

## Plan of Action #1

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**Proposal submitted by Morna McDermott**

**Title: Dangerous Dolls—changing the dominant narrative of education “reform” through art as collective social and public action**

The poet Charles Bukowski once wrote that “to do a dangerous thing with style is what I call art.” While art is not inherently dangerous and oft times can be painfully status quo (not to mention classist, racist, and sexist) ...the tools of artistic engagement- when embraced with a collective grass roots desire to provoke change- can in fact become dangerous. In this Town Hall I propose a presentation which discusses the power of the imagination to creating spaces where students and teachers can disrupt the current anti democratic ideology pervading classrooms and public schools across the country.

Following a 3 minute presentation in which I argue for the dire need for creativity and imagination in education in order to resist the rising tide of passivity and authoritarianism being inculcated in children through high stakes testing, participants will create dolls that will be placed in boxes, symbolizing our collective refusal to be boxed in any longer by fear based top down educational policies. See the “Out of the Box” Facebook site for additional information and images. This project was initiated in July 2011 when approximately 50 students and teachers from the *Free Minds Free People Conference* created 3 foot tall cloth dolls which were placed in boxes and delivered to the steps of the Department of Education in Washington DC. This action resulted in the project coordinator (Morna McDermott) and two other members of the action (Bess Altwerger and Rick Meyer—executive organizers of the *Save Our Schools March on Washington*) to an invitation inside the DOE to sit and speak directly with Arne Duncan and five of his top advisors about the issues we were addressing through this arts based collective action. While (sadly) nothing we said, nor the dolls, were enough to change the decisions of Duncan’s current “reform” policies, we did indeed get their attention and the attention of the media. See

[http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/campaign-k-12/2011/07/duncan\\_meets\\_with\\_school\\_march.html](http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/campaign-k-12/2011/07/duncan_meets_with_school_march.html)

[http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/campaign-k-12/2011/07/today\\_kicks\\_off\\_the\\_four-day.html](http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/campaign-k-12/2011/07/today_kicks_off_the_four-day.html)

This Town Hall discusses how arts-based public collective actions like this can begin to foment change by publicly disrupting the dominant narrative. The visual statement of 50 dolls in front of the DOE served as a public counter narrative that spoke to the issues of marginalized educational stakeholders. The Town Hall is grounded in ACTION as well. The dolls created by Town Hall participants will be placed in boxes and brought to the steps of the Education Administration Building just a few blocks away from the conference.

In the long term focus I propose that such actions like this (and as proposed on the “Out of the Box Doll Project” Facebook site) is to coordinate efforts across the country where members of the Curriculum and Pedagogy Conference could organize doll making sessions in their own communities and replicate the action of placing the dolls in boxes in designated public spaces –such actions will provoke community members, media and stake holders to attend to the voices of those who refuse to be boxed in any longer. Such actions taking place around the country- beginning an arts based movement –will demand that public attention be given to this counter narrative and may begin to shift the public dialogue away from the tight grasp of the neo conservative spin which silences all others.

## Plan of Action #2

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**Proposal submitted by Antonio Garcia and Kristopher Holland**

**Titles: “Education in the End Times: The Fantasy of Public Education” and “An Education to Come and its Mourning”**

### **Format**

*(Interactive group workshop discussion)*

The authors will divide the breakout group into smaller sections and give each section a prompt to focus on (after the authors cue them to read it). In short, the authors wish to share their thoughts in increments that help parse out the various ideas embedded in their work. By providing short prompts (i.e., their thoughts), then allowing one group focused on that prompt to reflect and respond, the authors hope that this will create a collage of ideas (i.e. a scaffold approach) as well as ensure that audience participation is evenly spread, since the authors anticipate the breakout groups to be fairly large. Our hope is that this format will allow for maximum participation and voice in the discussion.

