Christian Education, Binary Constructions and Deleuzian Thought

by

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Abstract

This dissertation is written as a series of interconnected papers around a theme– an accepted procedure by the University of Alberta's Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research – because such a process seemed to better further the goals I have to speak to a variety of Christian audiences and because it best fitted with the impact I found in Deleuzian thinking. In some ways, my work is an *in medias res* narrative – a humble beginning to a lifetime of scholarly study. Although I have committed to reading and understanding philosopher Gilles Deleuze, I know such work would take a lifetime and I know much more understanding will follow when this work has been completed.

The introduction outlines my personal journey from my own thesis work in the fields of religion and science (as I understood them) and to assess and explore why students, teachers, and researchers get caught in binaries and dichotomous thought. Chapter one explains my journey from a beginning background in hermeneutic phenomenology to the current moment where Deleuze is used as a conversation partner with my Christian faith – a faith that, similar to my scholarly study, remains an ongoing development.

Chapter two seeks to question educational research that avoids living in the flux, and remains caught in the problem of comparison. I address the constructed binary of sacred and secular and insider and outsider and, informed by Deleuzian thought, I use a strategy of 'breaking binaries' or complexification to encourage Christian researchers like myself to work towards openness to others outside of our own communities, to become more self-aware of our tendencies to split a complex and dynamic world into pre-judged categories, and to live open to researcher becoming that allows for exploring our own differences and becoming better bridge builders to those with other beliefs.

Chapter three addresses a binary that "lurks" in much philosophical Christian religious discourse – transcendence and immanence. Using a number of major thinkers whose work employed to thought can, I believe, inform these constructed categories, from Martin Luther to Gilles Deleuze, and following from chapter one, I discuss ways to think differently, to break this binary as an immanence that needs transcendence, and vice versa, a way of saying each is indistinguishable from the other. Although this binary might seem an odd formulation to some thinkers, it is a formulation that has a certain hold within the Christian community – a hold I wish to complexify. In light of this and Deleuzian thought I then discuss educational implications.

Chapter four engages Deleuzian thought applied to the practical dichotomy of good and evil (another constructed binary) searching for a creative way to discuss culture and religious issues related to marginalizing others. I close with implications for approaching researching and teaching that desires to be open to a world breaking binary constructions of good and evil.

Finally, I include two published papers in the appendices that apply a Deleuzian concept of rhizome, first to researchers becoming rhizomic in their approach to their fields of discourse, and second to rhizomatic thought in social studies practice. They are included as chapters five and six to show some implications of Deleuzian thought for education. Rhizomic Interludes have been included to connect the chapters, as a way to show my research process.

<div align="center">Reference</div>

Holmes, A. F. (1977). *All truth is God's truth,* Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.

Preface

Although I trust this dissertation adds to knowledge in several areas, in it I am addressing more specifically a Christian audience. As a Presbyterian chaplain at the University of Alberta whose work is specifically pastoral – that is, my chosen vocation is to minister to students on the University of Alberta campus, and I am positioned centrally within the Christian community. Although it is a community I love and am committed to, it is far from a perfect community. Sometimes, for example, Christians become a fortressed people – both avoiding and disdaining other truths.

In 1977, Art Holmes in *All Truth is God's Truth* spoke to this very issue when he wrote:

> The evangelical with his "minority complex" often forgets that he is part of a massive historical movement much larger than his own kind of church. Catholic and Protestant thought of various sorts, and Eastern Orthodoxy, can all be of help, for they share with him the basics of Biblical theism. The evangelical tends to see himself today standing alone, he supposes that nobody ever faced such issues as he now faces, and he therefore thinks in a vacuum. (p. 131)

I have engaged the topic of this research because I hope to help bridge my own community with knowledge I have found in Deleuze. One of my dissertation goals is to introduce Christian educator's to Deleuze through a discussion of constructed binaries as generally related to our community to help us think differently about education through re-viewing lens of what it means to love neighbour as yourself. Specifically, this dissertation explores several binary constructions in the Christian education community and how Deleuzian thought can help address them. Deleuzian thought informed a strategy of breaking binaries to address insider and outsider, transcendence and immanence, and good and evil – binaries central to much Christian thought.

Acknowledgements

I first acknowledge the role of Jim Parsons' educational research acumen in this dissertation, his ongoing encouragement and insight to explore lines of thought, informed each chapter. Looking back upon the interplay between his role as doctoral advisor and myself, it is difficult to discern anything but a 'rhizome' of writing together, not in the more technical sense outlined in this dissertation but rather as lives overlapping and intersecting in inexplicable ways. The full project is my own but each chapter has the imprint of our research conversations over the past three years.

I also acknowledge jan jagodzinski and Jason Wallin for their willingness to let me explore Deleuze from my own Christian location, and who encouraged me to grapple with Deleuzian thought.

This process was complicated by the loss of my middle daughter Melissa at the beginning of the journey and the writing that followed worked in a strange way to carry me through what I cannot describe as I acknowledge the role that grieving played in my writing. My wife Lisa, was a crucial support in the years that have followed and nothing I have written would be complete without her ongoing abilities to juggle our life. I learn new things daily from my other amazing daughters Jessica, and Bryanna who show me daily how "grace finds beauty in everything", despite overwhelming loss.

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"When people see some things as beautiful, other things become ugly. When people see some things as good, other things become bad." Lao-Tzu

Introduction

On the path of educational research in science and religion, I have encountered a world of ideas and people with deep commitments and passion; surprisingly, I have also confronted my own identity, subjectivity, and biases. Undertaking graduate work has encouraged me to pause and look at my own life and the influences that have formed who I am becoming. I deliberately use the word becoming with philosopher Gilles Deleuze's influence because I am less inclined to consider identity, or in theological terms an image bearer, a fixed autonomous self: rather, humans are deeply connected as people and environment and each effects who we are yet to be. I have described my prior situatedness in my modestly published thesis *Engaging Tension in the Science and Religion Classroom* (Clarke, 2011), and now seek to go back in my memory to an earlier time where the themes of brokenness and dualism impacted my life and research.

Pathway Themes – A Broken 'Self'/World

Divorce entered my world early, when my parents' relationship fell apart – I was three years old. I vaguely remember the world as an insecure place of brokenness and fragility and this sense followed me to school. With a strong desire to learn came a sense of marginalization, being the only student of divorced parents. Although this situation might seem odd today, in the community in which I lived, this situation was rare. Few families experienced divorce. Isolation led to conflict at school. I had a growing anger at the violence and conflict, yet felt helpless to stop it. In response to conflict, I chose to

buttress my anger against difficult situations; at times I felt I would explode. Unfortunately, the coping mechanism I developed was to treat violence with violence despite being taught a version of "turn the other cheek" to resist violence and choose non-violent resolutions. Watching brokenness emerge within my family and school life made me question whether it was possible to have healthy relationships.

Questions

By junior high I became aware of the "clash of ideologies." The model of schooling I can recall was a binary of us vs. them – Christian vs. Public school. My teachers did not make this binary explicit, but the separate schooling led me to believe I differed from other children in my neighbourhood. The view of the world I absorbed in my education, through studying history and my own religious culture, was painted with a brush that centralized my religious faith but not necessarily in a way that left me open to the 'Other' (Levinas, 1996). My teachers encouraged me to remain open and care for others; yet, the sub-text was that I was different.

Early recollections of clashing religious values were in this private Ontario Christian school, when I was reading a book explaining horse evolution. Evolution wasn't initially a huge question for me, but as time went on I began to question the compatibility of science and faith. Because my tendency has been to keep the peace and confront only when provoked, I kept the forming questions to myself about that narrative of the world. Any wonder I had about God and evolution was pushed aside because it wasn't central to my learning.

The schooling I had about evolution was that it was one of many theories but that, for someone of faith, I need not be concerned with it. I didn't realize my mother also held such questions early in her life; I only learned about them years later when my thesis was finished and she told me her story. What we found common to our experience was an influential religious community in both our lives through weekly studies and the emphasis from the minister on Sunday; teaching about God as the Creator of the world in six literal twenty-four hour days – sometimes mixing science with faith. We also realized we both might have been drawn to these questions because of people like my grandfather who had his own well-meaning dogmatism.

Cultural Heritage

Another aspect of my research path is my culture. I have already noted that my Christian community was fairly conservative; but, part of that background was my Dutch heritage. After my parents divorced, my Dutch grandparents were a major influence on my life. I would visit and stay with them often, picking up their cultural cues. This culture was rich for me, giving a secure place and a certain faith in the world. During university I would grasp this unshakeable home base strongly when evolutionary ideas surfaced in class or conversation. Unfortunately, this isolationist or individualistic mentality kept me from even entertaining certain viewpoints. What began to shift my thinking is hard to ascertain, and years later I gradually came to see how my social community might be misguided or even wrong. Perhaps meeting people from so many different backgrounds as a chaplain began to poke at my "stable" identity so connected to cultural signifiers. Perhaps the university setting enabled me to begin to look for other answers to the questions that resonated in the back of my mind.

Other questions, hard to locate exactly in my life, were part of my narrative of identity: "Why do we have to fight over what we believe?" and "Will there ever be peace?" and finally "Can't we just get along?" As a teacher, I began to notice how easily words could be misinterpreted and how difficult it was to communicate; then, as a pastor and chaplain, communication difficulties became even more apparent. Perhaps I eventually chose the vocation of chaplain/pastor/teacher because I believed the role gave me opportunities to struggle with and seek to resolve such questions.

Binaries Emerge

During research for my Master of Education, I was able to explore troubling issues of science and religion. The history of science and religion was key in helping me see how deeply we are affected by the era in which we live – i.e. Galileo and Copernicus; my hermeneutical studies pointed me to a broader scope of understanding that has followed my religious pedigree beyond the single position I was taught; metacognition gave me resources to look at how my own cognition has been affected by my presuppositions and biases; post-colonial discourse opened my often blinded eyes to the injustices that the us vs. them binary has created; and, research in science and religion classrooms showed the potential of teaching students about the embedded cultural dichotomies that pervade religious and scientific culture. In retrospect, my hermeneutical lenses and phenomenological experience were challenged through my studies and through contact with students who revealed that they were also wrestling with binaries and dichotomies.

Decentering

My studies of science, religion, hermeneutics, and Deleuzian thought have shown that I was influenced to believe in an essential self; my past cultural imaginary encouraged me to search for foundations with a reductionist mindset. I had inserted into my religious faith the needs for certainty and proof when even Jesus' wisdom doesn't do this. Rather, he states, "If you lose your life you will find it." He decenters the egoistic self even when the issue of self was not part of the cultural imaginary of his day, thus giving us a wisdom source to draw when many are so fixated on themselves in this age of the image, consumed with searching for symbolic decomposition.

The irony for me in this path to brokenness is that the very religious source central in the life of my community now also complexifies what I had erected on foundations that cannot be found in this life. The loss of my daughter has been an earth shattering reminder of my frailty, my sense of finitude, and uncertainty even in light of pronouncements from well-wishers who bombarded me with good intentions. Wisdom aspects of scripture like the psalms are becoming a place for me to re-orient myself as a fallible researcher/educator/chaplain who wants to engage the marginalized, those who don't fit in, those confused by the never-ending conflict often reflected in those writings, and in the Gospels where Jesus takes on the world's violence.

Thus, my passion for my research has been re-ignited in this time of deep loss, trauma, and grief. My dear daughter was caught in a school system rife with binaries that caused her so much anguish. Only when we took her out of the system for a short while to reassess her learning disabilities did a love of learning return and she announced to me, "Daddy, I am smart." All those years before her 14th year of life, she often lamented to me how she felt so stupid; and, only in her last days on this earth was

I able to hear those beautiful words. For her sake, I am spurred on to study further the constructed binaries that affect each of us.

Challenges and Complexities

I believe such a study could be helpful to the Christian community I serve and beyond to those who are trying to better understand people from religious backgrounds. I wonder if it might not also speak to a broader situation where 'idealistic' thought has captured imaginations, including any who seek to set up a standard to which to compare all else. I have noticed that binary thinking often goes with oversimplified life choices; even thoughtful scientists or academics can be caught in its hegemony, despite living in what some are calling a post-hegemonic era (Hardt & Negri, 2000). Constructed binaries can become political forces, creating interpretation and communication issues that encourage and allow those in power to remain so. Oversimplified interpretation can be carried into educational settings where learning about complex issues beyond binary thinking is problematic; holding tightly to one side of a binary firmly fixes either/or choices.

My classroom experience teaching philosophical ethics, science, religious education, and theology has given me ample examples of binary thinking at work. Examples from my teaching context would include binary categories from a course *Philosophical Ethics* including good and evil and postcolonial discourse that expose the self-centered us vs. them; for religious/science education in the science vs. religion typology of conflict in the creation vs. evolution debate; and in the theological/philosophical discourse of transcendence and immanence. In short, binaries

can create short-sightedness and factiousness – we can become closed to the fullness of living with others in community.

My critique of binaries does not attempt to demonize binary thought as only an enemy. Neither is it suggesting that making distinctions using binary terms is not a valuable asset for humankind because "they demarcate semantic domains, enabling us to be discriminating. In fact, in logic classes philosophers or mathematicians often represent such distinguished meanings with Boolean circles that depict inclusion and exclusion, enclosing and closing off, separating this from that" also distinctions "give us increased clarity and control, defuse arguments, ease our journey in myriad ways" (Scarborough, 2009, p. 6). Much day-to-day life includes this-or-that choices, going down one path or another; rather, I wish to point out that binary thought can be a hidden curriculum (methodology), a constructed pragmatic for engaging life's difficult questions that can result in reductionism and fundamentalism. My experience shows that this reductionism and fundamentalism creates unhealthy divisions and conflicts among people in a world that desperately needs to find ways to work through/with differences. Because the issue of binaries has most affected my connection to the world in areas of morals, science/religion, and theology, I will briefly explain how each bears upon my research path.

Moral Binary Constructions

Teaching philosophical ethics presents situations that expose dichotomous binaries flourishing among the students I teach, especially with the difficult dilemmas included in studying ethics. My own reading of history sees Western ethics deeply

embedded with a "way of being" that claims a position or camp and then gears up to defend that viewpoint, I especially see this in my own study of Christian history. Students might innocently imbibe or inherit this approach from their own cultural milieu; however, in my experience, such combativeness creates classroom tension, conflict, and dialectics and can encourage a negative ethical heuristics and binary mindset (Clarke, 2011). I witnessed firsthand debates that in hindsight were more about presuppositions of morality than ways of evaluating our own immanent situatedness. One example was between an atheist and Christian student where the Christian professor stood up for the atheist's freedom to think and express what she/he wanted to think and express. In a way I found compelling, this professor then chided the Christian student for their dichotomous thought process and claiming to speak for all Christians.

Daniel Smith (2007) has provoked my thought as to different ways to regard these types of polarizing to camps, where he points out a Deleuzian perspective of ethics that doesn't "appeal to transcendence" (p. 66) but rather to "immanent ethics." He states,

> What is an immanent ethics? Throughout his writings, Deleuze has often drawn a distinction between "ethics" and "morality"—a distinction that has traditionally been drawn to distinguish modes of reflection that place greater emphasis, respectively, on the good life (such as Stoicism) or on the moral law (such as Kantianism). Deleuze, however, uses the term "morality" to define, in very general terms, any set of "constraining" rules, such as a moral code, that consists in judging actions and intentions by relating them to transcendent or universal values... What he calls "ethics" is, on the contrary, a set of "facilitative" [faculta-

tive] rules that evaluates what we do, say, and think according to the immanent mode of existence that it implies. One says or does this, thinks or feels that: what mode of existence does it imply? "We always have the beliefs, feelings, and thoughts we deserve," writes Deleuze, "given our way of being or our style of life. (p. 66-67).

Coming from a Christian understanding of ethics and morality this different way of thinking, has been a challenge to my own idealism, which I am learning can have as much to do with Plato as with the biblical writings of the Hebrew and New Testament scriptures. While raising problems for my own articulation of Christian tradition, I think that exposure to an immanent ethics is pulling me back from dogmatisms I have inherited or imbibed. This exposure has begun infiltrating my own practice with a graduate group where I have worked at not taking all opinions and comparing them to some artificial standard, rather learning how to speak from a position of 'I' not 'we.'

One pervasive mega or meta-binary I have encountered within moral discourse is good vs. evil. Even this framing as something 'versus' something else is problematic, as it is a constructed binary. Some profoundly influential films and books are built around good vs. evil binary constructions and, when talking about these films with young people, it becomes obvious how this binary influences their ontology or descriptive models of the world or worldview. As stated by Goheen (2008) "Worldview is an articulation of the basic beliefs imbedded in a shared grand story that are rooted in a faith commitment and that give shape and direction to the whole of our individual and corporate lives" (p. 23). Despite so many available excellent films, I have been disappointed at how simplistic some popular media production can be for adult consumption – excellent

movies with deeper nuances are marginalized for movies that appeal to consumption for the masses.

For example, the moral complexities of living in a world of chaos in *The Walking Dead*, or the political imaginary and 'impossibilities' of *Homeland*. Possibly, such simplicity influences student dialogue from association with Christian education focused more on lack of nuanced morality, and this haunting binary 'invades' our conversations from these prejudices and makes communication difficult. Currently, in offset, I am daily encouraged in conversations with students who resist the status quo of media marketing and oversimplified religious binary thought. I do still see a challenge in that once someone has categorized an issue or person as 'evil,' there seems little one can do to dislodge someone holding tightly to this binary as seen, for example, in aspects of Bush administration spin that used "axis of evil" to hegemonic use. Augustine's view of evil as privation of the good raises questions as to what is evil?

The difficulty of life as an educator is that I have seen this binary within my own life and I continue to question my own interpretation of the world within a good and evil religious background. Although questions of neurology and human cognition are beyond the scope of this research (see Newburg, 2010), I believe even if human beings were hardwired early in life for binary thinking, biology is not determinism, and our development as meaning makers (interpreters) and what Deleuze and Guattari call 'desiring machines' does not depend upon this physiology because, when we view the world, we can become aware of and work to understand this binary as an embedded guide to our choices, utilize it to seek wholeness to recover the alienated binary and, if necessary, eradicate it as a controlling narrator for our lives. We can learn to 'break'

binaries that close down how we see the world – complexify binary constructions that are reductionistic and hierarchical.

Science/Religion Binaries

Science and religious issues have preoccupied a good portion of my time as a chaplain, which was why I focused on science and religion for my Master's research thesis [both terms science and religion are loaded with different implications and nuances, see Clarke (2011) for further discussion of these terms]. I use the term science specifically relating to process of scientific method while recognizing that the term in its earlier use simply relates to Latin *notitia o*r Greek *episteme* meaning knowledge and that more recently the term has been connected to the humanities (social sciences) to distinguish human sciences. Religion can be as specific as the culture, myths, and practices of a group of people as it relates to the immaterial/spiritual, or as broad a definition as Caputo (1987) uses with the paradoxical "religion without religion" to describe religion, religion always keeping open to life. For purposes here, Christian religion is one's spiritual beliefs and practices about the world. As a basic starting point, stated in Clarke (2011), "what a person believes to be of ultimate value...what gives passion and purpose to their life" (p. 11), despite how difficult or even impossible it is to define.

When one's faith is intricately related to a view of the creation of the world and its age, the challenge of navigating where faith and science intersect is presented and how science itself can become religious in scope whether it takes the path of scientism or another permutation. In my Master's study, I found students often conflicted between

what they were taught in evolutionary biology class and what they were taught at home or church – e.g. How old is the Earth? Thus, for some, a binary is created between science and religion where science is relegated to what one must do to finish school but has nothing to do with religion; others choose science and leave religious belief behind (Clarke, 2011). This dissertation is my further way of challenging this binary creation.

Theological Binary Constructs

A crucial/challenging binary that crosses discourses (Latin: *discursus*, "running to and from") and disciplines (a branch of knowledge, typically one studied in higher education) is transcendence and immanence. Transcendence and immanence is constructed as a binary when one positions oneself on one side of a Divine relationship (for the non-religious this may manifest as the Real and Inexplicable). This "lurking binary" shows itself in educational and other academic discourses that discuss questions of meaning. This binary struggle helps one encounter the perplexing questions: What is real? How do I connect to the real? Is there life after this life? These are not easy questions popularly or academically, in many ways they are impossibilities and yet could be taken up extensively on their own merit. Briefly, in the philosophic literature the 'real' can be described in different ways, from the Platonic 'Ideal' or 'Forms,' "model and the copy" (Deleuze, 1994, p.264) that are 'beyond' the sensate; the Lacanian 'Real' in relationship to the 'Symbolic' and 'Imaginary' taken up currently by Slavoj Zizek (see Sean Sheehan, *Žižek: A Guide for the Perplexed and The Monstrous Christ* with John Milbank 2009); for Deleuze "following Bergson, consists of both the actual and the virtual... these two, the virtual and the actual, are the two forming a 'circuit' moving back or up (transcendentally) from the actual to the virtual and forward or down in the

actualization of the virtual" (Simpson, 2012, p. 21). My current understanding for the Christian is that the 'Real' is that indescribable mystery of spiritual reality, glimpsed in the Gospels in the life of Jesus and in what is described as a new heavens and new earth linking us to the cosmos while Deleuze and Guattari (1994b) has more a view of pan-psychism (mind or soul universally in all things) as outlined in *What is Philosophy?*. (There is no sense that this simple paragraph can even begin to discuss the 'real,' I seek to address the 'real' more in chapter on transcendence and immanence chapter). What I am realizing through Deleuzian interaction is my own tendency to describe something that is indescribable in ways that seem self-assured as if I 'know' with certainty. In facing loss, the way of mystery has become more apparent. Pat answers don't work when facing something so 'real.'

Overcoming Constructed Binaries in Christian and (Religious) Education

To frame my research, I will outline aspects of my theoretical framework in the first chapter. This framing includes the need to clarify the terminology for this dissertation. I begin by asking a most basic question "What is a Binary?" and explain how I am using this term in connection to the subsequent chapters.

What I explore and expose through my research, in light of my questions, are problems and challenges with binary thought such as I have encountered on my educational path. I explore the issue of binaries by searching academic literature for authors who have addressed the challenge of how humans make sense of the world and their condition by constructing binaries, specifically in the three chosen binary constructions of chapter's two to four. Such an approach, I believe, will have value in

developing and questioning Christian and religious educators' interpretive frameworks and also exposure to a range of binary issues.

By developing these strategies, I encourage awareness of and challenge to the problems of us-vs.-them mentalities, representation, and reductionism arising in Christian religious educational discourse and pedagogy. My research invites educators to envision alternate possibilities for researching and teaching using frameworks that complexify binaries and move education from marginalizing others, polarizing conversations, and closing a willingness to hear other viewpoints. By engaging Deleuzian thinking applied to classroom teaching, I aim to inform how students see the world and transform how they interpret events, epochs, eras, and cultures drawing from students' own inherent qualities to see the world as interconnected and diversely unified.

Although with each chapter I begin to see other areas of opportunity in addressing binary constructions in Christian education, I bring these three to this dissertation as a beginning to what I hope will enhance a dialogue between teachers and with students that helps us engage scholarship and each other in ways that are different from some of the distortions highlighted herein. A conversation and pedagogy of loving neighbour as self that sees the 'other' differently from systems, and silos that contain and hinder reflected in Deleuze's approach of discernment in other philosophical thinkers (Lucretius, Spinoza, Hume, Nietzsche, and Bergson) of their "critique of negativity, their cultivation of joy, the hatred of interiority …[and] denunciation of power" (Patton & Protevi, 2003, p.6).

Chapter Summaries

Chapter One: Searching for Another Way of Seeing: Research Question and Exploration

Leading Question: How and why does binary research – overall theoretical/conceptual framework, research tradition, research design, ethical considerations – impact my work?

Chapter Two: Caught in the flux: Facing the Other

Leading Question: How can Christian educators appropriate insights from Deleuze as an ally to break binary thinking?

Educational research and pedagogy as interdisciplinary theopraxis gathers insights from a plethora of sources and, with such a wide base of theorists, often can gain insight from philosophers of varying frameworks, yet intersections of commonality. Such are Deleuze and Guattari and Paul Ricoeur in this chapter. While their divergent views of 'dissolved' vs. 'narrative' selves are ably compared in the literature as a contrast of major difference, yet during my initial research journey I found myself situated between them, searching for a way to learn from such different streams, much like Sheerin (2009) in *Deleuze and Ricoeur Disavowed Affinities and the Narrative Self*. I first look at practical comparisons as they relate to educational research and pedagogy and then go further into how comparison plays out in the binaries of sacred and secular and insider and outsider. With these constructed binaries, I discuss using strategies from chapter one, ways to 'break' the binary created by the deeply-embedded impulse for comparison in educational discourse through post-colonial resources and concludes by challenging

religious educators to appropriate these resources for the ongoing benefit of their students.

Chapter Three: A Lurking Binary – Transcendence and Immanence

Leading Question: How could breaking the transcendence/immanence binary by complexifying their relationship affect Christian and religious education?

Philosophical history has themes that intersect many disciplines, including religious education. The issue of transcendence and immanence continues to resurface in Christian communities and religious discourse in what I call a 'lurking' binary because, like cosmic background radiation, it resonates behind questions many Christians ask - what is real in the world, about God or gods, and about how we interpret a spiritual/religious life. Some see God intervening in ongoing ways; others propose a 'God of the gaps' approach with infrequent interventionism. Others see scriptural texts claiming God at work but have a hard time reconciling with their own circumstances and suffering; and, some discount God or gods having any reality for our lives and thus creating a binary that needs discarding. Despite the different ways of seeing God or gods as transcendent, immanent, or paradoxically transcendent/immanent, I propose it is important to continue to grapple with this binary in religious education and beyond because how people construct this binary relationship affects every day sub-textual belief and action. With Deleuze as conversation partner, my chapter explores historical viewpoints and models proposed in wrestling with this binary and offer my own paradoxical understanding, breaking this constructed binary as one way to enable

Christian students and researchers to gain insight with such a problematic and mysterious subject.

Chapter Four: Exploring Binary of Good and Evil in Youth Culture

Leading Question: How does the good and evil constructed binary affect our approach to youth culture(s) and how can Deleuzian thought suggest ways to break this binary?

In this chapter, I explore the binary of good vs. evil through several intersections with popular 'youth' culture – the vampire, Goth movement, and fictional Harry Potter novels. I also suggest that Deleuze and Nietzsche provide a way to think beyond and break the binary of good and evil for Christian and religious educators who might not typically search these authors for insight. I close with possible educational implications in applying Deleuzian thought to this constructed binary.

Appendix One: Becoming Rhizome Researchers

Binaries affect many aspects of educational discourse including research and teaching. Although not every binary is negative towards educational 'forward' movement, in this article the authors proposed that rhizomatic thinking, derived from the writing of Deleuze and Guattari, can open new potentialities for a breaking of different types of binary thinking. Adopting the terminology of *rhizomatic research,* they outlined ways that re-envision educational research through the concept of the rhizome, as a hopeful pathway towards new ways of teaching and research. As a guiding quasi-methodology, rhizomatics could help researchers/teachers develop agency but step beyond personal agency to see research/teaching through multiplicities that arise rather than pre-

planned forged curricula. Starting in the middle, the authors suggested that rhizome researchers recognized their embeddedness, allowed research to lead them, accepted that attempts to synthesize are never finished, listened to those before them and on the margins, and gave themselves to a life of becoming, thus 'breaking' the binaries that can capture or stifle their attempts to be educational researchers constructing symbolic selves.

Appendix Two: Rhizomic Thinking: Towards a New Consideration of Social Studies Practice

Social studies teachers engage a vast subject area within which they can enlist a wide scope of possible curriculum and pedagogy choices. Despite the opportunity to engage students with an abundance of potentially fruitful themes, topics, and ideas, social studies teaching can be captured by the need to cover specific content in particular ways. Philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari (1983), in their seminal work *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, were used to connect such an agenda to the capitalistic machine that shrinks potential sources into what Foucault (1982) sees as tendencies to seek control rather than the openness of becoming. In this chapter, we contended that Deleuze and Guattari's concept of the rhizome opened new lines of flight in social studies curricula and worked to revolutionize social studies as a subject area that often has been over-standardized and taught as one-size-fits-all. We also contended that rhizomic thinking could renew how students see the world and transform how they interpret events, epochs, eras, and cultures by drawing from rhizomic research's 'bamboo like' qualities.

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Chapter One

"We pray that they all may be one as we are one." Jesus.

"We are one but we are not the same... we get to carry each other." U2 One.

Searching for a Way to See: Research Questions and Exploration

The issue of constructed binaries is wide in scope, touching so many areas of our lives, and nuanced with terms such as dualism, polarization, and dichotomies. Early in this research path, first brought to mind during theological studies and educational research, I wrestled with these questions:

(1)   Initially, is binary thinking innate to human beings, a cultural phenomenon, or a combination of factors?

(2)   Do all people make sense of the world through binaries; and, if so, how?

(3)   And more recently, *how can students and educators be aided to recognize their use of binaries and overcome a dichotomous mindset?*

While neuroscience explorations and my own prior research presented possible clues to these questions, my current research is interested in the implications and permeation of binaries for education with the overarching question: **How does a binary way of thinking manifest and affect the educational situation as it relates to disciplines such as philosophy, theology, ethics, and science/religion?** (In my Master's work, I wrestled with issues relating to science and religion and have chosen to show their complementarity by using this arrangement). **Subsequently, what strategies to disrupt binary overemphasis can impact**

educational research and teaching, specifically constructed binaries in my own Christian community?

I agree with educator David Smith (2006) who says, "[t]eachers and teaching are caught in the middle of both a political and an epistemological crisis" (p. 16). Further, he mentions the need "for the recovery of the alienated binary" (p. 32) which, in context, means that aspects of paradoxical truth 'need' each other, a challenge that informs and guides my research vision. This vision could apply by recognizing that we can't speak of good without evil, others without our self, transcendence without immanence, and science without religion. The binaries we construct affect all areas of discourse, and how we relate to each other. Smith reminds us that this issue is not isolated, rather it touches upon truth-as-shared and how we relate to the 'Other.'

Background Location

This dissertation is an attempt to explore Deleuzian thought, addressing constructed binaries the author has experienced on the journey of teaching and chaplaincy, in the Christian and religious education community. Some may question these conversation partners, but the interplay between Deleuze, a time of personal grief and questioning, and my own Christian background was a dialogue that challenged me to think differently about my own constructed binaries.

One goal that emerged for this dissertation was to develop research from my engagement with a variety of philosophers and educational researchers, including Paul Ricoeur, Jacques Derrida, and Gilles Deleuze, for Christian and religious educators. While admitting this background, the chapters in this dissertation have been in

conversation with primarily Deleuzian and Deleuzeguattarian (when you read Deleuze in this dissertation often it includes work that was co-authored with Felix Guattari) perspectives, grappling with concepts such as the rhizome, becoming, deterritorialization, virtual/actual, and schizoanalysis. I admit that my work is a humble attempt to accept Deleuze's (as I read him) push against transcendence and the constructed binaries that come from such a perspective – and that, while Deleuze's transcendental empiricism flies in the face of existing binaries, in fact in my experience people in educational settings act as if they do exist. Often within the Christian community people use binaries to call people back to those 'standards' of belief that are in place that actually results in a sort of binary life – and it is this I hope to push against. Although I am unsure if the two conversation partners, Deleuze or the Christian community, will find convergence in understanding, my hope is to show that conversations can happen even when such different ways of thinking are at work, another way to love neighbour as self.

Shults (2014a) states my concerns differently,

In his book on Nietzsche, Deleuze argues that the opposition of Zarathustra or Dionysius to Christ is a "differential *affirmation*... against all nihilism and against this particular form of it." As Deleuze chipped away at Oedipus (as well as the dogmatic image of thought and moral images of transcendence), he also created novel concepts and assembled new, productive schizoanalytic and pragmatic machines. By chipping away at the iconic function of Christ, I hope to help unveil the dynamics that lead people to desire their own *religious* repression (p. 9).

Although, I see such binary constructions happening in other communities, it is to a Christian community in which I live that I am engaging, where this "iconic function of Christ" can be the tendency built upon constructed binaries. This delimitation of my work is both necessary and humble.

The beginning of my research progressed with the difficulty I recognize in myself and my Christian community of living open to the world in ways that allow for mystery and wonder, and affirming the 'other'. Although, from my perspective, Christian sacred scriptures are deeply mysterious and challenging, my reading of theological and philosophical history shows a narrative and trajectory that has often sought to confine understanding to parameters not explicated in the text but abstracted and idealized. For example, Augustine (354-430), having lived a colourful life sexually, upon profession of a serious Christian commitment downplayed the enjoyment of sex in marriage and is known for his views that sexual union was for procreative purposes, a view that continues in some Christian communities to this day with more connection to Augustine's Neo-Platonism than the scriptural writings. Some still hold this view, but for many theologians this way of thinking has been changed with many books now in rediscovery of espousing sex and the body as a good (espoused as far back as the Hebrew book *Song* of *Songs*). One such example, *God Loves Sex* (Allender, 2014), is a current examination of the *Song of Songs*. While this conversation may seem alien to many reading this dissertation, it is part of many lives present in 21st century Christianity, adopting a Christian tradition rather than working to grapple with the scriptural writings that can't easily be contained.

When introduced to Deleuze in the classroom and through works such as *A Thousand Plateaus - Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (1987), *Difference and Repetition* (1994), and *What is Philosophy* (1992), I recognized a voice that gave me room to explore the concept of becoming I found lacking in my own understanding and background. I took the freedom of expression I saw in Deleuze and experimented with it in relationship to several constructed binaries I could see at work in myself and my community. For those coming from a more conservative Christian community, this choice may appear to be incongruous with the beliefs of that community; but, my desire is that judgement of that sort be set aside in joining a search to understand and deepen in ways of loving neighbours as ourselves in learning from divergent views.

While there is no actual transcendence vs. immanence, good vs. evil, or insider vs. outsider binaries in Christian thought (often explained by paradox see Placher 1996) or in Deleuzian transcendental empiricism specifically, I noticed that people's articulations often pit them as binaries and treat them as if they are poles in contradiction. Thus, I am exploring ways to rethink and re-envision several binaries related to my areas of work in education, theology, and philosophy. While I have written articles related to different aspects of Deluzian thought as I understand it, I have chosen the following chapters to highlight my exploration of how an educator and chaplain who is a Christian might learn from Deleuze.

While admitting the background engagement with different philosophers and educators, the chapters in this dissertation have been in conversation with Deleuzian and Deleuzeguattarian perspectives which inform a way of thinking for me that seeks to break binary constructs and dichotomous thinking. As Parr (2005) says, "It is important

to remember that Deleuze, as well as Guattari, is concerned with overcoming the dualistic framework underpinning western philosophy (Being/nonbeing, original/copy and so on)" (p. 87). This forthright concern appealed to me as a way to research religion and my own Christian community with Deleuze in conversation. I have similar concerns in relationship to Christian and religious education as Christopher Simpson (2012) in relationship to theology when he says,

> What can a theologian do with Deleuze? While using philosophy as a resource for theology is nothing new, Deleuze presents a kind of limit-case for such a theological appropriation of philosophy: a thoroughly 'modern' philosophy that would seem to be fundamentally hostile to Christian theology – a philosophy of atheistic immanence with an essentially chaotic vision of the world. Nonetheless, Deleuze's philosophy can generate many potential intersections with theology opening onto a field of configurations: a fractious middle between radical Deleuzian theologies that would think through theology and reinterpret it from the perspective of some version of Deleuzian philosophy, and other theologies that would seek to learn from and respond to Deleuze from the perspective of confessional theology – to take from the encounter with Deleuze an opportunity to clarify and reform an orthodox Christian self-understanding (p. 1).

