impossible which was to negotiate the retailer agreement. And then since I have handed it over to the group that are running it everyone has just, crapped all over it. You don't have the ability to try and re-negotiate the architecture, it is time for deliveries; it is about getting on with it". In my notes, I wrote reflecting on this exchange:

Jackson left IntelliTech and went on to work on a set of venture capital projects, where he could satisfy his desire to make new ideas flourish as businesses while making enormous wealth. The difference in his demeanour while he was at IntelliTech and after was palpable. He smiled more, spoke without the constant slew of profanity, and for the first time, wore colour. Of course this is not 'evidence' of anything but it did spark the suggestion in my mind that how one perceives stuckedness may be connected with their sense of agency. It was clear that he felt agentically impoverished by the time we had that conversation but perhaps it is not about whether one has agency or does not but rather about how one views agency. Contrastingly, I remember a conversation with Owen where he told me about the frustration of not making any process improvements to Gridlock, even when the opportunity, through the IntelliTech trial, was aplenty. Instead, he said that they had to adopt methods that stayed away from new process changes because they knew that would be difficult and delay their work. The way Owen made sense of this anti-entrepreneurial stance was to think in terms of doing what his scope is and moving forward. He seemed to have a different view about agency, one that was less personal and more structurally cognisant.

Finally, with the driver of personal profit, the relationship of participants to the question of agency was once again highlighted. There's a related story that I recorded in my notes that I termed 'Unemotional Furniture & The Good Life', where a group discussion between Greg, Jackson, Peter, and Michelle, turned into a serious exercise in positioning-against. This is what I wrote:

Michelle asked the group, "what did you guys do over the weekend?" Then she looked at Jackson and given his well-known reverence for skiing, asked, "Did you go skiing?" Jackson responded that he went to the mountains but ended up not skiing. Rather, he said, he "scoured all of the Snowy Mountains and bought another place on the weekend…so I continue to build my real estate portfolio and then I went to the Novotel Resort at Crackenback in the mountains, a beautiful resort, magnificent, I truly pampered myself, then went to Thredbo and went to Snow Sports and proceeded to buy lots and lots of expensive items". As people laugh, I look around the room for the usual derision all but masked in people's eyes as was usually the case when Jackson started talking about his lavish lifestyle. On this occasion, only Pradeep had that look. Jackson continued, "I've adequately dressed myself up for the winter in the latest down jackets from Montclair in France. Yeah so…aaah as one must, so yes I think that was about five thousand dollars later … so I've had a very expensive weekend. At the end, I was probably somewhere down about $242,000 or something. If you are going to have an expensive weekend you might as well go all out you know, don't hold it back."

Someone remarked, "sounds like you had a good time". Jackson nods emphatically, "I did, I did, and I'll tell you what was crazy is that you can buy such nice real estate down there. Yeah it just doesn't compare to up here at all. So for a couple of hundred thousand dollars, you know, my fully renovated unit, you know, with all timber floors and it's all the Snowy Mountain timber, that rugged rustic look – it's just magnificent. Plus the furniture shops that you can go into is just wonderful and it's all genuine local hard wood, it's just you know, in all these different gums, it's just spectacular to look at and smell". Just at this point, Jackson makes an interesting point, sniffing and saying, "You know…it's nothing like this horrid, horrid, artificial lemonade crap, which, you know, all the people in the furniture shop think they are buying timber". Knocking the table, he says, "we know this isn't. A lot of people actually walk in and go, 'I'm buying a timber item' and I think, 'How can he actually think that?' Freedom Furniture, you know, all these furniture stores don't sell real timber, it's not timber guys, they actually don't get it. It's so well window dressed. Yes anyway. That's my gripe, you know, I believe in natural fibres I'm a big proponent of it. Well you think of all the things that inspire emotion." Slamming his fist down on his desk with a big thud, he says, "if you touch this there's actually no emotion. Real stone, real timber, glass, even metal, inspires an emotion – iron ore that's been turned into something. It's high tactile and as a person you feel something. But, we have got this propensity to surround

ourselves in microfiber and, you know, plastics and that, and they leave you feeling hollow as a person. And I think that's part of the problem with modern living although we are drawn to cheap and clean looking and new – in reality we hate plastic frames, we hate plastic chairs, what a horrible thing to sit in. Whereas I go home and I you know, I got beautiful bent wood European chairs. And you know, and you sit in them and they don't even need cushions. You're just like oh my goodness, this is comfortable, this is wonderful". Jackson continues to talk about his love for wool and cotton and then he exclaims to the group, "this is exactly the fight, the short-sightedness. Anyway I'll burn my plastic office and go home after I've done all my work."

In his tirade, Jackson, in interaction with material objects, was positioning against cheapness, frivolousness, and short-sightedness and his performance suggested that he did not see himself as any of those things. Indeed, even in our conversations, he positioned his wealth relative to my existence on a stipend and often used that as a reason I should work with him and make some "cold hard cash". The reason I see the above story, which was one of many with similar arcs, as important, is that at the end, Jackson reveals that he positions what he has to endure at work against what he can enjoy at home, that his troubles at IntelliTech could be put aside when he was home to enjoy the luxuries that money can buy, which serve to remind him of the agency that having wealth bequeaths upon him.

Understood in this way, I could see that the participants who had an anti-structuration view of social unfolding were more likely to feel stuckedness, both in its amplification and diminution. Participants tended to feel they had more agency in the performances described in this chapter, as opposed to seeing that the desire for certain practices was intimately linked to particular subject positions in a given social structure. For example, the preference for free-market approaches had no outlet for expression in the interactions between IntelliTech and DOG, but manifested in myriad ways in interactions, sometimes skirmishes, between IntelliTech and GridLock. In each case where the desire was expressed, there was a history that allowed its objectification by participants. They could not see this and, when their preference could not be satisfied, they characterized the practice as a grave case of stuckedness; whereas when it could be satisfied, the stuckedness was less grave. Stated another way, there was room for an idea or a desire they saw as of their own choosing. When this room dissipates, as we see with Jackson's decision to resign, we first see an escalation of a sense of

stuckedness and in the case of Jackson, an eventual collapse of stuckedness, when he decides that to move well is to pursue other opportunities.

The notion that follows on from an anti-structuration point of view of social unfolding is that power relationships are not seen in a dynamic, circulatory manner. A wane in stuckedness tends to be reified and seen as a stepping-stone of sorts to a further shrinkage of stuckedness, attributed to the heroics of the people involved. Some would call this change driven by a canonical desire for efficiency and transparency, or an entrepreneurial mindset, or higher profits. However, being so enmeshed with the recursive cycle of *savoir* that structures the field and positions on agency and power relationships formed within it, the reasons we have explored in this section for why participants characterize certain performances as a contraction of stuckedness are far more taken for granted. Put another way, sensing stuckedness is a process of taken-for-grantedness and the subsequent collapse of such taken-for-grantedness takes place in the interstices of practices that have an assumed regularity. These practices are not all either expanding or contracting in stuckedness but rather are performances that enable such tenuous, moment-to-moment categorization.

9

RELATED DOMAINS OF STUCKEDNESS

The two prior empirical chapters included a presentation of how respondents at IntelliTech characterized an expansion and a contraction of stuckedness. In each case, this was followed by a discussion of why respondents problematized certain performances in these ways as well as a further problematization of their sensemaking, serving, as Czarniawska-Joerges (1992) says, to "turn what seems familiar and understandable upside down and inside out". Yet, there is always a lens through which we view, even as we look at an issue from multiple vantages. There has been full disclosure (Chapters 2 – 5) of the lens I adopted for the purpose of this study. On this basis, the cultivation (and problematization) by respondents of what I have taken to be practices of stuckedness should be evident. Given the space constraints of a doctoral thesis, as well as the idiosyncratic limitations of my own *savoir*, the adequate marriage of this theoretical work with the empirics of genealogical ethnography requires one final stage. In this concluding empirical chapter, depth is added to the analytical domain of the IntelliTech trial by elaborating three key contexts that are both institutionalized aspects framing the action nets of which IntelliTech is a part and are seen as embodiments of stuckedness. The primary aim here is to understand how these contexts shape the dynamic *savoir* of the field and produce a space-time specific politics of truth.

The first two contexts are elements that interact with the creation of the IntelliTech project that do not need anonymity. To start, I delve into the Australian government's engagement with the issue of climate change, where the impetus for a green technology trial had its origins. As this trial was funded at the federal level of government, information about events pertaining to governmental involvement in climate change issues is in the public domain. IntelliTech was thus a research site conditioned both by events and a hothouse of public opinion permeating and constraining the *savoir* within which all practices, including stuckedness, unfold. This first context is significant not just because it serves as

the platform through which this project was funded but also because it continues to be a site of political manoeuvring and chicanery, which surpasses all other institutional contexts shaping the practicing of stuckedness at IntelliTech, in a context of heightened public awareness of the issues of climate change, the status of knowledge about it as science, and policy responses. The public nature and pervasiveness of this context makes it more likely to have a larger influence on the *savoir* of the people associating with the IntelliTech case, constraining the range of possible coping strategies both from within the organization as well as without, in the form of the personal views and performances of the actors.

Of the three contexts, it is climate change politics that, while crucial for understanding the positioning of a trial such as IntelliTech, conditions the melange of governmentalities in the field in the most unseen manner. Aside from sporadic comments from a participant, who may have been making the connections between federal politics and IntelliTech, climate change is, interestingly, an issue not often addressed in the field setting. In fact, some of the Program Managers who managed the larger streams of work at IntelliTech described themselves as climate change deniers in private debates. As such, the inclusion of climate change politics as an entrenched context needs to also be viewed as an attempt to connect a key overarching narrative with the dynamic and taken-for-granted *pouvoir*/*savoir* relationships circulating in the field, as opposed to taking the narrative to spring from a sequence of events grounded in rationality.

Second, the context of energy supply is a domain that has a unique history within the corporatized public sector within Australia. In this section, I briefly discuss the genesis of new public management in Australia, focusing more on the energy reforms that have taken place over the last two decades. The main way in which this context differs from the context of climate change politics is that I was more, able to observe changes that were taking place as part of the flux of corporatizing.

Finally, I address the context of the IntelliTech trial being a male-dominated workplace in what respondents characterized as a male-dominated industry. Of the three contexts, it was most apparent how this context conditioned and was

conditioned by respondents. Gender relations contributed to how and why certain tropes of nominalist seeing and speaking with authority in a particular field came into being as the space-time-specific politics of truth. I conclude this chapter with a review of how the politics of truth among these three contexts collides in the networks of connections between material elements and relationships of power and knowledge, amongst others, which are all immanent to one another.

Climate Change Politics

Although Australia participated actively in early international climate change meetings, for eleven years (1996 – 2007), under the conservative Howard government, Australia developed a reputation as a climate change laggard[36] (Rootes 2008). Regulating carbon emissions was seen as an impediment to economic growth that would foil the nation's competitive advantage as an exporter of fossil fuels.

In a clear change of direction, in November 2007, immediately following the election of the Rudd Labour Government, Australia ratified the Kyoto Protocol at the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Bali. They released a statement supporting a target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 60% of the 2000 levels by the year 2050. In December 2008, the white paper titled 'Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme' (CPRS) was produced, in which the details of the government's carbon emission targets for 2020 were elaborated. In 2009, an emission trading scheme (ETS) bill[37] was passed by the House of Representatives but subsequently rejected by the Senate. Concerns that a hostile Senate would obstruct Labour's ETS waned with, Malcolm Turnbull's election to the leadership of the Liberal Party in September 2008, given his clear commitment to effective action on climate change. Barely a year later, however, and largely due to resistance from climate change sceptics, the failed UN Copenhagen Climate Summit, and industry protectionists within his own party, Turnbull lost the

[36] Australia took a minimalist approach to carbon emissions reduction, and in line with the US, did not ratify the Kyoto Protocol, also called the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.
[37] The Howard government, placing highest priority on economic growth, was moving only slowly and cautiously towards action to inhibit carbon emissions. While the Rudd government's proposed ETS did not go as far as many environmental movement organizations and groups would like, the government took positive steps towards addressing climate change, including the addition of a new Minister for Climate Change.

leadership by one vote because of his attempts to enforce support for a version of the government's proposals for a Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme (CPRS).