### **Question of Interest**

*(#6) How do our modes of inquiry, as both scholars and practitioners, work to rearticulate curriculum, pedagogy, and the notion of education itself?*

### **Description of Content**

What remains irreducible to any deconstruction, what remains as undeconstructible as the possibility itself of deconstruction is, perhaps, a *certain experience of the emancipatory promise*; it is perhaps even the formality of a structural messianism, a messianism without religion, even a messianic without messianism, *an idea of justice* – which we distinguish from law or right or even human rights – and *an idea of democracy* – which we distinguish from its current concept and from its determined predicates today.<sup>1</sup>

-Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx*

As the thematic titles of these papers suggest, the authors seek to discuss and examine education’s death as a means for rearticulating the “very thought of education”<sup>2</sup> and the implications of *an education to come* (via Derrida). For the authors, the death of education begins with the *autopsy* of progressive fantasies. That is, progressive educators and reconceptualist curricularists have worked diligently to create a discourse of what public

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<sup>1</sup> Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx: the State of Debt, the Work of Mourning, & the New International*, Trans. P. Kamuf (New York: Routledge, 1993), 59.

<sup>2</sup> See Deborah Britzman, *The Very Thought of Education* (New York: SUNY Press, 2010).

schools “ought” to do and “we tend to define public schooling by what it is not.”<sup>3</sup> Especially in the neoliberal climate, we ask the question that others are also raising: how public is public schooling? We are interested in discussing a theoretical-philosophical framework supplied by Slavoj Žižek (psychoanalysis) and Jacques Derrida (deconstruction) to inquire into the *autophagy*<sup>4</sup> of public education and the fantasy construction that keeps us believing in hope without the evidence supplied by optimism.

In *The Revisionist Revisited* (1977), Diane Ravitch commented, “Radicals have long dismissed the schools as a tool of the capitalist economy which distracts attention from the need for fundamental change.”<sup>5</sup> At the time she wrote this in 1977 there was an impending backlash to Leftist idealism and cultural liberalism that would emerge with Thatcherism and the Reaganization of America. Ravitch was a believer in the neoliberal enterprise of education that promised not just feel-good curriculum, but a systemic enterprise of testing and ensuring students’ competency in subjects. As a proponent of standards and testing, Ravitch was on the “conservative” side of education. Žižek asserts that it is when “the enemy talks your language”<sup>6</sup> that you are winning. But what if, your enemy not only speaks your language but also shares your same destitution of hope? In Ravitch’s latest book, *The Death and Life of the American School System* (2010), She reflects on her ideas from *Revisionist Revisited* and laments, “I wanted to share the promise and the hope. I wanted to believe that choice and accountability would produce great results. But over time, I was persuaded by accumulating evidence that the latest reforms were not likely to live up to their promise. The more I saw, the more I lost the faith.”<sup>7</sup> If our antagonists to progressive education have begun to show signs of hopelessness, does this pave the way for really existing progressive possibilities and reform? Or, does it mean that something larger than ideology has relegated us not to hope and optimism but pessimism and nihilism?

The problem is that we are “prisoners of hope”<sup>8</sup> in which we do not cling to hope; rather, it clings to us. As Cornel West distinguishes, there is “hope” (a fantasy signifier with no real signifying) and “optimism” (a positive outlook based on evidence of a given situation).<sup>9</sup> So to what degree do we continue fighting as an “already-ready” appendage of an invisible government<sup>10</sup> in which the ideological apparatuses (Althusser) are not just external institutional entities but internalized institutions of the (Lacanian) “symbolic world”? That is, we continue to operate under the fantasy of *objet petit a* - an ambiguous

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<sup>3</sup> Chris Higgins and Kathleen K. Abowitz. “What Makes a Public School Public: A Framework for Evaluating the Civic Substance of Schooling,” *Educational Theory* 61, no 4. (2011): 365.

<sup>4</sup> Def. Self-eating or self-cannibalism. [Oroboros]

<sup>5</sup> Diane Ravitch, *The Revisionists Revisited: A Critique of the Radical Attack on the Schools* (New York: Basic Books, 1977), 4.

<sup>6</sup> Slavoj Žižek, *Žižek Presents Mao*, 17.