Deleuze's work "proposes an affirmative vision of difference, becoming and life" (Simpson, 2012, p.1) which I find working at my own presuppositions and stance for my own academic journey. Reading German philosophy as background for this dissertation I have become, with Nietzsche (2012) in *The Antichrist*, suspicious of the unadmitted theology posing as philosophy, "One need only utter the words 'Tubingen School' to get

an understanding of what German philosophy is at bottom – a very artful form of theology" (p.10). Thus, in this dissertation I am making it explicit that I am searching for a better understanding of my theology, philosophy, and educational practice in light of critique from Deleuze, to "reform an orthodox Christian self-understanding" (Simpson, 2012, p.1) (despite terms in phrase also being open to critique – reform, orthodox, self). While I haven't let go of Christian convictions that trace back to *Mere Christianity* (1960) of C.S. Lewis and *Simply Christian* (2010) of N. T. Wright, I want to be willing to think differently from a Deleuzian perspective that informs my work as religious educator and chaplain, engaging in a wider conversation.

This dissertation argues that binaries are constructed and lived as if a transcendent model exists, what Deleuze (1987) in *A Thousand Plateaus* calls a root-tree model. "The important point is that the root-tree and canal-rhizome and are not two opposed models" (p. 20). These models work as idealized ways of seeing the world rather than viewing immanent process of overturning the models we construct. Although rhizomes signify the mapping of deterritorialization, Deleuze and Guattari (1987) deny that firm binaries separate trees from rhizomes. Instead, differences between rhizomes and trees exist simultaneously, because "there are knots of arborescence in rhizomes and rhizomatic offshoots in roots" (p. 20). Rhizomes form and re-form by acting out the principles that ground its composition. Gregoriou (2004, p. 244) sees rhizomes as "perpetually in construction or collapsing." The issue is upholding the root-tree model as if, simultaneously, the canal rhizome is not also at work. Thus, what can Deleuze say to binary constructed transcendent models in Christian education, those who hold to the root-tree model as if the other is not also always present?

From Hermeneutics to Deleuze

Nancy Moule (2002) sums up well where I have come from in a Christian and hermeneutics background:

> There is always a piece of phenomenology present and at play in hermeneutics but, whereas Husserl suggested attending to the phenomenon itself and describing it as richly as possible, hermeneutics argues that experiences of something are not isolated but are eventful, ongoing, emergent, forming, and generative (p. 6).

First, this background informed me to listen to other perspectives, remain open to new possibilities to change, and develop new interpretations. These tasks questioned my propensity of thrusting my own opinions upon others and dismantled the creeping in of any sense of a "messiah complex." I saw in this interpretive discourse an embedded humility that I found appealing and encouraged me to be in ongoing dialogue that promotes learning no matter the level of sophistication or intelligence. I found that this discourse provided a common ground with other academics, students, in religious dialogue and teaching, or everyday life that allows communication to take place for humans perceived what Ernest Becker (1997) calls '*homo poetica'* – meaning makers.

With Paul Ricoeur, most known for *The Rule of Metaphor (1981), From Text to Action (1991)*, and *Oneself As Another (1995),* I saw a perspective in tension with the dialectic of the "hermeneutics of belief" and a "hermeneutics of suspicion," highlighting the tendency to be self-deceived; yet, that we can become aware of our self-deceptions (Ricoeur, 1991, p. 34-35). Ihde (1971) showed me that Ricoeur's work reinforces that

there is no "timeless philosophy" (p. 9), emphasizing the importance of a rational discourse, and suggests that philosophy is a "reflection upon existence" (p. 11) using "distanciation" (Ricoeur, 1991, p. 35). "The concept of distanciation is the dialectical counterpart of the notion of belonging, in the sense that we belong to a historical tradition through a relation of distance which oscillates between remoteness and proximity (p. 35). While Ricoeur's work leans on Hegel, whose views Deleuze critiques, his work still pointed out to me the need for openness to that which is unnamable.

Contrary to Ricoeur, Deleuze's concept of deterritorialization brought me to question my own sense of what I noticed as my way of forcing meaning on life and Ricoeur's dualistic terminology. In approaching educational research, hermeneutics invited me to what educator David Jardine (and John Caputo) discuss as restoring life to its original difficulty. I was drawn towards a perspective that doesn't shirk hard questions, settle for pat answers, or simplistically deny difficult truths. Hard questions are faced, sensitivity to sufferers is displayed by a humility that won't settle for speaking clichés, and data is engaged at multiple layers of complexity. My hermeneutic orientation has been brought into question by engaging with Deleuze; he has challenged my hermeneutic logic with an approach (Deleuze, 1987) called "intermezzo" from the middle and not trying to find foundations among the multiplicities and complexity.

Further, restoring life to original difficulty can itself be a problematic statement, from Deleuzian framework because it implies an 'ideal' state. Some versions of a Christian metanarrative of Creation and Recreation admittedly draws upon this same logic depending on one's view of creation, although religious scholars such as Christopher Simpson (21012), Kristien Justaert (2012), Clayton Crockett (2011), LeRon

Shults (2014), Mary Bryden (2001), and Joshua Ramey (2012) are opening up new ways to envision theological discourse and Deleuze – a helpful cohort for this dissertation.

Deleuze challenges hermeneutic phenomenology as one way to draw on a transcendent logic. Colebrook (2003) outlines Deleuze's "philosophy of difference," what Deleuze calls transcendental empiricism, as an immanent hermeneutic and his challenge to "the dominant belief that we know and experience our world through imposed structures of representation" (p. xxxi) basing our viewpoints on an assumed ideal. Deleuze sought a new way of thinking about things as essential powers with no ultimate foundation or timeless essences.

In theological academic circles, this way of thinking is challenging Cartesian dualist notions that are based on foundationalism (see LeRon Shultz, 2014, *Iconaclastic Theology*). Deleuze is considered a poststructuralist (post 1968) along with Foucault and Derrida. He seeks to go beyond a structuralism that sought to see how all things fit together within a system. He critiqued a theological hermeneutics informed by structuralism, the "belief that phenomena of human life are not intelligible except through their interrelations. These relations constitute a structure, and behind local variations in the surface phenomena there are constant laws of abstract culture" (Blackburn, 2008); and, "Instead of finding a meaning behind events and texts, we need to ask how texts that appear as meaningful are created" (Colebrook, 2003, p. xliii).

For structuralists, what differentiates the world is a system of language, and we can never step outside the system to understand its origin or genesis – "any being could only be known through a system of difference" (Colebrook, 2003, p. 11). Deleuze wanted

to see the positivity of difference, contrary to Hegel (see Colebrook 2003 for further discussion of differences between Hegel and Deleuze), which is "not so much a theory or proposition as it is an eternal challenge" (Colebrook, p. 13) and also difference "is therefore not grounded on anything other than itself" (ibid, p.13). He points out that we assume the world is differentiated already rather than remain open to what is there that affects us. Deleuze wouldn't just accept that there just 'is' difference rather "he insists on thinking the genesis or emergence of difference" (ibid, p. 13). This perspective points out a tension with my Christian theological background that will be noticed throughout this dissertation and I am admitting this tension in my dissertation as I seek to understand Deleuze.

In looking for an approach to the discourse of binary constructions across disciplines I have encountered – science, education, theology, religion, ethics, and philosophy, Deleuze opened for me ways to educational research that is interdisciplinary in scope and multi-faceted in approach. The range of possibilities this framework provides includes tools of analysis for assessing binaries reframing pre-conceptions, experiences, and interpretations of events, ideas, and concepts.

Early in my Master's work, I studied binary opposition of science vs. religion from a hermeneutic phenomenological framework – a perspective I found useful for interpreting religious references (Ihde, 1971), but my exposure to Deleuze has me questioning and rethinking the way I look at texts, and experience, and in light of this how to understand Christian faith. In this chapter, I seek to review literature on binaries and dualism, and develop what I mean by binary constructions, and what it means to break with a binary construction, using Deleuzian thought to help deterritorialise

negative binaries and better understand and create a multi-perspectival way of creating meaning. I look to understand a more immanent hermeneutic that breaks with objectification, reductionism, and representational roadblocks that can stifle creativity and ability to dialogue with others in and beyond the Christian education community. Wallin (2011) states the difference well, "As Deleuze and Guattari (1994) aver, the Western metaphysical tradition presupposes the existence of a substance above and beyond empirical space, power or ontological being. In Nietzsche (1969), the primary example of transcendence is that of God in the Judeo-Christian tradition. God transcends not only the world of experience, but the world itself. 'He' exists above and beyond our capacity to conceive of him (May, 2005)" (p. 17).

Applying Deleuzian thinking to my educational path is leading me towards an understanding that, no matter what aspects of my research are before me, there is the challenge of interpreting my (and others) experiences, whether in my own past, in the current moment, or projecting into the foggy future but also even to challenge the search for meaning in every detail. As a discourse, hermeneutics made me aware of my own subjectivity and has led me away from ongoing quests I have for ultimate or absolute certainty. Yet, the conversation has led me further to this current engagement with Deleuze as an alternative to paths of dogmatic absolutism, a wobbly relativism, or essentialized self, revisiting what it means, from my own location, to "love my neighbor as myself.", to complexify simplistic constructed binaries.

Binary Terminology

One need not go far to find regular inculcation of binary constructed worldviews. Newspapers, Internet, or the nightly news offer a spectrum of claims about religious life. Political news – from leadership failures or politicians castigating each other for perceived missteps that *demand* apologies or resignations – has become a dance of binary extrapolation. Binary oppositions are newsworthy. To break the world into two parts – us vs. them – makes life easier to navigate, even though deep down most of us understand that we are hearing false promises of easy solutions to the ethical dilemmas we face each day.

The religious propensity to create binaries can be seen in a multiplicity of ways, exposing a real love/hate binary. Surveying religious books on Amazon, one can see this binary in action by perusing current popular titles from *God is Not Great* by Christopher Hitchens, *The God Delusion* by Richard Dawkins, to *Toward a Positive Psychology of Religion* by Rocco Cottone, or *The Power of Positive Thinking* by Norman Vincent Peale. People often choose sides (either positively or negatively) when it comes to religion. The academic realm offers a greater openness to religious conversation, but I have seen in teaching a course in Moral and Religious Education that even students open to religion engage questions about faith that tend to fall into binary categories – good vs. evil, science vs. religion, or body vs. spirit.

Although a general understanding of dualism and binaries tends to be part of academic discussion across disciplines, researching binaries provides a challenge with differing uses of terminology. Terms are not always used equivalently, so defining ideas can help clarify the language of this discourse. The first contrast of terminology is between *monism*, all of reality being "one" and *dualism*, which distinguishes between

two parts. For example, dualistic thinking suggests the existence of material and immaterial, mind and matter, body and soul, and physical and spiritual. Understanding these ways of thinking makes a difference because both monism and dualism become ways to experience whether one sees the world as unified, dichotomized, or otherwise. From one theological perspective, the Catholic Online Encyclopedia notes, "[t]he term dualism is employed in opposition to monism, to signify the ordinary view that the existing universe contains two radically distinct kinds of being or substance — matter and spirit, body and mind. This use of the name is the most frequent in modern philosophy, where it is commonly contrasted with monism." In contrast, "Monism denies that the manifoldness is real, and holds that the apparently many are phases, or phenomena, of a one" (Maher, 1909). From a philosophical viewpoint monism is not necessarily unified. For Deleuze monism is expressed in his view of immanence that "the world is one of pure immanence in place of any transcendent or hierarchical structuring of being" (Simpson, 2012, p. 17). There is one plane of immanence where everything is included, a monism that denies dualism of levels, "no ontological dualism between here and there, no axiological dualism between good and bad", rather "monism=pluralism" (Deleuze, 1987, p.20).

Strictly defined, the term *binary* is usually connected to the idea of opposition between two opposites without mediating ground. Fogarty (2005) states common constructions of binaries as:

> According to Ferdinand de Saussure, the binary opposition is the "means by which the units of language have value or meaning; each unit is defined against what it is not." Essentially, the concept of the binary opposition is engendered by

the Western propensity to organize everything into a hierarchical structure; terms and concepts are related to positives or negatives, with no apparent latitude for deviation: i.e. Man or Woman, Black or White, Life or Death, Inside or Outside, Presence or Absence, and so on. (Accessed online at: http://www.litencyc.com/php/stopics.php?rec=true&UID=122)

Scarborough (2009) gives a further sampling:

Nature vs. history, works vs. grace, supernatural vs. natural, intelligible world vs. material world, empiricism vs. rationalism, phenomenal vs. noumenal, catastrophism vs. gradualism, creation vs. evolution, mind vs. body, psychology vs. logic, steady state vs. big bang, essentialism vs. existentialism, particle vs. wave, superstructure vs. deep structure, transcendent vs. immanent, inside vs. outside, idealism vs. realism, monism vs. dualism, faith vs. reason, good vs. evil, subject vs. object, etc. … (p. 11).

A brief glance over these lists shows serious intellectual challenges listed among these binary oppositions. These lists show us that they are not simply constructed binaries from the past; rather, they continue to be used in academic discourse. I have used them in my teaching: as a pedagogical tool to teach, students are taught to give pros and cons, hold to 'two' sides of an argument (following logic of non-contradiction), compare and contrasting polar positions (Greek and Hebrew thought), developing political affinities (us vs. all others), ability to summarize an argument (simple and complex conflation). Noticing my own fallibilities, I am recognizing it is difficult to think differently and apply to my practice, which is why being introduced to Deleuze has

challenged my way of setting up the ideal, still resonating with Platonic tendencies. Allen and Springsted (2007) point out, "The two main sources of Christian theology are the Bible and Hellenic culture, especially Greek philosophy" (p. xv) and further

> This systematic search for reasons, or for the logos for anything and everything, is something we today take for granted. It is part of our mental makeup. We do it automatically. We share with the ancient Greeks a desire to push back the domain of the unknown and to unveil all mysteries… likewise it was part of the mental makeup of the early Church Fathers of Christianity, who fashioned Christian doctrines in a decisive way in the first centuries" (p. xviii).

I use this quote to illustrate the challenge for Christian and religious education with embedded ways of thought, including binary distortions adapted from Platonism, that are a hidden curriculum for many; and, I would argue need exposure and admittance. Deleuzian thought offers insight that pushes back on this way of systems and towards complication and complexification. As Deleuze (1990) says, "There is always another breath in my breath, another thought in my thought, another possession in what I possess, a thousand things and a thousand beings implicated in my complications: every true thought is an aggression" (p. 298).

Binary Distinctions

The idea of binary constructions assumes some basic distinctions. Binary oppositions are pairs of terms that can stand opposite to one another; however, the term *binary* can also be used to distinguish and construct things that are not necessarily opposites (creates oppositions where they might not exist). One term that distinguishes

in this way is *polarization*. Practically speaking, on a spectrum, black can be constructed as the polar opposite of white. For example, different quantifications of black and white produce various shades of grey. When political parties are viewed on a continuum, the polar opposites are the parties furthest to the left pole and to right pole (from Social Credit to New Democrats in Canadian context). These parties are considered polarized. If an absolute opposite occurs, the term used is a *contradiction* – for example, as *black* and *non-black*. In terms of Greimasian square logic, the semiotic square is the elementary structure of signification, marking off the oppositional logic that is at the heart of both narrative progression and semantic, thematic, or symbolic content. Thus, black (S1), white (S2), non-black (-S1), non-white (-S2) puts black and non-black as contradictories, and white and non-white as *contradictories (*logical incongruity) while black and white, non-black and non-white are *contraries (*the opposite of a pair of terms or simple negatives). Thus, Non-white is a far broader term than white and non-black is a far broader term than black (Greimas, 1987).

Chart – Transcendence and Immanence

Transcendence (S1)   **Immanence (S2)**

Non-immanence (-S1)   **Non-**
Transcendence (-S2)
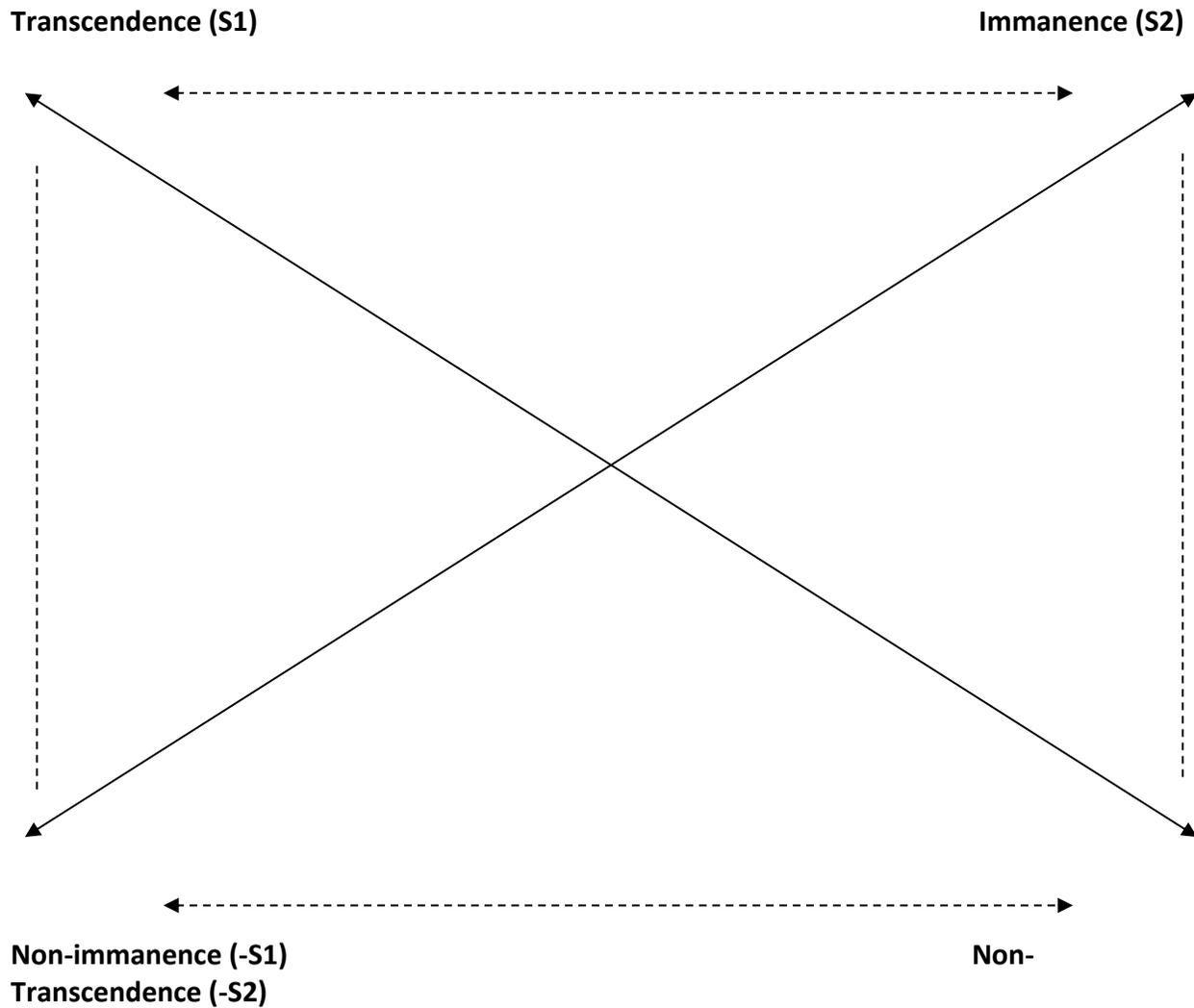
――――― Relation b/t contradiction

◄----► Relation b/t contraries

------- Relation of implication

In philosophical discourse, this conversation becomes more nuanced where

different types of logic are at work (Greimasian square). Yet as Colebrook says, "most

philosophy is written in this way, as though we all share a basic logic that can be corrected and freed from error. But what if we don't recognise or refuse to recognise the basic rules" (p. 5).

The absence of middle ground in its strongest sense is labeled a *dichotomy* where something is divided into two non-overlapping parts – a contradiction is to treat a dichotomy as if there were overlap. Thus, concepts are not frozen: within a certain logic they can move along from complementaries, contraries, and contradictions among terms between something that differs to a certain degree, distinguishing two elements, opposition between two entities as contraries, polar oppositions, and contradictions/binary oppositions. In summary, "difference, opposition and polar opposition constitute a progression away from an undifferentiated unity or monism in the direction of a dichotomy or contradiction. Distinguishing, opposing, or contradictory terms juxtaposed together constitute a pair in a merely quantitative sense. If the juxtaposition of two terms becomes habitual however, the binaries turn into a stable couple, if you will. 'Left' and 'right,' 'sacred' and 'profane,' and 'black' and 'white' are such pairs" (Scarborough, 2009, p. 6). Binary constructions tend to come from "free association" (p. 6) and are oversimplified ways of dealing with concepts that are more complex – i.e. monism and dualism can be differentiated in ways that are not contradictory. Although such terms can be distinguished, binary in the literature is often shorthand for binary opposition/contradiction: sometimes binary is used synonymously with dualism. Although, in common usage, "linguistically speaking, dualism is spoken of in binary terms; however, binaries are employed in a broader range of circumstances than simply to express dualism" (Scarborough, 2009, p. 5). The use of binary terms can

help develop a discourse around differing concepts that present implications for our discussion of the construction of oppositions as people use terms that are not contradictory as if they are contradictions. Thus, with Greimasian logic, transcendence is not contradictory to immanence rather to non-transcendence, good is contradictory to non-good, not evil, etc. Some profess in terms that neighbor (transcendent) and self (immanent) are not contradictory and yet live in ways that demonize those 'others' who don't have the same perspective. For example, as an educator and chaplain I want to find another way to think of our neighbor, not being inhospitable to new people seeking to be a part of a group. For further study, Fredric Jameson in *Postmodernism Or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (1991) has some creative ways of using Greimasian logic that can further help in current educational moment.

Binary Construct Implications/Distortions

While in some sense, philosophically, and due to our fallibility, it could be questioned whether there is such thing as non-distortion, for this discussion I look at the implications of binary constructions, how ways of thinking can close down conversation and openness to becoming. Scarborough (2009) points out five ways that binary constructions can negatively affect thinking. First, a binary can distort by "drawing boundaries too narrowly or precisely" (p.7). Often one gets caught in a binary when one or both terms have been subjected to reductionism. When one falls prey to reductionism, one tends to create a definition that distorts because the term's scope has been truncated to miss important meanings. Utilizing the binary good vs. evil distorts because it paints one's opponents in ethical terms that reduce them to one's own perspective of right and wrong.

For example, those who think using transcendence as the ideal, will place priority on their tradition as that which to compare other traditions. For those in Christian tradition, the splits amongst denominations display this tendency whether it be a boundary drawn from the Catholic Catechism, or Reformed confessions such as Westminster (typical to Presbyterianism) or Belgic (typical to Dutch reformed) as compared to other Christian traditions. In philosophy, those who still claim allegiance to Platonism or Neo-Platonism, would use their understanding of Plato to compare against all other forms of philosophy as a standard boundary of thought, more specifically assuming *their* form of Platonism. Deleuze (1994) points out that this form of thinking, assumes, "Everybody knows, no one can deny"... and is the "form of representation, and the discourse of the representative" as if the universality of the premises are a given (p. 130).

Second, binaries can result in "numerical simplification" (p. 7). Instead of offering a multitude of possible options, binaries prematurely narrow choices to only two. For minor life situations, thinking in terms of only two options is not necessarily negative; however, when one considers major concepts or worldview choices, having only two choices can become problematic. For example, the dilemma some faced in Nazi regime when they felt caught between "I shall not lie" and the fact that in giving up Jews hiding in their house was akin to sending them to be killed. Courses in ethics are filled with these di-lemmas - offering two possibilities, neither which seems acceptable to do as equitable. Like in fictionalized series *Revolution* of a world where the power grid is immobilized, situation after situation is presented where the only options are to kill one person or yet to kill another. In sci-fi series *Fringe*, scientist Walter points to two

unacceptable possibilities - for his research test case Olivia either to be sacrificed or for the millions of lives she will inevitably save. Although in light of the liar's paradox or Lacan's choice without a choice, there is not always a simple solution even in what may be such an obvious situation.

When one resorts to a binary, the choices become a clear either/or and one of the two chosen binaries will, by default, be relegated to being demonized, ignored, marginalized, or placed in obscurity. For example, when one chooses to see two religious groups as binary rivals, the temptation is to promote one and deflate the other. A religious example is the strategy of some Christian apologists, seeking to 'defend' their faith position, to go beyond comparing Islam and Christianity to pitting them as rivals in the world to gain territory. For example, a statement by fundamentalist Jerry Falwell labeled Islam 'bigoted' in a blanket statement that included every Muslim (2001, p. 1).

Third, Scarborough says, "To speak of an essence or substance that is fixed, permanent, or eternal is to deny time and change" (p. 8). This binary becomes a taxonomic distortion of fixed species that would have occurred using 19th century definitions that failed to account for current genetic discoveries. Scarborough adds, "If there is something absolutely eternal or fixed, it is beyond perception. At best, such concepts survive largely as 'limiting concepts'" (p. 9). To designate something as 'absolute' creates a binary of anything that we can think of 'beyond.' For example, categorically saying 'all Christian educators believe' or 'all philosophers think' assumes a static state rather than dynamism of changing conceptual schemes, assuming 'timeless truths' rather than admitting the need for content and perspective in sorting through ideas.

Simpson (2012) argues that some perspectives of God are actually closer to Aristotle's 'Unmoved Mover' than a mysterious God who "gives of His bounty" (p. 79). He points out it could be argued that Deleuze is more speaking against Christian conceptions of God that emphasize what this binary construction displays (p. 79) – an individual God more attuned to capitalism than to one who is generous and expansive in love. As philosopher Rollins (2006) says, "The argument is made that naming God is never really naming God but only naming our understanding of God. To take our ideas of the divine and hold them as if they correspond to the reality of God is thus to construct a conceptual idol built from the materials of our mind." (Kindle, Location 238).

Fourth, binary oppositions can account for pendulum swings in Western thought and culture. Generally speaking, when shifts occur historically, often one pole of a binary was seeking establishment – rationalism and empiricism, transcendence and immanence, science and religion. In the history of philosophy, leading thinkers would develop intricate arguments for one pole of the binary or, seeking a synthesis that gave priority of one binary over another instead of seeing that the binary oppositions themselves were the issue. Scarborough (2009) points out Immanuel Kant as a prime example of an implication of relying on binary oppositions:

> Kant's attempt at a synthesis of the two positions, based as it was on the oppositions of a priori vs. a posteriori, phenomenal vs. noumenal, form vs. content, and theoretical reason vs. practical reason was no more satisfactory than the long disintegrated and overly simple 'medieval synthesis' of revealed theology with natural theology and faith with reason. There was merely the substitution of

one set of oppositions for another, a sleight of thought that brought but a temporary and illusory relief. The real culprit, the intellectual habit of reliance on simple binary oppositions, was left unidentified and thus, 'allowed' to perpetuate its deleterious effects (p. 8).

The complexities of these 'swings' increase over the centuries. For example, the early pre-Socratic debate between Parmenides arguing for being and Heraclitus for becoming, develops into deeper argumentation in Plato for higher and lower realms emphasizing being and Aristotle with essence and appearance in this world. From Plato and Aristotle there are attempts to synthesize by Plotinus to explain a hierarchy of the cosmos flowing from the divine, to Augustine (354-430) who attempts to synthesize his theology with Platonism – transcendence of God with Ideas, Essence, and Being. Tertullian (155-220) is famous for the statement "what has Jerusalem to do with Athens?" focusing on the sacred pole and Clement (150-215) on the secular pole. Many in the Middle Ages wrestled with the dualism of rational knowledge opposed to divine revelation. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) developed view of an upper story (grace) and lower story (nature). Duns Scotus (1266 – 1308) and William of Ockham (1288-1347) espouse the separation of faith and reason while Rene Descartes (1596-1650) developed a rationalism that travels through the Reformation and Renaissance to the Enlightenment. Hume's (1711-1776) skepticism of causation pushes Immanuel Kant (1724 -1804) out of his intellectual slumber to seek to produce a synthesis of empiricism and rationalism. By the time of German Idealism, this conversation has reached a complexity of vast proportions from G. W. F. Hegel (1770 -1831) the hegemony of dialectic, to Edmund Husserl (1858-1938) a return to the phenomena, and Martin

Heidegger (1889-1976) ontology of *Dasein* – critiquing prior philosophies and creating their own schools of thought. More recently, postmodern philosophy critiques all metanarratives, and following with post-structuralism, Deleuze "sought to truly embrace difference, becoming" (Simpson, 2012 p.13). As Colebrook (2003) says, he critiques much of this summary of polarity and synthesis of theology and philosophy: "Philosophers have treated the world as though it were already meaningful, identifiable and logically ordered. They have regarded thinking as the passive repetition of the world's inherent meaning and logic" (p. 5).

Finally, a distortion is created when we elevate one opposition or duality over another and create a hierarchy that privileges the one at the expense of the other (Scarborough, p. 9). Whether male and female, rich or poor, one race over another, or religious vs. non-religious, created categories fall into disparities that prevent fairness and justice. Religious educators who still foster this hierarchical way of seeing the world can see that, even the apostle Paul, highly venerated or vilified in faith, states in letter to Galatians 3:28, "There is neither male nor female, slave or free, we are all one in Christ."

This religious trajectory was set to change much of the way hierarchies were dominating. Thus, despite other texts of terror, here is an explicit opening to break down religious hierarchy that even in that day was created by binary distortions. As philosopher and religion professor Mark C. Taylor (2007) says, "Recent history suggests that neither monistic nor dualistic schemas are adequate for life in the increasingly complex world of the twenty-first century" (p. 298). Whatever our perspective, he emphasizes the need for a way to see the world that addresses and goes beyond misusing our representational capacities.

Breaking with Constructed Binaries

This dissertation encourages Christian researchers, teachers, and students to become aware of living in flux, and interpreting their worlds and educating in ways that leave them open to others who are different, addressing issues of hierarchy, representation, and reductionism. Questioning binary constructs is a way of destabilizing, deforming, and problematizing thought that lives as if there is a closed future. Constructing binaries, I believe, closes connections to others, and thus the need to break with constructed ways of engaging others in research and classroom.

In my research with students involved in a science and religion classroom (Clarke, 2011), the interviews and survey disclosed how some students had been taught in their Christian community to make a choice – either pursue science or stay faithful to their religious community. They were in a quandary because University class, *CHRTC 350*, was showing them that there are different ways to envision the world than to pit science against religion including science and religion as overlapping magisteria proposed by Stephen Jay Gould (1997) *Natural History,* science in dialogue with religion (John Polkinghorne, *Exploring Reality: The Intertwining of Science and Religion*, 2007), and science and religion as complementary (Ian Barbour, *When Science Meets Religion: Enemies, Strangers, or Partners?,* 2000). Through these students, among many others that I have had conversations, I saw the need for a challenge to binary constructions.

When communities are small and insulated, their contact with others can provide a false cushion against connecting with a wealth of ideas – such a situation I have seen in my own community. With the availability and access to numerous traditions at the

touch of buttons on the internet, I see the need for change in the Christian community for how we interact in ways that are consciously aware of the diversity of opinions and thought. For example, some Christian communities focus on one issue politics (i.e. the Religious Right and abortion). Although there are diversities of people in my community who look at issues differently, I have encountered many students from communities who are struggling with the constructed binaries they have inherited and the need by their leaders to have a position on numerous complex issues so they can 'stand for what they believe.'

I am asking for an education that engages and doesn't close off things we don't understand or assume these are out of our purview. In speaking to my community in this dissertation, I would have the unheard voices of students who want to live engaged with any issue or challenge be heard. This hope for better education suggests to me that we need to complexify binary issues in ways that don't polarize and discuss good without evil, the other without our self, and transcendence without immanence admitting our own presuppositions and leaving ourselves open to education where we can learn from anyone. This approach is not necessarily a new path for education, but Deleuzian concepts as a source for engagement is among less explored regions in relationship to my Christian community.

Shults (2014a) explains a possibility of why Christian and religious educators resist the voices of others, based on a mis-focus on their own group:

> The reasons why most people seem impervious to objections to the notion of a
> personal God who cares for their own group can be clarified by a set of

hypotheses that have emerged within and across disciplines such as evolutionary biology, cognitive science, neuropsychology, archaeology, cultural anthropology, behavioral ecology, political economics, and comparative religion. Theoretical insights from these (and many other) fields, which contribute to what I will call the biocultural study of religion, are converging to support the claim that supernatural agent conceptions are naturally reproduced in human thought as a result of evolved cognitive mechanisms that hyperactively detect agency when confronted with ambiguous phenomena and, once conceived, are culturally nurtured as a result of evolved coalitional mechanisms that hyperactively protect in-group cohesion. These tendencies are part of our phylogenetic and cultural heritage (p. 3).

Deterritorialization

What I envision as breaking with a binary construction comes from interacting with what Deleuze (1994) calls "conceptual personae" (p. 69), which he says "the role of conceptual personae is to show thought's territories, its absolute detterritorializations and reterritorializations" (p. 69). For this dissertation, I am calling binary constructions a 'territory' of thought. Thus, what Deleuze calls deterritorialization, Roy (2003) summarizes as "a movement by which we leave the territory, or move away from spaces regulated by dominant systems of signification that keeps us confined to old patterns, in order to make new connections" (p. 21).

Deal and Beal (2004) say, "Schizoanalysis seeks 'deterritorialization,' a space where desire is liberated from the constraints of the psychoanalytic. The

deterritorialized is the space (both spatial and psychic) occupied by the metaphorical body without organs, which contrasts with territorialisation and reterritorialization – the attempts to totalize, to structure hierarchically, to contain – through institutions such as religion, family, and school" (p. 81). Further they say, "the deterritorialized is fragmented, multiple, uncontained. In such a space, boundaries are fluid, selves transform, desire flows in multiple directions" (p. 81). Deleuze and Guattari would not use the term 'self' as they would see this as "the locus from which machinic assemblages converge and interact, creating impermanent, dynamic connections that are in constant flux" (p. 82).

> Put differently,
>
> Deleuze and Guattari suggest that new ideas need "clear space" in which to establish a foothold. This is a space devoid of the old rules, regulations, norms, and practices associated with the existing ideas. The new assemblage needs to be differentiated from other competing or existing assemblages. This process of opening up clear space is termed "deterritorialization" and is followed by a process of "reterritorializing" where new rules are coded for the new concept. (Reardon, M., Sanzogni L., & Poropat A., 2005/2006, p. 163)

Adrian Parr (2005) further elaborates:

> There are a variety of ways in which Deleuze and Guattari describe the process of deterritorialisation. In *Anti- Oedipus* they speak of deterritorialisation as 'a coming undone' (D&G 1983: 322). In *A Thousand Plateaus* deterritorialisation constitutes the cutting edge of an assemblage (D&G 1987: 88)...In their final

collaboration – *What is Philosophy?* – Deleuze and Guattari posit that deterritorialisation can be physical, mental or spiritual (D&G 1994: 68). Given this seemingly broad spectrum of descriptions two questions emerge. First, how does the process of deterritorialisation work? Second, how is deterritorialisation connected to reterritorialisation? Perhaps deterritorialisation can best be understood as a movement producing change. In so far as it operates as a line of flight, deterritorialisation indicates the creative potential of an assemblage. So, to deterritorialise is to free up the fixed relations that contain a body all the while exposing it to new organisations (p. 87)

What I have outlined above as deterritorialization I suggest as a concept informing a strategy of "breaking" with or better said complexifying binaries. Parr (2005) calls this a "movement producing change" (p. 87). Complexifying a binary is one conceptual way to research about certain types of binaries. Rather than ignoring or dismissing a binary entrenched in thought patterns of students and educators, I postulate there are ways to 'break' or complexify the binary to open new possibilities using Deleuzian thought. Thus to break a binary, using discussion above, suggests not permanent breakage but Deleuze's (1994) scope of "spiritual, mental, physical" (p. 68), movement from a territory, movement producing change (Roy, 2003), coming undone (Deleuze, 1983, p. 322), fluid boundaries, breaking from totalizing and hierarchy, to reterritorialize in other configurations. My own religious tradition typically includes transcendent foundations for individual salvation and transformation, while Deleuze challenges me to see interrelation and connectedness at a level that pushes against my own incorporation of individualism into faith, on one plane of immanence.