The incoming Liberal leader, Tony Abbott, like Howard before him, was candidly sceptical about the implications of scientific analysis of climate change. Abbott's response to climate change can be summed up as an encouragement of industry to reduce emissions, without any regulation or capping system (Curtis 2010). Big business interests welcomed this strategy but it was heavily critiqued by others, including former leader Turnbull, who claimed Abbott's 'policy' was a political ploy rather than a serious attempt to combat climate change. With Abbott's ascendance to the leadership, Australia's Liberal Coalition can be seen, once again, to be following the United States, with whom Australia shares a close relationship (see Dunlap and McCright 2008; Hamilton 2008). There appeared to be a clear partisan divide over the imperative to act on climate change, with the coalition partners broadly against and Labor and the Greens in favour.

There was an expectation that Prime Minister Rudd, after the failure of inter-party talks to reach a meaningful consensus over an amended CPRS, would return from the summer vacation to call a general election[38] for March 2010. Instead, Rudd announced that CPRS legislation would be postponed till 2013 at the earliest. It appeared that an election with CPRS as a primary issue was something Rudd was not willing to navigate. Later, it was revealed that this decision was prompted by his deputy, Julia Gillard, telling him that she could not support an election triggered by the CPRS issue. Polling data had suggested that the Opposition's claims that a CPRS would cause electricity prices to spike greatly had gained traction in Labour's marginal seats and Gillard was unprepared to run as Rudd's deputy in those circumstances.

Subsequently, Rudd lost support from both his party and the public[39]. In just over two years, the goodwill that flourished throughout Rudd's *Kevin07* campaign,

[38] Liberal and National senators voted against the CPRS as did the Greens, on the contrary grounds that the CPRS was derisorily weak. As the bill was defeated twice in the Senate, Rudd was provided with the grounds for dissolution of both houses of parliament.

[39] By deferring the ETS into the next parliament, Rudd appeared to be irresolute about a difficult but popular issue. This incensed those who had believed his rhetoric about climate change being the great moral challenge of our time, and pushed a sizeable chunk of Labor constituents toward the Greens. This had already been a growing group as Rudd appeared increasingly illiberal (on censorship as well as

largely dissipated owing to failures of policy implementation (including Keynesian measures conceived as an economic stimulus to avoid large scale economic dislocation, focused on a home insulation programme that was as much a green measure as an economic one, whose implementation at a local level was fatally flawed, and a schools building programme that was widely critiqued as overly wasteful). Powerbrokers within the Labor Party believed that Labor would not win the next election under Rudd and orchestrated a coup to replace him with Julia Gillard. Despite Gillard's passed by the House of Representatives, the callousness of the coup against Rudd did not endear Gillard or her government to the electorate.

In the lead up to the ensuing election, both the opposition and the government seemed intent on avoiding Climate Change as a campaign issue. It became public knowledge that Gillard had been complicit in Rudd's decision to defer the ETS, considered to be Rudd's worst policy decision. To smooth over public concerns about her involvement in this decision, Gillard proposed a 'consensus-seeking' citizen's assembly to address climate change. However, this was widely interpreted as a lack of willingness to exercise leadership and cited as an example of near-pathological risk aversion (Rootes 2011).

The 2010 election result was the closest in recent national history, producing Australia's first hung federal parliament since 1940. (See Rootes 2011 for a detailed explanation of the election results.) Having been veiled as an issue during the campaign, climate change became the key issue in the formation of the new government. Three independent MPs and the Greens, were convinced of the need for urgent action to address climate change and thus declared their support for carbon pricing. The Liberal Party, led by Abbott, was ill-placed to appeal to these independents, thus leaving Gillard with a strong prospect of gaining the support of the independents and thus, forming government. The agreement with the Greens effectively saw Gillard sidestep her campaign promise of creating a

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refugees) and in thrall to development mania with his aspirations to a 'big Australia' of 35 million people by 2050. It appears that the final straw was Rudd's ill-timed attempt, apparently without adequate consultation, to impose a resources tax on the profits of the booming mining industry, against a vociferous and well-funded media campaign by the resources sector. Hence, he lost supporters both from the green and liberal left and from the anti-immigration/population-growth right, as well as alienating powerful interests in resource-rich states.

citizen's assembly[40] to ascertain community consensus for a price on carbon. Without a majority vote, Gillard was forced to adopt a stronger position on climate change than did Rudd and despite continued declines in popularity in July 2012 the government's climate change legislation came into force, with the 500 largest GHG emitters forced to pay a fixed price per tonne of CO_2 emitted (Commonwealth of Australia, 2011). Thus, rather ironically, 2010, not 2007, became Australia's climate change election.

These were febrile times in Australian politics and the combination of an unpopular female Prime Minister with an unpopular public policy, in which the project being researched was implicated, meant that these issues were a constant polarising presence in the discourses of the field setting. The project was federally generated but housed within a state energy company, where, beleaguered by problems with implementation, the project was finally delivered by private sector contractors and consultants. Reminiscent of the clash of misaligned strategies that we encountered as one of the observations concerning how the waxing of stuckedness was known, these contractors and consultants tended to be hostile or ambivalent to a Labor federal government as well as largely sceptical about the science of climate change (see Chapter 7). Although they were interested in delivering the project, climate change politics was in itself seen as a performance characterized by increasing stuckedness.

In one of the stream lead meetings, Adam makes the point that, "Julia is making a fuss in the news that it's actually a Gillard government initiative that's doing all the research to manage the costs, future costs, we're the proactive ones. It's an opportunity for IntelliTech to get some mileage out of it given that she's made a fuss about it". Jackson responds that "Kent should be on the frontlines doing his best fighting for us right now", to which Adam replies, "Well he can't take an opposing view to Julia. But Julia's the one who's started the argument, she's making a fuss, this is an opportunity for New South Wales government which is now directly in her sights to come back and say, 'Well actually our instrument

[40] The agreement between Labor and the Greens was headlined by a commitment to establish a Climate Change Committee of politicians and experts, resourced like a Cabinet Committee, to work towards setting a carbon price. Greens Senator Brown declared that this would advance a stronger regime than the one defeated in the previous parliament.

GridLock is actually spending all this money, some of which is federal government money, but we're doing the research to manage future costs'". Owen pipes up and says, "But it is a federal initiative". Adam holds strong on his position, saying, "It doesn't matter, we're doing the research, we're spending a whole bunch of money, it is GridLock doing it. I'm just saying it's a wonderful opportunity to get IntelliTech out there on the lips of people". Jackson then chimes in, "Yeah, I don't disagree. Until she says, 'show me your implementation plan for post-doing all of this work', then we say, we're not going to actually do it, we've got no vision to implement jack shit". Amidst laughter in the room, Owen says, "we do it and nothing's going to be done". Jackson then adds, sarcasm dripping from his words, "yeah, so Julia will get some fantastic mileage out of that and I look forward to giving her that message. I'm deeply positive today mate. This has all become like an episode of Yes Minister mate, it really has, you know". With people laughing again, Adam rejoins, "it's not an episode; it's a series".

Problematizing the Why

Overwhelmingly, participants viewed the project as an exercise in politics even though on some level they were interested in the outcomes of the trial being leveraged by GridLock and contributing to updating the outdated energy supply paradigm. Federal-level climate change politics being played out in the public domain intersected (or clashed with) the politics inherent to GridLock, a state energy company. Participants had reason to feel that the IntelliTech trial was an exercise in stuckedness because they were advocating a futile project.

Another example of how federal politics being intimately tangled up with climate change politics became seen as reason for a sense of futility was revealed in Adam's diatribe:

My own hypothesis is that we cannot have a sensible culture with sensible decisions, and sensible national leadership while we have democracy. You know who Blinky Bill is the ex-Prime Minister, the one that Julia deposed? Blinky Bill thought he would get extra popularity, a big burst in popularity when his popularity was fading by giving everybody in the country a thousand dollars, or at least his constituents. Poor people. I'll just give them all a thousand dollars. Well they are going to run straight to Harvey Norman and buy a plasma TV and all of that money, this Australian federal government money, which is our nest egg for our children and to provide

infrastructure for the country going forwards, we are just going to give it to China. Boom! I'm not advocating dictatorship or any other anarchical form of government. But I am making the observation that Australia is one of the worst countries because we have compulsory voting. I honestly believe there is a system and the system cannot rely on the compulsory voting system. It has to be run on completely different lines, with the opportunity for the public to have a say with lots and lots of forums, and mechanisms for people to contribute their ideas but a very, very different basis for making decisions to the ones we have today, rather than just knee-jerk bullshit where politicians say whatever they think they need to say to get voted back in. And their focus is on the next election. So, at a national level, a politician is not interested in taking any initiative which has a maturation period of longer than three years, because of the maximum, is three years till the next election. And whatever they do has to contribute to their re-election. Now as you get half way through there term it is now only one and a half years, how do you do what we used to do back in the late eighteen hundreds and the early nineteen hundreds which is build magnificent structures that would last hundreds of years. We don't do that anymore. We can't do that anymore. We've lost the ability to be forward thinking and truly invest strategically for the future. I think that contributes to a lack of good candidates as well. Because who would put their name in a hat? The people who are willing to play the stupid games. The people who are interested in self-aggrandizement. The Tony Abbotts and Julia Gillards of this world. Who are exactly the people we don't want in charge.

Adam was unusual in his penchant for monologues in front of his colleagues, often sharing views that were extreme. Yet, the response to this particular rant suggested that complete and utter disillusionment with federal politics was common. As a group, most participants were heavily in favour of private enterprise. Interestingly, despite being beneficiaries of climate change policies in their employment, most participants were also climate change sceptics. There was little explicit consideration by them as to why they saw climate change politics as being a domain related to stuckedness or itself a site of stuckedness.

By and large, experts agree that anthropocentric climate change is the most momentous environmental problem humankind faces (Christoff 2005). Dobson (2004) argues, logically, that without an international body with the authority to impose and regulate global solutions, the environmental problem of climate change will continue to escalate. It is in this context that the Australian government's climate change adviser, Ross Garnaut, referred to the problem as 'a diabolical challenge'. As coordinated international action addressing climate

change is 'highly problematic', Garnaut (2008) stressed that collectively, countries needed to adopt their own policies to cut carbon emissions. Specifically, Garnaut (2008) noted that the Australian imperative for such policies was strong because, as a primary exporter of coal and natural gas, it has one of the highest levels of GHG emissions per capita amongst developed economies.

Within advanced democracies, the key hurdle to the adoption of policies to combat climate change lies with national public opinion concerning the need to reduce carbon emissions, change long-established patterns of behaviour and, perhaps most importantly, absorb the cost of doing so. According to Pietsch and McAllister (2010), if public opinion sides with the majority of experts, climate change action is likely to be far-reaching and swift. However, public scepticism about the science and an unwillingness to change behaviours is likely to result in government policy that is reticent and lacks coordination.

In this thesis, I have presented data on a government-funded climate change mitigation trial that exemplifies a policy deliverable that was both reticent and uncoordinated. Based on this research, it would be fair to describe IntelliTech as being characterized by those terms for the entire duration of my time in the field. Climate change politics was a related domain of stuckedness to the experience of IntelliTech. Participants in IntelliTech saw the political milieu of national and state government as embodying stuckedness that was reflected at the field level. Here a narrative of hopelessness and a critique of political expediency that emerged in relation to federal politics in general, and climate change in particular, was evident. Cynicism about the political process allowed people to excuse themselves for acting in terms of self-interest in a project that misused public funds, even when these were some of the very issues that these contractors lamented.