<sup>7</sup> Diane Ravitch, *The Death and Life of the American School System: How Testing and Choice are Undermining Education* (New York: Basic Books, 2010), 4.

<sup>8</sup> Cornel West, *Restoring Hope* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1997), xii.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> See Edward Bernays, *Propaganda*.

representation, a space that is beyond the signified. Is this not evident in Obama's "change we can believe in"? The key here is the ambiguity of "change." Change to what? *Change* to fascism, *Change* to patriarchy, *Change* to alternative lifestyles, etc. "Change" signifies nothing and thus continues as a fantasy supplement, it is a *prosthesis* to and of ideology.<sup>11</sup>

### **Audience Level**

Theorists, philosophers, and practitioners of all levels and areas are encouraged to attend. The format of this presentation allows for fluidity and dialog across a varied spectrum of attendees (and their application for such a discourse). The academic educational theorist and graduate student will find the theoretical/philosophical implications provoking, as well as the intellectual possibilities that penetrate everyday practice and policy making. Practitioners may find the theoretical/philosophical material intimidating, but the authors have taken great lengths to provide materials and activities to access the material, as well as discuss the material in a language that code switches between popular colloquialism and academic high theory talk.

### **Example Points for Consideration**

1. Education has been confined rhetorical to edificial notions, which limits the discourse and pedagogy surrounding a true nature of what we might call "education" proper.
2. What are the fantasies that must be confronted by the progressive and left of education in order to create really existing change? And, what would this change look like?
3. What would it mean to rethink our pedagogy and implications of emancipatory pedagogy (i.e., critical pedagogy) as a broader project as an intellectual project that challenges the obligation of explanation in teaching and politics as Ranciere suggest?<sup>12</sup>
  - Freire said there is no learning without teaching, but who and what is teaching (how do we know)? This points to the new landscape proposed by, for example, Postman who believed that the TV would replace the teacher. What is learning and teaching, and, even more important, we must press upon the field of education writ large that "we are our own best tools" and to consider "what does the child have to come to me for that he or she cannot get from a text book?" The latter applies to the allure and expertise of the teacher. However, in this, we should consider the pedagogical implications of Ranciere's *jacototian* stultification in which he critiques giving explanation to

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<sup>11</sup> Slavoj Žižek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology* (New York: Verso, 1989).

<sup>12</sup> See Jacques Ranciere, *The Ignorant Schoolmaster: Five Lessons in Intellectual Emancipation* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1991); *Jacques Ranciere: Education, Truth, Emancipation* (New York: Continuum, 2010).

students without them coming to learn on their own how they arrived at their pedagogical point of understanding.

4. The grand revolution of education and society has not come – *or has yet to come* (Derrida).<sup>13</sup> Why do we continue to engage leftist and progressive education (and politics) despite the apparent failure to create really existing change? How does a ‘radical political deconstructive perspective’ (a la Derrida’s ‘students’, i.e. Jean-luc Nancy, Giorgio Agamben) add to future lines of flight?

### **From Depression to Direction: Considering Projects for an Education to Come**

What type of projects can evolve the field of education as an academic discipline and K12 practice that harkens a return to the teacher as expert (or intellectual<sup>14</sup>) – competent to evaluate students on their own terms? This second part to our discussion seeks to engage interested attendees in exploring and constructing “action plans” to address the problems and issues raised in the first town hall break outs. We hope to collaborate or encourage separate projects that seek to illuminate the issues raised, as well support the connectivity and bridging of these projects from this year’s conference to next year’s. The goal of authors is to support and encourage possible projects as education ‘to come.’ It is not our specific intention to “lead” or dictate what type of project (in accordance with Derrida’s principles of non-systematic/ eccentric ‘control’ / de-centering of discourse), for we feel that this agreement should come organically out of the conversations and desires of the attendees, which is where any education ‘to come’ must emerge.