For example, this could call into question the traditional role of creeds and confessions such as the Apostle's creed, Nicene Creed, or Heidelberg catechism (doctrinal teaching in Q and A style in Dutch reformed tradition) in what can become us vs. them within the Christian community. What role could they play in light of concept of deterritorialization? Does each community of faith need to create its own creed? Have we individualized to the point where we cannot trust the interconnected and mysterious nature of how people understand scriptural writings? Does basing an argument on a creed establish an ideal that cannot be refuted? Do we leave only room for dogmatism? My interaction with Deleuze is pushing back on my own notions of what constitutes 'authority.' Shults' (2014a) concerns are my own:

> What potential movements of deterritorialization, what possible lines of flight can we find already *within* Christian theology itself? As atheists have learned over the centuries, however, poking at problematic doctrinal reasoning or questionable moral practices in religion has surprisingly little effect. If we really want to dissolve the power of *religious* repression, we need more leverage; we need to understand the mental and social mechanisms that surreptitiously produce and automatically reproduce this phenomenon across cultures. Here we are aided by discoveries within the bio-cultural sciences of religion, which have exposed the evolved cognitive and coalitional processes through which the gods (including Christ) are imaginatively born(e) (p.9).

Using Deleuzian thought and concepts, breaking a binary is a strategy of complexifying binary issues. In *Chaosmosis* (1962), Guattari explained that, instead of seeking reductionism to simplify the complex, schizoanalysis works towards

complexification, process enrichment, differentiation, and ontological heterogeneity (p. 61). In breaking or complexifying constructed binaries I want to a) destabilise binary hierarchy, b) deform representation (see Patton and Protevi, 2003, p. 3), and c) problematize binary reductionism (open space against binary totalizing), bringing Deleuze to bear on constructions of good and evil (ethical orientation), insider and outsider (postcolonial orientation), and transcendence and immanence (ontological orientation).

Complexifying (Breaking) Binaries

'Everybody' knows very well that in fact men think rarely, and more often under the impulse of a shock than in the excitement of a taste for thinking. (Deleuze, 1994, p. 132).

Binary 'breaking' is my way of seeking to complexify the relationship of the constructed binaries informed by schizoanalysis and deterritorialization. Breaking constructed binaries for this dissertation means developing an ethical sensitivity to binary hierarchy and how we view the other that deflates us vs. them mentalities focused on hierarchy. The word *break* has different nuances of use from concretized usage to ontological description – breaking bread, breaking a limb, breaking a tie, breaking tradition, breaking representation, or breaking hierarchy. We can break 'with,' or 'from,' or 'away,' or 'apart.' Each use changes the complexity and nuances of the term. I am using break ontologically with binary constructions to signify that there is a dualism closing down complexity. While Deleuzian schizoanalysis (1987) is too vast a term to use for 'breaking' a binary or the complexifying of a constructed binary, this concept has

informed the use here in regards to 'splitting' with representational tendencies (elaborated later in this chapter).

Thus, in the next section we look further at what I mean by complexifying binaries I am arguing first there is the need to destabilize binary hierarchy

Destabilising Binary Hierarchy

Signifier enthusiasts take an oversimplified situation as their implicit model: word and thing. From the word they extract the signifier, and from the thing a signified inconformity with the word, and therefore subjugated to the signifier. They operate in a sphere interior to and homogeneous to language (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 66).

Complexifying binaries in my dissertation first, denotes destabilizing binary hierarchy when hierarchical oppositions are in place. Jacques Derrida is known for his critique of western philosophy that, since classical times, displayed characteristics of thinking in binary oppositions. i.e. literal opposes metaphorical, real opposes the imaginary, normal opposes the pathological. Through deconstruction he shows that one of the terms is privileged and dominates the other. As Derrida (1981) says, "In a classical philosophical opposition we are not dealing with the peaceful coexistence of a *vis-à-vis*, but rather with a violent hierarchy. One of the two terms governs the other (axiologically, logically, etc.), or has the upper hand" (p. 41).

My own connection to Derrida was being introduced to him through the works of philosopher/theologian John Caputo showing me the *aporia* of binaries and looking at what is beyond. I recognize that Derrida and Deleuze have affinities and the purpose here is not to conflate their thought (Derrida laments after Deleuze dies that he must

now walk alone) one such connection is concerning the future of "to come" yet they have many separations as well especially in Derrida's deconstruction via negative theology and Deleuze as articulated via virtual|actual (Patton & Protevi, 2003, p. 4 also conversation with jan Jagodzinski). This dissertation acknowledges a debt and influence from Derrida but moves forward explicating Deleuze as an aide to breaking binary constructions.

I am arguing to destabilize binary hierarchy through critiquing how the terms relate to each other, which can help complexify their relationship and break the binary. For example, a historical challenge with hierarchy within Christian thought, in various denominational configurations, including Roman Catholicism (papacy), Eastern Orthodoxy (patriarchs), and various Protestantisms (bishops), that accompany religious and Christian education; need challenging through breaking binary thought – the colonial impulse exposed and complexified. As Massumi (1992) says, "to promote human relations that do not automatically fall into roles and stereotypes" (p. 2) including hierarchical colonialized structures that affect Christian educational research.

Erika Biddle's (2010) article *Schizoanalysis and Collaborative Critical Research* reminds readers that schizoanalysis inserts itself into various settings to warp and destabilize rather than serve as its own research methodology. She states the challenge of traditional research binaries: "This observer/observed divide is inscribed with hierarchy and the understanding of knowledge as something static to be acquired and possessed" (p. 18). I am reminded that, with schizoanalysis the observer/observed binary is destabilized and, "Along with creating radical alternatives, schizoanalysis can be seen as a way of subverting or 'perverting' traditional methodologies for the purpose

of critical engagement, rather than a methodology in itself" (p. 19). Any form of hierarchy and comparison are actively worked against and the researcher looks only at differences produced by those who are embedded in the research project. The entities involved remain open to becoming, recognize change is always immanent, and always engage potential towards a lived methodology rather than seeking merely "data collection." By depersonalizing, researchers want to develop objectivity; but, what often occurs is a harmful detachment from being immersed in other's lives instead of viewing the knowledge acquired is itself a way of entering into becoming and living immanence.

Postcolonial Discourse and Binaries

Postcolonial discourse shows ways humans have treated each other and hierarchically categorized one another, sometimes in the name of religion, showing where colonial impulses have strayed from their own religious background in Jesus' words "love your neighbor as yourself." Schults (2014b) summarizes the relationship:

Scholars within the humanities and social sciences are often wary of theoretical conceptions of religion because of the way in which they have sometimes functioned under the constraints of essentialism and colonialism. The former refers to the way in which terms can be utilized as though they represent unchanging ideas that are actualized more or less fully in particular cases. The latter refers to the way in which essentialist terms that are (supposedly) fully actualized in one in-group are taken as the basis for evaluating out-groups, authorizing or condoning force to make "them" assimilate to (or keep away from) "us." Categorizing specific persons into generic groups has indeed too often

contributed to our anxious attempts to "colonize" others based on preconceived "essentialist" notions of race, class, or gender. All sorts of terms can be, and have been, used in this way (Western, civilized, rational, etc.) (p. 9).

Using Shults' above definition, postcolonialism is not a monolithic field but has many strands of conversation including Edward Said (1978), Homi Bhaba (2005), Gyatri Spivak (1988), and specifically Hardt and Negri (2000) and Burns and Kaiser (2012) who provide Deleuzian perspectives on postcolonialism on the issue of 'empire' that arises out of political and religious structures.

In Burns, L., & Kaiser, B. M. (Eds.). (2012). *Postcolonial literatures and Deleuze: Colonial pasts, differential futures,* Janz articulates well that it is not about postcolonialism as a field but only the post-colony that will move discussion forward:

Neither explaining nor interpreting are the primary goals of Deleuze and Guattari's thought. Being true to Deleuze must mean more than just getting Deleuze correct, or more than Deleuze getting postcolonialism correct, whatever that means. What seems clear is that it cannot mean that Deleuzian concepts must neither be 'applied' to new situations, nor be used to 'interpret' or 'explain' existing phenomena. Deleuze is not an applied philosopher, nor a hermeneuticist, nor a closet social scientist. And it seems that many critics of Deleuze want him to be one of these (p.23).

Further Janz points out why the focus on postcolony rather than whole discourse of postcolonialism, citing Mbembe's (2006), he uses

the term 'postcolony' instead of 'the postcolonial' because he wants to distance himself from 'modern black revolutionary possibilities' and a critique of 'the political ideologies of racial sovereignty and black internationalism of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries' (p. 152). He wants to distance himself from 'postcolonial theory per se', as it has, in his opinion, focused more on the struggle between 'Father and Son' than on the 'violence of brother toward brother and the status of the sister and the mother in the midst of fratricide' (p. 153).

With Shults (2014b) and Janz (2012) I agree that rather than focus on a monolithic field called postcolonialism, the postcolony is the issue and in that discussion I am placing the challenge of binary construction of how one views the other. Many voices speak to the injustices of hierarchy and the hegemonies that have followed the West and will be addressed in chapter two which attempts to show educators that, by helping students become aware of their own propensities for binary thinking and open their eyes to seeing others in Deleuzian way as assemblages of connection, they could be encouraged to see the "other" as themselves and as their neighbor not their enemy.

Multiplying Insight

My strategy to break or complexify constructed binaries first destabilizes binary hierarchy. Second, it invites multiple ways of receiving insight – not from hierarchy of religious authority but insight that can come from anywhere, including Deleuze for educators that are Christian. The Deleuzian concept of 'multiplicity' informs this aspect of destabilizing a binary construction. As Simpson (2012) says, "The process of difference and becoming are at work in what Deleuze calls multiplicities. The world is

'plural,' a 'pluralism' of unnamed differences in which any individual is, in turn, a multiplicity – of individuals that are multiplicities – such that, 'each' individual is an infinite multiplicity, and the whole of Nature is a multiplicity of perfectly individuated multiplicities" (p. 16).

Deleuze (1994) says, "It is the notion of multiplicity that denounces simultaneously the One and the many, the limitation of the One by the many and the opposition of the many to the One" (p. 203). Further Simpson (2012), "Multiplicity is 'in between' and irreducibly multiple – not binary – against both the one and the many" (p. 16). Deleuze has challenged me within my own Reformed theological tradition as to authority, Spirit, and research practice as to how I receive sources of knowledge and challenges the notion of orthodoxy as a static reality.

Insights from Anywhere

In 1971, Deleuze and Guattari's collaborative work *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* fused Marx with a radically rewritten Freud to produce an approach they called "schizoanalysis" (*Schizo* from Greek skhizein meaning to split) in response to the poverty they perceived in psychoanalytic practice. Deleuze and Guattari saw two problems in Freud's work: (1) the Oedipus Complex was a poor starting point for analysis and (2) psychoanalysts assumed authoritarian relationships with patients. Guattari believed practice could create, from systems of enunciation and preexisting subjective structures, new assemblages capable of forging an analysis open to new propositions and representations. The writing of *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* was partly in response to the May 1968 political strikes and protests that

occurred in Paris and throughout France when, as Deleuze and Guattari believed, the

French Communist party betrayed students and workers by siding with the Gaullist

forces of law and order (Eugene Holland, p. ix). The revolutionary passion that followed

pushed for de-centralized, small scale, improvisational "micro-politics." Thus, *Anti-Oedipus* explicitly critiqued political power structures.

Deleuzian thought informs the process of understanding data or where we receive

knowledge as educators. If schizoanalysis is a research event performed upon an

assemblage, it can be seen as a way to understand transgressive data – data that

wanders from its *roots*. Schizoanalysis could inform a view that data has no beginning

or ending. Researchers could enter from their first insight – anywhere in the middle of

the issue – and migrate wherever their best instincts draw them. This could shift

researchers toward an ethos of greater research responsibility that doesn't exclude

knowledge based on source.

Schizoanalysis suggests that fixed knowledge does not exist for persons; instead,

new knowledge emerges from creative acts, assuming diverse forms, including breaking

research apart. When multiplicities are separated by difference, each piece may produce

new insights. Canadian educator Dave Cormier (2008) believes that, in a rhizomatic

view, knowledge is negotiated from within contextual, collaborative learning

experiences. These spaces become connectivist pedagogies where personal knowledge is

created using constantly negotiated goals.

Schizoanalysis is about middles; thus, for educational researchers, it is a critical

construct that helps engage the loss of a transcendent canon against which to compare,

judge, and value knowledge. Using a Deleuzian lens, where would we start in finding insight - in the middle of life where we are located not by searching for a standardized field of 'orthodox' allowance thus destabilizing against constructed binaries?

Schizoanalysis allows fluid relationships to spring up in myriad places. No longer *rooted* to structures commonly valued by their distance from a common root, schizoanalysis leaps horizontally by connecting points to other points and seeing traits not necessarily linked to traits of the same nature. Deleuze and Guattari's characteristics of a rhizome outline how schizoanalysis might work as a way to seek insights in multiplicities: (1) Schizoanalysis connects any point to any other point, bringing into play different regimes of signs and even nonsign states; (2) Schizoanalysis is not reducible to the One or the Multiple; (3) Schizoanalysis is composed not of units, but of dimensions, directions, and motions; (4) Schizoanalysis has no beginning or end, but a middle from which it grows and spills; (5) Schizoanalysis has no standardized structure, but see lines of segmentarity and stratification; (6) Schizoanalysis is not the object of reproduction – neither external reproduction as image-tree nor internal reproduction as tree-structure; (7) Schizoanalysis is "antigenealogy"; (8) Schizoanalysis has a short-term memory, or "antimemory;" (9) Schizoanalysis operates by "variation, expansion, conquest, capture, offshoots; (10) Schizoanalysis pertains to a map that must be produced, is always detachable, and connects to multiple entryways and exits; (11) Schizoanalysis is an acentered, non-hierarchical, nonsignifying system without a "general" – it is defined solely by a circulation of states; and, (12) Schizoanalysis is made of "plateaus" (adapted from Deleuze & Guattari, 2001, pp. 1458-1459).

Second, I am arguing that breaking a constructed binary, is to complexify binary representation.

De-forming Binary Representation

The task of perception entails pulverizing the world, but also one of spiritualizing its dust. The point is one of knowing how we move from minute perceptions to conscious perceptions, or from molecular perceptions to molar perceptions. Is it through a process of totalization, when for instance I grasp a whole whose parts are imperceptible to me?" Gilles Deleuze, (The Fold, p. 87)

In *The Fold*, Deleuze (2006) uses term to "pulverize" which Claire Colebrook (2003) clarifies by saying that Deleuzian thought breaks with representation, or deforms it – a concept we will use to complexify the discussion of binary constructions and apply to breaking binaries. Representation is from the Latin *repraesentare*, from re-, intensive prefix, + praesentare "to present," literally "to place before." Humans are categorized as *Homo symbolicum*,"the representational animal", because of our linguistic abilities and our continuous search to place things in categories and create signs. We are semiotic creatures – we engage our world and discover meaning through multi-perspectival groupings and flows of signs and symbols that inform our way of seeing significance in every mundane moment and how we create meaningful events. Representation undercuts what Ricoeur called the surplus of meaning; representation seeks to contain meaning within a framework, but meaning keeps "spilling" out beyond the sign something represents. Simpson (2012) says Deleuze's view of the classical

representative image of thought, "becoming and difference…is obscured and bound" by it (p. 16).

Mitchell (1995) adds, "[r]epresentation is an extremely elastic notion, which extends all the way from a stone representing a man to a novel representing the day in the life of several Dubliners" (p. 13). Philosophically speaking, Plato and Aristotle held different views of what representation entailed. Plato saw representation as negative and a way of blocking the way towards the ideal; Aristotle viewed it as natural that humans make sense of empirical reality. Ironically, the Platonic worldview that separated real from unreal or forms from the Form or ideal contributes to the negative challenges of representation we currently face in Christian religious education. As Diogenes Allen (2007) says, a Christian tradition relying too much on Plato "has a tendency to overemphasize the part of an increasing knowledge of God in the soul's ascent… it encourages a steady movement away from a created universe" (p.61), which serves a sacred and secular binary where contemplation overrides engagement with physicality.

Deleuze/Guattari and Representation

Critique of representation as a way to break binary construction is informed by Deleuze (1994) "Representation is a site of transcendental illusion" (p. 265) and "representation implies an analogy of being" (p. 303). The relentless challenge he brings against analogy, a key concept in theology and Christian education (explored in chapter four – analogy, equivocity and univocity) shows the implication of tethering oneself to a concept that dictates one's view of scriptures and Being. Although there is ongoing

debate in my Reformed community, my own theological training emphasized *analogy* as the crucial way to speak about God in education. Thus, for my own community, Deleuze's critique of representation could be a key challenge to Christian educators.

According to Kristien Justaert (2012), representational thinking is a "way of thinking in which thought and language represent being(s)" (p. 13). Put differently, "Representational thinking is synonymous with a worldview that can be analyzed as dualistic: on the one hand, there is the human mind (rational thinking) and, on the other hand, there is being or beings" (p. 13). This gap between mind and being reinforces a binary, introducing a hierarchy where thinking can only represent being but not equal being (p. 13). For Deleuze, "representation "entails an essentially moral view of the world, explicitly or implicitly drawing on 'what everybody knows'" (Parr, 2005, p. 227). Deleuze (2004) counteracts representational thinking that assumes an ordered and differentiated world, which we then dutifully represent. He rejects this "poisonous 'logic of representation'" (p. 164). As Colebrook (2003) says, "Deleuze's project continually attacked the notion of the autonomous thinking subject, which according to him is the dogma of the western tradition" (p. 80).

Instead of an "autonomous thinking subject", Deleuze wants to see difference as a positive and creative power to differentiate; without this differentiation there is "no place for creativity and newness within the logic of representation" (Justaert, 2012, p. 13). Deleuze sees this logic as a way of thinking bound by propositions and directed towards making everything belong to or "fit" some pre-known category. Philip Goodchild (2010) explains, "Representation thus repeats and confirms concepts, as if

they were the only proper way to understand experience; it prevents any opportunity of thinking and acting otherwise" (p. 157).

Deleuze's contribution against representation is that his openness to becoming (immanence) is not being mired in psychoanalytical *lack*. He emphasized the way to be rid of representation was to "embrace a state of pure immanence" and "develop an allergy for dualisms and hierarchy" (Justaert, 2012, p. 13-14). Deleuze views the dogmas that have pervaded Western thought from Plato, Descartes, Kant, to Hegel as limiting our becoming. As Colebrook (2003) points out, Deleuze recognizes that, despite some positive insights, the form of thought they elevate promotes a "simple recognition of already differentiated beings" (p.4). She also shows that he pushes against the idea that "we all share a basic logic that can be corrected and freed from error" (p. 5) and to those philosophers who have "treated the world as though it were already meaningful, identifiable, and logically ordered" (p. 5). His approach works against "common sense," often a tool for representational control; rather, he problematizes representational stasis that circumstances are fixed and immovable – "they are as they are." As Deleuze (1994) playfully says, "Perhaps stupidity, rather than common sense, can show us that thought does not necessarily conform to models of correctness" (p. 152). Summing up, Deleuze and Guattari see all life of as one univocal plane of codings, they "enable a method that can approach life non-interpretively" (Colebrook, 2003, p. 142).

Justaert (2012) asks, "What if we envision the divine not as an infinite singularity but an infinitesimal multiplicity?" (p. 35). Even those from other theological traditions that hold Trinitarian views could be part of this conversation because the perspective can break free from thinking infinite singularity or dualistic tendency to a third way that

moves towards multiplicity. Further, those who choose not to use the term God can still converse about "being" and "becoming" and bring fresh insight to those of different affinities. For Christian education to "approach life non-interpretively" may seem like an insurmountable and impossible task, yet to break down dogmas of thought and representation, this dissertation wants to provoke thought towards complexification for breaking binary constructions, what Guattari (1992) calls "territorialised couplings" (p.4).

Finally complexifying binary constructions is to problematize reductionism.

Problematizing Binary Reductionism

Breaking a constructed binary denotes breaking down totalizing and reductionistic thought that is beyond an either/or way of viewing the world, the way of problematization. "Broadly speaking, problematization is the work of elaborating and forming problems, delineating both the contours of a problem and the conditions that give rise to it as a problem. Problematization is an act of thought that is essentially ethical in its scope because, as the very shaping of problems, it is an activity that dictates how we might understand them and thus begin to respond to them" (Gilson, 2014, p. 77) Problematization is to raise the issue of the way a binary is constructed and used to communicate. To address the binary we need to question the territorialization at work. As Gilson (2014) discussing Deleuze and problems says, "In problematization, one constructs problems both by taking one's activities and the conditions of one's existence as something question-worthy, and by determining their main problematic features" (p. 84).

Deleuze (1994) says, "[p]roblems are the differential elements in thought, the genetic elements in the true" (p. 162). Further, "The process of problematization constitutes the problem, determines its contours, and thus shapes the potential array of responses. Thus, only through the determination of problems – the particular problems of our time – can we come to grasp what the present dangers are. Problematization is fundamentally an ethical project because it has the potential to open certain possibilities and foreclose others. On this understanding, problematization is a vital component of the task of critique" (p. 87). Deleuze's ontology of the problem and question provide valuable resources for grasping this difference in sense. As he develops the concept in *Difference and Repetition*, problems are occasions for the production of thought, instigating the activity of problematization: "Questions express the relation between problems and the imperatives from which they proceed. … Problems or Ideas emanate from imperatives of adventure or from events which appear in the form of questions." (p.87).

For example, when we construct a binary of good vs. evil, some think this way of 'taking a position' will merely work towards positive goals of promoting good and ridding the world of evil. Yet, what often happens instead is oversimplification and classification of the world in reductionistic ways with danger of becoming implicated in the evil one was set to work against. Ironically, the binary 'gift' is to distinguish all forms of injustice as evil and fight against them; yet, the negative "gift" is to absolutize ways that seek control over other aspects of our lives that are less discernable and that might lead us to harm others. The danger of 'overseeing' through binary lenses is the tendency

to place more complex aspects of life into two simple boxes - objectifying those around us into 'angels' or 'demons.'

For example, fundamentalist religious groups are examples of binary constructed thinking that lead to problems. Christian fundamentalism appears to be an overreliance on binary views of the world – reducing things into dichotomy, which pulls toward absolutes on either end of a spectrum. Often, making a list of prerequisites before one can be considered true to one's faith. Perhaps people learn as children to build upon their natural propensities to view the world in binary terms from an early age (and our brain structure) as a way to survival from our ancient past or perhaps indoctrination prejudices rather than prepares to live with others who are different. Philosophically, Deleuze informs my view that fundamentalists are captured by representational thinking because they are in a territory that must be fixed and cannot allow for uncertainty. As Deleuze (1983) says, "The subject who desires can be made to desire its own repression" (p. 105). This repression seems self-inflicted by one's tendency to live in mindset of reductionism.

Reductionism

The strategy I am using in this dissertation is adopted to work against what Deleuze called 'interpretosis.' Interpretosis is an issue of territorialisation, what I envision as a hyper-interpretive grid that unfortunately categorizes effortlessly and thoughtlessly closing down different ways of thinking - a form of reductionism. Reductionism is a fallacy that reduces entities, ideas, or phenomena to the sum total of the constituent parts. For this dissertation, I see binary constructs needing

complexification through problematizing reductionism. For example, Christian education that reduces the world into sacred opposed to secular, or insider against outsider, needs to be challenged and seen as degrading to the dignity of persons. This way of thinking can be exposed as working against a faith that promotes "love your neighbour as yourself" and Deleuze can be used to open Christian educational to ways of thinking that resist entrenched territorialisation. As Adkins and Hinlicky (2013) say in relationship to privileging one concept over another, "The opposition set up here between organization and consistency, transcendence and immanence, is the opposition between two poles of a continuum. Understanding an assemblage means understanding these opposed tendencies, not eliminating them (p. 80).

Nancy Murphy (2010) provides several different types of reductionism, and defines the type I am discussing: "Ontological reductionism: the view that higher-level entities are nothing but the sum of their parts" (p. 82). For this dissertation, I see ontological reductionism as an oversimplified approach that relies or privileges one pole of a binary and believes that, when one knows the parts one can know the whole or that causation can be affirmed by positing God. For example, in conversations with students, I have witnessed an approach of hyper-transcendence that disavows immanence as in an unquestioning allegiance to one's own interpretation of a text "God (the Transcendent) said it, I believe it, that settles it." The ideal, or transcendent trumps experience based on one's interpretive grid. Another theory is Freud's comments on religion as neurosis, a transcendent is posited because of deep emotional conflict and stress. More nuanced is Edward Burnett Tylor and James Frazer, *The Golden Bough*, who posit "systematized animism," belief in transcendent is cognitive (downplaying the social) to make sense of

the incomprehensible and reduced human psyche to sameness (Pals, 2006, p.19). Mircea Eliade (2001), in *The Sacred and Profane: The Nature of Religion*, is another scholar who breaks religion into binary of the sacred and profane, pitting the sacred (transcendence orientation) and the profane (immanence orientation). Deleuze is a counter to reductionism emphasizing primacy of difference in experience, a challenge to a theology of transcendence: "a Deleuzian theology of immanence would endeavour to be true to a univocity of being in which being is equally and immediately present in all beings, without mediation or intermediary without hierarchy" (Simpson, 2012, p. 78).

The concept of reductionism is used across disciplines from science to philosophy and affects Christian education in a way that can eliminate or marginalize those who don't fit into a preferred category. For example, either/or thinking on moral issues can reduce human beings to sexual preferences or biological function. Those who are not within the current norm are reduced to being less than others, even if the sacred writings don't directly address an issue – whether that issue is same gender attraction or abortion.

Perennially, issues emerge with each generation in Christian and religious education that involve a long history of philosophical, theological, and ethical discourse and that expose students to thinkers from the past. Concepts from the past inform and influence students, who engage the vast literature of difficulties and problems our ancestors faced that carry forward into our own era. Major themes, such as justice, rationality, the nature of reality, and scientific progress, continue to fascinate young minds searching for purpose. In teaching these vastly complicated subjects, a challenge is evident in being fair to difficult concepts from the history of ideas; one can easily fall

prey to oversimplification, a reductionism that I would argue needs to stay open to complexification. The temptation to create binary oppositions that simplify learning can even be reinforced by standard textbooks that utilize simplistic binaries, such as justice vs. injustice, rational vs. irrational, being vs. becoming, and science vs. religion to name a few – and, for my purposes, the constructed binaries of this dissertation. While hierarchy exerts one concept over another, whether transcendence over immanence, or persons ranked over others, reductionism makes clarity overshadow complexities.

Although generalizations are standard practice for conveying difficult concepts, the danger of reducing complexities into oversimplified explanations exists. Binaries are often used in a reductionist way in the Christian community and this reductionism can be problematized using Deleuzian thought as expressed in the following chapters.

Reductionism and Christian Education

Deleuze provides a trajectory to critique binary constructions in Christian and religious education. I postulate that, for religion and education to flourish and contribute to a healthier society, there must be a new openness to becoming (univocity) and awareness of our tendency towards territorialization, as a thought process for seeing things. Willingness to push past the limitations of categorizing people into camps would allow those of various persuasions to engage in conversation even as they are working from divergent perspectives. While an idealized view, an education open to diverse views and allowing for personal standpoints, argumentation, and stances could give marginalized voices access to a rich and important conversation about human becoming. I would see a role for religious education to break past truncated and

reductionist fence building and provide a more open and healthy academic playing field that engages this diversity.

Conclusion

My dissertation desires to see curriculum and teaching reshaped by pedagogy that intentionally breaks constructed binaries. I agree with educator Jason Wallin's (2011) assessment of the need for today:

> Put differently, while the field of curriculum theorizing has made great strides to multiply the meaning of curriculum, the task of contemporary curriculum theorizing has only begun to imagine a style of thought capable of encountering the curriculum in terms of its unthought, non-identitarian potentials. Such a style of thinking is desperately needed today, for while the field has done much to multiply the definition of curriculum, these definitions continue to carry latent assumptions that unnecessarily constrain how a pedagogical life might go (p. 286.

One might point out that some binaries seem to be a normal part of religion – good and evil, transcendence and immanence, insider and outsider. Although binaries might offer simplistic parameters for life, the challenge is when we put our interpretations of events and our world in ways that pit us against others as if we are good rather than from a Christian understanding that believes people live with brokenness and imperfection. Later chapters in this dissertation will address these theological binary constructs.

I believe we need to break down binary oppositions that are constructed between people, even as a role for religion to play in our world as Christians address their need for certainty. Deleuzian deterritorialization and reterritorialization points to an ongoing interplay to keep us from fixating on finding a constant to control rather to be open to becoming and change. Deleuzian thought contributes to my attempt in the following chapters to break with binary constructed viewpoints that allow negative lack to capture and lead us, instead of pointing us towards becoming and immanence that doesn't try to control the world.

In a preliminary way, breaking binaries through a complexification that destabilizes, deforms, and problematizes could be a positive framework for teaching religion in a world of religious conflict and polarities of position. Although historical accounts of religion and the exposition of religious texts are key aspects of any Christian theological/religious curricula, I believe Deleuze has things to say to this community. Sometimes it is presupposed that, if student teachers have enough theological content background and if they like young people, they can teach courses in religion. Rather, I see that helping future teachers develop their pedagogical style and their interpretive frameworks are equally important and that our current frameworks do not allow for the complexity of living in 21st century, where rubbing shoulders with those 'other' than us is a common aspect of the educational situation.

The following chapters seek to go into more detail taking three different binary constructions from my Christian community (insider and outsider, transcendence and immanence, good and evil) bringing Deleuzian concepts into the conversation, and

applying strategy of *breaking* the binaries – destabilizing binary hierarchy, deforming binary representation, and problematizing binary reductionism.

As Noel Gough (2006) says regarding the use of essays in my research, reflecting my own approach to these chapters:

> I use the term 'essay' here both as a verb – to attempt, to try, to test – and as a noun. In theoretical inquiry an essay can serve similar purposes to an experiment in empirical research – a methodical way of investigating a question, problem or issue – although I find more appropriate analogies for my work in the experimental arts than in the experimental sciences. Both 'essay' and the related term 'assay' come to English speakers through the French *essayer* from the Latin *exigere*, to weigh. Thus, I write essays to test ideas, to 'weigh' them up, to give me (and eventually, I hope, my colleagues) a sense of their worth (p. 2).

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Rhizomic Interlude

Embarking on this research pathway began with preconceptions conditioned by my Masters research in science and religion concerning dichotomous viewpoints that religiously split the world into us vs. them. Rather than continuing further into the science vs. religion debates, I began to wonder what is behind this binary way of thinking and why is there even a debate. Suddenly, binaries began to emerge in every research corner. By conducting student interviews, a perspective formed that there were not just different viewpoints at work in their responses but different ways of thinking/seeing the world.

I attempted to write the following chapters with tensions acknowledged between different ways of seeing the world and thus this chapter reflects the sense of being caught in the flux that surrounded my dissertation. I write to explicate this sense of writing amidst the flux. Most of these chapters were written during the most difficult time that I have ever faced in my life, losing my daughter and trying to pull together a life beyond her presence with us. I can read back through them and see this sense of living in the flux, even as I continue on that path. It is to this need for flux, for complexification, that the following chapters re-envision a pedagogy that loves neighbor as self through strategy of breaking constructed binaries.

Chapter Two

Caught in the Flux – Facing the Other

Binaries that Beset Us

"Two things are required of us, both to possess and to teach: ability which is restrained and wisdom which is humble." (H. G. Gadamer Truth and Method)

Binary logic "rules" the world – in our computer systems, vehicles, bureaucracies, and even views of family life. At every turn one can find people caught in systems that are less about the freedom to flourish and express creativity than about control, hierarchy and dignity reduced to functionality. Parents search for ways to help their children grow up and learn in this kind of world, hoping for so much more than they themselves experienced yet feel caught and bombarded by the fluctuations and blindingly apparent incongruities. Students begin the learning journey with an insatiable thirst for more that degrades into dragging feet for another day at school. I remember when my middle daughter came running up the stairs with such excitement of discovery - "Daddy that's an M!". Then the haunting words that broke my heart - "Daddy I'm stupid". Teachers go into their classrooms ready to change the world and within a few years many drop off the radar of education and end up out of the classroom. I recall my own days of teaching junior high and dreading the battle to "get through" the curriculum in time and to make sure I taught students the right things for them to do well on their upcoming standardised tests. This tension was apparent when I began my doctoral work, so many of my colleagues were looking for answers to the tensions in the classroom - teacher and student, grades and love for learning, "smart and dumb", in crowd and out crowd. None of these tensions are ultimately real if one sees life on what

Deleuze calls a plane of immanence with rhizomatic perspective that lets life assemble and go in any direction. Yet we construct binaries simply by trying to know difference between mind and body or religiously in spirit and world.

Christian educators have their own tensions that can seem odd to those who are coming from different life viewpoints – religious, ethical, cultural. They have a whole history of interpretation of important texts they seek to incorporate as a way of being in the world. They have students who come from a variety of denominations who have some major and many minor differences as simplistic as how to navigate Halloween to whether they are "allowed" to watch various films with differing ethical views. This is the community that I work within and would like to introduce some different resources in how to engage the tensions that not only afflict as people in general but also as people wondering about the spiritual in relationship to physical and how to be open to becoming while living with sacred texts that appear to emphasize insider and outsider. A world of global access that only increases the tension for educators seeking to be change agents for those others, our students, who will lead this world into new vistas and challenges.

This chapter proposes ways to break out of this mindset and develop curricula that would deterritorialise and reterritorialize following a strategy that would break constructed binaries. For this chapter and the following I introduce how Deleuzian thought can speak into a Christian educational context. Following from chapter one I bring into the discussion the strategy of a breaking that complexifies the constructed binaries that beset us – insider and outsider, sacred and secular through destabilising binary hierarchy, and problematizing binary reductionism.

Questioning Constructed Binaries

Kerdeman (1998) raises a question that has continued to resonate in my experience and reflects the overall theme of this chapter: "Might specific curricula or educational strategies help students see and cope with existential tension?" (p. 254). I would add for this chapter: How can we help students engage in dialogue amidst this tension in a competitive world where facing the 'other' is often delineated as sacred and secular, and situated as insider and outsider?