A memorable exchange from my time in the field occurred at the end of one of the stream lead meetings, when participants were relaxing together for a few minutes before dispersing, I remarked to the group, "I would love to sit down one day and play back the responses to 'how are you?' to you all". Oliver instinctively seemed to know what I was making light of. He said, "more often than not it is a very

sarcastic". Greg added to this, "yeah, when people ask me what I do I say 'well, I don't really know but I think it is somewhere between a cleaner and a kindergarten teacher'". Oliver then added, "like herding cats isn't it?" and everybody laughed. The disillusionment with the roles they were required to play at IntelliTech was palpable. However, this disillusionment, indeed cynicism, was mediated by self-interest that kept participants rooted in their roles. There were many examples where self-interest could be identified or was even explicitly articulated, such as when Jackson stated that he was in the job because it paid well (in excess of $500,000 per annum), or in the fact that IntelliTech used a contracting agency that was owned by Adam to find and pay their contractors, thus enabling him to profit through each contractor IntelliTech hired, or in how Oliver and Jackson had revealed at different points that their work on the trial was primarily a means to secure a long term PMO contract with GridLock for WPK.

What we cannot establish here is whether the self-interest was taken-for-granted and unconscious or whether it was a calculated, driving force. We are however, able to say that the politics of truth must account, like Nietzsche (1925: 92) says, for the "lie as a supplement to power, a new concept of *truth*". By denying climate change and dismissing the political manoeuvrings that spawned the trial, the deep commitment to being cynical and disillusioned functioned as a supplement to the *pouvoir/savoir* that circulates in the field, creating and created by the spatio-temporal politics of truth. It is thus evident, in this cycle of production, how the context of climate change politics is interwoven with the practices by which stuckedness was known.

The second key context that was observed as contributing to the politics of truth in relation to stuckedness was that of the IntelliTech trial being housed within a corporatized state energy company. This is explored next.

The Corporatized Public Sector & Energy Reform

Until the 1980s, Australia operated under the inherited British public service model of a non-partisan bureaucracy, providing governance in the public interest. In 1984, neo-liberal reforms that were changing the industrial relations landscape started to have a bearing on public servants. Under the auspices of new public

management (NPM), these reforms involved both a restructuring of public sector organizations and governance, and a redefinition of the role of public sector managers and their relationships with politicians, citizens and public sector workers.

In 2006, Christensen and Lægreid made the point that in the 30 years since the emergence of the term (Hood 1991) there has been significant variance in the way NPM models worked internationally. Although this has called into question the coherence of the concept, it is possible to identify a set of inter-related approaches to financial management, organizational restructuring and employee relations. According to Pollitt and Bouckaert (2004: 67), the reform of financial management focused on the devolution of budgetary responsibility, public expenditure restrictions and performance monitoring, based on accrual accounting and output-based reporting. Christensen and Lægreid (2006) identified a range of 'agencification' models for organizational restructuring, such as non-departmental public bodies and quangos. For Hood (1995: 96) the seeking of accountability and the ability to assign blame explains the 'unbundling' and specialization of agency functions and the introduction of purchaser/ provider arrangements among cost centres. Finally, process-oriented personnel management was displaced by a reliance on 'strategic' human resource management practices (Pollitt and Bouckaert 2004: 66–96).

Additionally, the notions that NPM is based on coercive pressure (from powerful institutions such as the World Bank or ratings agencies), normative pressure (from professional bodies and networks), and mimetic pressure (the fads emanating from consultants) are not mutually exclusive. Nor has NPM been consistently deployed in any particular country. Indeed, it has been documented that NPM initially emphasized decentralization, which was followed by a 'second wave' that involved some degree of recentralization (Christensen and Lægreid 2006). Others see these fluctuations as simply a change in emphasis based on decentralising and centralising tendencies being inherent to the NPM program (Halligan 2006).

Beyond the semantics of how and why NPM has been deployed, it is widely accepted that in Australia in the 1990s financial reorganization preceded personnel management changes. Decentralising relationships and smaller scale organizations were seen as facilitating a more responsive and rapid delivery of services, and large, hierarchical and unified public service organizations were slowly moving towards becoming agencies governed by contractually determined relationships.

Energy supply is a domain that has a unique history in the scheme of the increasingly corporatized public sector, and addressing it, a specific narrative about consistently rising energy prices has developed. Taking into consideration adjustments for inflation, these prices for households have risen by around 80% over the past decade. The discussion of price increases is often partisan, because as we have seen, the two major political parties have divergent views on tackling climate change and what might be appropriate policies for addressing sustainability in relation to dominant sources of energy.

The oft-blamed culprits for these price increases are the carbon price, the "gold-plating" of distribution networks, excessive dividends demanded by governments from state-owned enterprises, excessive profits demanded by private investors, as well as the impact of renewable energy such as rooftop solar PV, etc. There is validity to some of these claims: for example, the introduction of the carbon price has been equated with an increase of around 2 cents per kilowatt-hour, or 10% of the retail price of electricity. However, these reasons are not sufficient to explain the substantial prices increases that people are experiencing.

The predominant issue with these arguments is that they take for granted the structure of the energy sector and its corresponding pricing system. Put another way, we could say that this structure is part of the *savoir* that the action net of people, organizations, government and energy usage inheres within. However, the current structures and pricing system of the sector are not the outcomes of unrelenting market forces. They are the upshot of a set of reforms, only 20 years old, that was introduced for the purpose of lowering, not increasing, the cost for consumers.

Prior to the reforms, supply was metered through a set of interconnected public systems, within each state. Generally, statutory authorities ran these systems and were expected to charge enough to cover their investments and provide a modest return to the government. Their primary objective was ambiguously worded but included the reliable supply of energy.

As a necessity of the 20th century, supply was extended to the entire population and worked reliably, except for a period of blackouts in NSW in the early 1980s. There was a slow and steady decline in real costs and outside of the Snowy River Scheme, revered within the national consciousness as a success of nation building, the states operated these energy supply enterprises independently, without any involvement from the federal government.

Changes to this system were implemented in the 1990s, when microeconomic reform was at its peak. The impetus for reform was triggered by the creation of a national grid that melded the eastern states into a single network through the construction of new transmission links. Concurrently, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) was tasked with the development of a National Competition Policy specifically to turn public monopolies such as the energy industry into a competitive marketplace, where private firms would first compete with, and eventually replace, government enterprises. The primary assumption behind this move was that competition and choice, rather than public provision, would enhance the outcomes for consumers.

Two major complaints about the public monopolies were that the organizations were overstaffed (featherbedding) and that there was excessive investment in system reliability (gold-plating copper wires). Consequently, private entrants and corporatized public sector firms, such as Gridlock, drastically cut the number of payrolls and capital investments in network infrastructure. However, ironically, the "blue-collar" workers and technicians laid off in the 1990s were replaced by even larger numbers of managers and marketing staff, ostensibly required by the new competitive environment. There was also a wave of blackouts often seen as related to the reduced investment in infrastructure, which then required an expensive crash program aimed at restoring reliability.

Since then, it has been widely argued by energy supply scholars, that these effects may have been avoided had reformers seen that free-market assumptions were inapplicable to a network industry like electricity, where all participants interact with one another through a distribution and transmission system that has all the characteristics of a natural monopoly (Sharma 2003; Nelson & Dowling 1999; Outhred 1998; Fathollahzadeh 2006). The other important factor that remained unconsidered was the range of mitigation strategies that might come into operation based on climate change concerns. It is not unreasonable to have expected that the COAG reforms would contemplate this because the timing coincided with the emergence of global concerns about climate change. Yet, at that point, the assumption that households were purely as consumers carried significant weight. As such, the possibility of solar rooftops or of any interactions between households and energy suppliers to promote energy conservation was simply not a consideration.

The assumption that a combination of profit-driven investment and regulation in the public interest could resolve these contradictions has proved unfounded. In the case of GridLock, the Executive was motivated by profits, and the organization was subject to the energy regulator. Yet, the data presented thus far shows that the organization had many legacy issues as well as current personnel issues that were intractable. Respondents characterized the way in which this context affected IntelliTech in a simplistic fashion: that the public sector was motivated by fear, and the private sector, by greed, the latter viewed by them as a driver of greater efficiency than, fear caused a public sector malaise (expanded upon in Chapter 7), which included corruption, cronyism, ineptitude, and a structure and personnel that did not favour innovation.

Problematizing the Why

Some interesting and candid thoughts were revealed in a conversation between Jackson, Peter, and Oliver, where they were making sense of why the trial failed to be taken seriously. In particular, they were lamenting that IntelliTech had been located (both physically and structurally) at arm's length from the GridLock Executive leadership, which, overlain by internal GridLock politics, had the effect

of distancing the insights and needs of IntelliTech from GridLock. Peter, a GridLock employee himself was probably most conciliatory about why this might be the case and said, "I kind of think it's the concept of change and I also think that you know, it's the doubting Thomas side. I think we're getting closer to finding out things which are new or different. The fact of the matter is that we've found out so much about this program, it's been the first proper in depth research exercise into an alternative network". Nodding, Jackson said, "we've got so much data out already around the fact that a lot of our planning decisions are wrong, the way we built things, we don't have actuation points in the network, we don't have enough management and monitoring the network, and you can't manage what you can't measure. All the very, very basic management slogans that you learn when you do your MBA have just rung true. And absolutely, the network is gold plated. We know that. There's absolutely no doubt. And I think when the executive hear information coming up, they're almost dismissive of what they hear. They say, 'Oh yeah, we know all that'. Well, no you don't! You have a guess. Here's the data. The data says something very different guys and it should be changing your 'business-as-usual' processes immediately. You don't need to wait for the end of IntelliTech to reap the benefits. So there isn't that vision there in the executive to bring change when you've got a highly introverted Executive General Manager sitting above on it". Oliver adds, "yeah, it gets dissipated; the message. It's is like pouring in bottle of or opening a can of coke into a Smirnoff bottle. You can't tell. There's a lot of positioning papers and reports which are going on and there is a lot of data there but it's not seen for what it is and all the messages are shouted down before they can be presented. It's terrible that such an important program is being run in the business, which is going through such a large transition".

At this point, I wanted to clarify, as sometimes would happen when I was shadowing respondents, and I asked if GridLock knew they were going to be transitioning into a more centralized structure when they bid to house the IntelliTech project. This new structure, where GridLock would be collapsed under one state body, with a number of other organizations, had been the harbinger of a new CEO, executive positions being revised, and the internal and external audits

that had thrown the IntelliTech leadership off their natural course of work. Peter responded to my question saying, "I think the Federal Government knew or they didn't believe there would be the impact there is but they've sold the pre-existing business and now they're going through this. So it will be an incredible feat delivering it. My concern is, is that this business [GridLock] won't benefit from the work that's done here, and that's a huge loss. You're not leveraging something which is in your backyard, which you have had to dedicate over $400 million of in-kind support to [as per the bid]. Other energy companies will get a huge amount of benefit out of the reports that which will come out, but to adopt the insights now isn't a focus for GridLock".

Peter's response reminded me of Jackson further emphasising the view that "they don't treat the public purse in any serious way – they're a bunch of old people sitting here trying to protect their positions, cover their backsides and that's it. They're about looking after one another, not about achieving any outcomes, that's why they should be privatized and completely gutted and every single executive manager in this company should be fired starting at the top, starting with the biggest joker ever that has been appointed to run this place. There are more consultants walking through this place that I've ever seen. So instead of turning the tap off, they've actually increased what was spent. The management here don't have the ability to pick up a report and digest it or to have intelligent feedback about it; all they do is they get consultants, to manage consultants, to manage consultants, to manage labour hire people. It makes no sense". Reflecting upon these conversations, I wrote:

The irony is that the IntelliTech guys don't seem to see that they are engaging with a public sector company that has been reforming over the last 20 years according to a neo-liberal agenda of the free market. I can see that they think the solution to the challenges they face is a completely privatized entity, but it seems to me that both sets of thinking (the current corporatized public sector model and the private enterprise model) are pregnant with certain assumptions that constrain the savoir that each model may contain.