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<sup>13</sup> This concept of an education to come is borrowed from Kristopher Holland who has been working with Derrida’s work of mourning and education. This idea, though only mentioned here, is a complementary piece to this work as Kris and I continue to develop our thoughts using Zizek and Derrida as our primary frameworks. There may be a very fruitful terrain to explore with the link of Derrida and Zizek because Zizek was at one time very into Derrida until he found Lacan.

<sup>14</sup> See Henry Giroux, *Teachers as Intellectuals*.

## Plan of Action #3

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**Proposal submitted by Erik Malewski**

**Title: "Curriculum Interventions: Can Gandhian Thought and Currere be Mobilized Toward Educational Policy Reform?"**

*The real difficulty is that people have no idea of what education truly is. We assess the value of education in the same manner as we assess the value of land or of shares in the stock-exchange market. We want to provide only such education as would enable the student to earn more. We hardly give any thought to the improvement of the character of the educated. The girls, we say, do not have to earn; so why should they be educated? As long as such ideas persist there is no hope of our ever knowing the true value of education. (M. K. Gandhi True Education on the NCTE site.*

Mahatma Gandhi wrote at length about his thoughts on social transformation. He spoke of the need to turn away from the "isms" in terms of socialism, Marxism, and existentialism and focus on aligning our personal pursuits with our efforts toward truth. In other words, Gandhi spoke often of the disconnect between those who professed to be in support of the poor, labor, and social justice but lived lives that contradicted those beliefs. In this sense, he took transformation inwards. One must begin to focus on what is just and then change their practices to align with what they know is just. Gandhi's thinking, then, aligns with that of William Pinar's ideas on currere and the need to democratize one's interiority prior to social reconstruction. Yet, Gandhi did not stop with the autobiographical as a form of social transformation. He worked politically to effect social policy, from the disarticulation of the caste system to community practices based on improving self-reliance. Most notably for this perspectives section, Gandhi developed a national basic education policy for India, one based in self-rule, doubled in meaning to mean rule over one's consciousness and one's nation.

Gandhi's approach to education originates with his experiences in South Africa. He had been the beneficiary of Western education and for a number of years, after becoming a barrister and adopting a middle class lifestyle, he encouraged Indians in South Africa to also pursue colonial education. By his mid-thirties, however, Gandhi takes a near complete redirection. Not only did he shed his Western clothing and refuse middle-class lifestyles, he described the "rotteness" of English education and noted that "to give millions a knowledge of English is to enslave them." Gandhi was frustrated that he had to use a foreign language to speak of home rule, that the courts were conducted in English, and that official Indian documents and the best newspapers were written in English, a language only accessible to the elite. Gandhi had given up on convincing the English to be benevolent; he

wanted Indian people to see that emancipation from the domination of Western education would be the only route to freedom.

Not surprisingly, then, Gandhi advocated an educational system against industrialization. He was opposed to forms of technology that impeded the capacity Indians to connect with the labor that allowed them independence and self-rule. In this sense, Gandhi equated industrialization that moved the means of production into the hands of capitalists with slavery. Accordingly, Gandhi advocated a complete boycott of all machine made goods, from cloth to farming, all in pursuit of home-rule. Gandhi was keenly focused on economies of scale.

It was within this context that Gandhi developed his ideas on education. Key to his curriculum was the introduction of productive handicrafts to the curriculum. Rather, it was less of an introduction and more a curriculum of learning a craft that was centered within the program of study. This was no small feat in India, where laboring in crafts was associated with the lowest levels of the caste system; where one was expected to labor to escape the need for knowledge of production processes involved in crafts from weaving and pottery to metal-work to book binding. Gandhi was attempting to challenge the very bases of colonial education, where the emphasis is on literacy and acquisition of knowledge that serves the needs of the upper classes. With this in mind, one can see the radicalism embedded within Gandhi's basic education proposal, where the emphasis is on the skills and capacities associated with the working classes as a means toward social transformation.