Looking at the box office titles is an interesting exercise in informal assessment of the range of cultural issues some are thinking about and expressing creatively on the big screen. The titles express this tension. Heading towards and following *2012* the doomsday scenario seems to have accelerated into a prominent spot in the popular psyche. While end-of-the-world themes can be traced religiously as far back as the first century when devoted followers of Jesus looked skyward for the return of Messiah, and throughout the annals as major powers arose and fell from power, leaving destruction and death in the wake; our current moment seems cued in to another epochal, seismic shift, as we now live in a world interconnected as any in recorded human history. Communicating sound bytes happens at the speed of Twitter and visual connectedness through the click of a photo and upload to Facebook.

Prior science fiction series and movies seemed in "galaxies far, far, away;" yet, through often under available resources communicated possibilities of worlds never before envisioned. Now, with the availability of simulations that approach the appearance of being more true to life than life itself, weekly television series like *Fringe*

or currently running *Continuum,* point to a potential future where themes of political and technological dominance in a "globalized" world come too close for comfort.

I recognize the term *globalized* has been interpreted and appropriated in many different ways, yet for this chapter this term reflects a broad and ongoing scenario that has been part of educational research discussions in search of ways to globally navigate a changing world, to break hegemonies of control, authentically connect in hyper-connected technological environment, and positively teach in what David Smith (2006) calls "a great season of untruth." This season of untruth for education continues in the efforts to compete on a global scale using a commodified approach to education that, for Smith and many others, is the antithesis of a real education. Meanwhile, while public education develops diversity, some curriculum studies Christian researchers continue with dream of developing standardized curricula for current educational bureaucracies, holding to an older form of orthodoxy rather than ongoing renewal of tradition, and some even trying to contain all knowledge into a neat one-size-fits-all package and remaining ethically 'safe' (these comments reflect my own experience in using curricula at a conservative evangelical Christian school, my interviews with students in science and religion, and teaching teachers in Moral and Religious education). With complexities of a global community as the new normal I would argue that Christian educators need to open themselves up to the wider conversation for the sake of connecting with students and helping them to learn and navigate within this world community.

For example, if we are to help students be culturally savvy, the content that is allowable for junior and senior high Christian education cannot stay contained and safe

turning a blind eye to popular culture. While sensitivity is needed for people of all backgrounds, curriculum should not be restricted pandering to each families' individual tastes or boundaries. This was apparent to me when I raised a question to student teachers about the use of thought provoking material, in this case a series' highlighting vampires to be used for pedagogical purposes to discuss issues of life and death, human desires, and the inexplicable. When polled whether they would use material from the current vampire craze, the response was that it did not cross the radar for many of the student religion teachers in my class, moral repugnance blocking any potentialities.

Many Christian educators, specifically in my own Presbyterian connection, continue to unwittingly follow a pattern of developing curriculum and teaching what Deleuze and Guattari (1987) call *arbolic* (top-down, hierarchical linear movement from roots to branches), by using instruction based on catechism that deductively assumes an ultimate. "For Deleuze, the classical image of thought is a profound betrayal of what it means to think" (Patton, 1996, p.7) because it closes the potentialities for future developments of "becoming" yet unforeseen. Further, as Patton (1996) says, this way of thinking "sustains a complacent conception of thought which is incapable of criticizing established values" (p. 7). In place of dependence only on arbolic pattern, Deleuze and Guattari (1987) suggest the concept of the rhizome as a way to think differently about the world, rather than assume what is needed prior to engagement, telling rather than questioning.

In contrast to a curriculum and pedagogy that seeks normativity, rhizomatic thought is non-linear, anarchic, nomadic, smooth, deterritorialized, multiplicitous, and heterogeneous. Lechte (1994) adds, "Deleuze's thought is radically horizontal" (102).

Rhizomes create smooth space and cross boundaries moving in many directions and connecting many lines of thinking, acting, and being. They deterritorialize hierarchy and control as border crossing networks and dynamically deterritorialize arbolic, striated ontological spaces that value hierarchy and order.

Deleuze and Guattari contrast the *rhizomic* with the *arbolic* as two different ways to see the world, both needed and happening simultaneously yet in much Christian education leaning to hierarchy. Rhizomes grow by cloning or lateral spreading; they have no central trunk, with outwardly extending roots and branches; rhizomic thinking disturbs and disrupts linear Western metaphorical thinking because instead of a singular, forced unity, rhizomes are "messy" de-centered networks that spread in all directions. As Deleuze and Guattari (1987) state, rhizomes have no beginnings or ends, but always middles. Rhizomes' multiplicities emerge and engage without structure and, if broken, will re-emerge at another point. Rhizomes do not conform to generative or linear models. Because non-linear, rhizomatic growth associates with difference, its lack of a center allows it to establish external networks. Thus, a rhizomic approach points to a wider acceptance of life's complexities because it challenges the belief that everything must have a concrete foundation. It does not pander to grounded binaries, which close our minds to anything but either-or thinking but rhizomatically connect to the community in which they live – and all the activities of that community (what was done, what was said, who has relationships with whom). While this is easier said than practiced, this way of thinking is a challenge to thinking differently in Christian education by destabilizing binary hierarchies and reductionisms. Rhizomic thought shows us a different way to face the other, love neighbor as self.

Living in Flux

A theme carried over to our own lives that threads itself throughout many media of popular culture (e.g. *Lost in Translation, The Matrix, Hunger Games)* is to be lost in the between, in tension with vying systems, and pressed from all angles towards conformity. Philosophers and scholars have struggled to give this a name and these concepts are not necessarily mutually compatible but reflect instead what we see as the commonality of the struggle - Heidegger called our human struggle as *Geworfenheit* or "thrownness" into this world; Jacques Lacan as experiencing the Real; Badiou facing the Void; or John Caputo being caught in the "flux" (Caputo, 1988).

I postulate, despite the nuances of the ongoing debates implied above, that this existential tension or flux is a common ground of our existence and draws us together towards trying to understand openness to purpose and finding paths towards a different world – where foregone conclusions are not norm. Seeking meaning in this life is our human heritage – what philosopher Paul Ricoeur (1976) in *Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning* (1976) called a "surplus of meaning." This search leads some to reach for transcendent realities, hoping for God or gods to rescue; for others the search goes within to try to comprehend the mystery of the "self", inherited from Descartes, search for an indubitable foundation. Deleuze might say that the search itself is the issue, that we need release from the incessant search for meaning. As an educator and chaplain, I find myself caught in my own flux between my past learning from Ricoeur's sense of possibilities in the surplus of meaning, and Deleuze's liberating release from the ongoing search for transcendence that remain elusive or impossible. I believe that wrestling within this tension reflects our human situation and that our

students face the similar challenge of this mindset caught between sacred and secular, and being insider or outsider.

For this dissertation, I "write essays to test ideas, to 'weigh' them up" (Gough, 2006, p.2) hoping to do what Richardson (2001) encourages to do with writing as *a method of discovery* (italics in original), a way of finding out about yourself and your world" (p. 35), a form of inquiry that is learning as I write, rhizomatically allowing for new offshoots to lead in different directions.

In the following I explore why the binary issue of insider and outsider are so important for educators to understand and how we can utilize strategies that open up discussion in our classrooms that reflect the real struggles of being caught in the flux of dichotomous thinking. For this chapter I will explore and seek to go beyond the binary tensions of two issues involving binary comparison: 1) grappling with a sacred vs. secular dichotomy which sets up, and 2) negatively seeing the world through "black and white" lenses (insider vs. outsider) by destabilizing binary hierarchy, and problematizing binary reductionism.

Thinking Difference

With the existential tension that continues to be present in our classrooms we face the challenge with learning to think differently. What Deleuze calls thinking difference upends a mentality that fits within a system closed to new possibilities by starting where we are rather than looking for something to tell us where to begin. Noel Gough (2006) says about possibility of other worlds Ursula Le Guin's book *The Telling*,

The Telling is testimony to the *possibility* of thinking what many humans think is unthinkable, such as imagining a world without 'foreigners.' What would social and educational policy look like if we too assumed that 'the people' meant 'everybody, humanity'? Le Guin demonstrates that it is possible to think differently about identity and community, and related questions of inclusion and exclusion, without ever underestimating the remarkable difficulty of doing so, and the even greater difficulty of bringing new imaginaries into effect (p. 5).

Remembering that Deleuze and Guattari (1994) remind us, "The task of philosophy when it creates concepts… is always to extract an event from things and beings, always to give them a new event: space, time, matter, thought, the possible as events" (p. 33). Gough (2006) further points to what Deleuze and Guattari might be envisioning like Le Guin's storytelling brilliance of the potentiality of difference we also can envision a classroom, education, a world, in ways that breaks free from what we are holding on to as normal. That is, relinquish the quest to hold on to what we think is the norm and which everything else should be compared against. Does this former mindset of "what is" keep us captured by representation that restricts creativity and limits hopefulness in what Wallin (2010) following Deleuze calls "a people yet to come?" As educators we can work against this mindset by exposing what Kent denHeyer (from class notes 2010) calls "realist claims" – those statements that shut down discussion by invoking a higher authority whose claims disallow further exploration, typically holding up one form of binary to the exclusion of another (see Derrida, 1981). While our visions of education may "compete", could it be too idealistic to allow for difference to lead us

rather than trying to fit every curricular concept into a "one size fits all'? As Parr (2005) explains difference:

> Deleuze's 'liberation' of difference from such a model has two parts. First, he develops a concept of difference that does not rely on a relationship with sameness and, second, he challenges the philosophy of representation. Deleuze argues that we ought not to presume a pre-existing unity, but instead take seriously the nature of the world as it is perceived. For him, every aspect of reality evidences difference, and there is nothing 'behind' such difference; difference is not grounded in anything else (p.75).

One reason it is so difficult to think this way is because of the reliance on comparison as a way of seeing the world both in teaching and as students. Rather than letting an idea or concept work its way through us and into practice we often resort to comparing to other things instead of speaking for themselves. Like when we compare the Renaissance to the Reformation to the French Revolution which in many ways can be helpful to pedagogy. But this becomes a problem when comparison resorts to truncating one aspect of the world such as sacred and secular or insider and outsider. In religious studies this can turn into things that are 'spiritual' and things that are 'worldly'. In relationships we form insider and outsider cliques, or political parties, or denominational affiliations and define ourselves against the other who are not like us. This problem of comparison is worth exploring as it relates to education and the binary constructs we are destabilizing in this chapter, as a factor in how we divide the world.

Problem of Comparison

In researching the importance of binaries, one might question why they are important for education. In this process, among the themes that rise to the surface is the problem of comparison. Etymologically the word comparison can be broken into *com* and *parare* taken from "mid-14c., from Old French *comparaison* (12c.), from Latin *comparationem* (nominative *comparatio*). Comparison is a noun of action from past participle stem of *comparare* "make equal with, liken, bring together for a contest," literally "to couple together, to form in pairs," from *com-* "with" (see ***com-***) + *parare* "prepare" (see ***pare***)" (Online Etymological Dictionary). From this etymology we see hints of competition in "bring together for a contest" that reflects comparison as ordering in hierarchy of one thing over another, one of the two being represented as above or over another. Note that the word has roots in "forming pairs" or, as I see it, to form a binary.

When I compare two things, I am taking these two things and likening one to the other in some relationship, either for positive connection of similarity or to show differences. As Foucault has shown through his analysis of disciplinary societies, the pathway of comparison reflects our human propensity for misuse of power, using and constructing binaries to sort through our day-to-day existence yet falling prey to control (Tran, 2011). For much of our typical activities, using binary comparison provides a way to navigate the world. Controversially, researchers even point to specific parts of our brain, the parietal cortex, oriented to such comparisons (Newberg, 2010). However, what has been seen by some as a major asset in our development as *homo sapiens* I posit has now become a downfall for educational growth. This downfall occurs when this comparison mode overtakes other equally valuable learning processes, such as

developing holistic thought or complex ethical choices. I see three areas of comparison affecting the issues of binary tension: comparison essentializes the self, compartmentalizes split reality, and denigrates difference:

1) Comparison essentializes the self.

When comparisons occur, whether intentionally or inadvertently, the person comparing makes their own "self" the center of reality, as the standard or measure to hold something or someone else against. Such self-understanding is understood not in relationship to the *other* but as an individual entity, the person we compare with isn't taken into consideration. As Ricoeur says, "there is no self-understanding that is not *mediated* by signs, symbols, and texts; in the final analysis self-understanding coincides with the interpretation given to these mediating terms" (*Oneself as Another*, 15) – in this case denying agency to the "other." We all navigate from our own lenses of reality and when we compare we are assuming our view of the world. This navigation holds minimal issue when comparing mundane things. When comparison becomes personal – that is, relating to persons, a deeper level of complexity arises because of the physical, emotional, and spiritual components of what comprises a person – a not me. What can often occur is making a person into an object through reification. Because one's own locational self becomes the foundation for comparison, the temptation towards objectification can create an educational issue; and, when this process happens in a classroom, either by a teacher or a student, disharmony or stifling creative discussion can be created.

Philosopher Martha Nussbaum (2006) gives specific factors for understanding objectification (treating a person as a thing) including: instrumentality (treating someone like a tool to be used); inertness (denying persons agency or self-determination), ownership (owning others); violability (violating others); and, denial of subjectivity (feeling no sense of emotion for others' needs) (p. 257). Thus, the person one compares oneself to can be viewed as a diminished self and used for our purposes, or denied their own identity as a person/self, and then violated without heed to their own perspectives because they take lower priority to one's own essential self. Although this analysis may seem drastic, does this not happen when people communicate their perspectives in a classroom? Awareness alone won't change this human propensity; but, could not regular exposure, problematizing, and practice by teachers and students help make strides towards change?

2) Comparison compartmentalizes into a split reality

In forming pairs or comparison, one also tends to compartmentalize reality. Mathematically speaking, this regular use of division and categorizing are positive and disciplined, but this mindset breaks down when applied from numbers and concepts to persons involved in the learning environment who have thoughts and feelings to be expressed interacting with other persons. Although making distinctions is a regular aspect of education, when thinking becomes dichotomous distinguishing between entities or persons can become oriented towards setting up us vs. them comparisons, splitting their reality from our own.

Split realities tend towards upper and lower, inside and outside, and assume sameness and not difference. Use of comparison points to an ideal to find rather than allow for the multiplication of assemblages on the plane of immanence. As Deleuze (1994) says, "Whenever immanence is interpreted as immanent 'to' something, a confusion of plane and concept results, so that the concept becomes a transcendent universal and the plane becomes an attribute in the concept. When misunderstood in this way, the plane of immanence revives the transcendent again: it is a simple field of phenomena that now only possesses in a secondary way that which first of all is attributed to the transcendent unity" (p. 45).

3) Comparison denigrates difference

A final problem with comparison is that comparison negatively heightens the sense of difference from others. Becoming too ingrained in habits of comparison not only gives the individual priority of self as center and creates categories of other's reality split off from our own, but also has the potential to overflow into how we view the qualities of other persons. Rather than see a diversity of difference, comparison puts oneself in the center of the world, as all the available potential to be compared towards. Comparison can be the epitome of arrogant individualism when we hold up ourselves as the model. It can be as obvious as "popular" people who think everyone should be like them or athletes who see their craft what comprises a "real" sport, or as subtle as a father or mother who sees different abilities or qualities in their children but refuse to acknowledge their validity because they don't match "what I did when I was your age." The reverse is to model one's life through someone else's because one sees such little value in one's own life, thus holding up the other as the paragon of personhood.

Celebrity (in media or the academy) can entrap many. These examples emphasize how, when we compare ourselves to our own "brilliance of individual self-centeredness" or to the blindness that only sees a lack of potential in our own skillset, we let comparison rule out the vast and amazing differences among us.

Reconceptualizing a Religious Vocabulary

As I have argued, living in a comparison culture that follows a comparison ethic can split the world into undesirable haves and have not's, between those who are like us and those who are unlike. For Christians, this problem is alive, but extends past, those non-religious 'others.' It also engages those who seek a world of religious flourishing. In this chapter, mainly addressing my own Christian community, I suggest that reconceptualising our vocabulary and religious language is needed to bring about change, because embedded in our language are the hegemonies we inadvertently and blindly follow. I would use as a beginning point the words of Jesus "By your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned" (Matt 12:37). Such sobering words lend themselves to reflection about how language shapes us in light of the challenge of comparison.

Creating Concepts

Agreeing with Deleuze and Guattari's (1994) claim in *What is Philosophy* that the role of the philosopher is to create concepts that change how we see the world, I would argue that the theologian and religious educator also share such a role in developing a religious vocabulary for the community of faith to express what the sacred texts are saying in our current culture. The challenging task is to understand the context of the

written words and then bring them in relationship to the difficulties of faith in the current moment. For the theologian, a hermeneutical challenge to bridge the then-and-now exists that requires a creative willingness to hold the old and new in tension while seeking to remain faithful to the ancient words.

Keeping in mind these problems of comparison, I now explore what it would mean for educators to go beyond binaries, to briefly "break" the binary construction of sacred vs. secular that is, destabilize, and problematize the binary, and in more detail break the binary of insider vs. outsider. I start with sacred and secular (which could be its own chapter by rights) because it leads from a wider issue with those who break world into spiritual and unspiritual, to what results in the insider and outsider binary of those who are Christian and non-Christian.

Sacred vs. Secular

The sacred vs. secular binary can be traced throughout the available history of thought across epochs, eras, and cultures traced from Plato's distinction between what is in the cave and what is beyond as different realms, Augustine's city of God and city of man, and through the Middle Ages where sacred and secular often merged. Further usage of term continues in Kant's *noumenal* and *phenomenal* distinctions of known and unknown knowledge; in Cartesian Enlightenment reasoning; and includes diversities in Taoism folk religion, animism, and the secular/sacred embedded in "Western" discussions of church and state. Throughout each era how people code these ideas vary as humans grapple with the seen and unseen, the material and immaterial, the physical and the spiritual, physics and metaphysics.

The terms sacred and secular provide clues for their ongoing signification and misuse in religious discourse. Because both terms have become embedded in our language, I think it is important to reengage them and discern whether their role as master signifiers need challenging, renewal, or replacement and whether our language must break or go beyond these binary terms.

Sacred comes from Latin *sacrare* "to make sacred, consecrate; hold sacred; immortalize; set apart, dedicate; whereas secular derives from Late Latin *saecularis* "worldly, secular, pertaining to a generation or age," from Latin *saecularis* "of an age, occurring once in an age (Online Etymological Dictionary). One can notice that, although these words have become dichotomous for many, their early usage of *sacred* is about setting apart something that is of this world, rather than something completely disconnected in a *secular* realm. Rather it is taking something that is "secular" or "worldly" and imbues meaning upon it, rather than detaching it from the world. An example was the way people could call things as menial as pots and utensils "holy." Their concept of "holy" did not turn these things into something akin to how the ark is portrayed in *Raiders of the Lost Ark* emanating with otherworldly aura, rather that they were only to be used for practices related to religious *cultus*. A current analogy of sacred or holy could be how some of the "fine china" is kept for use in special occasions. Reaching back to this etymology allows for a comparison of distinction without division and opens up possibilities that break with separating reality into disciplines that don't interact – such as religious vs. non-religious. If sacred and secular are viewed in sharp distinction, educationally we are dividing the world instead of

viewing things or people in ways that connect the sacred "them" to secular "us" and vice versa – no us or them there is only "us."

The sacred-secular continues to be a challenge in our current society and in education with Charles Taylors's massive work *A Secular Age* leading the way. In my own chaplaincy and research context there is an ongoing challenge to help students think differently about their world, because this split is apparent in much of our conversation. As a chaplain I hear a common refrain that students don't have time for the spiritual rather than seeing their schoolwork as an active spiritual part of their lives not separated from their day to day studies.

In prior research, I saw this in interviewing students (Clarke 2011) in relationship to their understanding of science and religion. Until this issue had been addressed in a science and religion course, each of the interviewees explained that their assumptions were framed by sacred aspects of their lives (church and prayer) and secular aspects of their lives (school and jobs) rather than seeing them as assemblages in relation to each other that were not in separate compartments. Complexifying their understanding was part of my research goals by making them aware of their splitting life into a hierarchy, typically with sacred prioritized over secular but a few with secular separated from sacred. The mindset of viewing life through narrow categories and a pre-existing unity created unnecessary personal tension.

Keeping secular and sacred in a strict binary relation can unfortunately not only create personal distress, but also create categories that lead people to an insider vs. outsider mentality, something that postcolonial discourse ably exposes and challenges.

We'll first look at postcolonial discourse as an example of the insider and outsider binary.

Constructed Binary - Insider and Outsider

Postcolonial discourse is one example of how to address insider and outsider. Christian educators can learn from this discourse as it also critiques our own difficulty with hegemonic control. In the following we look at several themes drawn from postcolonial discourse and Deleuzian thought to explain in relationship to the binary of insider (us) vs. outsider (outsider); these terms include cultural hegemony and empire, views of the other, and consumerism. Bringing these terms to the attention of students, teachers, and researchers can expose and promote resistance to binary thinking (us vs. them) deeply embedded in human thought that continues to plague us, as remnants of our colonial past. Each term signifies different aspects of the complexification needed for students to thrive in awareness of loving neighbor as self. Explicating an understanding of postcolonial terms and discourse and then enacting them in classroom pedagogy is the intention of including them in the following discussion. Each could be taught in relationship to how we view others – owning insider and outsider tendencies and seeking ways to resist. I suggest that students who understand these concepts in light of their own proclivities to exclude could bring turn around to educational practice as they recreate educational practice.

First, the following is intentionally short for illustrative purposes, thus we will look briefly at each term related to this discourse in a short literature review exposing insider and outsider, intended as a resource for Christian educators, and then I will

conclude with how these terms can inform educational practice for a way forward which recognizes student tension, engages the binary, and considers implications for curriculum.

Cultural Hegemony

Postcolonial discourse addresses what Antonio Gramsci calls situations of "cultural hegemony" (Ingleby, 2010, p. 21) where one group uses its cultural position to dominate another through means that appear legitimate, but are really subtle forms of oppression. I believe education needs to help students recognize these types of situations by developing ways of thinking that provide resistance to this undermining of a just society. As theologian Walter Brueggemann says, "Empires, ancient and contemporary, are always about the business of exercising hegemonic control over their presumed spheres of influence" (cited in Horsely, 2008, p. 25). While students may be aware of their own personal situations of conflict, understanding this term as carried on through history can help them locate the problem beyond the personal to the political realm.

The insider and outsider mentality affects how we view systems and structures affected by human hegemonic control. The term "empire" has become a short form term within academic discourse. Empire encapsulates a full discourse critiquing the power structures providing educators a way to help students critically engage their cities, countries and continents and understanding how others view the world. Empire is often characterized as those in positions of power resorting to violence by the misuse of the law as a hegemonic ploy and false ally in the name of "what is good for the 'other.'" The

scriptural narrative of Hebrew Scriptures and the gospels and letters of the apostles have a long history relating to Empire embedded in Jewish and Christian thought. The record of our colonial past shows that biblical narratives have sometimes been misused for colonial impulses when ironically they actually have much affinity with the idea of an ongoing narrative *against* empire.

Hardt and Negri's (2000) insights are crucial in current discussions of Empire. They say, "In contrast to imperialism, Empire establishes no territorial center of power and does not rely on fixed boundaries or barriers. It is a decentred and deterritorializing apparatus of rule that progressively incorporates the entire global realm with its open, expanding frontiers" (p. xii). Their argument is that European imperialism is over and that we are in a new order that "suspends history and thereby fixes the existing state of affairs for eternity." Further that, "what is forming today and what we will face in the future is not a new U.S. imperialism but rather a much broader and more complex form of global domination" (Hardt & Negri, 2008, p. 308). Thus, Empire is not just a word from the past in relationship to an older imperialism but continues to be a *concept* of political power and domination "characterized by a lack of boundaries: Empire's rule has no limits" (p. xiv). They also argue for the need to "look at forces of control beyond the United States and its government to recognize the functioning not only of other dominant nation-states but also of capitalist corporations, supranational institutions, NGO's and other powers" (p. 310).

If Hardt and Negri's analysis stands, it "serves as a warning against lodging one's hope and faith in the idea that a future, virtuous government…will save us" (p. 310). While imperialisms come and go, the concept of Empire can be viewed in past conquests

that sought to take in all of the world under one regime, a totalization of all under one rule, even claiming benevolence to know what is good for all. Empire also overshadows our own era that faces new challenges with the need to push against hegemonic claims of all-encompassing political power – whether they are sacred by claiming one nation under God, or secular through ideologies that leave out religion in the name of secularization; further whether they want to make everyone an insider under the jurisdiction of control that dictates for the all inside. In an era of global capitalism their argument continues to raise the alarm against subtle and blatant hegemonies of economic power brokerage and control. Their manifesto points to educational needs that resist a mindset that won't think differently about the global politics. Their analysis shows me that we continue to face new constructed binaries that make claims for the good (left vs. right) but still act to buttress a society of control even in sacred and secular, insider and outsider.

For those involved in education, the belief "Empires colonize imaginations" (McLeod, 2010, p. 25) could be a helpful starting point for discussing our own current challenges of 'Empire' in a world challenged by globalization. Ironically, to realize that, for many, Empire remains a dominant way of thinking, in religious education one must turn to those trying to reframe the scriptural account based on this background of Empire.

Richard Horsley (2008) attempts to reframe the scriptural narrative by bringing together scholars in a compilation called *In the Shadow of Empire*. This book contains several chapters educators could find helpful for understanding Empire and its

relationship to the Jewish and Christian worldviews informing a hermeneutical understanding of scriptural texts. Norman Gottwald (2008) writes about early Israel as an anti-imperial community, because the Jews were a people continually under imperial rule through the Old Testament narrative. Walter Brueggemann (2008) shows how faith in the Empire was continually challenged and under oppression from imperialist forces throughout the Old Testament. John Dominic Crossan (2008) and Warren Carter (2008) show that a Roman imperial theology was at work behind the scenes in the New Testament scriptural narrative while Richard Horsley (2008) shows how Empire was at work when Jesus walked the earth. Some of the most fascinating connections come from the chapter discussing the apocalyptic book of Revelation, a book that has been interpreted in multiply divergent ways from a historical record from the first century to end-time prophecy futuristic predictions. In light of the oppression by the Empire, one can read Revelation with new insight as a "counter imperial script" (p. 157) and the author points out how deeply imperialism affected those colonized by the Romans. Developments to find counter measures to Empire continue in this field of study and could be a fascinating area for those who study in religious education.

Consumerism and Colonial Impulse

Zygmunt Bauman (2007) is a negative yet provocative voice that points out the historical process and human propensity to "consume life" and shows how one comes to consider that what one possesses is what one deserves – a definite issue related to insider/outsider binary. He points to the implications for this mindset: that a colonizing mentality is a "no-choice" situation when one needs to subjugate others to maintain one's personal status. Even calling what happens in the market a "law" shows how a

fatalistic determinism can creep into one's terminology and more subtly into one's worldview.

Christian educators have many resources at their disposal to give students the tools to resist their own consumer impulses and be generous contributors to wellbeing of society – destabilizing the hierarchy of insider and outsider. An ethic of concern can be taught through use of religious writings including sacred texts and theological resources. One example is William Cavanaugh (2008) in *Being Consumed* outlines a way of addressing consumerism through the paradoxes of freedom and unfreedom, detachment and attachment, global and local, and scarcity and abundance. He provides a helpful critique for teachers wanting to resist the consumer impulses pervasive in all of us. Also important for this discussion is the way we view people.

View of the 'other'

Throughout my studies of science and religion, among other binaries, I have noticed a tendency among those who hold strong viewpoints to represent themselves *against* someone else. As humans, we do this with our sport teams, our friendships, at the workplace, and in our families: it appears we are prone to this simplified binary mentality. Whether this mentality is specifically something that traces far into our evolutionary past, is an internal necessity or a flaw, or something we have acquired more recently, it certainly is an issue for our current insider vs. outsider, postcolonial situation, affected as we still are by our colonial past. Postcolonial studies have helped me recognize more deeply that the binary representations we make of those who are not like us are important to address in education and specifically in Christian and religious

education where, in principle, when we adopt this binary we are going against collective wisdom by teachers who have worked counter to Empire, writing about seeking alternate ways of viewing the world and living, involving integration and connection.

Sugirtharajah (2012) highlights one aspect in the use of language and the view of the other that religious educators should note. Building upon postcolonial theorist Edward Said, Sugirtharajah controversially says that even our naming "is not an innocent activity or an honest desire to describe reality. It is the way of intruders – claiming, particularizing, dividing, and taking possession of the land for themselves. It is a form of control and domination and of managing the 'other'" (p. 104). As an example, he notes how geographical terms are used in religious studies and how even a standard term such as Ancient Near East still excludes those of other cultural backgrounds, such as African. His approach does not necessarily seek to catch teachers in a helpless bind that restricts all teaching, he simply directs us to a carefulness and awareness of how we characterize the "other".

Resistance

The concept of resistance is addressed in various ways by key postcolonial theorists Frantz Fanon, Edward Said, and Homi Bhabha; but, according to David Jefferess (2008), not enough has been written about this subject and its application to a "politics of transformation" (p. ix). Bill Ashcroft (2001) has also written on this key subject in *Postcolonial Transformation*. These writers and others note that, for change to occur, one must move beyond critique, deconstruction, and revolution to see transformation. Discussing Leela Ghandi's emphasis on hybridity and postnationalism,

Jefferess says, "As the defining terms of postcolonial thought ... imagines a utopian alternative to the totalizing and Manichean binaries of colonial difference that fails to contend with the material inequalities produced by the colonial economy, an economy conceived of and rationalized with the civilizing project of European imperialism and its attendant discourse of Manichean difference" (p. 5). The concept of how transformation can occur beyond colonialism and how to develop an ongoing resistance to future imperialisms could be an ongoing discussion that breaks the insider vs. outsider binary.

Use of language

Postcolonial studies has been for me, as an educator interested in religious hermeneutical concerns, a theoretical discourse to note, especially as it relates to the use of language. Currently, Deleuzian thinking has challenged me even further in relating to this discourse and the above terms. As Patton and Bignall (2010) say, "Deleuze does not directly 'speak with' the thinkers and writers of the postcolony, and postcolonial theory seldom engages with Deleuzian philosophy in a sustained or comprehensive way, despite the abundance of Deleuzian motifs in postcolonial discourse. When theorists have directly considered postcolonial influences of/upon Deleuzian philosophy, they have usually done so in a critical and dismissive fashion" (p. 1). Some see Deleuzian thought in a negative light (Spivak, 1976) because of this lack of direct interaction; yet as authors further elaborate "many of Deleuze's philosophical writings, both alone and with Guattari, develop concepts and frameworks of discussion that resonate with themes and issues pertinent to postcolonialism. Among other examples, we might point to their comments about the imperialism of normative Western forms of Oedipal subjectivity; movements of de/reterritorialisation describing a conceptual politics of

capture and relative liberation" (p. 3). Further, "defining the contours of an encounter between Deleuze and the postcolonial is to define the shared problem of finding lines of escape from forms of capture and containment, but also to identify some of the ways in which these lines of escape might come together, mutually reinforcing one another" (p.9). Deleuze and Guattari challenge me with how a use of the language of transcendence (a preconceived image of thought) "captures and contains" and affects how we speak of others. In application, seeing persons as assemblages rather than categorically defined helps problematize what becomes a perspective focused on a hierarchy of persons.

From Edward Said, we learn that the language used by the colonizers was part of what could be called, in educational terms, a *hidden curriculum*, where language continues to exacerbate the problems of colonial subjugation, even if one wanted to resist the injustices. Brought to my awareness by the book *Metaphors We Live By,* the topic of how language is embedded in our texts and speaking has motivated me, as a religious educator, to understand my speech, deconstruct my language, and recreate a more faithful hermeneutical approach to the texts integral to my field and my own personal faith. Even further, under Deleuzian influence, I question the role of metaphor and my understanding of hermeneutics, with the concept of an immanent way of interpretation. Words are an important aspect of life and faith and, with the postcolonial critique in hand, I see importance of learning to reinterpret biblical text with new eyes and greater humility, as worthy goals for Christian and religious educators. Thus, I conclude this look at the insider vs. outsider binary with the following observations and insights for postcolonialism and the Bible because I believe the appropriation of this

book of sacred texts for Christians can contribute to this constructed binaries' continual influence in religious education.

Insider and Outsider and the Bible

The relationship of the Bible to insider and outsider is important to religious educators; similar to any book claiming divine authority, it can be prone to misuse by humans with their own agendas. As Johnston (2003) shows, in our choice of literature and exclusion of others' perspectives, we have been complicit in a binary of the Western (us) vs. the Eastern (them), so our reductionist use of certain biblical texts and verses have created not an integrated world, but one that sets people into camps. The challenge is how to move forward in wisdom as religious educators, taking into account what we are taught by postcolonialism and Deleuze as ways to complexify binary thinking. While a full dissertation of its own, because the Bible and its interpretation are crucial to these possible steps, "How has the Bible (among other religious texts) been misused by the hegemonic colonial impulse to split people into insider and outsider?" and "Is it possible, as Horsley (2008) posits in his book's subtitle, "to Reclaim the Bible as a History of Faithful Resistance" (p.181). Although what follows tends toward generalizations, my intent is illustrative to show several themes religious educators can explore while helping teach students become competent interpreters without continuing to pass on an imperialist way of interpreting scripture. Specifically, scriptural texts have been misused to overemphasize uniformity, reductionism, and ignorance of cultural assumptions leading to a hegemonic abuse that marginalizes our neighbour.

Overemphasizing Uniformity

One stream of thought to note is that, by ignoring the diversity of scriptural narrative and flattening the story, some colonists promoted their agenda. Such promotion was a way to decrease resistance among the colonized as they promoted their beneficence to those they were ruling. My own reading shows that this agenda was not necessarily explicit; but, through language, assumptions, and interpretation of scripture, the colonizers implicated themselves in ways that the scripture's anti-imperial narrative lost the possibility to speak and correct them. As Brett (2008) says, "Biblical texts were implicated in the language of colonialism" (p. 8); thus, those in the colonies often found it difficult to distinguish between what the colonizers said and what the Bible was actually saying because, often, the colonizers were also teaching about the scriptural narrative in an abusive way. The recent movie *12 Years a Slave* is a troubling depiction of what colonizers did with the scriptural texts.

Conversely, some colonizers read their own situatedness as a sign of divine favour and treated their own interpretations with an authority beyond textual warrant (i.e. too closely linking oneself to the biblical narrative – "We are Israel, they are the Canaanites"). Because those carrying the message sometimes emphasized a uniformity that suited their own purposes, the scriptural narrative became intertwined with the imperial impulse (see Brett, Chapter One in *The Bible and Colonization in Decolonizing God*). Situations in Australia, South Africa, North America, and New Zealand can be distinguished in their approaches as to the indigenous people, such as the issue of who owned the land. For example, in the North American colonial situation, the "official legal ideology in North America was never founded on a biblical discourse alone; it was

blended from notions of 'civilization' and the superior rights of European culture" (Brett, 2008, p. 8).

Some colonists had notions of a divinely given mission and confronting the inhabitants of the "promised land with an Israelite act of conquest" (p. 8). Others worked from notions of civilization that were less coordinated with a scriptural message but were rather cultural superiority; yet, in both cases when they used the Bible for support they both mistakenly over identified their own divine right to impose themselves upon the colonies. Some Puritans did this from their sense of fundamental God given mission and others with the sense of James Kent, a legal writer from the 19th century who conflated Christianity and culture. His rationale for colonialism was, "in consequence of the superior genius of the Europeans, founded on civilization and Christianity, and their superiority in the means and act of war" (cited in Brett, 2008, p. 9). It is this approach that we want to disavow ourselves from – a hegemonic use of the scriptural narrative that conflates itself with European civilization or a divine right of conquest.