The stuckedness held as inherent to the context of the corporatized public sector by participants seems to have produced the narrative of overarching public sector malaise that was addressed over the last two chapters. It seems like a common

theme for public sector organizations to be paying salaries and consultant fees on top of that, so that consultants can deliver what staff are too afraid to, because, staff are conditioned to always have an audit trail covering their bases, justifying their every move. The politics of truth in this context cuts across many others because they obscure the critique of political expediency present in both federal and state political structures. There is a spatio-temporally specific assumption that the "dirty hands" justification is sufficiently ethical. The dirty hands[41] justification is best illustrated through an excerpt from Anthony Trollope's (1875) novel, *The Way We Live Now*, a piercing appraisal of the corruption present in the late Victorian period. Lady Carbury, a central character of superficial tendencies, feels that the praiseworthy deeds of the powerful should not be subject to normal categories of morality. Commenting on the main character, the grand swindler Melmotte, Lady Carbury says to her journalist friend, Mr. Booker:

"If a thing can be made great and beneficent, a boon to humanity, simply by creating a belief in it, does not a man become a benefactor to his race by creating that belief?"

"At the expense of veracity?" suggested Mr. Booker.

"At the expense of anything?" rejoined Lady Carbury with energy. "One cannot measure such men by the ordinary rule."

"You would do evil to produce good?" asked Mr. Booker.

"I do not call it doing evil….You tell me this man may perhaps ruin hundreds, but then again he may create a new world in which millions will be rich and happy."

"You are an excellent casuist, Lady Carbury."

"I am an enthusiastic lover of beneficent audacity," said Lady Carbury.

A present-day Lady Carbury would use the dirty hands justification for why we should accept that politicians and leaders in public sector organizations may not have any long-term policies in the public interest, because they need to ensure they continue to hold power first. The problem with this justification and the stuckedness inherent to this domain is that in its taken-for-grantedness, we are

[41] The dirty hands debate dates back to Machiavelli, though its present currency is largely attributable to the American political theorist Michael Walzer. In an influential article *Political Action: the Problem of Dirty Hands*, he coined the term "dirty hands", an adaptation from Jean Paul Sartre's play of the same name (Walzer 1973).

unable to see that political expediency is never just an isolated case. It gets reproduced with more and more structural heft, allowing for bad decisions that waste public funds in the first place, and sanction the continued wasting of public funds through performances such as the *$1 million dollar turn around* that I present in Chapter 7. Beyond the obscured ethics, there is also the issue of how such commitment to existing structures may prevent us from developing new, more appropriate structures for the distribution of energy.

The third key context, explored below, observed as contributing to the politics of truth in the field was that of the stuckedness of the way gender relations intersected with other technologies of power in the field.

Gender Intersecting

The last context that warrants examining, as it was characterized by participants as a site of stuckedness, is that of the male-dominated environment of IntelliTech and GridLock. From my very first day in the field, right until I finished, participants repeatedly stated that they worked in a male-dominated culture. These statements were always unprompted, and usually made as explanations of various performances I witnessed. However, it must be emphasized that this analysis is not about gender *per se* and below is an excerpt from my notes on how I conceived of tackling this section:

I don't like talking about gender as if it is something binary and thinking in those terms because that in itself makes me victim to the vocabulary it uses, which is based on a metaphor of difference between the sexes. It is not that I don't think differences exist, but I think they are overlain by innumerable elements and this makes me reluctant to convey what I observed about the male-domination of the field as a context. After all, in my brown-skinned world, there exist culturally-mediated issues where the female is routinely subjugated through practices such as slut-shaming (have you dressed immodestly?), power-shaming (if you can't make your marriage work it must be because you are power-hungry and too ambitious for your own good), or simply the visible differences in the way boys and girls were loved growing up. My great-grandmother famously offered a cash prize for the first of her three daughters to produce a male heir. Thankfully, I escaped the direct wrath of most of these types of practices but these ideas are part of my complex negotiations of life and thus, gender is just an aspect of my life and something I have created my own (socially-constructed) solutions to navigate. And I don't mean this in a

that-was-then-this-is-now sense. Even since having migrated to Australia, I have encountered other performances that required similar negotiation. For example, being brown made me exotic, or being comfortable in expressing my emotions in the workplace was brushed aside with responses such as "women tend to be nervous, but you're thorough and it will be fine at the end of the day". This latter experience occurred with someone senior with whom I had a very congenial relationship and deep respect for, but he hadn't a clue that I felt gendered by the experience. However, across all these experiences, the common thread is that while they involved or evoked gender to some degree, they also involved many other facets, all intimately unique to me. So it follows that it is likely that gender is generally experienced in this complex sense of it bleeding into other facets of one's life and other facets bleeding into it. Based on this experience of gender, I am hesitant to think that I might be able to talk about how other people experience gender, no matter the level of intimacy inherent to genealogical ethnography.

Having had some distance from the field, I have now come to the conclusion that there are a few observations that I can make about IntelliTech being a male-dominated workplace. Never once in my working life had I worked in an environment where the sheer difference in men and women represented was so vast. There are hardly any women who work for IntelliTech and in the few instances they do, they play supportive roles. And they just tolerate the things that get said, with great discomfort written all over their face. Never in a professional context have I been in a room of men exchanging stories of their weekend exploits, which include the proud telling of how he "fucked a girl in a nightclub toilet" or how "all the gays need to be shot". I know that I cannot attribute causation between these instances and the difference in male/female representation, but I feel awakened to a different experience. Perhaps not one of the blatant and conspicuous celebration of the male that is a part of my cultural upbringing but certainly one of performing the female at IntelliTech, which includes being nonchalant about sexist comments and violent ideas. The critical point about how I tackle male-domination as an entrenched context however is that I don't want to talk about gendering per se, because I don't think doing an ethnography qualifies me to. I want to talk about two observations that involve gendering, but instead of trying to discuss how these performances were experienced as gendered, I want to talk about how these observations intersect with other elements of stuckedness observed.

Instead of problematizing the way participants make sense of their gendered experience, I query the binary, masculine versus feminine nature of the existing narrative that participants espoused, that the energy sector was a male-dominated environment, and hence, the culture at IntelliTech was very masculine and that these GridLock men, as people, were poor communicators. Such an account was generally used as a way for IntelliTech contractors and WPK consultants to position-against GridLock employees: they were more versatile and less stuck-ed

in their ability to embrace both their masculine and feminine sides, thus making them better at communicating. This view was epitomized through the way people discussed Peter's inability to communicate well with his hundred or so IntelliTech staff, often citing the way he would walk around the floor just looking at people every morning, not smiling, not saying hello. Indeed, I myself witnessed this routine of Peter's and that he was not the best communicator was not an unfair characterization. This was also evident in the data presented in Chapter 8, where Paul talked about how the leaders at GridLock were not able to hold friendly conversations in lifts and seemed to find empathetic connection with employees difficult. It is important to problematize this view because regardless of how un-gendering one perceives his or her action to be, the unfolding of gendered social processes are tied up with a symbolic order of gender which assigns the female and male with respective meanings, expectations, and social representations of what is apropos and vice versa for femaleness and maleness.

Towards the end of my fieldwork, the program management team (Jackson, Peter, the stream leads, and the WPK consultants) had an Executive Steering Committee (ESC) meeting to prepare for. As mentioned in the last chapter, this was a crucial meeting for the team because they very rarely got an audience with the Executive and this was an opportunity to get their message across to some of the executives who managed divisions that IntelliTech interfaced with, but did not belong to. It was also the arena in which IntelliTech would need to once again try and convince GridLock to apply pressure on Neon to meet their obligations, having signed on as retailer of the trial. Considering these pressures, the office environment was tense and people were talking about the stress that they felt. In this milieu, a decision was made that the next stream lead meeting would actually be used as a preparation meeting for this upcoming ESC meeting. One consequence was that, for a change, Michelle (WPK), Sara, and Kate would be in attendance at these meetings. In my time at IntelliTech, this would be the first time that there would be females aside from myself attending this meeting. Prior to the meeting, I did not think very much about this point but during the meeting, the discomfort I would usually feel at having to seem unfazed by some of what I was hearing was ratcheted up many knots and this is what I wrote in my notes:

When the ESC Prep meeting was over, Pradeep started a conversation with me in the corridor. He then motioned to move the conversation to the other side of the office, further away from Jackson's office. When he felt a comfortable distance away, Pradeep said, "unfortunately he only gets encouraged the more female attendees there are. That behaviour in there, ugh…totally self centred. And when Michelle is present, well, it is not even that she's blonde, she is like one of those people who trek to the mountains to save people. She is also a fricking bungee jumper, and so he just thinks she is the ducks nuts, because she can do everything right, so she is like really super special. Plus she's blonde. Plus she's hot. So he's just like, as soon as she walks into a room, so bad. He behaves so badly. And people then try and behave like him, it is bizarre". In my head, I had to agree with Pradeep. In this meeting, I felt severely uncomfortable because it seemed like all the men, led by Jackson, even the ones who were usually circumspect and respectful, were on a roll. They discussed how the OH & S (Occupational Health and Safety) officer was a "faggot in short, a fucking pink eyed commy", who was "a turd" to be flushed down the toilet. Amidst laughter, road cycling was characterized as homo-erotic and putting cars in reverse so cyclists would be squashed after a mild knock was talked about like a good joke. Even Kate and Sara started to join in, adding to the conversation about how cyclists were disgusting. At one point, Jackson described his last interaction with the Executive and he was bemoaning that none of them were competent enough to understand reports. Then he used a phrase that he had used many times before, that Dennis [GridLock Exec] "started to curl up into the foetal position" and that he "started to deliver repeated blows". No one seemed to have been spared. They talked about a recently resigned GridLock employee whom they despised, joking around that she had "cankles" which made her feel inferior and that she was "entertaining, dating animals rather than people" and I heard the Rita Langan-is-so fat-she-ate-all-the-mentos story again. Truly, this was the most difficult meeting to keep a poker face in and not erupt and tell them that they were misogyny personified. Deeply disturbed.

Reflecting upon this meeting as well as many other milder instances of disturbia[42], it was evident that gender discourse within IntelliTech is based upon and supports certain forms of masculinity that disciplines both female and male organizational members. As explained earlier, my research was not sufficient, if indeed any research could be, to establish how people, both men and women, experienced such an instance of gendering because the lived negotiation of such a performance melds elements that are very private to individuals. Also, as Martin (2003) depicts, both gendering practices and practising gender can be intended or unintended.

[42] The urban dictionary (2014) defines disturbia (n.dĭ-stûrb'ē-ə) as "the feeling of dread or shock that comes with the realization that something that is normally considered normal and safe is, in fact, horribly dangerous or wrong".

That this disciplining masculinity soaks the fabric of everyday life makes it seem immutable. To this effect, I wrote in my notes about other instances where I felt gendering taking place:

Jackson is not aware that I feel sexed (and so many other conflicting feelings) when he states that he thinks I am better looking than Kathy Freeman. Nor is he aware that by stating that sharing an ice cream cone with Clare will smooth the issues on which she challenges him, he is treating her concerns far more flippantly than he treats Kent's concerns, even though, as colleagues, Kent and Clare share the same concerns. These performances are taken-for-granted and unquestioned because the symbolic gender order is a historically-situated practice, reproduced in the discursive and material practices of quotidian life.

So far, I have queried the dominant narrative of the energy sector being a male-dominated environment, thus engendering a masculine culture at IntelliTech, but this only problematizes the ability to analyse gendering in the field. The analysis sought to go beyond this through an examination of two vignettes based on my observations that were characteristic of many incidents witnessed in the field. Many participants consistently linked these two observations (among others) to the overwhelming male presence at IntelliTech and held that the outcomes were instances of stuckedness of particular conceptions of gender. However, I will problematize this view to highlight how it intersects with other practices to illustrate, with nuance, how this context of a male dominated workplace was a related domain of stuckedness.