We need to give serious consideration to the impetuses behind Gandhi's basic education proposal. What he had hoped that the schools of India focused first and foremost on becoming self-supporting for at least two reasons. The first had to do with the need to generate the resources for schooling from local sources so that they might become self-reliant. The second related to the first and the need to keep schools from becoming politically reliant upon those who did not have the best of intentions. In this sense, Gandhi envisioned swaraj and swadeshi as twin guides to education policy. Gandhi saw state supported public education as a problem, one where the schools would become intertwined in corporate and political power bases that would result in social, economic, and political hierarchies. The right to labor mentally and physically, and see both as integral to a good life, was key to Gandhi's vision of productive education policy.

Because Gandhi's basic education was based in an ideal society of small, self-reliant communities where individuals acted in industrious, self-respecting, and generous ways, there are implications for the roles of teachers. Gandhi was unrelenting in his belief that teachers become free from outside interference, particularly government or state

bureaucracy. By way of colonization, teachers held prescribed roles based in what state and corporate authorities wanted students to learn. The emphasis on the textbook, in such a world, limited teachers' capacities to teach in create and unique ways, ones linked to the students' and communities' interests. Gandhi wanted teacher autonomy and also wanted power re-positioned within the local community.

These ideas, among others of Gandhi's, need to be considered in light of the contemporary direction of public schooling in the US. Gandhian ideas have great implications for activism and advocacy within the Curriculum and Pedagogy Group. They will guide this perspectives session, one with a focus on connecting Gandhi's ideas of personal and social transformation with currere and efforts to intervene within educational policy.

## Plan of Action #4

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**Proposal submitted by Jake Burdick, Jenny Sandlin, Betsy Reyes**

**Title: Defining a Genre: Towards a Robust and Trenchant Vision of Public Pedagogy Scholarship and Activism**

The concept of public pedagogy has held some prominence within the greater body of education literature since the late 1980s. However, despite a growing polyphony of scholarly work on public pedagogy (see Sandlin, O'Malley, & Burdick, 2011 and Sandlin, Schultz, & Burdick, 2010), the concept remains largely on the periphery of educational thought, conference programs, course offerings, and scholarly journals. This perennial (dis)location has contributed to a perception that public pedagogy scholarship is frequently understood as a tangential conversation to, rather than an integral component of, colleges of education and the field of educational research. Whereas we clearly understand the emphasis on institutional and commonsensical sites of educational activity, we feel that a strong argument can and must be made to illuminate the important and ubiquitous relationships between human learning and the pedagogical/curricular experiences that emerge outside of formal spaces. Our hope for this proposed Plan of Actions session and its ensuing conversation is to begin a formulation of strategies and tactics for creating and maintaining spaces for the development of public pedagogy knowledge within institutional, extra-institutional, and contra-institutional sites. In essence, we are asking, *how do we articulate, coalesce, and vivify diverse pieces/events of public pedagogy theorizing, inquiry, and enactment into a project (or projects) that offers enhanced insight, nuance, and capacity for both curriculum studies and educational praxis?*

We feel that this conversation must take on two distinct foci as a starting point. The first centers on the fractious and potentially fragile nature of existing public pedagogy scholarship. In our literature review of scholarly work on public pedagogy (Sandlin, O'Malley, & Burdick, 2011), we found several key deficiencies in public pedagogy scholarship that threaten either to maintain the genre's marginality within educational thought or to collapse the concept entirely due to absent or incomplete epistemic, theoretical, empirical, and conceptual foundations. At the apex of these concerns is the fact that, as noted by Bill Ayers in a 2009 AERA session, public pedagogy has been and continues to be so broadly conceptualized in the literature base that it might actually become meaningless. Furthering this concern, Savage (2010) observed that public pedagogy work has not clearly delineated itself from the anthropological processes of enculturation, and thus risks becoming an ill-fated attempt to theorize culture itself. Within this session, we hope to raise these issues as a means of engaging other scholars and activists working on, thinking through, and/or enacting public pedagogy in the beginnings

of dialogue and (potentially) communal scholarship centered on articulating and forwarding the genre as a viable site of educational activity.