The irony of the use of the Bible by some British colonizers was to treat it as their book instead of a narrative over thousands of years of the Hebrew people under ongoing imperialist rule – Greece, Persia, Rome etc. The colonist's rule or domination in the political context carried over into the social and religious context as they decided that their practice should be brought to bear on those they considered uncivilized. This main thrust was found in what Brett (2008), from an Australian context, writes against in *Decolonializing God*. He summarizes it well by saying,

In the history of colonization, it is clear that generations of Europeans became intoxicated with their ideas of racial superiority and civilization, and the Bible was caught up in the destructive consequences. Biblical texts were often used as colonial instruments of power, exploited with pre-emptive and self-interested strategies of reading (p. 31).

My hope, along with his, is to look at our scriptural narratives with lenses that will protect and encourage us to view our world beyond us vs. them and begin to seek an integrative approach to Christian education. We should not sugarcoat differences and difficulties of the texts, but honestly interpret and admit our own proclivities to dominate. We should instead seek what Jesus meant to be "poor in spirit," humble before a Bible that can easily be misused for our own purposes. As educators, we also want to avoid teaching the error of reducing the Bible to an ethical usefulness, which in itself becomes a form of reductionism that doesn't allow the text to speak to us. Students should be informed of this danger and of how to avoid it. One way to avoid it is to teach awareness of our cultural assumptions and bias. Brett (2008) offers a word of wisdom to take with us in our teaching: "While the issue of divine judgment remains a vexed matter for theology, one conclusion in relation the Gospels is clear: nothing in the Jesus traditions, whether 'early' or 'late,' can provide a sanction for colonial violence" (p. 147).

Cultural Assumptions and Bias

We are entering an era of studying texts that, in my own research, seems to have a much stronger awareness of the cultural bias, assumptions, and their implications at work in hermeneutic endeavors. Biblical studies, as an academic discipline, has come to

recognize the challenge of where it is suited to be part of the interdisciplinary academic conversation. Sugirtharajah (2012) situates biblical studies, based on insights from Edward Said, in Oriental studies because, "Given the way that mainstream biblical studies habitually reinforces the inherent prejudices of Orientalism in its work. … In its method and scope biblical studies resembles Oriental studies and has a number of affinities with it" (p. 99). With this situatedness, religious studies explicitly connects to postcolonial discourse. This connection is as it should be: what has been done with the Bible, by those who are abusing people through its narrative, needs to be kept in the minds of every religious educator.

Resistance to Learning

Marshall Alcorn's book *Resistance to Learning* (2003) points this discussion forward, to ways for ongoing resistance to sacred and secular and insider and outsider and the construction of binaries. While certain aspects may seem self-evident, as Stanley Fish argues, it is not always true that seeing is believing (Fish, 2001, p. 501). "We do not observe the world and then believe what we see. We have beliefs and we then observe or hallucinate the truth of our beliefs in our observation of the world. In this case "believing is seeing" (Olson & Worsham, 2004, p. 149). Centuries ago, Augustine said, "I believe in order to understand" and the history of philosophy plays out arguments for various rationalities. Alcorn's (2013) research shows, "People will invent evidence to support belief before they will adjust belief in response to evidence" (p. 4). He researches the poles of an emotional dialectic where people have "symptomatic fixations" that prevent them from accepting evidence. This leads to emotional resistance

to learning that create further concerns which are also my own in Christian education that is resistant to change,

> I worry that the skills we are most required to develop as professional educators make us unprepared for and inattentive to the teaching that develops flexible and integrated minds. When success becomes measured by defeating the enemy, skills in synthesis of uncomfortable and conflicted information become subordinated to victory over opposing ideas. Teachers often win arguments by silencing their oppositional students. But oppression is not persuasion (p. 125-126).

From these pertinent comments, Alcorn adds several things applied to breaking binary thinking that contribute to closing this chapter. The phrase "victory over opposing ideas" stands out in opposition to what postcolonial discourse and Deleuzian thought teach us against constructing binary of insider vs. outsider because to win an argument a hierarchy is assumed, whoever is "right" ends up on 'top' and thus is insider. Destabilizing this hierarchy is crucial to overcome the winning of arguments at expense of learning and an oppression that doesn't persuade but seeks conquest. From lens of constructed binary of insider and outsider, the teacher is the insider and all who join the teacher's position will become an insider, thus crushing dissent. There is a presumption of pre-existing unity in the teacher's knowledge, a representation of the teacher as the expert. Deconstructing the binary could mean as Alcorn says, "To solve problems, we must integrate new and uncomfortable information. Learning to be non-defensive in the assimilation of new information is as important as insistence on logical rigor" (p.126).

With an accepted body of knowledge embedded with binary constructions, Christian educators have a challenge ahead to engage resistances and perspectives that perpetuate what Alcorn terms oppression.

Educational Implications

Framing pedagogy in binary oppositions inadvertently shows a way of teaching that sets up ideas as a conflict of polarities, this chapter has sought ways to break this binary approach using Deleuzian thought as a guide to destabilize this binary construction. Engaging the postcolony informs education of the human propensity to set up hegemonic control built upon a warring mentality. Alcorn (2013) calls this a metaphor of war that pervades human thinking: "If we want to develop a healthy and responsible society, we must understand how our emotional commitment to the metaphor of war and mastery defeats our ability to develop flexible thought. To solve problems, we must integrate new and uncomfortable information. Learning to be non-defensive in the assimilation of new information is as important as insistence on logical rigor (p. 126). Responding to the hegemony of insider and outsider requires awareness and resistance to this metaphor of war to open up understanding of the gift of diversity. Parsons (2012) shares this vision:

> The gift of diversity allows new voices to be heard and new ideas to flourish. The new curriculum changes augur openness and inclusion. We want to include all into our school communities. The philosophical message implicit in these new curricula is a critical response to growing world domination by a singular economic *empire* as well as our acceptance that people should grow more globally

connected. We accept that there are differences, but we no longer choose to see these differences as problems. Instead, they become opportunities for insight. We choose to no longer fear difference and respond to that fear by shaping a cultural ethos into conformity of heart, mind, and body" (p. 42).

Parsons' perspective summarizes much of why education needs to work against constructed binary of insider and outsider. Reshaping our way of seeing the diversity of others is a way forward in education that retains the search for knowledge and yet allows for other voices, seeing others as a gift.

From the above discussion I conclude with several implications for a Christian education curriculum from my own educational experience.

1) Expose Binary Hegemony

When discussing difficult issues in a group setting, my role as a chaplain often turns into one of mediator of ideas and human competitive spirit. I concur with Alcorn's (2013) assessment of how tricky this can be to find a proper balance to allow the rigor of argument and yet the awareness of the emotional state of other students. One way I seek to destabilize those who would control the conversation into a hierarchy of ideas (their idea as on top) is to frame and problematize the discussion in light of the propensity to turn discussion into a battle, by actively discussing the need to break down hegemony. All ideas are not equal but all persons in discussion equal, and need to be treated with the dignity required of personhood, loving the other person as they love themselves. With a colleague, we then say that we our role will be as the referees who require participants to use 'I' statements instead of the co-optive 'we' statements which try to

bring others inside on to our team or camp. This actively seeks to disable the constructed binary of insider and outsider. When the individual has to express their own viewpoint without buttressing others as their backup voices, we attempt to expose this binary hegemony, disallowing it to take hold in the discussion. I would like to say that this always works but while it is not the case of full exposure, it has helped bring in voices that wouldn't normally be heard. The difference we have seen is that those who don't easily join the discussion have a safe space to express any of their thoughts without fear of reprisal.

Anecdotally, in teaching a recent university course I sought to expose binary hegemony without silencing dialogue by starting each class with an open ended concept relating to course material. I.E. Philosophy as resistance, philosophy as relationship etc. I would introduce a binary within the philosophical discourse and then expose presuppositions that were supporting the constructed binary. We would then critically engage the idea focused on the idea as a whole not as an either/or. We would set up not as a classroom debate of who can make strongest case, rather brainstorming different perspectives and disagreements focused not on the person but how the ideas could possibly cohere. It would take more survey analysis to know if my introductory comments each class were helpful in allowing for productive engagement but some of the student comments reinforced that they appreciated the effort of presenting ways to respectfully engage. I sought to frame my teaching of the history of philosophy as a history of hegemony of ideas and how to respect and yet interact with great thinkers from the past. Parsons (2012) sums up my classroom attempts when he says, "Our educational pattern for our young has been to homogenize diversity. We are beginning

to realize that our tendency to homogenize diversity has enslaved the humble among us who, through ability or placement, would be destined to live in shadow of our freedom" (p. 43).

2) Explore Binary Cultural Assumptions

Alcorn (2013) asks questions related to the theme of existential tension for students, from the beginning of this chapter, "A central problem that educational systems must address is an improved use of the information we gather. Can we as educators, foster learning communities better able to make use of vast resources of information? Can global networks of information offer more promise for social progress? (p.155). This global challenge is only exacerbated by the insider and outsider binary that we have addressed in this chapter. How we view the other is crucial to turning away from a silo mentality to one that engages the vast information available. There may have been an era where some religious educators sought to plead ignorance but this is no longer the case, each of us need to examine our cultural assumptions.

During my own educational journey I have heard many different intentions for why student teachers seek education as a vocation some more idealistic others leaning to the pragmatic. This makes teaching training even more crucial and one way to encourage cultural exploration is for classroom teachers to be given a strategy that resists personal bias and shows their own cultural assumptions. Thus a teacher training curriculum and school curriculum that actively incorporates awareness of not just cultural assumptions, which has been in process for many years, rather to search for the embedded binaries in our thinking that are preventing an openness to differences. As

Parsons says, "There are many good reasons we should want to embrace differences. Basically, however, how we react to student differences by creating policy and by classroom actions defines the communities we hope to create and how we believe those communities might empower citizens who live within them. School curriculum has always been about thoughtful community building. And that educational challenge will be defined by how we build commonality from difference. Community building is not only an educational challenge, it is the very challenge of democracy itself (Parsons (2012) citing Hardt and Negri, 2004, p. 100).

3) Search for Personal Binary Blind Spots

A challenge for the Christian education community as it seeks to develop curriculum is to be aware of personal binary blind spots. We have our own key authors and ideas who guide our discussions, our own 'papal authorities'. As educators we would be wise to hear Žižek:

> To be organized within a particular passionate discourse community is to be organized around the structure of a symptom. This is a condition of thinking for the true believers of many belief systems, be they religious, political, or academic. We become attached to people and ideas we are comfortable with. We become blind to modes of discourse organized around other logics determined by other people with other passions. Symptoms, whether personal or social, are examples of failed discourse organization. But we all, as Žižek says, love our symptoms (Alcorn (2013), p. 177 citing Žižek, 1992).

In my own educational background I was exposed to a way of thinking that in hindsight I see as unable to handle a diversity of religious opinion. This catechetical style was supposed to build a solid basis for basic knowledge built upon Christian scripture and theological authors who were on the 'allowed list'. What I realize now was that this basic instruction was to form a 'skeleton', a structure that would hold other knowledge, not become an end in itself. When I entered into education I began to see that there were multiple ways to utilize this foundation and explore new directions of thought, rather than returning to the skeleton, examining the skeleton and then working with the skeleton as the only way to orthodoxy or right opinion. While this may seem strange to many educators who have taken a different path with less religious baggage, I write this to a Christian community with the hope that they can read between the lines and bring their own applications.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have navigated a path that explored the use of binary terms secular vs. sacred and insider vs. outsider. I began with insights that recognized the flux or living amidst rhizomic thinking and dissolved selves and the narrative self from philosophers' Deleuze and Guattari and Ricoeur, continued by looking at how this is an issue of tension in our cultural milieu, and sought ways to break constructions of insider vs. outsider binary. The challenge of comparison was then explicated as a vehicle often misused by educators in theory and practice. Recognizing that anyone, including religious educators, can fall into the trap of misusing binaries is a reminder for educators to an ongoing self-awareness of the non-verbal, sub-textual messages that are being presented in teaching and research. This awareness is only a beginning towards a

flourishing and just educational outlook but what I see as necessary for those teaching

religion to be aptly familiar personally and in their communication as educators.

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Rhizomic Interlude

While the feeling of being caught in the tension and flux of seeing the world between a narrative and dissolved self, relativism and objectivism, this chapter points to the tension throughout my work as a chaplain and religious educator. This issue lurks behind the conversation of many Christian religious and theological issues because it relates to questions of meaning and meaningless, what is reality, and our place in the world. The opening paragraph clarifies the importance of the binary of transcendence and immanence, asking questions about our situatedness in the world. Exploring this binary brings to light the subject and object divide that has a long pedigree from the early Greeks to medieval theologians and more currently Derrida and Deleuze.

Having moved through the history models, theorists, and problems of this binary, I argue the need for educators to help students and researchers grapple with this constructed binary. In this grappling, I suggest using the strategy of destabilizing, and problematizing the concepts of transcendence and immanence as way to work with these important concepts. Some have chosen one side or the other of the constructed binary when there are different uses made of the transcendental ego; I would argue that educators model the need for living with the mystery of such deep and complex subjects. Promote a view of life that seeks flourishing and wholeness not merely holding up the way of negation or way to manage our world to make it safe. Thus the *Lurking Binary* is really a specific extended reflection on the prior article of living in the flux because I seek to exemplify how one might think of this complex issue in a way that works at keeping openness to the world and not resorting to picking the side of one binary turning the conversation into a false dichotomy.

Chapter Three

A Lurking Binary: Transcendence and Immanence

Does transcendence mean the search for a world beyond this one or is there some sense in which there is a transcendence of or in this world, which is not a transcendence beyond the world? By the same token, does immanence always mean we are "trapped" in the world or does it represent its own kind of surpassal, splendor, or glory? What difference, ethically or politically, would it make to be the champion of one or the other? John Caputo (online syllabus)

Throughout the travel through a world of binaries, some appear earlier in the journey while others tag along for the ride at different stopovers along the way; others haunt from behind a veil of mystery. Early in life, while transitional space is always there, binaries seem deeply embedded in our minds, consciousness, psyche, the non-material aspect of "who we are" as humans; or they are constructed as we grapple with existence. For me, one constructed binary mysteriously lurks behind the disciplines of philosophy, theology, and religion in my own struggle to find meaning in this world; as *homo poetica* or *animal poetica,* man/animal/humans the meaning makers, I continue to "bump" into the discourse of transcendence and immanence as I read philosophical and theological/religious history – a binary that also inhabits Christian education discourse.

The discourse became more apparent to me while studying introductory philosophy – the early Greek philosophers Parmenides and Heraclitus. Although only a small corpus of writing is available related to these key figures (Grondin, 2012), the former argues for "being" and the latter for "becoming" – another way to describe the

transcendent and the immanent. Being implies eternality – that which has always been, that which is changeless and infinite; becoming points to constant change, flux, and things close in proximity and finite.

Defining Transcendence and Immanence

According to the Meta-Encyclopedia of Philosophy there are no uniform uses of the terms transcendence and immanence.

Transcendence is derived from "(L. *transcendere* to climb over, surpass, go beyond) that which is beyond, in any of several senses. Transcendence is the opposite of the immanent (q.v.). When used by Immanuel Kant, "whatever is beyond possible experience is transcendent, and hence unknowable," Theologically transcendence can mean perfection that is beyond limitation or imperfection, incomprehensible, remote from Nature as seen in Deism. When the term is used epistemologically, often it refers to a dualism "that the real transcends apprehending consciousness" (used this way in phenomenological discourse see *Transcendence and Beyond*). The term immanence "(late Lat. *Immanere*, to remain in) refers to the state of being immanent, present, or indwelling." Immanent, used by Immanuel Kant, is "experiential as opposed to non-experiential or transcendent"; in modern metaphysics and theology, immanence "signifies presence (of essence, being, power, etc.) as opposed to absence." Three specific theological movements, pantheism, deism, and mysticism, have their own uses of the term immanent:

According to pantheism the essence of God or the Absolute is completely immanent in the world, i.e. is identical with it. According to Deism God is essentially absent or transcendent from the world. According to immanent theism He is both immanent (in presence and activity) and transcendent (in essence) with respect to it. Mysticism in its broadest sense posits the mutual immanence of the human and the divine. -- W.L. (Meta-Encyclopedia of Philosophy, www.ditext.com/encyc/frame.html) up to here.

Notice that, in the above, the contexts and referents change and elude and one does not find any singular definition. As Daniel Smith (cited in Protevi and Patton) (2003) says, "Immanence and transcendence are both highly over-determined concepts in the history of philosophy and it is not immediately clear what it would mean to be a philosopher of either one" (p. 46). Smith helpfully clarifies how the term is used philosophically: "For any philosophy that begins with the subject – that is, much of post-Cartesian philosophy – the concept of immanence refers to the sphere of the subject, while transcendence refers to what lies outside the subject, such as the 'external world' or the 'other'" (p. 47). Conceptually, these twin ideas continue to appear in emerging and shifting forms over the centuries, and I would argue they are an important binary construction to discuss because, like the background radiation echo, they are/were not easily recognized or "discovered"; yet, many serious academic conversations about religion engage such discourse. Grappling with the immanence/transcendence distinction, not as opposites but as concepts in relationship, can help give us "differing philosophical trajectories" (Smith, p. 46) related to the flow of history, including the current conversation. While there is no actual binary, in my own theological training, I first experienced these terms

used in a way that a binary was constructed. For example, in graduate studies that involved learning about Neo-Orthodox theology, for one eminent theologian, Karl Barth, his view was explained as hyper-transcendence, as he uses the term 'wholly Other' for God in a way that seemed to leave no place for immanence. His perspective is much more complex than this rendering, yet beginning students will not often get passed his exertion of concept of transcendence.

For this chapter, I discuss transcendence and immanence as a constructed binary as a problem that affects the discourse of religious educational research. I briefly discuss three models of the transcendence/immanence distinction, the historical pedigree of the binary, the problems/issues the binary has created, some key figures who have addressed this binary, how the constructed binary affects hermeneutical, religious, and educational discourses, and ways to break this binary through complexification theme of dissertation that seeks to destabilize, deform, and problematize (decentre) hierarchies, representation, and reductionism.

Three Models

Daniel Smith (2003) outlines three models for thinking about the transcendence/immanence distinction: subjectivity, ontology, and epistemology.

The first model he considers is the tradition of *subjectivity (*field of consciousness*)* as a model for transcendence from post-Cartesian influences. Here transcendence is outside the subject, and immanence is the "sphere of the subject" (p. 47). Thus, the ego or consciousness is both at issue for Husserl, Sartre, and Levinas as they all point to different issues raised by transcendence: inter-subjectivity, Being-with-

Others, or alterity. Smith further explains, "[w]hen one says that the field of consciousness is immanent *to* a transcendent subject, one is already erecting the subject as an element of transcendence that goes beyond the flux of experience" (p. 47). Deleuze is critical of this viewpoint as Shults (2014) says, "Throughout his writings, Deleuze hammered away at all sorts of figures of transcendence, psychological and political as well as priestly" (p. 9).

The second model Smith outlines for thinking about the immanence/transcendence distinction is related to the question of *ontology* (the field of Being). "In other words, an immanent or pure ontology would be an ontology in which there is nothing 'beyond' or 'higher than' or 'superior to' Being" (p. 48). Categories of transcendence include, "God" (Christianity), "One" (Plotinus), or the "Other" (Levinas), all which are said to be "beyond" being and can be used to judge or account for Being. The long history to this trajectory will be described below through key figures of the immanence/transcendence conversation.

The third model, which played a historically important role for thinking about the immanence/transcendence distinction is found in Kant and oriented primarily towards *epistemology* (p. 55). Kant actually frames much of his project around this distinction. Smith (2003) elaborates, "On the one hand, Kant defines his project in immanent terms as a critique of transcendence, and thus functions as a precursor to Deleuze. On the other hand, Kant nonetheless resurrects the transcendent Ideas, in the second critique, as the necessary postulates of *practical* reason, thereby assigning to Ideas an important regulative role, and in this respect functioning as a precursor to Derrida" (p. 56).

Binary History

Early in the philosophical historical record from Parmenides and Heraclitus to the present, one can find the immanence/transcendence discourse. The long line of people who grappled with this concept beyond the Greeks include three pre-modern theologians Thomas Aquinas, Martin Luther, John Calvin, and philosopher Immanuel Kant; to the present, major figures one must understand as they relate to religious education and binaries include Jacques Derrida, Emmanuel Levinas, and Gilles Deleuze/Felix Guattari among others. (I acknowledge that I haven't interacted much with a rich feminist discourse).

From their own summation of the historical use of transcendence and immanence, In *What is Philosophy?*, Deleuze and Guattari (1994) insisted that "Wherever there is transcendence, vertical Being, imperial State in the sky or on earth, there is *religion*; and there is Philosophy only where there is immanence even if it functions as arena for the agon and rivalry … only friends can set out a plane of immanence as a ground from which *idols* have been cleared" (p.43). Further, they then outline three general strategies by which transcendence has been introduced into philosophy (Deleuze, 1994). The first strategy is "found in Platonism and its variants: the field of immanence is a simple field of phenomena or appearances which only possesses secondarily what is attributed first to the anterior unity of the Idea (or in later variants, to the 'One beyond Being' in Plotinus, or to the transcendence of the Christian 'God')" (Smith, 2003, p. 51). A second begins "with Descartes, and then with Kant, the cogito made it possible to treat the plane of immanence as a field of consciousness, which was attributed … to the Subject or Ego" (p. 51) (rather than Idea). The third and

contemporary form of transcendence "was introduced by phenomenology and its successors. When immanence becomes immanent to a transcendental subjectivity, it is from within its own field that the mark of transcendence must appear" (p. 52).

Reading these great theorists, I see possible polarizations and emphases with one side of the binary; yet, their struggle has pointed to the need to rethink this constructed binary. I will briefly show how each figure 'echoes' different senses of paradoxical tension in the relationship of immanence and transcendence and set out background to complexify the discussion beyond binary construction.

Thomas Aquinas

Thomas Aquinas has had many friends and foes over the centuries. Of his writings, his views of immanence and transcendence among the earliest. I won't argue against those who contend with his classical theism involving his five proofs of the existence of God, that debate is thoroughly covered. In my own reading of Aquinas I question if he is rationalistic and fixated on transcendence or caught in the semantics of his era. With William Placher (1996), I see glimmers in Aquinas that point beyond his high view of certainty in knowing a transcendent God. Although not specifically commenting about immanence/transcendence, Taylor (2007) points out Thomas' method: "For Thomas, these distinctions (faith/reason, nature/grace etc.) never become oppositions; in every case the latter completes and fulfills, without destroying the former" (p. 51). I believe a possible argument could be made that Thomas was not so dogmatically sure of his transcendent God, rather he was a theologian of synthesis who tried to synthesize immanence and transcendence. As Placher (1996) says, "Aquinas

stated, 'Now we cannot know what God is, only what he is not." And Placher questions if Aquinas' God is "at the peak of a grand metaphysical hierarchy" (p. 21) as many have placed him.

Following Smith (2003) Aquinas could fit in the second model. My own studies of Aquinas find a tension in his thought in his surety to try to understand a transcendent God and an immanent Christ. Aquinas moves to synthesize immanence and transcendence. Adding to the mystery, later in life he leaves behind much of his theological writings (he never finishes *Summa Theologica)* for an experience that he claims changes how he sees everything (likens all he wrote prior to "straw" meaning that he in some ways disputes his earlier reliance on rationalism), moving toward the mystics and away from the rationalists. This said, his view of analogy is a key component of Deleuze's critique as Smith (2001) points out that Aquinas' view "became the position of Christian orthodoxy" rather than equivocity "that denied order in the cosmos" or univocity that seemed to "imply pantheism" (p. 169). According to Smith (2001) Deleuze resurrects this debate as "confrontation with Heidegger" (p. 169). Another example of the second model is Martin Luther.

Martin Luther

Theologians and historians are not sure if Luther read of Aquinas' struggle to relate to a transcendent God (Placher, 1996, p 40). Aquinas saw God's love as so unlike human love (transcendent), we could only make tentative inferences about God's acting in our lives (immanence). Luther uses dialectic terminology, but his idea of a *hidden* and *revealed* God would roughly correspond to transcendence and immanence (Placher,

1996, p. 50). Luther wrestles with a hidden God and uses hyperbole and rhetoric in writing about this struggle, to the chagrin of those who would like their theology in a neat, "reverent" package.

Theologians and psychologists have spilled much ink trying to understand Luther's bombastic personality, who offended as many people as he encouraged, especially in the central struggle with the Church over justification by faith and how deeply he felt his guilt. This issue of how to be right before God related to his view of God as so utterly absolute that he knew of no way to reach that God of perfection. Luther's understanding of immanence relates to the person of Christ coming to earth that, as Placher says for Luther, "We cannot imagine how the God of all the universe will turn out to have been revealed in the crucified Jesus" (p. 50). Luther articulates that no person can be in the place of God's transcendence (to see from God's perspective) and thus his thinking is a reminder that transcendence/immanence is a place of mystery that requires humility. Thus, his perspective while problematic in many ways, I have brought this aspect of Luther forward to show further complexity for Christian educators trying to understand the issue.

John Calvin

John Calvin creates his own binary for people; they either love or hate his way of writing theology and embracing and articulating difficult doctrines. Despite the caricatures of his personality, "Calvin's particular legal training was shaped by a Renaissance humanism that emphasized the study of classical texts as models of rhetoric and persuasive discourse" (Placher, 1996, p. 52). Those who followed him, later

called Calvinists, were not always as willing to remain in the tension of mystery as Calvin. His approach to any theological issue was to be "willing to leave questions unanswered, 'necessary consequences' underived, and apparent inconsistencies suspended in tension" (Placher, 1996, p. 53).

Taylor (2007) comments, "Calvin's theology is in some ways even more dualistic than Luther's. God is radically transcendent and the world is sunk in an abyss of sin and corruption. Human beings, therefore, are totally dependent on God's grace not only for salvation but for all aspects of life." With Calvin the sacred and profane are imploded because he pushes divine transcendence to its limit and thus unwittingly affirms divine immanence (p. 72-74).

Coming personally from the Reformed tradition, my own reading of Calvin would key in on the word "unwittingly." I am more sympathetic because I know how one's presuppositions are difficult to shake once embedded from culture, early life, and study. Lurking behind Calvin's desire to interpret the biblical writings faithfully is his overarching view of transcendence dominating some aspects of his writings. Unfortunately, followers gravitated to places in Calvin's writings (mostly sermons) that appear more unbending although other places are less prone to extremes. A lesser-known fact about Calvin is his "pastoral heart." In an era when people were executed for unorthodox beliefs, Calvin is purported to visit Servetus in his cell prior to execution by Inquisition – a different picture than often portrayed. Not excusing his flaws but in honoring my tradition, there are things to glean from Calvin's interpretive skills.

Several hermeneutical nuances can be learned from Calvin's approach to transcendence/immanence: the principle of accommodation, his allowance that "secret things" may remain hidden and not unduly speculated upon, and his sincerity to his presuppositions and convictions despite their unpopularity each allowing for problematization of the issue – especially now to postmodern eyes. He wrote that God accommodated us by giving us the biblical writings, so when we have difficulty understanding we shouldn't be surprised. Those who interpret sacred texts in hyper-literal ways could learn from this accommodation principle from Calvin, especially those involved in debates over science and religion trying to read science back into texts. With all his flaws, he continues the conversation of immanence/transcendence and moves us beyond the pre-modern to the modern and postmodern.

Each of these three pre-modern theologians had in common a sense of limitation to their knowledge of transcendence and immanence. "All three agreed that human reason and human efforts cannot make it to God" (Placher, 1996, p. 67). Despite flaws and incongruities from a Deleuzian perspective, I read an epistemological humility in these three that I don't see following the 17th century and era of Scholasticism. Aquinas, Luther, and Calvin had a sense of caution against speculation and sought to accommodate the scriptural writings to a developing modern world, but they lacked the confidence displayed by the Scholastics who followed. The overconfidence of the Scholastics in human reason was dismantled by one of the most influential figures in transcendence/immanence study – Immanuel Kant.

Immanuel Kant – Finite/Infinite Divide

"Like the Protestant culture in which it was rooted, Enlightenment philosophy absolutized the distinction between finite and infinite, man and God, and took man as its absolute standpoint – a man, moreover, determined by finitude and sensibility and so a man incapable of elevating himself to the eternal and absolute" (Kosky, 2004, p. 16). Kant's introduction of a wall between the *noumenal* and *phenomenal* strengthened the finite/infinite binary and left religion to sort out ethics from the phenomenon without revelation. As Kosky (2004) elaborates, "This critical turn was meant to secure the possibility of knowledge by specifying the a priori structures of the mind which make knowledge and experience possible. Knowledge was possible so long as it was confined to the phenomenal realm of experience where the mind is active" (p. 16)

"Kant maintained (with Descartes) the transcendency of God, though recognizing the relative immanence of man" (Thamiry, 1910). That said, his understanding of the noumenal realm prohibited any knowledge of God to get beyond the boundary into the phenomenal realm of empirical experience. Kant was actually "protecting" belief in God (God could be postulated by practical reason) through his confining of knowledge to sensible experience, but those who followed were less inclined to his religious views. His writings provoked much further thought, and some later concluded that Kant reduced "everything to the individual consciousness, and declaring all metaphysical investigation to be illusory, locks the human soul in its own immanence and condemns it thenceforth to agnosticism in regard to transcendent realities" (Thamiry, 1910). Kant still assumes transcendence, different from those who follow him (Spinoza, Nietzsche, Deleuze), who reframe his insights and end up on the immanence trajectory. Daniel Smith (2003) clarifies:

Kant called his project a *transcendental* philosophy because it sought

immanence criteria that would allow us to distinguish between these legitimate

and illegitimate uses of the syntheses of consciousness. In this sense, the

'transcendental philosophy is the critique of transcendence, and hence the search

for immanent criteria of critique – that is, immanent to reason itself. A

transcendental critique is a purely immanent critique (p. 56).

Several philosophers of importance following Kant continue with a transcendence

trajectory – Jacques Derrida and Emmanuel Levinas.

Jacques Derrida

Jacques Derrida belongs to a contemporary and post-phenomenological tradition

of transcendence due to his deconstructive efforts to "attempt to uncover, within the

immanent and manifest movement of traditional philosophical concepts and their

'binary oppositions,' a latent and transcendent movement of 'difference' that is never

present as such in the text but constantly serves to disrupt and destabilize it" (Smith,

2003, p. 52). In his philosophical journey, Derrida moves in the direction of "negative

theology" (p. 53). Smith (2003) further elaborates, "In Derrida, metaphysics is

determined by its structural 'closure,' and deconstruction is a means of disturbing this

closure, creating an opening or interruption" (p. 48). When Derrida speaks of

"disturbing this closure", he is assuming transcendence and while one cannot "get

outside" of metaphysics he chooses to push the "edges" and work from within, he

"situates his work at the limit of philosophical discourse" (p. 49). Thus, although

Derrida is situated on the side of transcendence, one can see that he is aware of

immanence/transcendence issue and seeks to work at what he sees is the periphery, "The border he straddles is the border between the closed and immanent totality of metaphysics, with its exhausted concepts and philosophemes, and that which exceeds that totality … a formal structure of transcendence" (p. 49).

Emmanuel Levinas

Emmanuel Levinas "explicitly describes himself as a philosopher of transcendence," with his idea of the "Other" playing a central role in his concept of transcendence (Smith, 2003, p. 46). Levinas' philosophy "founds ethics on the infinite transcendence of the 'Other,' which challenges the status of the reflective subject and undoes the primacy of the Same" (p. 52). As Levinas (1996) says, "Transcendence is only possible with the Other (Autrui), with respect to who we are absolutely different, without this difference depending on some quality. Transcendence seemed to me to be the point of departure for our concrete relations with the Other (Autrui); all the rest is grafted on top of it. *That is why the transcendent is a notion which seems to me primary (italics added)"* (p. 27). Further, for Levinas,

> the ultimate situation of the face-to-face encounter implies a kind of religious experience, that is an encounter with transcendence, albeit not the kind of religious experience that tends to affirm or shore up the foundations of any religious certainty… Thus with the other person in a relationship of obligation is in the same moment an encounter with transcendence as exteriority, radical otherness (Deal & Beal, 2004, p. 128-129.)

While Levinas' stand against totalizing situations with the Other and his "ethical obligation to face the other" are positive contributions to religious education," his views of transcendence are vigorously encountered in the works of other philosophers and theologians including Deleuze, who never discusses Levinas' views directly yet says to the form of thought that Levinas takes, "since this lived experience, pure and even primordial, does not belong completely to the self that represents it to itself, it is in the regions of non-belonging that the horizon of something transcendent is reestablished" (Smith quoting DG, 2003, p. 52).

Thus Levinas' view has even been called "hyper-transcendence" because

> For Levinas, the classical idea of transcendence is clearly not enough for it represents a movement that for him is trapped *within* being, and hence within a sphere of 'ontological' immanence, even if and especially when it asserts an ontology of supersensible being. The trap that transcendence springs for Levinas is to confine all travel within the borders of being- either in the classical movement from a lower mode of being to a higher one; from finite (sensible) being to infinite (supersensible) being; or, as in Heidegger, in a movement from beings to Being itself. So, for Levinas what is truly called for is 'escape' from this trap" (Caputo & Scanlon, 2007, p.3).

Baruch Spinoza

Baruch Spinoza (1632-1677) introduces a radical departure from those in prior genealogy who emphasized transcendence. For some in my own educational community this might constitute reason to leave Spinoza outside of the conversation,

but I think a willingness to engage with those who have been marginalized can be beneficial in overcoming personal blind spots and in the case of this dissertation better understand the constructed binary of transcendence and immanence that holds sway in much evangelical, orthodox thought.

For Deleuze and Guattari, Spinoza is considered a prince of philosophers (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994, p.60) and informs their own understanding of transcendental empiricism. Spinoza pushes back against a Judeo-Christian conception of God and those who idealize and anthropomorphize a transcendent God. "People attribute to God features borrowed from human consciousness… and, in order, to provide for God's essence, they merely raise those features to infinity, or say that God possess them in an infinitely perfect form" (Deleuze,2001, p. 63). Spinoza critiques the views of transcendence espoused by Plato, many medieval theologians, Descartes, and Kant by positing a God of all encompassing substance. For Spinoza, "God and nature are one and the same thing" (Smith, 2003, p. 55) or in other words not transcendence above immanence or vice versa, rather transcendence within immanence. Further as Deleuze (2001) says, "Absolute immanence is in itself: it is not in something, to something; it does not depend on an object or belong to a subject. In Spinoza, immanence is not immanence to substance; rather, substance and modes are in immanence. When the subject or the object falling outside the plane of immanence is taken as a universal subject or as any object to which immanence is attributed, the transcendental is entirely denatured, for it then simply redoubles the empirical (as with Kant), and immanence is distorted, for it then finds itself enclosed in the transcendent" (p. 26-27).

Rocca (2008) elaborates the problem, "Spinoza's problem with Cartesian and other accounts of the affects is that such views introduce an objectionable bifurcation between human beings and the rest of reality" (p. Kindle Location 405). In *Post-Secular Spinoza: Deleuze, Negri, and Radical Political Theology* Clayton Crockett (2010) outlines Spinoza's importance for a radical political theology that doesn't bifurcate reality such as the issue of immanence and transcendence in this chapter. For this discussion "Deleuze uses Spinoza's thought to criticize the notion of analogy in its theological use" (Crockett, 2010, p. 7).