1. "Don't Say a Word, If You Want To Keep Your Job"

My last day in the field was an interesting one. Respondents had planned a special farewell get-together at a very fancy whisky bar in the city and everybody I had been shadowing was eager to say goodbye and have a decent conversation. A few people made sure to let me know that they wanted me to stay in touch. As I made my way through this socially hectic day, I was completely unaware of an interaction I was to encounter just before the end of the day. This is what I wrote about that incident:

There entire floor was bustling, one of the Project Managers was going to get married on the weekend and someone from his team had bought a congratulatory cake and had invited everybody from IntelliTech (all seated on the one floor). I had been, as usual, waiting for Jackson,

whose eventual response to the notion that someone was getting married was, "poor bastard". This stuck in my head because it is so characteristically Jackson, always ready with some response he thinks is either witty or socially inappropriate and shocking. I was shadowing him but he wasn't able to have me next to him during his entire workday, so in between I would spend time with other respondents. It is remarkable how people went from being so hostile, to wanting to have me with them. This time, I was spending some time with two of the three personal assistants (PAs) on the floor. The three PAs were Zilla, Sara, and Kate. I had noticed that Zilla hadn't been coming into the office for the past two weeks or so and had asked Sara and Kate if she had been seriously ill or something. They looked at each other, a long, slow look and then looked back at me, half shrugging their shoulders. I was aware that they had taken issue with some of Zilla's conduct in the past, so the idea that this current slow motion display of hesitation was simply a function of that bloomed in my mind. The last time I was shadowing Kate and Sara, they had revealed that Zilla had appointed herself as the leader of their pack and that they did not understand why (because they each had people that they reported to and saw Jackson as their ultimate boss) but also that even though she had more years of experience as a PA, they did not respect her because of her conduct. Upon probing, they gave examples of how she sometimes read their emails and replied on their behalf, but with incorrect information, which would make them look bad. Interestingly, while this conversation was ongoing, Zilla poked her head into the room and said, "Sorry, Sara, my laptops in Peter's office, can I log in onto yours just to get some stuff for statements?" Sara clarifies, "in my emails?" Zilla says, "I just…I just need to go on the Internet". Sara then agrees to go and let Zilla onto her laptop and then comes back and whispers, "She's now in Jackson's email getting the invoice. Are we allowed to say don't do that?" Kate counters this by saying, "Can you tell her to get off your computer; I have a really bad feeling about this. She's probably in Jackson's emails emailing people above him". They explain that this has happened previously and that when they got into trouble, they "took it on the chin". "She should not be trying to answer our emails because we work on behalf of different people, who have specifically prepped us with what is to be said in certain replies", Kate said. Sara then suggested that she and Kate had formed the opinion that Zilla also tended to do things that made them look bad and would then gain satisfaction in trying to "help" them in the aftermath.

I could not have been more wrong about assuming that the hesitation I saw in both Kate and Sara had anything to do with Zilla's behaviour. After their display of indecision and a conversation between themselves that required no words they queried me for what seemed like the hundredth time, "this is all confidential, yeah?" I had gotten used to this question rearing its head repeatedly and offered my usual reassurance. Then Sara said, "well it is true that you never repeat what anyone else has said to you to us, so I think we can trust you". I was starting to worry a little by this stage because their faces looked so grave and in the past, Kate particularly, had faced harassment and found that she had no recourse to raise a complaint. I had felt concern

for them and my personal feeling was that they were sometimes taken advantage of because of their young age and lack of experience in the corporate workplace. As the air stammered in my throat, Sara recounted how she had walked in on Peter and Zilla in a compromising situation, after which, Zilla had confessed that she had started an extra-marital relationship with Peter. She had also told them that she and Peter were in love and Peter was going to take her on a five-week all-expenses paid trip to the USA. Then Sara continued her story her voice dripping with indignation. Peter had recently given her a medical script of Zilla's and asked her to pick up Zilla's medication for him, during her lunch break. Both Sara and Kate were very busy at this point and their lunch breaks were highly valued and often cut short. So as Sara was finding the courage to say to Peter that perhaps picking up Zilla's medication was not part of her job description, he, in his assumption that she was the only PA who knew about the relationship as he was unaware of Zilla's confession to both Kate and Sara, said to Sara, "don't say a word, if you want to keep your job". Sara was both furious and scared and fulfilled his request nevertheless. As I had been many times during my fieldwork, but never to this extent, I was stunned and was coaxing myself to maintain my calm and collected exterior. In light of this information, a few other "it's just the way it is" situations made more sense. I was reminded of how Pradeep had been desperately but ambiguously trying to tell me that there were many instances of foul play. He said, "it's all about money. I hate it when people just flaunt the money. Because it is public money, you know. And you've got people that are running…. doing other things in their own personal life, totally and utterly other things…and they are charging their full time job here, and you just think, that is just as wrong as you can get". I asked him if what he was talking about was occurring in the present moment and he said, "oh yeah, it's happening today. Non stop. There are people that are doing things of a political aspiration, that are not here, and they are not here for five hours a day, and they are charging nine hour days. And, who am I going to tell?" When I asked him who, he said, "All I'm going to say is, look up the local council elections webpage for Marrickville. It will take you two seconds to find the photo to go ahh, and then notice the person who is not here". I looked it up, it was Zilla. On another occasion, Jackson had made a complaint in passing, in relation to her conduct with Sara, who was his PA, and I asked him why he had not told her that she was overstepping her duties and it was not beneficial. He simply said, "she is Peter's PA. I have told him, but he isn't going to let her go". I later found out that most of the program managers were aware of the relationship between Peter and Zilla and as such, did not raise any further complaints about Zilla's work.

2. "JACKSON'S LITTLE HAIRDRESSER TRIO"

Sara and Kate also had lots of issues with Human Resources from the very start of their contracts. Sara told me the story of how after she accepted her contract, HR came back saying 'Oh you aren't qualified enough so first of all, you get this lower

rate than originally promised'. And then she summed up her whole experience with HR saying, "Kate and I have been bullied within our company because of our appearance, from HR". Kate jumped in to say, "not on the way that we do our job. But basically they treat us like we are idiots". Sara added, "also we are quite bubbly so like for me as you have seen I'm like, 'Hey how you going?' and that's just me, and it doesn't mean that I don't sit down and do a lot of stuff but I'm a people person and I am super friendly. We've heard comments, even from Management, said about us like, 'Oh its Jackson's little hairdresser trio' and 'they are little girls' and these are obviously derogatory comments towards us based on appearances". Kate then said, "and it could have only come from HR because no one else would have known that like I was previously a hairdresser. It's really just unacceptable because like, why should you come into a government workplace, not the private sector, where you know it's supposed to be equal opportunities and you know we come in and just get treated so differently. Like the first day I started I got introduced to everybody across the road and the next day I had to do tests to prove that I was qualified even though I already had the certificate to prove that you know I was qualified for the job". Sara continued "and had already gone through the interview process! We interviewed quite a few people for Kate's position and she was the most well spoken and had the best resume, so we took her. But then poor Kate had to then go and resit the test after across-the-road saw her appearance". Kate added, "it was really ridiculous, I had turned down other jobs and then a day later I'm told that, 'Oh you have to do this test and if not see you later'. Then chuckling, she said, "so it was just lucky that I passed like but you know I already had the certificate to prove that. I was qualified and capable to do the job but that apparently wasn't good enough". I then asked them both if this matter was taken up with anyone and they first made the point that Jackson couldn't do anything about the situation. Kate said, "There's no way to change it", which Sara affirmed with: "especially for little guys like us. They'll just replace us".

To make this point further, Sara told me how she had worked at IntelliTech for a year up till the present day and she said, "probably for the first six or eight months I really tried to just excel as far as possible, I took on additional stuff and Jackson was doing his high level meetings and these huge transformation across the

department and I was minuting it all with the heads and I just put my hand up to like learn and stuff but then I realized that I was bending over backwards working huge hours, stressed and didn't get any thanks – like Jackson says thanks. Jackson's always looked after us". Kate seconded this, "yeah, he is really good" and Sara added, "and he's always appreciated everything I've done and I know forever he'd always give us the highest recommendation to anybody. But, across the road would be rude and so many people just made your day harder and I just realized whether I just do what's required of me for the money I get an hour or whether I go completely out of my way – it's not making a difference. So I chose to just step back and just do what's required of me and I get the same 'Thank you'. So I stopped growing but you can't really grow in a place where you're not appreciated or where we keep being degraded by other women in HR".

Problematizing the Why

In the first vignette, I presented how Sara found herself exploited by Peter, in his requests that she do tasks unrelated to her job and that were of a personal nature for him. Although she felt she should refuse, she was told that she needed to keep their exchange a secret if she wanted to keep her job. This infuriated Sara but also caused her to feel too intimidated to take the action to report this exploitation. I also described how there were many examples of IntelliTech staff feeling that there was no recourse to raise an issue and how the incoherence of dysfunctional acts being allowed in an ostensibly rational legal bureaucracy was often made sense of by using the phrase *it is just the way it is!*

In the second vignette Sara and Kate, but Kate particularly, had faced harassment and found that they had no recourse to raise a complaint. It also reveals how their young age and lack of experience in the corporate workplace compounded their inability to complain about someone they saw as having a more senior and protected position compared to them. Interestingly, at the end of the second vignette, we see how both Kate and Sara want to suggest that Jackson wanted to but was unable to advocate on their behalf but then they reveal that they feel that if they had sought to use other official channels to complain about being harassed, they would have been replaced, which would have been Jackson's prerogative.

As outlined earlier, instead of trying to discuss how these performances were experienced as gendered, I seek to discuss how these observations intersect with other elements of stuckedness observed. It is evident that stuckedness of certain conceptions of gender is part of the performances in the vignettes. For example, Peter, who was only one of two full-time GridLock employees on the IntelliTech project is exploiting his seniority as Sara's boss by threatening her with the loss of her job. Peter had previously revealed to me that he was aware how much "the girls" like and look up to Jackson and he also knew that his relationship was not a secret to Jackson. Peter ostensibly assumed, based on the fact that Jackson had not pushed him to ask Zilla to resign despite his knowledge of her reporting of false information on a number of issues, that Jackson would not pursue a complaint of exploitation if Sara was to ask him to pursue it for her. It is hard to say if Peter would have acted in the same way if Sara had been male, or even older, but certainly from Sara's perspective, her low rank, her being female, and her congenial nature were the reasons that Peter felt able to not only ask her to do something for him that was outside his remit but also threaten her with the loss of her job if she did not comply. I highlight that Peter is a GridLock employee because it is germane that all of his ten years of professional experience has occurred within the one company culture, which ostensibly contributed to his perception that his actions were not inappropriate. However, IntelliTech leadership, who are only contracting to GridLock, are complicit in some ways because they have sanctioned (through their inaction) some of Peter's practices, which ultimately, also had the effect of preventing Sara from seeking recourse for the exploitation and threat she faced.

We see how this theme of being unable to challenge hierarchy continues when Kate was unwarrantedly told by Human Resources that she had to re-sit a test to prove her competence as a female GridLock employee: the HR professionals made conclusions about her based on her appearance. Both Sara and Kate were also on the receiving end of derogatory comments. Despite these performances, their complaints went no further than Jackson and ultimately, based on their perception that they were replaceable within IntelliTech, they felt that they had no choice but to accept that they may normally expect to be degraded every now

and again. Similarly, Kate accepted that why she was made to re-sit the test would not be further investigated. Indeed, there are theories on gender that suggest that women are complicit in their being gendered, most famously, perhaps, those theories developed by de Beauvoir (1952).

While stuckedness of certain conceptions of gender is clearly at play in these scenarios, they interact with the stuckedness of particular conceptions of hierarchy. As Child (2009) points out, there is overwhelming evidence as to the negative effects of organizational hierarchy. In the cases presented, we can attribute self-interested reproduction of certain relations of power and privilege to why this is so. Yet, it is worth querying the inherent drivers towards hierarchy in large organizations like GridLock that may allow abuse of public funds and people to go unmonitored, perpetuating the view that nothing can be done to rectify inappropriate courses of action.

The youth and inexperience of Kate and Sara exacerbated the ability for others to take advantage of them and stuckedness is evident in the seeming nonchalance of those in more senior positions. This is particularly surprising because respondents did suggest that they saw GridLock (and therefore, IntelliTech) as a bureaucracy, one in which one might expect that "equal opportunities prevailed" and that work was driven by an overarching interest in the public good. These sentiments were intended to convey their disappointment that this was not the case at GridLock.