As a second focus, we want to discuss the ways in which public pedagogy might be re-positioned within educational research, colleges of education, and ultimately the educational imaginary (Barone & Lash, 2006) as a complementary, critical element of the larger body of educational thought. Our initial ideas include such tactical approaches as the development of a network of scholars (potentially affiliated with C&P) who share perspectives/research about public pedagogy and presenting their insights and findings collaboratively, the development of presentations and publications that link public pedagogy inquiry to the concerns of a wider audience of educational scholars and practitioners, the inclusion of activist and informal “intellectuals” within conference programs, and sustained efforts to produce “guerilla” (Ellingson, 2008) works of scholarship and practice that forcefully assert public pedagogy concepts into the educational imaginary. On a broader level, it is our hope that these efforts might affect such changes as special issues of journals devoted to public pedagogy scholarship, a public pedagogy SIG within AERA, and public pedagogy research institute working to foster and support large scale research initiatives.

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## **Plan of Action #5**

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**Proposal submitted by Jennifer Milam**

**Title: Restless and Lost in Curriculum and Pedagogy**

Each of us has been a student.

Many of us have been teachers.

We are all curriculum workers.

And while the above is true, the messy, rewarding, chaotic, painful, deeply intellectual, spiritual, and yes, even physical work of curriculum has been largely ignored or exchanged for static notions of content and traditional, if not nearly always oppressive, ideas of what curriculum should be and who students, teachers and curriculum workers are (and by default, who they are not). Nearly thirty five years ago, Adrienne Rich and Andrea O'Reilly began the groundbreaking work of deconstructing the paternalistic and reductive ideals of motherhood to "release the creation and sustenance of life into the...realm of decision, struggle, surprise, imagination and conscious intelligence" (O'Reilly, 2006, p. 11). In serendipitous synch with these works was/is the emergence of curriculum studies and curriculum theorizing in the reconceptualist movement that posits as unfinished and complicated the very nature of the lived, destabilized, and profoundly personal experiences of all of us. In this moment, the convergence of auto/biography, identities, subjectivities, reflexivities, praxis and discourse refuse the reductive and elude the definitive. As in motherhood, an identity I know well, curriculum and pedagogy work is physically, emotionally, and intellectually, restless at its core.

Reconceptualized curriculum and pedagogy are living, breathing, birthing, and rearing texts and experiences that refuse previously articulated, overly simplistic, paternalistically exclusive, and impersonal narratives or stories about education. And while language on the following pages may appear linear and two-dimensional, as on the printed page it must be, curriculum theory, curriculum studies, and curriculum work, is a contested cultural space – unfree from cultural, political, historical, and hegemonic structures and categories that seek to discipline and contain curriculum and pedagogy. In each question we pose, every rally we attend, in the moments when we help our own children with their homework,

when we prepare future teachers, or ponder a provocative theory, we can engage in acts of “deconstructing assumptions of a knowing subject, a known subject, and an unambiguous, complete knowledge outside of the unsaid and unsayable, the embedded fore-structures of understanding” (Lather, 2000, p.104) to shine light on the un/conscious, multiple, and distinctly personal experiences of ourselves – and each other.

*Restlessness: A beginning*

On the one hand, we, human beings, are comforted by certainty, by predictability, by the ability to name and understand, with measurable and purportedly objective means, the world around us. On the other, we theorize experiences and challenge the very nature of our being in the world seemingly excited by the possibility of the unknown or unknowable. This contradiction, this restlessness, I contend is at the core of our wrestling, our contemplating, our searching for meaning – in nearly all aspects of our lives. This restlessness, exemplifies what Kinser (2008) described as the “ambiguity, tension, contradiction, and personal struggle in feminist mothering” (p. 11) but it’s the same for when “feminist mothering” is replaced with “curriculum.” It is the endless search for a utopic space of existence and the realization that this space does not exist. For m/others, it is the realization that your idealized fantasies of what it means to be a parent, to unconditionally and mightily love (and receive the love) of child(ren), and to become every bit the parent you perhaps lacked, are impossible fantasies at best. At their worst, the fantasies are depressing delusions that inflict horrible pain and suffering on the psyche and physical body. For the curriculum worker, theorist, practitioner, it is coming to see the absolute absence of hope in spaces once viewed only as hopeful and optimistic, riddled with candy-coated phrases like “All children can learn” and “No child shall be left behind.” Worse...it is realizing that our very position implicates us and holds us responsible for change.