Spinoza radically upends medieval notions of analogy and thinks of all things through univocity. We live embedded in a reality of oneness that has differences of modulation rather than distinct differences between persons (creatures) and God (creator). Spinoza's conceptions of univocity and immanence are taken up by Deleuze "to release, to set free what lives (In *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, 2006, p. 185). Deleuze sees that Spinoza's place of importance is "no longer the affirmation of a single substance, but rather the laying out of a common plane of immanence on which all bodies, all minds, and all individuals are situated" (p. 16).

In *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*, Deleuze "set himself to task of retrieving affect from Spinoza's Ethics" (Stivale, 2011, p. 182). Deleuze highlights Spinoza's important contribution that "there is not one type of affect in Spinoza but two (*affectio affectus*), and then, not only two but, before and beneath them both, a third (affect as blessedness - beatitude or soul), and then, in a lightening flash, not just three but a multitudinous affectivity beyond number (a plane of immanence)" (ibid. p. 182). Seigworth (2011) states: Through Spinoza's affect, Deleuze's "notion of the immanence

and perpetual flowings and fleeings of the social field can be more full grasped... Against dialectical reasoning and various structuralist dualisms" p.188. Further, speaking of affect that "circulates between potential and its actualisation, between what expresses and what is expressed... not to close up potential and its actualisation but to leave them perpetually open to the Outside" (p.189). Spinoza gives Deleuze a "logic of univocity, where things are thought in their being, since the act of thinking something is the same act that produces it, by which it comes to be" (p. 189) (Seigworth 2011 citing Macherey p. 189). The importance of Spinoza for this brief genealogy of immanence and transcendence is seen further in his influence on Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari.

Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari

Deleuze is well known as a philosopher of immanence. Immanence for Deleuze is "To remain within"— all causes come from within vs. external, transcendent causes or categories (e.g. Kant sees space and time as transcendental categories). Deleuze tries to build a philosophy of immanence, not based on transcendent causes/categories. Immanence in D/G's sense suggests that world or life produces itself and calls his philosophy a "transcendental empiricism" (contrast to Kant's transcendental idealism). In light of the ongoing debate presented so far, Deleuze and Guattari seek to develop what is called *transcendental empiricism* because they see the effect of transcendence into the active political sphere.

According to Claire Colebrook, "Everything in Deleuze's thought comes down to the crucial idea of immanence" (p. 57) or, as Justaert (2012) says, "In fact, Deleuze considered immanence not simply as an idea or a concept, but as the pre-philosophical

horizon against which thinking can be creative and productive" (p.12) and "immanence in itself" (p. 16). Ramey (2012) explains, "The term 'immanence' has several interlinked meanings in Deleuze's work. In one sense, immanence functions in his work as a kind of meta-philosophical axiom, injunction to philosophize from a perspective according to which *being* is never to be conceived as transcendent, but as immanent to thought" (p. 2). He connects thought and being in an inexplicable way in which thought cannot adequately represent being; yet, "it is only under certain intense conditions that the real is conceivable; the realization of being in thought occurs within the mind, yet paradoxically beyond its representational capacities" (Ramey, 2012, p. 2). Scholar Giorgio Agamben (2000) adds that, for Deleuze, "The principle of immanence, therefore, is nothing other than a generalization of the ontology of univocity, which excludes any transcendence of Being" (p. 226). Kristaert notes, "immanence is not (only) a technical philosophical concept, it is a matter of how one lives his or her life" (p.12); thus, philosophers and non-philosophers alike have a stake in this historical movement.

Problems

I now move from a historical sketch of concepts and persons to some of the problems/issues concerning immanence/transcendence. Concepts such as transcendence and immanence have been problematic for various reasons according to philosophical discourse. Agamben charts out a helpful diagram of where some of the

aforementioned philosophers would be situated (Agamben, 2000, p. 239):

Transcendence   *Immanence*

Spinoza

Kant

Nietzsche

Husserl

Heidegger

Levinas, Derrida

Deleuze, Foucault
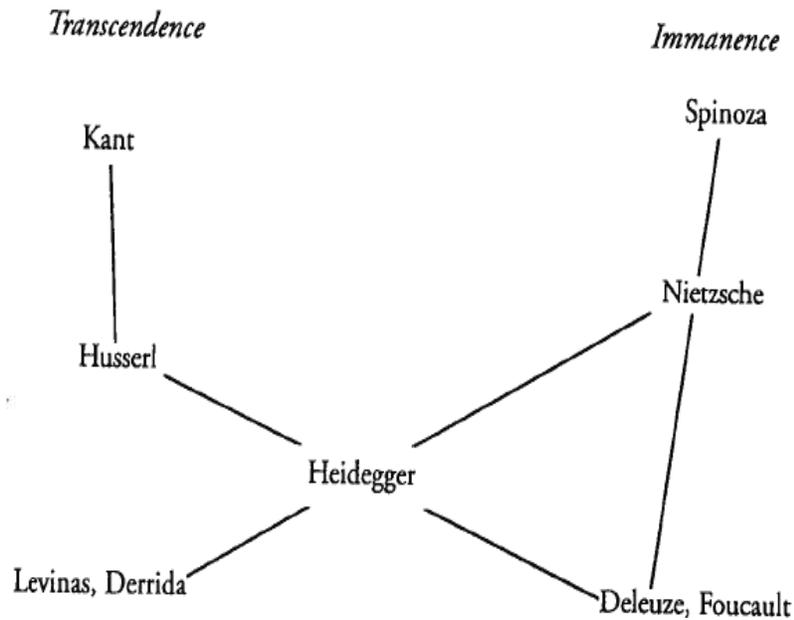
From the above, my estimate would be that Aquinas, Luther, and Calvin would be situated between the two poles with Heidegger but leaning to transcendence albeit not connected per se with the others. The diagram highlights the binary, showing Heidegger as an intermediary figure. Smith (2003) calls these "trajectories" that go through Heidegger's influence because neither side of the typology is absolutizing the theorists in the binary (although Deleuze strongly situates in univocity and immanence and Derrida with transcendence) (p. 46).

Issues

Although not everyone agrees, Colebrook (2003) points out that one error of thinking transcendence is to capture male as that which is used to "ground and explain all difference" (p. 102). One has to merely look at the history of the treatment of women

to see a line of atrocities and injustices that have flowed from thinking that the "altern" is an "other" to be subjugated to the current "world as it is." The irony of a stabilized societal sphere based on this sort of transcendent notion is that the stability itself creates a deeper embedded strife that those who have power are unable to see. This cultural imaginary can lead to overconfident interpretations of the self and the world, introducing binary divisions because of a false assurance of knowledge based upon a transcendent ideal, even when our actions oppress others.

In the theological sphere, an error of transcendence can lead to an otherworldly way of living that ignores the current moment because it is merely going to pass away. Thus, the real, the eternal, is the transcendent and what we see around us is illusion. This Platonic view has infiltrated the theological conversation, but awareness for this error has been admitted by many and is slowly being taken up by the discourse even by evangelicals.

For Christian theologians, the concept of *univocity*, siding with immanence sounds like pantheism (all is God), which throughout the history of the church was considered a heresy. As Kristaert (2012) says, "The divine and the earthly are here combined into one single form 'that would disallow any differentiation between Creator and creature'" (p. 21). Counter to this way of thinking, Duns Scotus, who Deleuze draws from, emphasizes the way that univocity allows for a formal continuity between terms without simply effacing them altogether" (p. 22). As Deleuze (1992) says, "Attributes constitute the essence of substance, but in no sense constitute the essence of modes or of creatures. Yet they are forms common to both" (p. 47). Thus, Kristaert believes, despite Deleuze officially not having affinities with theology, there is an opening to the possible

renewal of an older theological way (appropriating Spinoza and Duns Scotus) of immanence/transcendence.

Educational Becoming and Univocity

In the present Deleuze's "society of control," coexists with Foucault's governmentality and biopower. Deleuze and Guattari think of socially just pedagogies in terms of rhizomes (n-1), models of desire, and plane of immanence. Rhizome (n-1) as Deleuzeguattari (1987) explain is that, "The multiple must be made, not by always adding a higher dimension, but rather in the simplest of ways, by dint of sobriety, with the number of dimensions one already has available always n - 1 (the only way the one belongs to the multiple: always subtracted). Subtract the unique from the multiplicity to be constituted; write at n - 1 dimensions. A system of this kind could be called a rhizome" (p.6). These concepts construct pedagogies as "becoming" rather than "being" – opening resistant spaces and potential territories of social justice – all of them uncertain. Becoming for Deleuze comes from his position of univocity, a term that is contrasted to equivocity and analogy. As Smith (2001) says, "For Deleuze, the only pure and fully realized ontology must be a univocal ontology, and only a univocal ontology is capable of thinking difference-in-itself, or of providing difference with its own concept" (p. 169).

Deleuze and Guattari reject an ontology of fully-formed individuals (identities, beings, agents, states), but offer an ontology of difference as a radical alternative. They develop an idea that individuals are always in a process of becoming (creating, influencing, networking, etc.). Their ontology is hardly ethereal; it allows that the whole

of reality exists and grants that independent agents can and do build ideas. In fact, their dynamic realism rejects object-subject dichotomies because becoming (individuation) replaces being; immanent embeds the transcendent; difference untethers identity; and, multiplicities replace fixed essences and ideas.

The result is an ontological system that replaces the transcendent idealist and categories-based ontology of Plato and Aristotle, rather following Spinoza's idea of univocity. Cartesian dualism posits two unchanging substances: matter and spirit. Univocity discounts this classic philosophical split of subject and object, because, ontologically, substance grants existence, what Deleuze and Guattari see as substantial matters. For Deleuze and Guattari, substance is in a continuum of pure change that infinitely and inexhaustibly produces different expressions of itself upon the plane of immanence. These configurations are complexities of physical matter, human networks, and other manifestations of multiplicities.

The Scholastics (and Aquinas before them) used three terms to resolve the immanence/transcendent relationship of Being – equivocity, univocity, and analogy. "To say that Being is equivocal means that the term 'Being' is said of beings in several senses, and that these senses have no common measure" (Smith, 2003, p. 53). Equivocity means that to say anything of God does not mean it relates to humans – an ontological gap exists between the two that cannot be bridged. "By contrast, to say that Being is univocal (Duns Scotus), means that Being has only one sense" (p. 53) no matter if this is God, humans, animals, etc. Between these extremes was developed analogy: "There is indeed a common measure to the forms of Being, but this measure is

analogical" (p. 53). Aristotle and Aquinas both held to this way of explanation of Being. Medieval theology, as noted above in the Aquinas discussion, sought to syncretize a solution. Eventually this attempt to syncretize became known as "divine" names tradition asking - How can traditional divine attributes – such as goodness, love, wisdom and so on which are finite and immanent – be predicated of God who is infinite and transcendent?(p. 53).

Equivocity	Univocity	Analogy
Being (Creator)	Being (Creator) <–> Creatures	Being (Creator)
Transcendence	Transcendental empiricism	Transcendence
GAP	Transcendence within immanence	\\\\\\
Immanence - Creatures		Creatures

In this chart reflecting Christian theology, equivocity posits a gap in being between a view of God as creator and people as creatures as God is so different than people there is nothing to connect us, thus a hyper-transcendence; univocity correlates creator and creatures on plane of immanence; analogy sought to provide a link creator and creatures. Deleuze provides a different way of thinking about the relationship as seen in his view of univocity. With prompts from my research in Deleuze, I am asking the question whether Christian education can revisit univocity in light of a scriptural understanding rather than discard it as unorthodox due to acceptance of Thomistic analogy.

Deleuze and Education

For Deleuze, by embracing *univocity* rather than *analogy* or *equivocity*, what he calls the virtual is engaged in a process of actualization as it follows the plane which gives it its proper reality. In other words, creation is actualized as the virtual in the immanence of life and incarnated as the becoming of folds, which are folded, unfolded, and refolded by events. Rather than looking to some transcendent ideal, Deleuze sees all on a plane of life. As Crockett (2011) says, "Both virtual and actual possess equal reality; neither of these is essentially negative or lacking being" (p. 62). Analogy would assume a transcendent such as God; equivocity assumes disconnectedness and heightened relativity of individuation. Univocity looks to the pre-personal and not some ground of being where all things are flows and assemblages and becoming. Colebrook quoting Deleuze (1990) says,

> Only a theory of singular points is capable of transcending the synthesis of the person and the analysis of the individual as these are (or are made) in consciousness. We cannot accept the alternative which thoroughly compromises psychology, cosmology, and theology: either singularities already comprised in individuals and persons, or the undifferentiated abyss. Only when the world, teaming with anonymous and nomadic, impersonal and pre-individual singularities, opens up, do we tread at last on the field of the transcendental (p.103).

Colebrook (2014) adds to this discussion of the difference between equivocity and univocity in chapter, *Postmodernism Is a Humanism: Deleuze and Equivocity*. She argues for univocity in relationship to sense, that "sense is not an order imposed on an

undifferentiated world (read equivocity); rather sense is orientation or relations effected from singularities" (p. 207). Further, that "univocity sees sense as the surface that regards bodies as located within time, but perceives in them a potential for all time" and one plane of expression (p. 207-208) whereas "equivocity posits two radically incommensurate levels" (p. 209). Thus, Aquinas sought analogy to bridge equivocity and univocity (in chart - what I have termed creature and creator following Aquinas' language and transcendent and immanent), and scholastic theology following him. Deleuze challenges analogy, disputes equivocity and argues for univocity. Deleuze opens up discussion, followed further in Adkins and Hinlicky (2013), as to whether univocity was discarded without a hearing.

Thus, influenced by Deleuze's focus on univocity, Christian education can be challenged by Deleuze as a celebration of a constant becoming of life, in which the primary use of knowledge fosters multiple world-making and sees our actual becomings in terms of multiplicities and singularities rather than unification and actuality. Life becoming is no longer made by a self or a subject, but becomes indetermination within life's immanence. Self and subject become incarnated by events, through which the existing folds are continually folded, unfolded, and refolded made up of assemblages, which are a "becoming that brings elements together" (Wise, 2011, p. 91).

Deleuzian Fold

Another way I am looking at complexification of this binary construction is informed by the Deleuzian concept of the fold, "the outside is not a fixed limit but a moving matter animated by peristaltic movements, folds and foldings that together

make up an inside: they are not something other than the outside, but precisely the inside of the outside" (Deleuze, 1988, pp. 96-7). "The concept of the fold allows Deleuze to think creatively about the production of subjectivity, and ultimately about the possibilities for, and production of, non-human forms of subjectivity. In fact, on one level the fold is a critique of typical accounts of subjectivity that presume a simple interiority and exteriority (appearance and essence, or surface and depth). For the fold announces that the inside is nothing more than a fold of the outside" (Parr, 2005, p.119). Further, "There is a variety of modalities of folds: from the fold of our material selves, our bodies, to the folding of time, or simply memory. Indeed, subjectivity might be understood as precisely a topology of these different kinds of folds… In this sense, the fold can also be understood as the name for one's relation to oneself (or, the effect of the self *on* the self)" (p. 119).

The concept of the fold shows the constructed nature of binaries because in reality they are not simple appearance and essence. While polarized terms are used pointing to dichotomy…, "The fold is a way of organizing thinking without binaries, absolutes, or hierarchies. It's not one or the other; there's no inside or outside; there are no limits to rupture. It's all just a relative position ripe with shadows, obscurities, edges but that all give way once you round the corner, make it over the crease (or not, as the case may be)" and "Binaries such as inside/outside and surface/depth operate with an either/or logic: it's one or the other. The fold, however, allows for the operation of and: it's both this and that. There's a distinction between what I feel and what I say… But they are intimately bound up and rarely opposed. They are different planes of a common event: the event of me" and "The fold overcomes binaries including the binary between

binaries and not binaries. Which is to say, the fold doesn't just replace either/or with and. It supersedes the distinction by offering either/or and/or and. It all depends on the mode of the fold" (Coffeen, 2014, p.1).

In other words, the actualization of creativity in the virtual of the immanent field of life refers to creating knowledge for becoming concerned with creativity and innovation in terms of ontology. Among the contemporary influential French thinkers, as aforementioned, Deleuze presents a "transcendental empiricism", which argues that immanence is a plane that "does not present a flux of the lived that is immanent to a subject and individualized in that which belongs to a self" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994, 47). For Deleuze, there is no such predetermined existence, so called subject and self, but "only events, that is, possible worlds as concepts and other people as expressions of possible worlds or conceptual persona" (Ibid., 48) – as Kristaert (2012) says, "the virtual dynamizing the actual" (p. 14). Crockett (2011) further states, "Any time one posits two planes, a plane of transcendence and a plane of immanence, the problem becomes the mediation, in both ontological and epistemological terms, between the two planes. If God is located simply on a transcendent plane, then knowledge of God is impossible and religion is reduced to the problem of political obedience" (p. 68).

According to Deleuze, the concept of the subject is merely created to serve the functions of universalizing in the linguistic acts and of individuation for a living and lived person (Deleuze, 2007, p. 353). The concept of the subject is created to represent the field of immanence plane of our life and worlds; peoples and others are just the expression of becoming derived from such plane through the force of events. Deleuze

argues that "a life is the immanence of immanence, absolute immanence: it is complete power, complete beatitude" (Deleuze, 2007, p. 390). The immanence of life is a concept that grasps unique relationships between one and one's world-making where all multiplicities are laid out and meshed into this plane. This approach demands some thought as to how we can generally re-think Christian education.

Either/Or?

In my Christian community, some would have us choose between one or the other, as if the binary was meant to pit immanence vs. transcendence or vice versa (This problem stems back to using the dative form of immanence – something immanent *to* something else) (Kristaert, 2012, p. 16). I am arguing that immanence and transcendence are not meant to be pulled apart, (not because this is reality rather as a constructed binary) but rather are meant to be held together in a creative tension– bound in a way I take the sense of Latin *relegare* in a paradoxical relationship. I recognize that formidable minds are weighing in on different aspects of this discourse; yet, Deleuze helps address a Christian education that should continually be destabilizing stasis rather seeking harmony, peace, and yet creative disruption. These values motivate me to work towards bringing these concepts together. Perhaps I am naïve, but theorists from Plato to Aquinas, Calvin to Kant, Derrida, Levinas, and Deleuze all help me see the need to promote a passion to embrace the flourishing of all things; thus, I want a way to engage creativity in the tension rather than re-territorializing, by revisiting paradox.

Revisiting Paradox

Paradox is a term with an interesting genealogy (literally "beyond belief").

Derrida uses term *doxa* to describe "opinions"; and, theologians regard *kavod* in

Hebrew scriptures as "heavy or an imprint of glory" and the New Testament Greek

equivalent is *doxa*. Joined with prefix para (beside, side-by-side), these could creatively

be joined etymologically as opinions (seriously contemplated), imprinted alongside one

another in relationship.

Paradoxes appear to be contradictory but can point to mystery that is open to

becoming. With mystics past and present, I would find a way to step into what some

term the *abject*, resonating between subject and object, complexifying that binary

together to see more connection to the universe rather than distinguishing from it. In

theology, this quest would mean re-conceptualizing the Creator/creature dualism to be

distinguished – yet one. One possible way out of this is Mark C. Taylor's (2007) use of

"neither/nor" as he outlines categories of monistic (both/and), dualistic (either/or), and

complex (neither/nor) (p. 38). He emphasizes neither transcendent nor immanent, an

emergent creativity (virtual) (p. 38). Taylor (2007) explains, "The complex type is the

third religious schema. In contrast to the monistic and dualistic types, the real in this

case is neither present nor absent, rather it is irreducibly interstitial or liminal and as

such is virtual" (p. 40) a schema that opens up possibility.

Adkins and Hinlicky (2013) point out "It is a critical task of both philosophy and

theology to expose the often concealed but nevertheless functional deities or appeals to

transcendence at work in accounts of our experience and require an accounting" (p.

214). With them I continue to question and seek ways to do this in my own academic

journey seeking new ways of exploration. Further, it is a challenge in thinking what

some may see as unthinkable: "Philosophy therefore should have the courage to think God and/or the gods naturalistically in metaphysics and/or to engage in real exchange about the one God with theologies (or jurisprudences) of the revealed religions" (p. 214). Put differently, "Philosophy should also dare to deploy Deleuze's critical analysis of religions as conservative of fragile human shelterings over against the chaos. Deleuze's analysis of religion… is a double-edged sword: acknowledging both the necessity and inevitability of "anchoring" immanence in transcendence by means of religious figures, it also undergirds genealogical accounts of these figures, which, of course, may be more or less successful in execution" (p. 214). They potently remind that "The memory of Christendom's unholy alliance of throne and altar, moreover, with all the guilt-ridden and morbid subjectivities fostered to undergird that alliance, has made Christianity toxic if not merely passé for many contemporaries" (p. 215). They point ahead to a dePlatonized epoch and a transcendence within immanence related to a reMessianized mode (p. 215), even citing Luther's (1961) discontent with "what now is and yearns for what is to come" echoing my own journey, calling me to remain engaged in this discourse.

I admit that in seeking to break or complexify binary thinking in relationship to transcendence and immanence, there is ongoing need to challenge personal consistency, yet this chapter desires to be a rupture in representational thinking within my Christian education community. This rethinking of paradox is a possible way forward, a line of flight, for me against representational thinking.

Searching

Humans have been characterized by many descriptions – restless, searching, longing, desiring, reaching, grasping, and wondering. Jesus says, "lose life to gain;" Agamben (1998) calls humans outside of political coverage *homo sacer* "sacred or accursed man" (p.45); Deleuze uses term "desiring machines"; and, Ernest Becker (1974) (Pulitzer Prize winning book the Denial of Death) discusses the concept *homo poetica* or "meaning makers." Following this line of thought would encourage openness to becoming, not to define ourselves and give in to new forms of representational oppression yet, we continue to struggle with hierarchies, reductionism and representation to remain immanent to the immanence and live "life as absolute immediacy … pure contemplation without knowledge" (Agamben, p. 233). The constructed binary remains in my educational community, but I see potentialities emerge in paradox of transcendence within immanence as Barber (2014) shows a way forward is thinking symbiosis: "The two attributes of thought and extension are said simultaneously of the one substance, which means the difference (distinction between attributes) and unity (one substance) are not mutually exclusive but in fact symbiotic" (p. 41). Further, "Deleuze… makes formal distinction (the distinction between attributes) essential to substance (or God), which means that difference becomes intrinsic to God, or substance, itself. The contrast is thus that Deleuze does not distribute difference within a framework where the unified one transcends the diverse many, he instead makes difference intrinsic to, constitutive of, the immanent relation of substance and attributes." (p. 42). Whether this way of thinking will be assimilated by Christian educators is still to be seen, there is a move in Christian theology to grapple

with univocity and dispute analogy as seen in Shults (2014), Barber (2014), Justaert,(2012), and Adkins & Hinlicky (2013).

Necessary Binary?

This chapter has discussed negative aspects of an education that dualistically approaches or creates a hierarchy of transcendence and immanence; yet, the binary is a reminder of our tendency to remain static and closed to new vistas of thought. One Christian perspective postulates (Keller, 2013) an approach to suffering that takes into account daily realities of our view of the world, the issue of transcendence/immanence pushes us to envision and make sense of the chaos and suffering. The difficulty of living "pure contemplation without knowledge" leaves most facing each day grappling with chaos, challenge, and the mundane. In this regard, religious pursuits have often given life through epistemological stability and coherence. Unfortunately, this pursuit of religion also can lead to the abuses one merely needs to open up history to see. Transcendence, popularly understood and even if it is illusory, gives people hope there is something beyond the day-to-day grind. Max Weber pointed to a time to come that would be characterized by "disenchantment with the world" and a modern culture "premised (upon) the assumption that the world was fully knowable, fully calculable, fully open to the probing of the scientific mind and reason" (Kosky, 2004, p. 13). Many still grasp for "something more, caught even in their way of questioning rather than looking to each moment as in assemblage as "complex constellations of objects, bodies, expressions, qualities, and territories that come together for varying periods of time to ideally create new ways of functioning" (Parr, 2005, p. 18).

Educational Implications

There are several implications I envision from this chapter for (Christian) educators to consider from the genealogy of this binary and how Deleuzian thought can help address the constructed binary of transcendence and immanence.

1) **Resist Hierarchy of Concept**

Rather than polarize immanence and transcendence, make students aware of tendencies to think transcendence in hierarchy over immanence or vice versa. Introduce them to the history and human propensities to intolerance to other perspectives and develop a resiliency to engage in healthy debate. Alcorn in the context of resistance to learning says something also needed to inform classroom strategy against binary thought: "If you are truly committed to freedom of thought, if you are in principle seeking to support freedom of thought, you must demonstrate your own ability to tolerate anxiety when your beliefs are threatened (p. 45). Helping students see transcendence within immanence can allow for a deeper sense of mystery in spiritual development and living moment to moment. If relating to an idealized "Other" is discouraged then students learn not to import their own preconceptions on a controlling transcendence rather they see life as a journey that isn't preset by a self-inflicted, possibly immature or even harmful agenda. For example, if one views God as a controlling presence only interested in behaviour modification or improvement, personally or politically, then that transcendent notion will restrict any growth that can come from daily discovery for fear of mistakes under that tyrannical gaze. Hardt and Negri (2008) share an experience of this dependence on transcendence after they had lectured "a member of the audience expressed her sympathy with our project but then

objected that we overestimate the power of people. We are weak when we act on our own, she explained, and we are strong only when we confide ourselves in and are guided by a power that stands above us, God's power"; one's perception of this constructed binary is as they say "a clear example of the politics of immanence and one of transcendence" (p. 311).

2) **Embrace Embedded Existence**

In Christian tradition that depends too heavily on Plato, there can be a dismissiveness to this temporary life, to education and politics as not so important as what is beyond. With Hardt and Negri (2008) I affirm that "despite the great philosophical interest of these nuances in the meaning of the transcendent and the transcendental, we find ourselves more concerned in the end with the kind of confusions they introduce" (p. 314). As Christian educators, when a dependence like this on transcendence emerges in classroom discussion, with this in mind we can help students to rethink their immanent location, that their faith is not in something that is so far beyond them but rather as close to them as the air they breathe. There are aspects of the scriptural text that have a transcendent tone such as the Lord's prayer stating "our Father in heaven" yet they can be qualified in other places by a deeper embeddedness, as the apostle Paul says, "In God we live and move and have our being". There is an emphasis in Revelation that some miss for all the apocalyptic fervor, that conjoins the idea of heaven and earth, a future new heaven and earth in harmony not just a Platonic heaven to go to when you die. Many places in Christian scripture it asserts that this earth matters and how we understand this binary affects our political engagement in the current moment and to accept life as a day to day embeddedness breaks with thought

that takes a passive approach to current global challenges.

3) **Affirm Complexity**

Christian educators can explore binary constructs as a strategy for student development – instead of idea of reconciling polarities or paradox, instructors can encourage the destabilising of need for absolute certainty. These paradoxes can be pedagogical tools to aide in grappling with the complexity of knowledge and open their eyes to Socrates' dictum of knowing what they don't know, or recognizing ignorance. Deleuze can alert us to the ongoing human draw to transcendence in reading sacred texts. Educators can model a pedagogy holding more to a perspective of perhaps or possible (see Caputo's latest book *The Insistence of God*) a way of thinking rhizomatically. (The appendices in this work are further exemplars of how this approach can be part of educational research and instruction).

Conclusion

Living in the "something more" is one of life's ongoing difficulties in relationship to Christian religion and education. The binary mindset has broadly affected humans' abilities to "extract meaning from the external world by ordering abstract elements into dyads" (Newberg, 2010, p. 76) and "are found in many religious traditions throughout the world" (p. 105). While providing resources for survival to our ancestors, in the current moment oppositional dyads create the sort of tensions outlined in this thesis. Religion, in a positive sense, "finds resolution to these dyadic problems via some form of integration or wholeness and this wholeness might even recognize both elements of the dyad as *requiring* the other" (p. 106), a territorialization that needs reminding to remain

in tension of ongoing deterritorialization and reterritorialization. An echoing voice from Adkins and Hinlicky (2013), "To think all this, not "as if", but rather as "having and yet not having", that is, in non-possessive because self-surrendering faith is the thinking of a form of life that rhizomatically erupts…" (p. 216).

By outlining some of the immanence/transcendence philosophical conversation, I have seen that binaries often put distance between people who join different sides of binary. I would envision educators who are informed of this important conversation, especially those who develop student teachers, so that there would be a serious movement to student-becoming – this chapter as its own contribution to expose this lurking binary in the Christian community.

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Rhizomic Interlude

From transcendence within immanence, this next chapter was a foray into a further interdisciplinary article bringing my prior interests in youth work forward touching my current educational research. A problem arose from that earlier work in the classroom and continued into my work at the university where I encountered a religious mindset that evoked in me memories of my prior faith journey, a mindset firmly entrenched in either/or categories. Firm opinions, strong stances, worked through logical argument were all part of the scene and all acceptable aspects of discourse; but, entrenched dogmas that wouldn't engage in conversation having any sense of possibility of learning something new that might sway one to another way of thinking were disturbing. I recognize that this theme has resonated throughout this dissertation; but, here with this issue, I was disturbed early in my studies to go in the directions seen in the prior chapters. The rhizomic fit in this dissertation is that multiple strands of ideas are brought together and display a wrestling with concepts to help break free of representational hegemony. The breaking of the constructed binary of good and evil is the main foci of this chapter, with other strands of thought drawn together from popular culture and theorists. This chapter reminded me that, where theory meets praxis, if my role as chaplain has been implicated in a closed world, then I want to follow a new trajectory of overcoming dichotomies that gives teachers new ways to reach out through pedagogy and research.

Chapter Four

Exploring the Binary of Good vs. Evil

A Binary Hierarchy that Binds – Good vs. Evil

As an educator who has taught in the junior high classroom and, more recently, has spent hours in conversation with university students in my role as chaplain, Christian educator, and moral and religious educator, I have encountered a problematic religious mindset. This mindset is something I have seen in myself and has had implications for how I see the world. I have noticed this mindset in my students as well, the tendency to frame the world in either/or categories. Whether this binary mindset is innate to humans or something we have acquired over our developmental, evolutionary history is for an ongoing discussion; but, currently I am asking whether one's religious education has had a role to play in this binary mindset and how Christian educators can learn from Deleuzian insights that complexify binary constructions.

A binary decision-making process can be an invaluable tool when things need to be accomplished on a day-to-day basis for simple tasks of choosing one thing over another. Yet, when one uses this same process to make major choices with wider implications and scope for one's life, a liability can tend towards setting camps – us vs. them. This mindset can divide people and break down societal unity. In broadly Lacanian terms, the Imaginary holds conceptually a duality expressed in the Symbolic Order. In other words, binary thinking entrenches us into a way of living that tries to deemphasize ambiguity and help uphold structure and control. Here I see the need for religious education to destabilize some of its own prevalent notions that would make life seem more in our control. One major binary theme in Christian and religious education is

good and evil, which impacts each generation of young people. My question here is how we help young people break this binary thinking as it relates to the big questions of life we explore in religious educational pursuits?

There are many ways in which binary thinking continues to be prevalent in the wider culture as well as within youth culture due to the embeddedness of so many polar themes popularized by the media in its various forms. One binary that has a firm grip in media and youth culture is the dichotomy of good and evil. From the more harmless sports rivalries of the "good and bad guys," explicit political us versus them designations of "the evil empire," to the more subtle offerings of the media we view every day, binaries surround the world of our youth. Indeed, they surround us all. The problem with our binaries, as stated in *Beyond Binaries in Education Research,* is

> The either/or logic of binaries means that one part of a binary is positioned as normal, while the other part of the binary is constructed as deficient or deviant. There is a hierarchical relationship in a binary where one part of the either/or is superior and powerful, while the other is weak or submissive. (Midgley, Tyler, Danaher, Mander, 2011, p. xvii)

In prior chapters we have looked at the constructed binaries of sacred and secular, insider and outsider and transcendence and immanence, in this chapter I focus on the binary of good and evil as constructed across ranges of culture and as a common connection to storyline's in books and film, whether subtly in the background or blatantly expressed as a central theme. The pervasiveness of films and books makes them a helpful connecting point to exploring their impact on education and youth

culture in our society. While this dissertation has focused on introducing Deleuze to Christian educators, hopefully what I write here will go out to educators of all stripes - those who teach Christian and religious education in some capacity, those who are religious and educators and seek to develop an integrative perspective that helps them engage and be open to the world, and those who resist religion and wonder at its persistent presence. Even more, I would hope educators who are less concerned with religious influences in our society might take a keener interest in these matters.

For this chapter, I draw from my own experiences with students and teachers in training, recognizing there are many films that are more suitable exemplars of Deleuzian becoming but these serve as an entry point into discussing Deleuzian concepts from prior classroom discussions. I will explore some examples of how good and evil are represented in the media, from vampires, to Harry Potter, to Goth, and their relationships to religious education and youth. (Two for future research are the series *Breaking Bad*, and film *V is for Vendetta*). From this beginning, I will move to looking at insights from Nietzsche and his book *Beyond Good and Evil* where some, from a Christian community, might find a surprising ally for deconstructing the binary of good and evil. Then through Nietzsche's thought as expounded by Deleuze, I then break/complexify the constructed binary of good and evil. At stake is not whether some ultimate good or evil exists: such a study is one that metaphysics and religious educators will continue to grapple with. Even if it were the case that an ultimate good and evil exists, my own location is situated in my experience in theology, ethics, and religious education where I have never met or read about any humans (barring one, Jesus, who people like to argue about) who aren't rather a mixture of good impulses (at a basic level

those that are not destructive to others) and evil impulses – rather a continuum of mixed desires and proclivities (see jan jagodzinski, 2008 for a fascinating discussion of much more complexity in this regard; also Nietzsche (2001)).

At stake is that the welfare and peace of our planet depends upon recognizing propensities that are harmful to society and restraining ourselves or finding good channels for what we want to do – everything we do affects the "other," the neighbour we are to love as ourselves. This issue is not theoretical. Ethics is not merely a game people play; instead, for many daily face injustice in life-and-death struggle. In this regard, for some religious education is a nice distraction from the "real" world; yet, for me it is crucial that religious educators recognize that succumbing to the binary of good and evil presents a hugely negative influence on youth. This binary exerts power during deep suffering and grief, and when life choices are in balance. Thus, teaching youth to live with ambiguity and mystery, and showing them that life is more than being a good or bad person, is central to the religious educator's task; and, the issue of good and evil as a binary is one entry point into having that conversation. A dialogue that allows them to see that the popular media can be culprits in promoting the binary through purveying an oversimplification of cultural issues and promotes discernment and possible emancipation from binary thought.

Of making categories there seems to be no end for the academic and religious journey. One could lament this dilemma to be solved, avoided, or to contend against; or, one could allow the general use of terms be part of the collective discussion. By writing about youth culture or subculture and education, I choose to be part of a conversation

about youth culture yet attempt to not fall prey to reductionism, deny a sense of becoming and change, or turn towards creating new binaries (notice the word *attempt*). I am following jagodzinski's (2004) trajectory in the realm of media studies when he states, "Our attempt has been to understand youth fantasies psychically" (p. 3). I resist the binary of comparing youth to adults too specifically and will use terms more typically used in our culture by those (often in their teens to thirties) who form collectives or movements that differentiate themselves from other groups, often related to media and culture. Subculture is defined, not as that which is less than the "culture" but as that which can be distinguished within a wider group who have similar aspirations and life trajectory. I concur with jagodzinski (2008) that "Youth is no longer a developmental or age-related category... identity is agentive, flexible, and ever-changing" (p. 3).