Weber (1978: 3) famously characterized a bureaucracy as the best example of a legal-rational authority, where there was a formalistic belief in the content of the law (legal) or natural law (rationality) and obedience is paid to a set of uniform principles and not an individual leader, his or her charisma regardless. Weber wrote that of course no authority structure could actually be exclusively bureaucratic but his reading of bureaucracy is *the* paradigm of an ideal-type of legal-rational authority. In common vernacular, bureaucracy is almost a taboo word, the word conjuring up images of organizations stifled by red tape and pointless procedures. Interestingly, the field suggested a somewhat schizophrenic nature to GridLock's bureaucracy. On the one hand, the primary hurdle that the IntelliTech leadership team faced was the reams of position papers that circulated

through GridLock's varied bureaucratic pathways, constantly delaying decisions. The fear of making a wrong step appeared, to my respondents, to be the reason that the GridLock leadership was paralysed when it came to making decisions. There seemed to be an inordinate number of pathways to protect those in hierarchical positions of superiority, and on the other hand, no pathways, in practice, for complaint when it came to issues of workplace misconduct such as harassment, bullying, corruption, misuse of funds, examples of all of which we have encountered in this thesis.

Through an examination of the circulation of *pouvoir*/*savoir* intrinsic to stuckedness of certain conceptions of gender within IntelliTech, stuckedness of particular conceptions of hierarchy are also highlighted. GridLock, viewed as a legal-rational authority, acting in the public interest, would be an organization in which all constituents are treated with equal rights and respect. Indeed, during the one instance where I managed to get myself invited to a meeting within an Executive Meeting room with the headquarters, I made a note of the mottos emblazoned on the walls of the boardroom. They were *Collaboration*, *Integrity*, *Respect*, *Commerciality*, *Innovation*, *Sustainability*, *Leadership*, and *Safety*. That every one of those mottos bar safety had been observed to be repeatedly contravened with no recourse was remarkable confirmation of how stuckedness also involved the production and sustenance of an intricate politics of truth.

Conclusion

In 1941, Jorge Luis Borges wrote in his short story, *The Babylon Lottery* (*La lotería en Babilonia*):

Babylonians are not very speculative. They revere the judgements of fate, they deliver to their lives, their hopes, their panic, but it does not occur to them to investigate fate's labyrinthine laws nor the gyratory spheres which reveal it.

Its sardonic classification as a fantasy short story notwithstanding, these words from Borges' tale consummately describe the lack of curiosity necessary for the negotiation of organizational life at IntelliTech. In this chapter, I have further investigated three institutionalized contexts that frame the action nets of which IntelliTech is a part and are seen as embodiments of stuckedness themselves. As

expressions of stuckedness, a governmental technology, there was an implicit assumption that these contexts, in their taken-for-grantedness, shape the dynamic *savoir* of the field and produce a space-time-specific politics of truth.

In analysing the first context, we saw how denying climate change and dismissing the political manoeuvrings that spawned the trial inspired a deep commitment to being cynical and disillusioned. These elements function as a supplement to the *pouvoir*/*savoir* that circulates in the field, creating and created by the spatio-temporal politics of truth, where self-interest could be justified as the driving motivation for the conduct at IntelliTech, even when participants expressly conveyed that they felt that, in a public-sector organization (a legal-rational bureaucracy), actions should have a broader basis, including the public good and respect for public funds.

The second context analysed, the corporatized public sector and the energy reforms that have taken place within it, further elaborates how self-interest operates within the circulating *pouvoir*/*savoir* relations that permeate the field. Justifications for political expedience and a lack of governance are taken-for-granted, without consideration of how these issues cannot occur in isolation. Behaviours that grow out of these concerns get reproduced with more and more structural heft, allowing for bad decisions that waste public funds in the first place and then sanction the further, continued wasting of public funds. There is the additional concern of how such commitment to existing structures may prevent us from developing new more appropriate structures for the distribution of energy.

The final context explored concerned my observations of how the stuckedness of the way gender intersects with other technologies, contributing to the spatio-temporal politics of truth in the field. This section had two outcomes: one, to query one's ability to analyse gendering in the field as an isolated governmental technology of stuckedness, and two, to understand if the data highlighted the way in which stuckedness of certain conceptions of gender might intersect with other technologies. Through the examination of two vignettes of data from the field, this exposition highlighted a stuckedness of particular conceptions of hierarchy

within IntelliTech. The politics of truth that these two intersecting technologies create allows GridLock to be viewed as a legal-rational authority, acting in the public interest, where all constituents are treated with equal rights and respect, even when this was explicitly not the case. Specifically, this analysis, in concert with data presented in previous chapters, underscored the existence of numerous paths of protection for those in superior hierarchical positions, and in contrast, a lack of paths, in practice, for complaint from below when it came to issues of workplace misconduct such as harassment, bullying, corruption, misuse of funds, etc.

In the end, this chapter sought to investigate the labyrinthine ways in which the governmental technology of stuckedness created a certain politics of truth by looking at the gyratory spheres within each institutionalized context that reveal it as such. It is the chapter that most fervently asserts the phronetic worth of this research by showing how a different problematization of the practices most noticed as stuckedness may expose ways in which we are complicit, and made complicit, in ethically questionable structures.

PART V:

DENOUEMENT

The facts of nature are what they are, but we can only view them through the spectacles of our mind. Our mind works largely by metaphor and comparison, not always (or often) by relentless logic. When we are caught in conceptual traps, the best exit is often a change in metaphor — not because the new guideline will be truer to nature (for neither the old nor the new metaphor lies "out there" in the woods), but because we need a shift to more fruitful perspectives, and metaphor is often the best agent of conceptual transition.

Steven Jay Gould

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CONCLUSION

To recap, stuckedness—an advocacy of enduring or prolonging troublesome situations—was originally conceptualized in two main ways:

(1) As a sense of existential immobility, which is premised against an imaginary mobility, where a sense of 'going somewhere' is a prerequisite for a viable life.

(2) As a form of governmentality that valorises self-control in times of prolonged crisis.

Although there are numerous examples that seem to illustrate how this conceptualization of stuckedness (particularly the second depiction) is a phenomenon that many are familiar with experientially, the chapter that introduced this concept suggested that it was theoretically underdeveloped and lacked conceptual specificity.

In terms of Hage's (2009) first premise, it is not clear how, stuckedness, or a sense of existential immobility, is premised on an imaginary mobility, a sense of moving well. The second premise is also vague because Hage does not explain how he interprets the concept of governmentality, such that the reader can follow how and why his empirical examples demonstrate practices of stuckedness. Additionally, the notion that stuckedness is a phenomenon experienced in tandem with a sense of pervasive crisis can only be read as an assumption, albeit reinforced by his previous empirical work.

My understanding of why *stuckedness* needed conceptual specificity and theoretical rigour has been two-fold and has grown over time. To start, the original problematization of stuckedness seemed to be highlighting an interesting and marginally explored question: how and why is the dogged resolution to stick with a dysfunctional practice experienced or understood? This question is important to the study of change but tackles change from a non-instrumental

vantage. It is not interested in how and why the dogged resolution to stick with an unfruitful practice is experienced or understood so that this information can cultivate more efficient workplaces or even reduce stress. Rather, the question simply points to curiosity about how the experience that I have chosen to label stuckedness is a phenomenon of which sense can be made. Primarily, this is significant because it allows us to understand what new modes of thought and action spring from such sensemaking. My initial motivation for why *stuckedness* needed to be understood empirically came from this connection to sensemaking; without further conceptual specificity and theoretical rigour, any empirical study would have been mere pontificating.

Now, having journeyed through this theoretical excavation and empirical exercise, I can see how this work is part of a turning tide. A decade ago, respected organization theorist, William Starbuck (2003: 439) wrote that having "lost its connection to world affairs, today organization theory lacks an external mission. Yet organizations lie at the heart of major conflicts that are shaping the course of the 21st century, and in principle, organization theory could contribute significantly to human welfare". By returning to a focus on "the emotions of everyday life" in organizations and what they reveal about "longstanding social problems that persist and new ones that appear", key contributions of this thesis are represented by its theoretical rigour and conceptual specificity in addressing a significant organizational phenomenon. These contributions serve as the bedrock for the subsequent empirical project to understand how and why certain elements, in combination, are problematized and experienced as stuckedness.

Original Contributions

In this concluding chapter, I bring together the insights from this thesis beyond what it initially set out to do, dividing the contributions into three sections:

(1) Original contributions, comprising the re-conceptualization of stuckedness and the practices of stuckedness observed in the field;

(2) Contributions to academic debates, consisting of a section on governmentality post-Foucault and on the project of 'projectification', and

(3) Contributions to practice, which queries organizational values in practice.

In the first of these sections, I will re-state the questions that I asked and show how I answered them, either theoretically, or empirically. Then, in the second section, I will tie the work that was a consequence of my questions to current academic debates. In the third section, I will draw together the insights from the empirical work of this thesis, extrapolating the phronetic importance for current organizational practice. Post-script, this concluding chapter wraps up with some ideas for future research.

Re-conceptualising Stuckedness

In reference to Hage's (2009) first premise, it is not clear how, stuckedness, or a sense of existential immobility, is premised on an imaginary mobility, a sense of moving well. In Chapter 2, I add to Hage's (2009) explanations based on the Lebanese response of *mehsheh'l haal* (the state of my being is walking), and the exemplary tale between neighbours, by exploring the underlying desire for moving well through an analysis of human reactions to immobilization. Through an examination of the reactions to strandedness caused by the ash cloud event at Eyjafjallajökull in May 2010, I argue that being mobile is a fundamental modern desire and explain the connection between mobility and wellness. I also showed how feelings (problematizations) of stuckedness are immanent to feelings of moving well, and the reverse is also true. Characterizations of stuckedness in terms of its expansion or contraction in the data also confirmed that this is indeed how stuckedness is made sense of. At a more fine-grained level, the data also showed how a sense of existential immobility, premised against imaginary mobility is translated (by men) into 'public sector immobility', premised against 'imaginary private sector mobility'.

The next question I asked to further my quest for theoretical rigour and conceptual specificity of *stuckedness* was:

What, then, lies in the interstices between our compulsion for mobility and our advocacy to 'wait out the crisis'?

Foucault's concept of governmentality, as Hage (2009) clearly foresaw (see his second premise of stuckedness), provides a robust account of why there is an immanence between stuckedness and moving well, explaining the compulsion for mobility and advocacy of 'waiting out the crisis'. However, for the concept to be applied empirically, I had to ask:

What does it mean for stuckedness to be a form of governmentality?

How does governmentality offer an explanation for how stuckedness manifests from the immanent sense that we are going somewhere?

I show how as a governmental technology concerning "the conduct of conduct" or how the way we frame the conduct of others is tied to the way we conduct ourselves and vice versa, stuckedness must be seen as but one 'element' or 'instrument' instead of a 'foundation' or 'source' of power relationships. Many elements, together, account for the creation and functioning of the government of the self and others. I also demonstrate how a coherent analysis of stuckedness must employ a structuration view: that the heroism about the practice of stuckedness that Hage mentions is co-determined by the emergence of the self (agency) and structures of domination (structures), which are irretrievably enmeshed behaviours that are also self-reproducing. According to Hage (2009), the more invested one is in waiting, the more reluctant one is to stop waiting, which is how stuckedness is infused with a taken-for-grantedness that is activated. However, Hage (2009) argues that this activation depends on a sense of pervasive crisis, perceived as having structural heft. The data however, contradicts this last requirement that Hage stipulates, of stuckedness being linked to a sense of pervasive crisis. Within the empirical domain of IntelliTech, although people sometimes felt a sense of crisis, it was not always tied to practices of stuckedness and when they felt stuckedness, it was not always true that a sense of crisis pervaded their orbit.

There were two ways in which establishing the necessity of a sense of pervasive crisis for a problematization of stuckedness was problematic. A practice of stuckedness weaved a number of actors together in a net and at any given space-time point, the overarching complexity, or crisis, affected those actors to different

degrees. For some people, a pervasive sense of crisis also made them more reflexive and they took fewer of their behaviours for granted, which meant that the practice of stuckedness was collapsing. An example of one such instance was when Jackson resigned from his position. On the other hand, there were also instances where an increase in a specific sense of pervasive crisis, such as the external audit to which IntelliTech had to submit, seemed related to an increase in feelings of stuckedness. Based on these actualities, I argue that a sense of pervasive crisis is *unnecessary* for practices of stuckedness. This however, does not mean that they do not occur in concert.