Restless, we seek, we wonder, we imagine.

Lost, we mourn, we cry, we surrender.

The sense of loss – loss of control, loss of autonomy, loss of idealized notions of curriculum, loss of rationality might reflect, a mourning of the loss of a subject (of a self) “capable of fully conscious, fully rational action, a subject assumed in most liberal and emancipatory discourse” and s/he is replaced with a “provisional, contingent, strategic, constructed subject which, while not essentialized, *must* be engaged in processes of meaning-making given the bombardment of conflicting messages” (emphasis in original, Lather, 2000, p.120) about what it means to teach, to learn, to work, to think, to theorize, and be responsible for the education of another human being. And perhaps, it is in the moment of meeting a child, our child(ren) – our own and those in schools - that we see a reflection of the unknowable, fragmented, and irrational self we had previously left unattended.

While on first read, one might recognize this space as theoretically and intellectually productive (I certainly do), even pregnant with pedagogical possibilities for growth and learning (Maudlin, 2012), it is also a space that for those who have never previously encountered it, or for those who have been enmeshed in it for some time, an exhausting place where foundational knowledges, taken-for-granted ways of being in the world, are swept away like the sands on a beach with each breaking wave. It is an encounter with a self that “is constituted and reconstituted relationally, its boundaries repeatedly remapped and renegotiated” (Scott, 1987, p. 17). We question things once assumed as truth and posit new truths in relation to and with our world, our theories, and our experiences. In essence, we are engaged in a postmodern (Grossberg, 1987), “post-post-structuralist” project (Johnson, 1986, p. 69) rejecting a tendency to reify any singular, even fractured, self (or notion of curriculum) while constantly, *restlessly*, engaging in a discursive self-production in an attempt to produce some coherence and continuity in our world.

In the midst of radical contingencies and indeterminacies, we must dis/locate our selves – be lost, seeking, still always feeling that just out of arms reach of some sense of stability, of knowing. In the harshest and most compassionate way, we must confront what many already know – to work in curriculum, in classrooms, is to live in the presence and power of the Real, and to live a restless life is inescapably fraught with discomfort and alienation. And while these are experienced alongside moments of great joy and immeasurable exhilaration, to feel them, to recognize and name them, is difficult because it requires an

acknowledgement that the grandiose notions of curriculum or theoretical idealism present in our culture, memory, and social consciousness is a falsity built on grand narratives that neglect the contradictions and complexities of living.

When we (re)focus our thoughts, our actions, our language toward a “mutual, dialogic production of a multivoice, multi-centered discourse” (Lather, 1991, p. 112) we can ponder a world where not all people are the same, but rather we are not all oppressed (and oppressing others) by and with the social scripts and objectifications that envelope us now and have for the entirety of our past. The goal is not arrival at some idealistic utopia but rather a dynamic, engaged, discourse and dialogue that recognizes the possibilities and potential in all its people.

Restless.

Unable to stay still or quiet.

Ceaselessly active or moving.

Worried. Anxious. Uneasy.

Not restful.

Without repose.

Restless and Lost.

Lost in restlessness.

In the twilight, the moments between darkness and daylight, restlessness resides. In the spaces between static notions of curriculum and spinning-out-of-control pedagogy, restlessness is found. It can be debilitating in its omniscience or liberating in its refusal to relinquish simple answers to our deepest, most pressing questions. Curriculum is restless. It is the constant searching for answers for one’s self and for one’s life. It is the courageous, radical and rebellious understanding that nothing is ever finished and nothing should ever be. Get lost. Be lost. Remain lost.