The direction I take for exploring youth education and the binary of good and evil is to (1) explore this binary with several examples from my personal engagement with "youth" culture, (2) discuss insights from Nietzsche as they relate to vampires and the binary, and (3) throughout the chapter show how religious educators can glean wisdom from Deleuzian discourse for their teaching practices and attempt to break this binary way of thinking, based on chapter one's outlining of complexification through destabilizing hierarchy and reductionism.

The Influence of Culture

It goes without saying that popular cultural artifacts continue to be a major influence on our societal values, viewpoints, and worldview including film, books,

music; also youth movements epitomized by shifts in appearance, habits, and dress. One does not want to take away the sheer enjoyment that comes, through media, from the overwhelming visual bliss and euphoria experienced while immersing oneself in another life, another history, or the possibilities of other worlds. Yet, being aware of the pedagogical influence that what one watches, reads, and follows has on one's life does not need to be a pedantic exercise in an ethic framed by being good or bad. Some of the most interesting conversations I have experienced have been with youth whose attention has been captivated through a movie.

In my own experience, I have utilized the media more and more in my teaching. More recently I have been critically looking at my choices from "youth" culture asking if I have been avoiding certain types of media. To help understand my choices and because I know this topic is controversial in the Christian community, while teaching developing classroom teachers I asked the culturally related question: "Could/would you incorporate the current rage over vampire in your classrooms?" The responses said more about the people and their approaches to Christian education than merely their approval or disapproval of horror films and vampires. Their responses also revealed more about how they situated themselves and viewed popular culture (some also exposed my own biases).

With further opportunities, because of the rich discussion it provoked, I will continue to ask about vampires, as they continue to be a phenomena through a *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* cult following, *Twilight* aficionados, and *True Blood* among others. What I will be exploring in this last chapter of my dissertation, is how teachers respond

to the good/evil binary displayed or problematized in the vampire, Harry Potter, and the Goth phenomena, and utilizing the interest to deconstruct the binary of good and evil. Borrowing a phrase from Nietzsche– can we go beyond good and evil, that is, see the world as a place of constant change and overcoming prejudice rather than something that is fixed by will? As Deleuze (2006) describes this will to power, "Nietzsche calls the genealogical element of force the will to power. Genealogical means differential and genetic. The will to power is the differential element of forces, that is to say that element that produces the difference in quantity between two or more forces whose relation is presupposed" (p. 53). In this dissertation, we begin task of promoting awareness of the need to break this tendency of constructing binary of good and evil through destabilizing, and problematizing hierarchy and reductionism. With Deleuze and Nietzsche as interlocutors I now take up the discussion of vampire and youth culture.

Vampire and Youth Culture

A first example of a cultural phenomenon affecting youth applied for breaking a binary of good and evil is the figure of the vampire. Through a Deleuzian lens of becoming in *Nietzsche and Philosophy* and Nietzsche's going beyond this constructed binary I propose the genre of vampire like Bram Stoker's *Dracula* and *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* can be used to open pedagogical opportunities for students that break up the good and evil binary. The use of this fascinating genre offers entry into the difficult world student's inhabit, a world often fearful of the unknown and plagued with the binary of good and evil. By engaging a binary such as good and evil in the classroom, youth are exposed to other pathways and possibilities to live with openness to the world, not bound by the fearful overtones of various aspects of their society.

Nietzsche and Philosophy

Deleuze (2006) introduces us to Nietzsche's concerns with sense and value: "One of the principal motifs of Nietzsche's work is that Kant had not carried out a true critique because he was not able to pose the problem of critique in terms of values" (p. 1). Nietzsche raises questions that continue to challenge through his "essential pluralism", meaning "there is no event, no phenomenon, word or thought which does not have a multiple sense" (p. 4). As it relates to religion for Nietzsche, "religion does not have a unique sense, it serves many forces. But which force has the maximum affinity with religion? Which is the one where we can no longer know who dominates, it dominating religion or religion dominating it? For all things all this is a question of weighing, the delicate but rigorous art of philosophy, of pluralist interpretation" (p. 5).

From the classic *Dracula*, to Anne Rice, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, *Twilight*, *True Blood* and many other rich offerings on theme of vampire that this paper cannot engage, there is plurality of interpretation, major differences to how vampires are viewed; yet, these works all deal with ethical and spiritual themes, that which is unknown, and often with attending philosophical issues. Popularly, the vampire in the movie adaptation of Bram Stoker's *Dracula* is a prime example of highlighting the issue of good and evil in a binary fashion by treating the vampire as the personification of temptation and seduction. Throughout the centuries, this theme can be traced throughout popular and academic discourse from Nietzsche's thought in *Beyond Good and Evil* to our postmodern or as some now say, post-hegemonic context. This binary provides subject matter for teaching if we ask what has happened to the vampire and why it has changed over time as it relates to the way our world is structured around good and evil themes.

Although some like Clements (2011) believe the shift in the vampire is due to a secularization process that has happened historically, from past era of Bram Stoker to more currently *Twilight*, I question this secularization thesis. I believe there is a wider complexity of reasons. *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* opens some of these complexities for us.

Buffy

Buffy was invented by Joss Whedon as a way to subvert the typical weak young girl who gets overtaken by the forces of evil (Hautsch, 2011, p. 2). Whedon, a self-proclaimed feminist, wanted to re-vision how women were portrayed in film. The series has been criticized for its "normalization and universalization of middle class whiteness and its reliance on demons and vampires to metaphorically represent the Other" (see footnote for list of critics in Hautsch, 2011, p.2). Yet, there is also much to commend in Buffy as to understanding the monsters lurking in the subconscious of children, young people, and adults. As jagodzinski (2008) says, "There have been few filmic narrative structures that have opened a porthole into the unconscious as effectively as Buffy does to explore ethical implications of the Real" (p. 135). The scope of religious themes in Buffy is vast; but, for our purposes, her grappling with good and evil is sufficient to point out how this issue is problematized.

jagodzinski (2008) spends a full chapter in *Television and Youth Culture* explaining his thoughts on Buffy (see Chapter 8 for a much fuller treatment from a Deleuzian and Lacanian perspective). He shows that Buffy grapples with the sense of becoming animal, in Deleuzian terms there is less "seeing oneself as an ego (moi) to

seeing oneself as a flow (flux) … Such an ethics means decentering the egoic self" (p. 137). Deleuze (2006) says, "Nietzsche denounces the soul, the 'ego' and egoism as the last refuges of atomism" (p. 6). This sense of flux and a sense of unity with the other go against the simplistic us as good (vampire slayer) vs. them as evil (vampires). There is much questioning of motives for Buffy and, when she acts, one doesn't always see a selfish sense of pleasure in her overcoming the other. The secular and religious are blurred in this series and allow a more nuanced perspective than the secularization binary (sacred vs. secular) allows.

jagodzinski notes, "The usual understanding of Evil as being in opposition to the Good is deconstructed" (p. 138). There is a sense of empathy for the vampire who is compelled to drink blood for survival. (Also see *Stargate Atlantis* where the Wraith, who must feed off of humans, are framed in a way that one would pity this need for survival). He states further, "We are all capable of radical acts of evil, as well as radical acts of sacrifice for others" (p. 142). This perspective pushes against the simplistic notions of us the good vs. they the bad, humility worthy of being passed on echoing Jesus, "Blessed are the poor in spirit" (read marginalized).

Another example of the importance of Buffy in breaking down the constructed good/evil binary is how the story's mythic structure reframes reality differently than a typical secular or Christian narrative, yet alluding to compatible themes that come out of many religious traditions. By providing an alternate way of seeing the world in terms of good and evil, destabilizing categorizing in stark good and evil, students would be forced to wrestle with other ways of viewing the world, opening them to possibilities that those

from other religious viewpoints should be heard and understood. Learning to dialogue with the fictional narrative gives a framework to shift their own binary of *our* religion vs. *their* religion and utilized in teaching students to develop their standpoints without reframing themselves as the good which can function as a slave morality that says no to what is different. In regard to a slave morality and the problem of hierarchy, Deleuze (2006) says, "In a body the superior or dominant forces are known as *active* and the inferior or dominated as *reactive*. Active and reactive are precisely the original qualities which express the relation of force with force... This difference between forces qualified according to their quantity as active or reactive will be called *hierarchy*" (p. 40). Although these forces are "difficult to characterise" (p. 41), May (2006) points out in discussion of these forces, the former is about opening up to the creativity of life, the latter focusing on the negative and limiting the powers of life. While there is much more to this discussion in Deleuze, broadly speaking, breaking this binary looks to opening up the creativity of life, not in hierarchy of good and evil.

Harry Potter

On first glance, the story of Harry Potter could be misconstrued as reinforcing the good and evil binary (Voldemort – evil vs. Harry – good) and, in some instances within the series, this binary remains present, based still on a slave morality of good and evil. Although not without critique related to representations of women's agency and hierarchy, I have hardly met a person who hasn't enjoyed the series or books across a wide scope of perspectives. Even those less fond of the series can still take a hat off to the storyline as entertaining and thoughtful (I am a fan despite what I can see as shortcomings). What I found interesting in this series of books/movies is the twists in

plot that actually sublimate the good and evil dichotomy, and I think with such a wide readership there is an opportunity for religious educators to explore and deconstruct the good and evil binary with the flux demonstrated in characters who display acts of heroic courage even as they are portrayed as less than virtuous (i.e. Harry's professor Severus Snape and classmate Lucius Malfoy). There is also a rich trajectory, worth future exploration, as to how Muggles are presented by Rowling, those humans who do not have magic ability. Here I present a few characters as a sampling of addressing the binary.

Harry is presented as a marginalized and abused character that one cannot help but cheer on as the underdog. His charm and intelligence are both strong traits of his character; yet, J. K. Rowling seems to go out of her way to present him as an ordinary person with his own personal demons and developing struggles with the world around him. He isn't as clearly written to be stereotypically "good," like the characters Gandalf or Aragorn are in *The Lord of the Rings*. Rather he becomes jealous, he overreacts in anger, battles self-entitlement, and he holds an ongoing grudge with Snape and Malfoy (albeit understandable). While much more could be said, for basic educational purposes, these points highlight for me a breaking down of the good/evil binary. Students can aspire to be like Harry because we are 'like' Harry, a mixture of good and less good (bad) impulses (sometimes very harmful) and the world painted by Rowling seems less blatantly framed in good and evil terms as it relates to her characters while still holding to a sense of *telos* towards flourishing.

Although an alternate case could be made for aspects of the book that don't fit my

thesis, my point is merely to show that one can glean insight from material in *Harry Potter* to help teach students, who, although implicitly knowing they live in a world with less clear boundaries, often live in a fantasy built on the fundamental attribution error of "I am good and the 'other' or world is against me." Harry's godfather Sirius sums it up well in movie *The Order of the Phoenix*: "Besides, the world isn't split into good people and Death Eaters. We've all got both light and dark inside us. What matters is the part we choose to act on. That's who we really are." Although not the place to quibble over ontology; but, he might have said "who we are becoming…"

Although Harry must defeat the ultimate evil in Voldemort (although as the series progresses you see a much more human side to Voldemort and the lines of good and evil are also blurred with this character reflecting less a good and evil binary), I think one of the best characters to upset the good/evil binary is Professor Severus Snape. Throughout the story, with much reason, Snape has been vilified by Harry and his friends; yet, in a surprising twist at the end of Book 7, we find out information about him that can literally change how one reads the story a second time, and it reframes how one looks back on the whole story. The Snape who is painted in an evil light and who we have been led to believe is out for Harry's worst interests, actually becomes heroic in the final chapters. While this writing strategy is not unusual per se (like Darth Vader in *Star Wars*), I think, for the purposes of breaking a constructed binary mindset, Snape is an example religious educators might use to highlight how we see others and the deceitfulness of appearances.

While fictional examples could be added to this sample, more closely to the world

we live is another situation where what you see is not always as it appears - the youth phenomena of Goth.

Goth

Gelder (2007) states that those who are part of subcultures create their own "geography, a set of places or sites (some of which last longer than others) through which it gains cohesion and identity" (p.2) – which describes Goth as a movement. According to Goodlad and Bibby (2007), the Goth movement emerged in the 1970's during a time of socioeconomic depression during the Thatcher era. Keynotes of Goth subculture are said to come out of the punk culture with a "romantic obsession with death, darkness, and perverse (sic) sexuality (p. 1). To define someone Goth is an impossible task; but, as the Goth bible states, "Goth is a state of mind" (p. 1). Often those who characterize someone as Goth relate him or her to being lonely and morbid, but those in the Goth movement would rather be recognized as deeply thoughtful and seeing life as full of romance, historically defined. The Goth bible points out that they are into fun, edginess, and extremes, willing to push the limits (p. 2). Thus their way of dressing is not just about looking different, it is their philosophy of life to be on the edge and counter to popularity.

Two epochs are recognized by Bibby and Goodlad (2007):

> The history of the subculture so far can be divided into two epochs one which began with Goth's punk-era emergence and saw its mainstream diffusion peak in the 1980s and again in the mid-1990s, and the second in which Goth's presence

in the mainstream became more subtle, while it continued — and continues into the twenty-first century (p. 7).

If one asked someone in the Goth movement who they take their inspiration from, bands like the *Cult, All About Eve, Sisters of Mercy, Lycia, Banshees, and Siouxsie and the Banshees* are named. Goth is a movement that operates across the boundaries, and what keeps Goth linked is a sense of connection to gothic literature and art. Their dress is not uniform but has patterns that tend to include darker colours, leather, buckles, chains, lace, spiked heels, high boots, Doc Martens (etc.) as distinguishing them from other youth movements.

In a close reading of Goth subculture, one would be remiss to not engage with the metaphor that is used of Goth being an "undead subculture." This phrase resonates to me with the appearance of many in the movement who have pale faces and dark garb. It is as if they are pointing with their own symbolism to their sense of the world around them. In Lacanian terms, the symbolic realm is so far from where they would see the world become. Thus, one interpretation could be that they use their own appearance as a symbol of what the symbolic realm is to them – dead, another that "based on their social genealogy, you could theorize Goth as a refutation of symbolic author via their performance of living death" (Comment from Jason Wallin). This interpretation would turn on its head the notion that they are just an "evil" group of those who have turned their back on society. Their actions could actually display their hearts – broken over people who have hurt them along the way.

On a personal note, my oldest daughter went through a time where she identified with the Goth movement and remarked that what drew her in was "their willingness to not follow the status quo – to wear what everyone wore and also that they were very passionate about literature and romance." I found these comments interesting in light of the good and evil binary, as Goth are often characterized and stereotyped as evil. Yet, when one talks to those from the movement, they actually dress and act in ways to go against the grain and often against a life that has bought into simplistic good vs. evil binary rather than the complexity of human behaviour.

Thus far, I have focused on Harry Potter, and Goth, as they have been part of my current experience as a teacher and as a father, each has shown me promise in taking small steps towards breaking the constructed binary of good and evil as their narratives present opportunities to destabilize hierarchy, representation and reductionism.

The Vampire as Metaphor

Of all the examples of youth culture influencing our young people (ourselves), the vampire stands out as one that currently continues to hold sway. The vampire as a film character has almost become ubiquitous in the present day (along with the zombie in context of this quote), whose "etymological roots of the monstrous imply between human and non-human (originally human and animal) – the imaginary space that lies between being and non-being, presence and absence" (Boon, 2007, p. 33). The vampire is not just a film figure to be viewed and feared, Wolf (1999) has described several types of vampire – psychological, science fiction, the non-human, the comic, and heroic. The vampire has also been used as a metaphor to help write about difficult issues in politics

and philosophy with practical implications that could translate into classroom instruction.

Longinovic (2011) uses the term *Vampire Nation* to title his work because he was "preparing to lecture on temporality in Eastern Europe" and "the vampire was an imaginary figure so anciently original that it defied the temporal cycles marked by beginnings and endings" (p. ix). He further states, "The vampire as a metaphor for the unacknowledged sinister side of post-human civilization becomes normalized under the new regime of mass cultural production" (p. 3). Vampire is not only a metaphor for the political and as a critique of global consumerism it depicts popular culture and philosophy. As Sakal (2003) writes in *Buffy the Vampire Slayer and Philosophy*,

> It might further seem incredible that these two genre shows (Buffy and Angel), whose apparent subject matter is sheer fantasy, could possibly explore issues so profound and fundamental to the human experience. Yet, it is precisely the genre of myth and fantasy that gives itself so perfectly to the exploration of these themes, whether or not specific religious beliefs are involved. Myth and legend are meta-themes that draw us out from the realities of everyday life (p. 239).

Sakal (2003) argues that themes of salvation, sacrifice, and redemption are all part of the Buffy universe and are key themes that each generation needs to grapple with as major life issues whether in a religious context but also beyond (p. 240). Sakal writies in chapter *NO Big Win: Themes of Sacrifice, Salvation, and Redemption* confirms that the vampire realm could be a great bridge to teach religious education. He looks at vampire behavior and nature and questions our own sense of being and becoming

human.

The broadness and diversity of the vampire allows for several classroom applications. Rather than with Clements (2011) and Wolf (1999), while making some valid connections to secularism and who see the diverging perspectives of the vampire as a problem of secularization, I see an entry point to a diversity of themes that suits our postmodern context to explore the spiritual and metaphysical. One need not end up in relativism or dogmatism to learn about religious themes related to vampires, because there are many religious texts from which to draw wisdom.

For example, one could compare the Bram Stoker film *Dracula* with *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and discuss issues related to Roman Catholicism, the pseudo-history presented, and the use of blood as it relates to practices of the church and the way it is portrayed in the film. Looking at the series *True Blood*, one could discuss why the vampire's lust for blood is tied closely to the idea of seduction and temptation (also the religious implications of the Catholic view of the Eucharist). Rather than treat the issue as taboo, I believe one should engage it – not that everyone has to watch it per se (queasy stomachs), but the themes that arise provide excellent challenges to develop religious viewpoints.

Further, without condemning, one could ask honest questions about one's religious pedigree: Is the church caricatured in the film(s)? Is there truth to the portrayal of how people saw religious relics as a superstitious protection against evil? Is the binary of good and evil presented true to the human experience? Do they know anyone purely "good" or "evil" (obviously not) then why hold to the binary category? As

jan jagodzinski says in personal comment "it is the displacement of ethics that overcomes any strict binaries of moral behavior." That is to say, the categories we set up as ethical must be clearly thought about in light of how easy it would be to set up new sets of binaries. An example would be how Jewish tradition began early in their history with the Ten Commandments that gave boundaries but more latitude in application; to the place where they had added 613 rules beyond the Mosaic Law, far more restricting for daily ethical living. A good question for religious educators is: What extra rules have we added to our Christian education?

Resources for discussion abound. Beresford (2008) outlines how, in the Middle Ages, one was thought to become a vampire by predisposition to violence, predestination, a violent event, or incorrect practice of rituals and burial rites (p. 31-32). One could ask students what religious connotations they see connected to these understandings and where in *Dracula* they see connections to these superstitions or how Buffy stands against these biases?

Beyond Good and Evil

I would argue that the postmodern shift, influenced by Nietzsche has more to do with the change in our view of the vampire than Clements' secularization hypothesis. Although more study would need to be done to expand and challenge his viewpoint, I think Nietzsche's writings provide more nuanced insight into the shift towards our current views of the vampire, youth culture, and more specifically our understanding of good and evil.

Reading Nietzsche, one finds a direct challenge to our cultural imaginary as to

good and evil. Although critics of Nietzsche point to his own strict religious upbringing and the loss of his father at an early age as baggage, a fair reading might require Christian educators to listen to his critique, which gets to the heart of what is often a popular either/or dichotomy. From my experience, a good and evil binary mindset is damaging to a real life of faith and wisdom, thus, Nietzsche's critique needs to be taken seriously as it addresses various versions of Christianity.

With Beresford (2008), who alludes to heretical forms of Christianity that had binary outlooks on the world (p. 12), I would suggest that certain changes more in line with binary thinking took precedence over the Jewish roots of Jesus' teaching (I recognize that there are also possible binary challenges of interpretation in Judaism across the centuries). I think these binary viewpoints continue in various forms in some of what is considered mainstream Christianity and, if one probed, would find this ancient binary heresy rather than a tradition faithful to the prophets, the apostles, and Jesus. By the third century, a Manichean dualism presented itself as aligned with Christianity that had a simplistically good or evil view of the cosmos. This thesis has been unwittingly, over the centuries, adopted by some who think they are embracing Christian faith.

What began as an organic movement that subverted an "evil empire," where laying down one's life for others was strength and showed courage (not the weak Christianity critiqued by Nietzsche) became an approach likened to a doormat rather than a non-violent resistance (see Walter Wink, 1998). If violence to Jesus were intended to end all violence by subverting and absorbing it, then for me there would be no shame in

associating with such a movement, whether seen in an institutional or non-institutional context. Unfortunately, the word Christian has almost gone from master signifier to empty signifier due to the fragmentations of perspective, including this problematic good and evil binary. While I recognize that in reading biographical details of Nietzsche his views cannot be simplistically disconnected from his experiences and his process of becoming is surely influenced by the era and home he was living in, and yet his criticisms of a certain ethos of Christianity need to be heard.

Although Nietzsche has been a regular target for critique from religion and religious educators, I think he contributes several aspects to breaking the good and evil binary in ways that could apply to teaching. He calls into question any form of inauthentic religion and, although difficult for some to accept, his comments hit at a religiosity that leans towards the superstitious more than the earthy Hebrew worldview displayed as key elements in the Torah, the prophets, or the life of Jesus. Early in *Beyond Good and Evil,* Nietzsche (2001, p. xxxx) disrupts the idea that one can come to true knowledge detached from it in a Stoic (read Kantian) fashion and that philosophy has confessional elements rather than an absolute appeal to power (p.6). Thus, those who think they are objectively good deceive themselves. He critiques those who claim objective truth by saying that it is not a love of knowledge behind this impulse to learn; rather, it is a way to have control. He warns of the seduction of words (p. 16), later explicated in Wittgenstein, which also must be taken into account because the words good and evil are sometimes treated as a wax nose that can mean almost anything.

His critique gets more pointed. In *Part 3: The Religious Character,* he brings his most scathing critique to religion; but, much of what he says appears as words against a

certain form of religiosity he faced in his own experience. His words ring true in that a religion that would help the world would be one minus pitting us versus them, control by will to power, of those who think they are good while others are evil – of self-identified true believers who are and can often appear arrogant, casting a frown if a word is said that their pristine ears can't handle. A "true" (read faithful to its writings and teachers) religion could interact with anything the world offers – vampires, Harry Potter, and youth movements like Goth – without immediately dismissing or casting judgment upon those involved.

I think Nietzsche might be surprised at the resurgence of religion in all its forms. I see his words ring prophetically to those who would not seek a wisdom that speaks and stands against oppression, even of ideas, but follows a form of religion that merely tries to "be good" and ends up a lukewarm blandness. He would, and I believe should, oppose a religion that would make certain subjects taboo or that would not allow people to not believe but would force itself on others in colonializing impulse. I believe Nietzsche (cited in Hortsmann and Norman 2001) himself warns even those who shun religion with his characteristic barb and wit that rings as a reminder to scholars and religious alike:

> Every age has its own, divine type of naiveté that other ages may envy; and how much naiveté – admirable, childish, boundlessly foolish naiveté – lies in the scholar's belief in his own superiority, in the good conscience he has of his tolerance, in the clueless, simple certainty with which he instinctively treats the religious man as an inferior, lesser type, something that he himself has grown out

of, away from, and above, – he, who is himself a presumptuous little dwarf and rabble-man, a brisk and busy brain and handiworker of "ideas," of "modern ideas"! (p. 89)

Nietzsche's words push strongly against the good/evil binary, a binary we often see in stories of the vampire reflecting a cultural imaginary that has transcended several centuries but is being challenged with new kinds of vampire like Buffy that, while critiqued for other weaknesses, are powerfully at work breaking up typical views of good and evil.

Cultural Appeal

Nietzsche has helped me grapple further with the good and evil binary and the fascination with vampires as it relates to issue of binary thinking. Deleuze has challenged me to ask, "Is the interest in vampires/Goth/magic of Harry Potter partly due to the human impulse or need to be open to new possibilities, to break out of difficulty of always seeking to control life?" "Is the sense of 'becoming' reflected in the vampire as archetype?" If cinema's greatest gift is the restoration of our "belief in this world" (Deleuze, 1989, 188), maybe the turn to vampires having a heroic role has something to do with this development.

Kellner (1995) reflects on the popularity of horror film in general saying, "The broad panorama of popular horror films attests to a resurgence of the occult in contemporary society which suggests that individuals are no longer in control of everyday life" (p. 126). With so much information and change in the world, one now, even more obviously than ever, cannot easily plan for the future. I wonder if horror films

offer a place to test our reactions to crisis, violence, and bombardment of our senses or, as Snyder says, "our self-reflexivity and intertextuality" (p. 81) without having to actually face the violence and fear.

According to Wolf (1999), the vampire has stood for many things from the "industrialized world's fascination of energy without grace" to an apt symbol of the bloody conflict in Vietnam, to the psychological obsession with blood, to the Hebrew idea of "the life is in the blood" (p. 3). From that gamut of possibility, Wolf posits that the appeal of the vampire is "it speaks to them about deeply inner (and especially sexual) temptations and doubts" (p. 3). He further says that the vampire has such a draw for people because with it comes "psychological and spiritual meanings as well" (p. 3). Although there remain global applications of the vampire metaphor, this sense of the unknown of dealing with our temptations continues to be a valid concern for our students especially with the wide range of availability of tasteful and helpful Internet expressions of a natural aspect of humanity, to the dark, unbridled, obsessive, and even criminal realms of pornography.

To religious educators who, in my own experience, might be less prone to engage these issues, I would ask: If students must learn to face a world of fear, introducing the vampire, Harry Potter, and student movements like Goth, might engagement be a step towards developing resources that help them face the future and face themselves? Could engaging film through seeing the vampire as a metaphor help religious educators tackle some of the more difficult topic areas? Could relating to characters like Harry Potter provide a point of contact and empathy with students, who are not so unlike ourselves?

Wise Christian Pedagogy

This chapter has attempted to explore binary of good and evil in youth culture by weaving together Nietzsche, vampires, Harry Potter, Goth, and religious education. In conclusion, I close with a few thoughts as to Christian pedagogy, seeking an approach to break the binary of good and evil and help students remain open to the world.

Educational Implications

Reading these diverse sources has shown me that the binaries that can effect teaching and learning need not keep us from working for a different world, whether seeking God in religion, or in Deleuze's last work *Immanence… A Life*, we can learn from each other even when our perspectives are different. As Parr (2010) says, "Deleuze's ontology – that relations are external to terms – is a commitment to perceiving life; life is connection and relation, but the outcome or event of those relations is not determined in advance by intrinsic properties" (p. 5), it is a life open to becoming, to living moment by moment. From an educational perspective we don't have the option of not finding a way to understand and work together, my own Christian background has been challenged and enriched by Deleuzian thought that seeks a world "not determined in advance by intrinsic properties". Deleuze articulates this challenging vision throughout his writings.

In light of this chapter, I posit that educators can draw on various resources from their own traditions and from those who are critical of these traditions, because our classrooms are not monolithic but multiple beliefs all together in one place. Thus a way forward is rather how to work against binary thought amongst so many opinions in a

respectable way. Christian educators have resources to draw from their historical

traditions that can continue to stimulate discussion as they are rethought and re-

understood, but they also can learn from Deleuzian thought with several implications:

1) Resist the problem of objectification.

Objectification occurs when a concept is objectified, treated concretely, or made into

a physical entity. Objectification can occur in religious discourse when trying to make

sense of things classified as "spiritual" or non-material. Grappling with realities beyond

our empirical comprehension is one major area of religious study and the danger of

objectifying is constantly present when addressing religious topics such as God, mind,

and persons.

As mentioned in prior chapter, philosopher Martha Nussbaum (2006) has given

specific factors for understanding objectification (treating a person as a thing) including:

instrumentality (treating someone like a tool to be used), inertness (denying persons

agency or self-determination), ownership (owning others), violability (violating others),

and denial of subjectivity (feeling no sense of emotion for others' needs) (p. 257).

Religious educators, using Nussbaum (2006) can emphasize personal agency when

discussing how humans have, through history, been treated as tools to be used by others,

been violated, seen as less than human and categorized perjoratively as evil. Curricular

connections to ancient biblical (and other) texts could help reveal these issues in

narratives which typify ongoing issues for empires that subjugated the Hebrew people as

well as how the Hebrew people themselves were tempted and fell into similar patterns.

This broad awareness and application could go beyond typical moralizing and show a

religious tendency that emerges from ancient narratives (rather than read into these narratives), creating a sense of one's own situatedness in their world while offering authentic challenges that have beset humans for millennia. Further, students might better interpret texts with thoughtfulness giving them deeper ties to the past without ripping stories from their contexts. Also, rather than view life from the singular category of sin, an approach of thinking about one's own thinking and way of seeing the world could unlock personal insecurities and propensities in relationship to the Other. Behavioural issues are then no longer directly in view, but a deeper sense of a text's wisdom both "reads" us and speaks more deeply into our own lives grows apparent.

In partnership with Nussbaum's helpful factors for identifying objectification, Michel Foucault provides insight into three modes of objectification in our culture and, I argue, in religious education (Foucault, 1982), "that transform human beings into subjects: (1) modes of inquiry which try to give themselves the status of the sciences; (2) the objectification of the subject in 'dividing practices'; and, (3) the way a human being turns him or herself into a subject" (p. 209).

The first mode works with subjects put into categories of characteristics that have presumed scientific backing and thus objectified (Peters, 2004). This mode classified by seeking *objective* measures for their foundational arguments. The second mode speaks of dividing practices, how humans set themselves apart in ways that constitute power plays or control. The third mode is Foucault's way of subjectification or showing how humans turn themselves into subjects. Each mode could be reframed within a binary

schema – the first mode as subject/object, the second as us vs. them, and the third as divided interior and exterior self or physical/spiritual.

My study (Clarke, 2011) of students enrolled in a science and religion course found that, although not using terminology of good and evil, they were categorizing this discourse into a binary of good and evil. The tendency for many students was to initially posit a conflict between science as "objective" and good and religion as "subjective" (implying evil) or science as evil and against my religious beliefs and religion as good related to my communities' beliefs; however, instruction helped students become more aware of this simplification and learn to expand their use of terminology and expression of thoughts. By developing a broader way of thinking, students could imagine options other than the conflict model of science/religion (for example, science/religion in dialogue, as complementary or non-overlapping magisteria). Indirectly, the good and evil binary construction was problematized and destabilised as students began to conceptually rethink the two discourses.

2) Seek to dissolve mentality of us vs. them.

Foucault's second mode of objectification involves the way humans use "dividing practices" to create exclusion through power relationships that confine and capture. I concur with Bignall and Patton (2010), who noted,

> Judging from the regularity with which events of captivity and detention occur on the international political stage, it would hardly be an exaggeration to say that the theme of confinement, a hallmark of Michel Foucault's works from *Madness and Civilisation* (1965, 1967) and *The Birth of the Clinic* (1973) to *Discipline and*

Punish (1977), has lost none of its critical relevance at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

This mode of dividing practices exposes the ways humans create categories of good and evil. Beyond simple life examples such as a healthy competitive mode in team sports or debate clubs, the desire to marginalize by excluding others has not disappeared from schools despite a growing awareness and exposure of the problems. I argue that thinking in binary categories can be a problem that permeates this desire to set ourselves apart from others who we demonize as different. Rather than viewing life with this lens, Deleuzian thought posits against simplistic categorization and rather to live in the moment with the affects that we encounter on a plane of immanence made up of assemblages that deterritorialise and reterritorialize in an ebb and flow. While this doesn't resolve how to respond to aggression and violence from others, it addresses my own desires. For my own understanding as a teacher this can help with the words of Jesus "Judge not lest you be judged" because I don't start by comparing people to what I believe is right but I start by trying to love the neighbour as part of myself and as self, and see things from their perspective – thinking the whole, we are all assemblages in relationship, and thus not divided, a way of seeing different possibilities.

With Deleuze and Guattari (1994), I believe concepts are ways of seeing the world and that, by creating them, we can become more open to becoming. As Wallin (2010) explains, "For Deleuze and Guattari (1994), a concept is more than simply a name attached to a subject or object. A concept is a way of approaching the world or, put differently, a way of creating a world through the active extension of thinking the

possible" (p. 1). Raschke (2012) adds a concept, a further way to problematize this binary:

> Such a science would need to take into account the portmanteau sense of the Roman *religio*, which classical and even some current etymologies trace to the word *ligare*, to 'bind' or 'to bind tightly'. The meaning of this 'binding' has to be sought at two different levels, not only at the level of social cohesion and ethical consistency, but at the level where human cognition and agency can be understood as 'bound' to something deeper and far more compelling than contractual obligations (p. 37).

Wallin (2010) further states, "If we take seriously Deleuze and Guattari's (1994) concept as a 'tool' for understanding the problematics of life, then the question of what problems the reactive concept of *currere* answers become crucial to its continued opening" (p. 5). By proactively destabilizing good and evil, a non-reactive pedagogy is sought that responds to life's problems through educational curricula.

 For example, in teaching world religions and politics, one could engage reactive responses to oppression in the curriculum and explore how their own reactions can themselves create further hegemonies based on students' opinions as a new standard. For example, in the *Hunger Games* the chosen way to solve one problem where they were caught in the chaos of warring factions, was to create a new hierarchy of experts who set up a the Hunger Games so they can pre-empt further mass bloodshed by containing it only to several persons chosen are sacrificial representatives (with an incentive for those who "win"). Now where lies good and evil as envisioned by the participants? The representatives are forced to kill to survive by a system set up to be a

"good" that prevents massive loss of life. One monstrous possibility of warfare is turned into another hopeless evil for the individuals who are chosen. The simulation of reality is not an answer to a problem but a further way to keep power. Like CNN or Fox News, a way of viewing the world is displayed that tells the story of what they are trying to simulate. If good and evil are not pitted as **our** ultimate's that we know to be true, then with Deleuze we can see each experience as connected to other experiences in different assemblages and work against our propensity to put our viewpoint as the transcendent ideal to compare other's opinions.

3) Address difficult concepts and prevent reductionism

Perennially, issues emerge with each generation in religious education that involve a long history of philosophical, theological, and ethical discourse and that expose students to thinkers from the past. Concepts from the past inform and influence students, who engage the vast literature of difficulties and problems our ancestors faced that carry forward into our own era. Major themes, such as justice, rationality, the nature of reality, and scientific progress, continue to fascinate young minds searching for purpose. In teaching these vast subjects, a challenge is evident in being fair to difficult concepts from the history of ideas. The temptation to create binary oppositions that simplify learning can even be reinforced by standard textbooks that utilize simplistic binaries, such as justice vs. injustice, rational vs. irrational, being vs. becoming, and science vs. religion to name a few.

My research into Deleuzian thought has shown me that even those I might disagree with on issues of religion, politics, and culture can speak to my life and help me

ponder areas of binary mindset. My pondering has led me to read afresh the religious sources I hold dearly, not adding destructive criticism to the conversation but seeking wisdom, truth, listening, and hearing. This research process has also made me deeply resistant to negativity and injustice as I interact with people and as I watch films and read books, spurring me to change and act and teach differently. With the loss of my daughter Melissa, I am reevaluating many cherished beliefs through the experience of breaking my own binaries, as she lived with daily tension of her schooling.