It is also possible, that Hage (2009) simply meant that stuckedness is tied to an overarching sense of crisis that pervades the modern world. This idea however, does not theoretically cohere with stuckedness being seen as a governmental technology. The analytics of governmentality requires far more specificity because it takes *being* to be a constantly-in-flux activity, so to say that stuckedness only exerts itself when pervasive crisis is sensed would be to neglect the flux of feelings of pervasive crisis.

The further examination (Chapter 3) of the analytics of governmentality continues to present other insights that will be discussed in the section that addresses the contribution this thesis makes to certain academic debates. However, given the logical steps of analysis covered in this section, it is reasonable to conclude these things about stuckedness:

Stuckedness is a governmental technology that espouses persisting with a practice even when it is non-generative. It combines awareness of the dysfunctionality of practices together with their ongoing repetition. At the same time, the practice of stuckedness is a necessary part of the overall experience of achieving some progress. Stuckedness is self-reproducing and has an element of taken-for-grantedness that is required for its survival. It is not a static state. Rather, stuckedness is a phenomenon in-flux and it draws its problematization from how it contributes (and is contributed to) within a network of material and non-material micro-practices (discursive field). A sense of pervasive crisis is not a requirement for practices of stuckedness; however, this does not mean that both stuckedness and a sense of pervasive crisis do not occur in concert.

Practices of Stuckedness

In the field, my aim was to understand those practices constituting, and constituted by, stuckedness, that is, how and why certain elements came together to be problematized as stuckedness. Of these, there are three related types of practices – inherent, interrelated, and unseen - that were most consistently manifest in the field. Thus, the practices that fall into these categories are amenable to extrapolation, and perhaps represent particular practices of the technique of stuckedness.

Inherent Practices

The first observed inherent practice was the *expansion/contraction representation*. As was explained in Chapters 6, 7, and 8, I noticed that the phenomena I characterized as stuckedness were mostly discussed in terms of practices that represented an expansion or contraction of the advocacy of being stuck. An expansion tended to be seen as a bad thing, and a contraction, a sign of progress. Although this canonical problematization of good vs. bad is not part of my expansion of Hage's concept, it reflects my problematization of practices of stuckedness being immanent to practices of moving well.

Second, although participants tended to make sense of increasing stuckedness through an 'us vs. them' perspective, and decreasing stuckedness through a 'we are the heroes' perspective, these do not detract from stuckedness being known through the practice of *positioning-against-the-other* on both ends of the stuckedness spectrum. This includes performances of clashing, where the misalignment between parties causes them to clash, which can be seen as an outward manifestation of positioning-against. Positioning-against was observed in performances categorized by participants as amplifying the pursuits of unfruitful, ungenerative practices, as well as in cases where the sense of being 'stuck-ed' was contracting, where some resolution to the practices of stuckedness (or at least the perception of it) was in development. Both these tenuous categories were experienced in opposition to something or someone or a network of people and things. If they had characterized a particular event or routine as a one of diminishing stuckedness, it was clear that such a depiction was tangential to other

particular habits. For example, practices of passionate project professionalism, such as being more structured and having a professional lingo to imbue such a structure with confidence, are positioned against business-as-usual practices, where by comparison, transparency was seen as far less crucial. Particular practices of being stuck-ed were also characterized as such compared to other practices that epitomized being even more stuck-ed. This was evident through the DOG meetings, which was seen as an expansion of stuckedness, as illustrated in comparison to how much more stuck-ed the Federal government team was. Often this practice of *positioning-against-the-other* was revealed through the taken-for-granted coping techniques (below) such as muting the IntelliTech side of the conversation so that people could complain freely about the stuckedness of the DOG team.

Practices of *coping* were the last observed inherent practice of stuckedness. Coping practices were more conspicuous in performances of waxing stuckedness such as the example above, but they were employed just as often in performances of waning stuckedness. For example, reliance on project management reports and score cards that attributed a colour to the status of each of the program streams was a coping practice that was also a practice of *investment-in-structure* (discussed later), where every week, the SLMs that brought the program managers together and were characterized as a wane in stuckedness, were conducted according to these colourful and tangible reports that WPK was responsible for having ready. It is of course interesting, that the data showed how these colours and numbers weren't fixed in their nature and were malleable to other elements and relational technologies interacting in the field, much akin to practices of *storytelling*, *metaphor-use*, a *benefits-for focus*, etc., which are discussed below.

Interrelated Practices

Next, I collate what I term as interrelated practices. The more my analysis breaks down the practices of stuckedness under scrutiny, the easier it is to understand its interrelations with other elements, though unlike the notion of theoretical saturation in ethnography, there is no absolute conclusion to genealogical analysis.

Of Waxing Stuckedness

In the thesis, I demonstrated a number of practices that were related to the performance of waxing stuckedness. With Adam, we saw how he made sense of stuckedness often through the act of *storytelling*, with his stories of his doctor empathising with his time at IntelliTech and the story about the sled dogs becoming part of the collective sensemaking of how the team problematized stuckedness.

Metaphors were also similarly used, but more frequently, and by more people. They illustrate the abstract constructions that participants use to make sense of how they see (problematize) a situation or practice. Heracleous and Jacobs' (2008) metaphor analysis enables access to participants' first-order conceptions of organizational dimensions, thus revealing how they are connected for the participants and offer possible vantages of identities at play. In the same way, the many metaphors found in the data presented in this thesis offer an understanding of the unique organization of the IntelliTech project. The metaphor that sticks best in my mind is the goldfish metaphor, where Jackson uses the goldfish metaphor to calm Michelle down and suggest that she should not take her dealing with DOG too seriously because they are goldfish and cannot be expected to remember actual details or deal with regular fluctuations in a project in a way one would expect. There is also a sense that Jackson wants to imbue DOG with an insignificance, which he does by using a goldfish that not only has a very short-term memory but also is very small. It is an example of an instance where metaphorical practice is interacting with the practice of coping.

Of Waning Stuckedness

Facilitation was an interrelated practice of waning stuckedness. However, through the instrumentalism inherent to some practices of facilitation (Jackson facilitating WPK breaking into the ICT sector), we can see that networking and facilitating are not just practices of bridging, they are also intimately linked with passionate project professionalism.

Another interrelated practice that straddles both the performance of bridging and that of passionate project professionalism is that of *professional passion*. An

example of this was when Jackson describes his track record for bringing change and talking about his excitement for transformation projects that made him sign up with IntelliTech in the first place. Another example of professional passion is when Malcolm describes how, in his view, project people are confident and have got these grand ideas but that they are not appreciated because at GridLock, an Executive's power base is derived from the number of people they manage. As a professional project member, he is proud that he is being confronting when talking about automation, which means a loss of 'head count' and reference to efficiency models that do not suit the union labour that the Executive has acquired. We can see how as a practice of stuckedness, professional passion also engages with the practice of *positioning-against-the-other*.

A *benefits-for focus* is also an interrelated practice of waning stuckedness. Primarily, the manifestation of a *benefits-for focus* occurred through participants attributing the lucrative nature of project contracting to passionate project professionalism. However, there are examples of how this *benefits-for focus* extended to project skill sets, such as communication and transparency, which participants felt were superior life skills as well.

Investment-in-structure is the final interrelated practice of waning stuckedness that the IntelliTech case described. Participants invested in the structure inherent to passionate project professionalism. An example of this practice interacting with the inherent practice of *positioning-against-the-other* is when Pradeep talks about the difference in calibre between project managers in the Construction and ICT sectors and thus the swiftness of implementation of these respective types of projects.

Unseen Practices

Lastly, *mismatched savoir* is one of two unseen practices that were observed in the field. The data presented in chapter 7 builds to this conclusion because what was seen as normal code of conduct by IntelliTech participants did not match the conduct they witnessed in the leadership at GridLock. Indeed, this also coheres with the theorization of stuckedness as a governmental technology, where governmentality underscores that the way we frame the conduct of others is tied

to the way we conduct ourselves and vice versa. Although it is impossible to isolate the impact of power relationships at play and how this translates as agencies colliding within an action net, the issue that can be highlighted concretely is that of the relationship of stuckedness to *mismatched savoir*.

The second unseen practice that the data highlights is that of an *anti-structuration-view*. The data demonstrates that participants who had an *anti-structuration-view* of social unfolding were more likely to feel stuckedness, both in its amplification and diminution. Participants tended to feel they had more agency in the performances described as a wane in stuckedness, as opposed to seeing that the desire for certain practices was intimately linked to particular subject positions in a given social structure. The notion that follows on from an *anti-structuration-view* of social unfolding is that power relationships are not seen as relational, circulating through the field without a source.

A wane in stuckedness is thus reified and seen as a stepping-stone of sorts to a further shrinkage of stuckedness, attributed to the heroics of the people involved. Some would call this change driven by a canonical desire for efficiency and transparency, or an entrepreneurial mindset, or higher profits. However, being so enmeshed within the recursive cycle of *savoir* that structures the field and positions on agency and power relationships formed within it, the data suggests that the reasons participants characterize certain performances as a contraction of stuckedness are far more taken for granted.

In this way, this research makes a contribution to a more processual perspective on change, showing change as recursive and our customs as saturated with chance, providing, as Tsoukas and Chia (2002: 568) urge, more information on how change is actually accomplished. Weick & Quinn (1999: 362) remind us that from afar, flows of events appear to simply be repetitive action, interspersed with inertia, and further speckled with events of change. Said differently, sensing stuckedness is a process of taken-for-grantedness and the subsequent collapse of such taken-for-grantedness takes place in the interstices of practices that have an assumed regularity. These practices are not all either expanding or contracting in stuckedness but rather are performances that enable such tenuous, moment-to-

moment categorization. These micro-dynamics of organizing however, are taped together by more institutionalized narratives that frame the field, addressed in the section on the contribution this thesis makes to practice.

Contribution to Academic Debates

This thesis has largely contributed to two streams of academic debate. Given the absence of a concept of *stuckedness* within the domain of change management scholarship it does not so much contribute to debate as generate a novel, non-instrumental way of looking at resistance to change. Where it does engage with existing scholarship is:

(1) The intersection of governmentality and method. Chapters 3, 4, and 5 addressed some of these concerns and I elaborate on how in this section.
(2) Practice-oriented projects, with a focus on unusual project environments. I briefly explain the movement of the field and explain, based on the empirical work presented (6, 7, 8, and 9) explain why this genealogical ethnography makes a contribution to better understanding project environments.

Governmentality & Method

The discussion of the concept of governmentality and its relation to method is not always a comparison of like and like. There are views that governmentality poses problems for applied researchers such as that it disregards empirical reality, downplays the role of the state, neglects social difference, inadequately theorizes resistance, and sanitizes politics out of the policy process. It will be clear that this thesis is at odds with these claims from my Chapters 3, 4, and 5 in which I make the case for my translations. It is plausible that these views are the result of researchers looking to Foucault's notion of governmentality in isolation from his oeuvre.

Beyond what was covered in the earlier section on re-conceptualising governmentality, the *field* that the analytics of governmentality requires is also mediated by rationality, where one aspect regards the need to problematize and connect the observed practices of stuckedness to the process of its problematization. The other aspect indicates that a governmental technology is

never just about conditioning the *field* but also concerns how the *field* conditions the melange of governmental technologies. New forms of knowledge are generated that contribute to the government of new areas of regulation and intervention. Foucault terms this the 'politics of truth'. We also learn how as a form of governmentality, stuckedness must consider the synthesis of life-time into the circular production of practices, referred to as the political anatomy of the body.

This exploration of processing governmentality leaves some gaps, about the theorization behind the field, the politics of truth and the political anatomy of the body. Carefully examining governmentality also does not explain at what level the analysis occurs. As was suggested, these gaps might explain the issues highlighted by McKee's (2009) article. By considering the key analytical ideas of materiality (political anatomy of the body and politics of truth), *pouvoir*/*savoir* (field), and the idea of the 'subject' (level at which analysis occurs), which Foucault may have started developing in his early work, but continued to use well into his later years, when the notion of governmentality was featured, these chasms in understanding are bridged.

Antithetically, there is also more considered scholarship that discusses a wider breadth of Foucault's genealogical work and how relates it to the analytics of governmentality (Dean 2014; McKinlay et al. 2012; Rose et al. 2006). However, what these more nuanced articles are calling for is a celebration of the inventiveness of governmental analytics, especially when contrasted with "the often sterile cookie-cutter approach or the application of a template, a method, or a few catchwords". They ask scholars to not blunt unique prowess of governmentality — its specificity in identifying how government is formulated, how it problematizes, what techniques it uses, etc.

Other commentators reflect that Foucault has rapidly moved from the margins to the mainstream of organization studies, yet the propensity to analyse discourse and apply the analysis to practice endures. The task put forth to governmentalists is to go beyond the documents that conjure new images of societies, organizations, and individuals (McKinlay et al. 2012). Contrarily, they call for work

that understands “the politics that inform the making of particular governmentalist regimes with the witches’ brew of everyday practices”. This view has synergy with Rose et al. (2006), who have stressed that the development of the analytical toolbox with which to study governmentality is open-ended, compatible with other methods, and most importantly, creative. Seeking to extract a method from the multiple studies of governing is irrelevant. Rather, the task is to identify a “certain ethos of investigation, a way of asking questions, a focus not upon why certain things happened, but how they happened”. In the same vein, McKinlay et al. (2012) invite readers to translate ethnographic and historical research to rise to this task.

The research design used in this thesis may have bloomed in a manner akin to following a trail of breadcrumbs, where greater theoretical rigour led to conceptual specificity, which then led to a methodological approach that coheres with the trail. Perhaps, it is thus not a coincidence that the methodological approach taken compellingly reflects suggestions by the most nuanced scholarship available on the matter.

Specifically, I translate Foucault’s genealogical work to stimulate the process-thinking capacity inherent within the established research methodology of ethnography. Non-representation is a hallmark of genealogical research because the analytical eye is trained on scrutinising subjectivities as opposed to subjects. If this genealogical ethnography aims to be an interpretive analytics, or a history of the present, I argue that my problematization of stuckedness is one interpretation that can, and indeed should, be queried by others’ interpretations that grow out of different idiosyncratic concerns to the preoccupation of this thesis.

The chapter then considered how the notion of reflexivity was problematic, hence examining what an ‘uncomfortable reflexivity’ might entail. I problematized my own ‘positionality’ as both insider and outsider in the field, setting the expectation that the reflexivity employed in this thesis is discomforting in its accountability for self-representation and self-determination, both that of others and one’s self.

Coherence was important to my project and I translated my theoretical leanings through a triad of techniques.

I drew on Czarniawska's (2004) *action nets* to apply Foucault's apparatus to organizational settings. If the action net serve to attune me to the positioning of different types of elements that are netted together, the second technique, the *reporting style*, guided by Lancione (2011) and Latour (2005), help me trace the relational patterns present in the field without trying to attribute *a priori* value to these or enslaving me to try and literally 'represent' the occurrences in the field. Finally, I used *problematized confessional tales*, adapting what van Maanen (1988) termed simply confessional tales. By questioning both my participants' and my own confessions, I used an uncomfortable reflexivity to add to the ethnographically gained and journalistically presented material in this thesis.

In the end, the thesis was sewn together using carefully chosen methods to join the dots systematically between different elements (power/knowledge relations, historical and cultural conditions, human and non-human agencies, and the practices under scrutiny). While the methods are ethnographical, the purpose, as suggested by key governmentality scholars, is genealogical.

Practice on a Project

This thesis contributes to the fast growing body of project scholarship in a serendipitous way. Particularly, it has been noted that interest in project organizing has spread beyond the traditional sectors of construction and engineering (Frame 2002). The literature suggests that across all industries, organizations are dissatisfied with traditional organizational structures such as functional departments, business units, and divisions, set up for operating in relatively stable technological and market environments (Maylor et al. 2006). According to Sydow et al. (2004), large firms are re-organizing into less bureaucratic, more adaptable and flexible project-based units. Many organizations opt for some form of project organization, suited to the temporary hurdles and opportunities that they have to tackle (Maylor et al. 2006). There are also suggestions that projects are becoming larger, more complex and widespread, as they expand to involve parties beyond a single organization. This reach of projects is also being seen outside the realm of work in a broader 'projectification of society'. *Projectification* aims to characterize the proliferation (colonization?) of

project-related principles, rules, techniques and procedures to mould varied aspects of life, a sort of new 'iron cage of project rationality' (Hodgson & Cicmil 2003).

In tandem with these views, the need to study the 'inside' of projects has been flagged, emphasising the need to be able to further unravel the micro-processes of social unfolding in these contexts (e.g. Cicmil et al. 2006; Söderlund 2004; van Marrewijk 2010). This can be attributed to the 'practice turn' that has been ongoing within organization studies, thus bleeding into scholarship on the management of projects. A commitment to the study of *concrete* practices is a marker of this thesis and in terms of the sequence of research undertaken for this thesis, Foucault has been rightly acknowledged, and other key theorists have been mentioned. However, within project scholarship, adherents of the 'practice turn' follow the projects-as-practice framework, dedicated to the understanding of the internal dynamics in project organizations (Blomquist et al. 2010).

Based on the developments outlined, this thesis is able to make a rare contribution as it is not often that one is granted access to study a government funded trial that positioned a project-oriented workforce within a corporatized public sector organization. The way in which I gained access allowed me unfettered access in some domains, observing clashes that sometimes felt legendary in a literal sense. IntelliTech also straddled both engineering and ICT sectors, thus providing insight into a complex project that occurred across sectors and organizations. This type of arrangement is becoming more and more common and has different challenges to project organizations that either completely project-oriented or dwell within less opposing settings. Third, the timing of this research was specifically suited to capture the essence of the day-to-day unfolding of project work operating in this unusual setting as the research took place neither at the start or the end of the trial. In a sense, the team was behaving in an 'everyday' fashion, except for the period where they had to face an external audit. Cumulatively, these factors, together with the methodologically coherent style of genealogical ethnography will be able to convey an interesting and unique take of project life, thus further developing the field of project management research.

Contribution to Practice

The aim of Chapter 9 was to understand how institutionalized aspects framing the action nets of which IntelliTech is a part and are seen as embodiments of stuckedness shape the dynamic *savoir* of the field and produce a space-time-specific politics of truth. It is here that this thesis makes its primary contribution to practice.

According to Pietsch and McAllister (2010), public scepticism about the science and an unwillingness to change behaviours is likely to result in government climate change policy that is reticent and lacks coordination. I have presented data on a government-funded climate change mitigation trial that exemplifies a policy deliverable that was both reticent and uncoordinated. Indeed, a narrative of hopelessness and a critique of political expediency that emerged in relation to federal politics in general and climate change in particular were evident. Cynicism about the political process allowed people to excuse themselves for acting in terms of self-interest in a project that misused public funds, even when these were some of the very issues that these contractors lamented. By denying climate change and dismissing the political manoeuvrings that spawned the trial, the deep commitment of participants, to being cynical and disillusioned functioned as a supplement to the *pouvoir*/*savoir* that circulates in the field, creating and created by the practices by which stuckedness was known. This is not to say that people everywhere must believe in the position science puts forth, but when cynicism and disillusionment mediates practice that is ethically in question, behaviour needs to be far less taken-for-granted, and for that to occur, a culture of awareness and critical thinking needs to be specifically cultivated.

The second highlighted issue stemming from a lack of conscious thought is related to how it is a common theme for public sector organizations to be paying salaries and consultant fees on top of that, so that consultants can deliver what staff are too afraid to, because most importantly, staff are conditioned to always have an audit trail justifying their every move. The politics of truth in this context cuts across many others because they obscure the critique of political expediency present in both federal and state political structures, including that of

corporatized public sector organizations. There is a spatio-temporally specific assumption that the 'dirty hands' justification is sufficiently ethical. The suggestion is that it should be accepted that politicians and leaders in public sector organizations may not have any long-term policies in the public interest, because they need to ensure they continue to hold power first. Again, the issue here is that in the taken-for-grantedness of such a justification, we are unable to see that political expediency is never just an isolated case. It gets reproduced with more and more structural heft, allowing for bad decisions that waste public funds in the first place, and sanction the continued wasting of public funds. Additionally, such adherence to existing structures has been shown to prevent us from developing new more appropriate structures for activities such as the distribution of energy. In this context too, there needs to be a conscious consideration of the values that proliferate practice, as opposed to the taken-for-granted acceptance of all the structural values of organizing according to different sectors such as public versus private.

Finally and perhaps most personally experienced through the mode of genealogical ethnography, this research suggests that it is possible that in some organizations, stuckedness of certain conceptions of gender intersect with stuckedness of particular conceptions of hierarchy. The case of IntelliTech portrays a legal-rational authority, where the bureaucracy is not legal and rational for all parties. There seemed to be an inordinate number of pathways to protect those in hierarchical positions of superiority, pathways that obscured the cost of their unethical decisions as well as inaction in many cases. On the other hand, I showed how participants felt there were no pathways, in practice, for complaint or protection, when it came to issues of workplace misconduct such as harassment, bullying, corruption, misuse of funds, etc., all instances of which have been presented in this research. Again, I argue that there needs to be a conscious examination of organizational values and how they interact with the circulation of *pouvoir*/*savoir* intrinsic to an organization because in this last case, we can see how the production and sustenance of a politics of truth resulted in pernicious outcomes for staff who, I feel, were most deserving of protection.

In many respects, the issue contested in the final point above is akin to the argument against the changes of the Australian Racial Discrimination Act, currently being hotly debated in the media. This proposition is a result of lawmakers and the culturally empowered proceeding as though ours is a society without a racial power hierarchy simply because they sit at the top of it. This aspect of my analysis, the interrogation of how the governmental technology of stuckedness has created a certain politics of truth may not be a popular contribution to practice. However, it speaks to the observation that by and large, we do not pay attention to the ways in which we are complicit, and made complicit, in ethically questionable structures and this is, I think, consequential for practitioners of all stripes, and at all levels of any organizational hierarchy.

Ideas for Future Research

Beyond the theoretical and conceptual work performed, this piece of research was an exploratory study, but one that has resulted in concrete insights both about the types of practices that enable (how) a characterization as stuckedness, as well as, the new rationalities that are unseen (why) that condition the problematization of stuckedness. Further, the analysis of certain institutionalized contexts that frame the field revealed consequential information that should be considered in the practitioner world. As such, there is a good case that more research of a theoretically and methodologically coherent nature should be done on the manifestations of stuckedness. This way we can start to develop a catalogue of understanding about the monumental ways in which stuckedness conditions human affairs at multiple levels: global, national, organizational, and personal.

Beyond this, and as a final word, there are many well-developed concepts in the literature that share interesting characteristics with stuckedness. Looking into how they connect with stuckedness however was well beyond the scope of this thesis. Nonetheless, just as I started this thesis with an account of how I was convinced that it was important to study stuckedness, I end with a passage, one that suggests to me that a natural progression from this work would be to look into how stuckedness and related concepts overlap. I leave you with these words by William James from his 1887 book, *Habit*:

Habit is thus the enormous fly-wheel of society, its most precious conservative agent. It alone is what keeps us all within the bounds of ordinance, and saves the children of fortune from the envious uprisings of the poor. It alone prevents the hardest and most repulsive walks of life from being deserted by those brought up to tread therein. It keeps the fisherman and the deck-hand at sea through the winter; it holds the miner in his darkness, and nails the countryman to his log cabin and his lonely farm through all the months of snow; it protects us from invasion by the natives of the desert and the frozen zone. It dooms us all to fight out the battle of life upon the lines of our nurture or our early choice, and to make the best of a pursuit that disagrees, because there is no other for which we are fitted, and it is too late to begin again.

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