When Mina in the film *Dracula* says, "Am I good? Am I a bad and inconstant woman?" my emotion gets the best of me - I want to rail against binaries that holds people in chains, and speak to the screen, addressing myself, and fellow religious educators who are sometimes implicated into this way of thinking Mina displays. I believe we are all broken, challenged, weak, controlling, with good impulses, with bad and destructive impulses, becoming. The whole point (as I read it) of someone like Jesus was to set free, to open the world, to point to the becoming, not to make us obsessed with being good boys and girls (read some of my own religious genealogy into this statement).

Conclusion

I meet the Minas of the world at the university and often their binary view of religion keeps them from the freedom, joy, and liberation they could also experience amidst the sorrows, difficulties, and pain of life. I meet those who are often unwittingly oppressing the Minas out of ignorance or out of a binary thought process. Would we allow students to question and challenge us without a defensive response? Will we

journey with them through the difficulties of life and encourage them with our own lives?

Examples from my own reflections about how vampires, Harry Potter, Nietzsche, and the Goth youth movement point me to exponentially available avenues to explore with our students allowing religious education to thrive with questions, confusion, epiphanies, and community. I see many discussion possibilities to complexify binary thinking in series such as *Breaking Bad (*See Breaking bad: Critical essays on the context, politics, style and reception of the television series edited by David P. Pierson*)*, *The Walking Dead*, *House of Cards*, *V is for Vendetta*, and the list goes on.

I encourage Christian educators to see that the joy of relating to young people has a never-ending supply of resources to work with, only limited by our creativity and imagination. I encourage engagement with Deleuzian thought, a critique of our tendencies to representation, reductionism, and hierarchy. I encourage all religious educators to listen to the stories of what they are watching and reading and seek a realm of opportunity that can open up with potential to break down the good/evil binary.

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Conclusion

"There is no them, there is no them, there is only us…" U2 Invisible

Breaking Constructed Binary Impulses

Deep within the human psyche seems to live a territorial impulse displayed throughout history and imposed upon fellow human beings and their environment. The desire for more and the curiosity for what is on the other side of hill, river, or continent are written large in the annals of our time on this planet. What we now call colonialism has been recorded for as far back as we can search historically; but, even in our own Western context we suffer in a postcolonial world with hopefulness towards post-hegemony. This world is experiencing the after effects of the movements of our predecessors from England, Germany, and beyond. Some defend empires and point to the many good contributions they find from England's colonial rule; yet, in a postmodern context where one questions metanarratives, this pristine story of benevolence is shown to be a mixed blessing/curse, depending how deeply one probes.

At first glance, there are often noble ideals behind a desire to establish oneself in a new land or to impose one's own practices upon others because "It will be for their ultimate benefit." Yet, as each new land is gained or practice established, the good one would do for the "other" can quickly become lost in the need to fulfill one's own purposes at the expense of the "other." The stories of several centuries can be told of the havoc wreaked upon our own world through the desire to colonize, and among that narrative the word religion, in a broad sense, has certainly played a part in the drama and difficulties of colonies. Throughout this dissertation this subjugating impulse of

those in my Christian educational community has been questioned as unlike the words of Jesus, "Love your neighbour as yourself," Christianity has sometimes brought injustice rather than justice and I have questioned whether behind these injustices is a way of thinking, a way of seeing world in binaries that become dichotomies. Thus, engagement with all critique, including Deleuzian thought is a necessary step to think differently than our own worn pathways.

Depending upon who one enlists for comment, Christianity's checkered past continues to the present moment. In my own studies I have seen much that is commendable and much that is less so. In one sense, human's actions are always thus, because human beings are *homo religiosis (humans as religious)* or as Ernest Becker coined *homo poeta* (meaning makers) who have a deep drive to search out the transcendent divine. These same humans are passionate and probing, yet often misguided and self-interested. As Smith says, "We are more concretely *homo liturgicus*; humans are those animals that are religious animals not primarily because we are believing animals but because we are liturgical animals – embodied practicing creatures whose love/desire is aimed at something ultimate" (2009, p. 40). This dissertation has pointed out that several areas to destabilize our positioning of this propensity to the ultimate is rethinking, complexifying, breaking - insider and outside, immanence and transcendence, and good and evil.

Self-interested impulses, while in one way understandable, has caused deep chasms of injustice in the name of all religions that true believers should never want connected to their faith. Looking at the history of religion is a sobering process where one can reel in horror from the atrocities and indignities perpetrated in the name of

religion and my own tradition Christianity. While a justified response of rage at the injustices committed could easily have one leave religion behind, I am of the same mind as Ingleby (2010) who says, "[t]hough history cannot be changed, it can be interrogated" (p. 90). Religion in general has certainly played a part in many of the injustices we see in the world, specifically my own community; yet, I believe we can't ignore religion and gain any benefit to our educational endeavours. Yet, the insider and outsider binary construction needs to be interrogated, as attempted in chapter two.

Forms of religion both closed and open structures, are not easily expendable and they are globally pervasive. Religious groups have been part of the struggle against injustice, and could have a continuing powerful influence. Its paradoxical emphasis matches well with nonviolent resistance in the face of oppression. Figures of common recognition of our own era such as Gandhi, and figures exemplifying religious humility from the past, such as Jesus, have things to show us as we learn to "turn the other cheek." Such interpretation of these words is not a way of false submission, but rather is a third way that stands up to those dominating through the current system and shames them for their indecencies (see Walter Wink (2003) – *Jesus and Non-violence*).

This dissertation has sought to interrogate my Christian education community with Deleuzian thought, offer alternate ways of viewing the world as we are on a journey, embedded in a world that needs a continual challenge from stagnating within our systems and praxis. With Shults, Simpson, Hinlicky, and others, I expect that this is only a beginning of engagement with Deleuze, philosophy and theology. While in this dissertation I have outlined my own engagement with Deleuze, I recognize that this will need to be a lifelong pursuit as a conversation partner, as I continue to try and

understand concepts that would take more than a lifetime to begin to understand. A trajectory of conversation continues with a Christian discourse seeking to break with and complexify false dichotomies that have polarized and been used in ways that violate the other. Ironically, our modern poets like U2, despite their own shortcomings come out with the words that resonate and likely explicate more powerfully the force of this dissertation – "there is no them, there is only us." A world where we stop seeing the other instead of seeing ourselves, loving them as we love ourselves, seems so simple and yet with our propensity for violence each generation needs to hear the clarion call to "love neighbor as self" and seek to live out a world of "Ordinary Love" and not good vs. evil, us vs. them, insider vs. outsider, sacred vs. secular even teacher vs. student and faculty vs. faculty.

Future Considerations

It could be postulated that all of Deleuze's work is ethics with much to explore, but from this dissertation several areas open up new pathways for my own search, especially in his work *Immanence: A Life*. While this dissertation has focused on several constructed binaries and a way of complexification, new avenues remain open including subject and object, male and female, and issues of religious and cultural ethnocentrism. For me an overarching and ongoing trajectory from this work is the issue of what makes up a flourishing life as it relates to becoming, univocity, working against the tendencies to fixate on permanent stances, and the conversation of immanence in philosophical and theological discourse. As Giorgio Agamben (2000) says, "What is the nature of a knowledge that has as its correlate no longer the opening to a world and to truth, but only life and its errancy?" In other words, are we willing to accept our own fallibility,

mutations and meaninglessness and listen to other perspectives, no matter how far away from our own way of thinking? Are we able to life our lives inhabiting each moment rather than living in an unformed future for which we keep grasping and never have within our reach? As Davis (2009) says about a debate between philosopher's Slavoj Žižek and John Milbank, "Christianity as approached by Žižek and Milbank uniquely proffers an emancipatory exit beyond the deadlock of capitalism and its supplement liberalism – which in truth is a false politics sequestered by the owners of production in the name of freedom.... The monstrosity [exceptionalism] of Christ is the love either in paradox or dialectics – and, I believe, may be the pathway beyond the current absolutist rule of finance, spectacle, and surveillance" (p. 21). Yet Deleuze leaves us beyond what Davis creates as an either/or of dialectic or paradox pointing to another way of viewing immanence, challenging this created binary. Through this dissertation Deleuze has pushed me to keep searching for a life that accepts our ongoing errancy where ultimate solutions are elusive while not giving up on ways for students and teachers to flourish.

This statement from Deleuze (2001) provokes ongoing thought,

We will say of pure immanence that it is A LIFE, and nothing else. It is not immanence to life, but the immanent that is in nothing is itself a life. A life is the immanence of immanence, absolute immanence: it is complete power, complete bliss. It is to the degree that he goes beyond the aporias of the subject and the object that Johann Fichte, in his last philosophy, presents the transcendental field as a life, no longer dependent on a Being or submitted to an Act - it is an absolute immediate consciousness whose very activity no longer refers to a being but is ceaselessly posed in a life (p. 27).

A "ceaselessly posed life" – raises more questions for me - about being fully known, exposed, or real. What one notices when one begins Deleuzian research, new pathways are ever opened, which is why I chose to introduce Deleuze to my own Christian community for this project. Also Deleuze goes beyond simply my research in dichotomies to the personal importance Deleuze has had in allowing me to grieve loss in inexplicable ways. I have briefly touched on my own journey through grief that has merged with my research journey. The above words go with me, working into my own Christian understanding of life, and I wonder whether there will be a day I can ask Deleuze what he means by these words, and beyond this life whether there is as Jesus says, a place prepared that is beyond imagination, where we will see our Melissa again, where the "stolen voices will be returned". Fascinating this word 'life', so crucial to the philosophical conversation and in light of binary research, an ever-widening search and while I still haven't found what I'm looking for...I put hope in one who will wipe away every tear and lives to tell.

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Rhizomic Interlude to Appendices

The development of this dissertation included publishing two articles that show further explorations of Deleuzian thought related to education and research that informed my work. Each opened up new thought and the implications for education. I include them here as an extension of the prior chapters and as a model for how Deleuzian thought can impact educational research and pedagogy.

Moving through various constructed binaries as they relate to teaching and students, the prior chapters were my journey in engaging three constructed binaries. In conversation with supervisor, Jim Parsons, questions of how different Deleuzian concepts such rhizomatic thinking, becoming, and deterritorialization affect the researcher became a joint project; looking also at one's own role as the researcher. *Becoming Rhizome Researchers* was a reflection on theopraxis that steps away from the intentional and looks for the fissures, gaps, and perspectives that are embedded unaware to and in the researcher. By explicating what can be seen from this alternate viewpoint we were not intending to create a new set of rules to add to the hierarchy of research practice, rather to expose elements that are not taken into account as a hidden subtext of the research journey.

In learning to think in terms of becoming rather than being, we postulate that the options for where insights could be found were expanded because of how one viewed their research identity and personal agency. Simply destabilising the typical hierarchy of thought following scientific or quantitative method was enough to provide new avenues to think differently about research. Seeing oneself in a vast interconnected nomadic web of ongoing dialogue, thought, and project humbles, to see ones place among other

researchers and yet empowers the researcher to "go where no one has gone before." Thinking about "researcher-becoming" through concept of rhizome brought me into further contact with how Deleuzian concepts can complexify our assumptions. Our tendency can be to "reterritorialize" towards familiar ground, while deterritorialization pushes us back into the flux and reminds us that we tentatively hold all knowledge. To deterritorialize is to step into the "chaos and creativity" allowing its presence rather than seeking to shut down and oversimplify for the sake of premature clarity thus a rhizome researcher works in whatever direction their research draws them.

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Appendix One

Becoming Rhizome Researchers - Bryan Clarke and Jim Parsons

Abstract

Binaries affect many aspects of educational discourse including research and teaching. Although not every binary is negative towards educational "forward" movement, the authors propose that rhizomatic thinking, derived from the writing of Deleuze and Guattari, can open new potentialities for a breaking of different types of binary thinking. Adopting the terminology of *rhizomatic research* they outline ways that re-envision educational research through the concept of the rhizome, as a hopeful pathway towards new ways of teaching and research. As a guiding quasi-methodology, rhizomatics could help researchers/teachers develop agency but step beyond personal agency to see research/teaching through multiplicities that arise rather than pre-planned forged curricula. Starting in the middle, the authors suggest that rhizome researchers recognize their embeddedness, allow research to lead them, accept that attempts to synthesize are never finished, listen to those before them and on the margins, and give themselves to a life of becoming, thus "breaking" the binaries that can capture or stifle their attempts to be educational researchers constructing symbolic selves.

Key Words: rhizome, binary, education, Deleuze, research, curriculum.

Developing the necessary skills, aptitudes, and philosophy to be a research-oriented educator is a journey of agency. One concomitant learning in the growth from novice to experienced researcher is the growing belief that one can make a difference in the world – that engaging in research can help change some part of the world for the better. It seems almost impossible, unless one approaches research as a hack, that one can enter the work of research without an accompanying belief that the energy and actions poured into research promise that the work will successfully bring improvement. Research is academic work fuelled by a promise of change as the "affect" of research go beyond what can be simply represented.

Our experience researching, teaching research design, and working with graduate students who conduct their own research is that research engages them in a process of personal growth. This growth goes beyond what we could chart or delineate ahead of time, as *affect* in Deleuzian sense can emerge in so many ways, from experiences that could be deemed positive steps forward to the deconstructing that occurs to naïve conceptions as students face daily reality that don't fit into neat knowledge packages. Ironically, our experience suggests that most graduate students enter their research a bit in awe of academic researchers and a bit overwhelmed at the thought of conducting their own research. However, having engaged in research, they often emerge with a passion for research and a continuing respect for researchers; however, the research awe has been replaced with collegial respect and awareness of vast fields of complexity. Many new researchers, if not most, come to see research in revised ways – but not research as they first envisioned. Simplified binaries of qualitative vs. quantitative no longer hold sway as they develop awareness for what Kristeva calls the "abject", or what

one might call being caught in paradox, or Heidegger called *unheimlichkeit* or "strangeness." We have seen this affect cannot be specifically planned for but can be expected of our developing graduate researchers, even challenging the timeline for completing research as ideas change in flux.

Research As Agency

In 1976, Walker Percy wrote the odd titled book *The Message in the Bottle*. In this book, Percy conceptualizes "The Delta Factor" using the story of Helen Keller's breakthrough in learning as Annie Sullivan (1) poured water over her hands and (2) repeatedly signed the word for water into her hand. Percy theorizes that this action was more than simple cause and effect (or intermittent conditioning) because Keller received more than the signifier (the sign for *water*) and the referent (the water itself). Percy believed the breakthrough came as Annie Sullivan created a triadic relationship between *water* (the word), water (the liquid), and Helen herself – who was acting with agency to bridge word and substance. These "three corners"— the Delta Δ – were, as Percy saw it, the "absolutely irreducible" building blocks of human intelligence. In Percy's construction, Keller became more than organism responding to her environment. Suddenly, she was able to connect two unrelated things – (1) *water* the word and (2) water the liquid – and gained agency and insight by doing so.

Our point is that "water the liquid" becomes more than liquid because it connects the substance (water), with the word (for water), with the identity of the human engaged in the naming (Helen, herself). In terms of doing research, to state it directly, researchers do more than collect data and analyze findings. Research also becomes a

symbolic construction of self as the researcher gains agency and comes to self-identify and act as a researcher. Thus, the activity of conducting research shapes the lives and identities of those forging the constructions (doing the research). In other words, research is always more than research, because it is conducted and constructed by people who (by doing research) engage in the complex challenge of symbolic meaning-making and identity-building, informed by changing life narratives. While recognizing the term "learn" is loaded with multiplicities of signification, researchers "learn" about themselves as they conduct research, becoming researchers who act as their community of researchers act. Research changes the researcher in often inexplicable ways. When we use term "learning" we are assuming a multi-faceted, ongoing development within a person. Here we define learning broadly, in non-measurable ways that lack linearity and easy categorization. As we see and have experienced it, becoming-researchers defy checklists, standardization, system, and clear cut identities.

Thus, the methods of doing research ("water the word") and the data or findings of research ("water the liquid") shape researchers' identities (as they do research). Research itself is much more than creating a methodological proposal for collecting data. It is a building block of human knowing, a complexified form of learning and human identity forming where the whole of the research is greater than the sum of the parts. Specifically, as researchers came to conduct their own research at their own sites, they came to identify as researchers – adding to their identities as leaders –acting with agency in space (See Sheerin's 2009 discussion of the complexities related to identity through his study of Ricoeur and Deleuze).

Although we will not discuss it in depth, this view of research is sometimes

uncommon in academic contexts. We have seen power contestations within normative contexts housed in traditional research ethics forms that must be filled out prior to conducting research with human subjects. At many universities, the research ethics process is clearly grounded upon a traditional scientistic ideology where knowledgeable researchers hold a hierarchical – almost patronizing – relationship with research subjects whom they promise not to harm. In contrast, our experience is that most research is conducted by trusting peers working collaboratively within a community, most of whom would never consider advantage over colleagues as a status to be claimed because they all – together – have a vested interest in improving their learning and communities. These experiences do not delimit the insidious (and very human) potential for ambition and jealousy to impact research projects; it does, however, suggest that, in sites where research is engaged within a trusting professional community, empowerment often becomes a force for change.

Becoming a Rhizome Researcher

In this article, we will outline a process of what we call *rhizome research* and suggest ways researchers can become *rhizome researchers*. This learning process is one both authors have experienced in different ways that has shaped our approaches to research and to academic life. We have engaged in debates about qualitative and quantitative research, and will continue to do so. However, we desire to go beyond this constructed binary to become part of a reframing and reconceptualising of what we see as categories too firmly entrenched in ideologies of representation and objectification rather than open to allowing research to go where it leads and take us where it goes. The path is, for us, a path of agency. Thus, the idea was born for us to think of research as

rhizomatic or becoming *rhizome researchers*. This different way of framing our research has helped open up new perspectives on our educational journey.

Deleuze and Guattari

We see research opening us towards seeing interconnections rather than separations. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) explicated this conceptualization in their concept of a *rhizome*. Because we are teachers, we will conform our thinking about research with our thinking about teaching. We believe identity as a teacher is not separate from living as a researcher. Rather, our better teachers always critically searched for meaning. These teachers interpreted each day as it came and lived and shared their research from where they were living *intermezzo* (a short piece of instrumental music used between acts or scenes of an opera or drama).

For example, each day one enters the classroom, besides the pulling together of tests, articles, art, and other media, a teacher's routine consists of ongoing research: searching out etymologies, popular culture, current statistics, global political events, books, and many other typically mundane yet research oriented resources. Especially movies and television series seem amply suitable in contributing to grappling with a world of change, creativity, and potentialities. We see, with TED talks and the ubiquitous YouTube, teachers are now even less the "informers" or "tellers" and more the co-researchers.

Every day events from media draw us into a global discussion through Twitter, Facebook and the like, each informing us through blogs, movie, books, and television filled with rants, academic discourse, and diversified discussions. How is one to develop

oneself as researcher let alone a classroom full of students from multiple backgrounds? Declan (2009) points back to the 1982 movie classic *Blade Runner* as a "quest for immortality and the meaning of human being and having selfhood", which problematizes personal identity through the memory in relationship to the narrative self (p. 15). The androids in film are searching for their creator wanting to prolong their lives raising questions such as: Are the android's becoming human or vice-versa; what is the category of "human being"? Deleuze's idea of the virtual and Ricoeur's *Oneself as Another* are two responses to the ongoing challenge of agencies and identities raised by media, worth applying to becoming-researcher. A discussion that points to the practical yet complex day-to-day interconnections with students, teachers, research, and information that go beyond the linearity of books; students and teachers as researchers grow through personal agency and multi-perspectival identities in a *rhizomic* fashion.

Deleuze and Guattari (1987) wrote about two types of books – the root book and rhizome book. The root book depends on foundations, linear logic, imitation, plotted points, fixed order, and a reflected image of the world – dualism in its many forms. Although root books have become standard, they have missed organic connections to the way of the rhizome:

> One becomes two: whenever we encounter this formula, even stated
> strategically by Mao or understood in the most 'dialectical' way possible,
> what we have before us is the most classical and well reflected, oldest,
> and weariest kind of thought. Nature doesn't work that way: in nature,
> roots are taproots with a more multiple, lateral, and circular system of

ramification, rather than a dichotomous one. Thought lags behind nature

(Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 5).

Although many are committed to root books because there is an abundance of "trees" in the world, Deleuze and Guattari point to a way to get beyond what they call a weary way of thinking where thought lags behind the times to an untapped aspect of the natural order. Root book, binary thinking permeates Western society, so deeply embedded that this thinking is accepted without question; yet, this thinking misses the point by limiting and decomplexifying in ways that disallow openness to what could be. As Deleuze and Guattari (1987) say, "Binary logic is the spiritual reality of the root-tree" (p. 5). If that is the case – that this "spiritual" reality dominates and limits – continuing root thinking truncates creative growth.

Deleuze and Guattari (1987) posit instead the *rhizome book* – which morphs, redirects, and moves in multiple directions at once.

> A rhizome ceaselessly establishes connections between semiotic chains,
> organizations of power, and circumstances relative to the arts, sciences,
> and social struggles. A semiotic chain is like a tuber agglomerating
> diverse acts, not only linguistic, but also perceptive, mimetic, gestural,
> and cognitive: there is no language in itself, nor are there any linguistic
> universals, only a throng of dialects, patois, slangs, and specialized
> languages (p. 7).

Seeing the world as rhizome book rather than root book, rhizomatically instead of arboretically, shifts one away from binary oppositions. Rather than subject/object or

transcendence/immanence, the way of the rhizome opens one to a way of becoming, a univocity (one voice) that could unleash forces that are bound, captured, and limited to working with either/or logics. As powerful and as helpful as binaries are for seeing options and simplifying choices, we propose stepping forward as educational researchers toward seeing rhizomatic research as a shift in direction derived from Deleuzian and Guattarian concepts.

Thus, as we have come to think of research as *rhizomatic*, we have come to reframe research as *rhizome researchers* – an act that has helped us open new perspectives on our educational journey. Below, we explicate these new perspectives that emerge from thinking as a rhizome researcher/teacher:

1) Rhizome researchers start where they are (*nomadic*)

When deciding to research as a rhizome, researchers begin to see their current situatedness as an opportunity to be (Deleuze and Guattari) nomadic – to live outside the current state of affairs. The nomad intentionally lives without roots; willingly moves from place to place, idea to idea, and concept to concept. Nomads are open to interrelationships of what is before them, even if these interrelationships present places and concepts not traditionally linked. According to Deleuze and Guattari, being a nomad means that:

> The nomad has a territory; he (sic) follows customary paths; he goes from one point to another; he is not ignorant of points (water points, dwelling points, assembly points, etc.). But the question is what in nomad life is a principle and what is only a consequence. To begin with, although the

points determine paths, they are strictly subordinated to the paths they
determine, the reverse happens with the sedentary. The water point is
reached only in order to be left behind; every point is a relay and exists
only as a relay. A path is always between two points, but the in-between
has taken on all the consistency and enjoys both an autonomy and a
direction of its own. The life of the nomad is the intermezzo. (*A Thousand
Plateaus*, p. 380)

Nomadic research is open to and satisfied with being in current space and time;
there is no reason to live in another geography or in the past or future. One does not
forget what is backwards or forwards; rather, one deliberately chooses to be and to live
in the now without resorting to elements beyond close reach and proximity.

2) Rhizome researchers listen to the voices/things connected to them (*assemblages*)

Deleuze and Guattari's concept of the *assemblage* provides researchers ways to view
students and research by shifting away from binary oppositions and hierarchies such as
male/female, ethnic/non-ethnic (itself a misnomer), and teacher/student. This
provision means deliberately seeing things and people around you with intentional
equality, respect, and presence. Elements that seem less likely to provide opportunities
for research insight aren't immediately dismissed but remain in the purview because the
researcher sees assemblages in relationship and views synthesis rather than analysis.

3) Rhizome researchers embed themselves in the lives of their research/students
(*plane of immanence*)

We believe Deleuze and Guattari's concept *plane of immanence* is more than an ontologically powerful way of conceiving things: it is also a way of living as researchers who become embedded and committed to research and people. Although negative bias should be fought in our own subjectivities, we believe forming a bias *for* those we are working with that connects and gives us access to authentic lives is inherently positive. Recognizing that, with Ricoeur, understanding is always provisional (Ihde, p. 12), we see closer formations of researcher and students allowing entrance and permission to hear perspectives less open to the public. Not looking outside ourselves or those involved in our research to compare against and living in view of the *plane of immanence* gives research a freedom to follow *lines of flight* and seeks to break free from objectifying people as we consider ourselves as rhizomatically embedded to the "other." Thus, we see difference as positive and not as a lack.

4) Rhizome researchers develop sensitivities to elements/people that are not part of the status quo (*deterritorialization*)

Attempting to totalize and build hierarchies are ongoing temptations for researchers in an educational environment that often feels out of control or has already become territorialized by stifling oversimplifications. Rhizomatic thinking steps into the *affect*, creating moments of what Deleuze and Guattari call *deterritorialization* that embrace chaos and creativity as things to be celebrated and encouraged rather than shut down, captured, pushed out, dis-affected, or diminished (made small, lessened). Researchers should be aware of those on the fringe and come to see "all" those being researched and "all" the information being gathered, including disparate elements that seem out of line with preconceived notions. Rhizome researchers can problematize the status quo to ask

hard questions about what is happening that deflate educational hegemonies. Even

situations that seem lethargic may have reasons that unfold beyond our intuitions.

For example, if one entered and assessed a situation without understanding cultural

context, it might appear that a Chinese educational environment was lifeless, sombre, or

deeply silent. Ironically, however, Chinese students often become more still as they

listen intently and engage more fully. Thus, a rhizomatic researcher's skill set requires a

highly adaptive way of viewing research/teaching situations.

5) Rhizome researchers search for research aspects that are sometimes ignored

   (*different affects*)

Deleuzian scholar, Brian Massumi (1987) defines *affect* and *affection* in the Preface

of *A Thousand Plateaus*:

Neither word denotes a personal feeling (*sentiment* in Deleuze and Guattari).

L'affect (Spinoza's *affectus*) is an ability to affect and be affected. It is a

prepersonal intensity corresponding to the passage from one experiential

state of the body to another and implying an augmentation or diminution in

that body's capacity to act. *L'affection* (Spinoza's *affectio*) is each such state

considered as an encounter between the affected body and a second,

affecting, body (with body taken in its broadest possible sense to include

"mental" or ideal bodies) (p. xvi).

Researchers who follow traditional research paradigms can fall prey to searching for

preconcieved results, what Deleuze calls the danger of *representation*. Researching as a

rhizome highlights the possibility of seeking the preconceived and searches for ways to

allow pre-personal intensities – the *affect* – to be in purview of research and pedagogy. Such affect is generated not from the researcher's agenda, but from the researcher entering the strange release from seeking to control research projects or students. Allowing a research project to control itself is easier said than done, but we believe such openness to *affect* can negate preconceived conceptions of research that stagnate towards the norm.

Allowance for this affect can work in research and critique representation when beginning a research project. Justifiably, a temptation for researchers is to have an intuitive sense of their research trajectory but, keeping the rhizomic perspective in view, one can work at being less directed by these early assumptions of trajectory and open to that which affects ideas and perspective *in toto*. Practically, this could mean that, when someone is writing an essay-based dissertation, the subjects chosen for research are less prescribed and outlined chronologically on a timeline from the beginning and allowed to morph from coursework, reading, collegial interactions, and classroom placements. Receiving this affect would include the intentional openness to opinions outside of one's own scope and purview and move a researcher in rhizomic directions rather than linear fashion, finding unlikely connections. Granted, this way of working might deter efficiency and challenge standardized bureaucracies and doctoral graduation timelines, yet the allowance for creativity and openness would positively complexify research pathways that follow the more traditional and representational and can get caught in stale repetition trying to resemble that which was before rather than re-envision something new.

6) Rhizome researchers desire a life of becoming rather than copying what is seen (*haeccity* and *multiplicity*)

Multiplicities are rhizomatic and expose arborescent pseudo-multiplicities because there is no unity to serve as a pivot in the object or to divide in the subject. There is not even the unity to abort in the object "return" in the subject because a multiplicity has neither subject nor object, only determinations, magnitudes, and dimensions that cannot increase without the multiplicity changing its nature. The laws of combination therefore increase in number as the multiplicity grows (Deleuze, 1987, p. 8).

In *Dialogues,* Deleuze (2002) states: "In a multiplicity what counts are not... the elements, but what there is between, the between, a site of relations which are not separable from each other. Every multiplicity grows in the middle" (p. viii). Thinking this way can be challenging; however, that challenge is part of the energy rhizomes can exert for thinking differently and thinking "difference" rather than "sameness." Rhizomatic thinking challenges the binary mindset that depends upon finding foundations and relies on a representational horizon – comparison to what "is" rather than openness to the future. For Deleuze (2006), clear-cut binaries are but "molar or massive effects occurring within 'multiplicities.'" (p.70). From this insight, we can see that there is a "breaking" with binaries that opens up possibilities of re-envisioning research.

Breaking Binaries

In critical theory, binary oppositions are pairs of related terms or concepts opposite in meaning. Binary opposition is a system in language and thought where two

theoretical opposites are strictly defined and set off against one another – such as contrasts between mutually exclusive terms (on and off, in and out, or quantitative and qualitative). From our current binary research, we see the potentialities of how *breaking* a binary can be used to (1) shift one's current research approach, (2) expand/reform pedagogical methodology, and (3) revitalize educational practice.

First, shifting one's current research approach as a way to break binaries can open new avenues of exploration, re-establishing new concept tools for understanding and carrying out research. Second, using research to expand and reform pedagogical methodology opens researchers to creatively linking pedagogy with research – a rhizomatic conversation between researching and teaching colleagues that can help shape research findings into pedagogical or curriculum ideas. The fear of missing something can be replaced with an exploratory sense that each day contains new opportunities. Teachers, who may become set in particular teaching patterns and entrenched curriculum paths, might become less content with "what they have always done." When research becomes a rhizomatic path toward breaking binaries (between researching and teaching), the conversational act of resurrecting pedagogical ideas becomes a powerful educational possibility.

Third, building from rhizomatic conversations between research and pedagogy promises to revitalize educational practice. How might educational practices, for example, reflect rhizomatic research? In a rhizomatic world, there may be little distinction between a rhizomatic researcher and a rhizomatic teacher. Each day explores opportunities to try new ideas, to work in the *middle* synthesizing student interests and curriculum goals. Rhizomatic teachers/researchers can take steps towards giving some

control, allowing students' and teachers' ideas to merge in ways that incorporate core aspects of required curriculum. Researchers and teachers can "break" towards a lived curriculum "for a people yet to come" (Wallin, 2011) and seek ways to become that allow more flow, even within the constraints of binding bureaucracies.

Conclusion

Rhizome researchers have many conceptual tools at their disposal that can open lines of flight, enhance or uncover affect, release the need for control, situate one's self in embeddedness as a normal research situation, accept assemblages that constitute groupings of multiple groupings, and live within Deleuze's and Guattari's concept of becoming as day-to-day experiential learning. The beauty of these tools is that they are non-manipulative and seek to enhance educational flourishing by working against systems that can resort, if allowed, to power brokerage. Ideally, lines of flight can move students towards positive new outcomes in ways that might change a stagnant classroom to a place of expectation. Pressure to be everything to everyone is released, and possibilities for wider assemblages of contributors can encourage openness to new potentials. Perhaps the joy of research can be ignited when the responsibility to make things happen is let go.

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Appendix Two

Rhizomic Thinking: Towards a New Consideration of Social Studies Practice - Jim Parsons and Bryan Clarke

Abstract

Social studies teachers engage a vast subject area within which they can enlist a wide scope of possible curriculum and pedagogy choices. Despite the opportunity to engage students with an abundance of potentially fruitful themes, topics, and ideas, social studies teaching can be captured by the need to cover specific content in particular ways. Philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari (1983), in their seminal work *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, would connect such an agenda to the capitalistic machine that shrinks potential sources into what Foucault (1982) sees as tendencies to seek control rather than the openness of becoming. In this chapter, we contend that Deleuze and Guattari's concept of the rhizome opens new lines of flight in social studies curricula and works to revolutionize social studies as a subject area that often has been over-standardized and taught as one-size-fits-all. We also contend that rhizomic thinking can renew how students see the world and transform how they interpret events, epochs, eras, and cultures by drawing from rhizomic research's 'bamboo like' qualities.

Key Words: new social studies practice, rhizomic thinking, Deleuze and Guattari, social studies philosophy, research

Introduction

In the summer of 2007 in Eugene, Oregon, Wolfgang Rehmert created the Rizomatic Orchestra. What makes the Rizomatic Orchestra so interesting is its approach to creating music. The Orchestra plays and thinks like rhizomes to create "music for the moment" that is literally unmatched. Led by improvisational guitar virtuoso Wolfgang Rehmert, the music is not only improvised, it can never be duplicated.

According to Chris Castiglione's (2009) blog "Digital Music Becomes (more) Rhizomatic," music mimics inherent characteristics of the Internet that can be understood using Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari's concept of the rhizome. Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) work, *A Thousand Plateaus*, suggests how rhizomes may be used as an apt metaphor for describing how thought and work can extend in all directions and have multiple entryways. Although the concept often is used to describe how the Internet works, it can be used to better understand other areas of thinking such as, music.

This paper, however, is not about music: it is about teaching and learning in social studies. Our goal here is to suggest how *rhizomic* or interchangeably *rhizomatic* thinking (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) can be understood specifically within the context of social studies as a subject. We believe rhizomes represent ways of thinking that allow social studies students to see and interpret events and activities differently and, perhaps, transform how students come to see the world (inspired by Deleuze and Guattari's use of rhizome for texts, we are applying term rhizome to thinking). Rhizomatic thinking also offers social studies teachers both a way to encourage students to approach and understand events and to provide insights into what the future of

school learning might look like. The ubiquitous nature of technology will make rhizomatic thinking even more widespread; and who better to provide technological leadership than teachers who care about social contexts in a world of burgeoning possibilities.

We have titled this paper "Rhizomic Thinking" because we were inspired by how a rhizome like bamboo works in relationship to thought. Bamboo is a woody grass that grows mostly in Asia, but could grow anywhere. Bamboo's unique root structure—rhizomes grow quickly and pop up everywhere. In bamboo forests of Southeast Asia, the rhizomes network and connect, intertwining roots and nodes throughout the forests. Although becoming popular as a garden plant in North America, bamboo is a problem when it becomes invasive: lurking everywhere and connecting to anything, often appearing where it is not wanted. This invasive brilliance is the key to bamboo's survival despite challenging environments.

It is easy to see why rhizomes have become a metaphor and concept for how the Internet works and grows. Many of us, old enough to remember a time before the Internet, marvel at the interconnecting networks one can now access. For social studies teachers, defining terms, catching the news, exploring current topics, or finding others who share our ideas is fast and easy. One's constantly growing library is merely a search engine away.

Such rhizomic thinking is almost second nature for young people. Like rhizomes themselves, the defining characteristics of youth include connectivity, heterogeneity, multiplicity, and cartography. As Deleuze and Guattari (1987) imply, if young people can

be thought of as rhizomes, any point of a rhizome can connect to any other point. Youth have few firewalls. They celebrate privacy, and simultaneously welcome infringement. They build barriers (think of iPods) to eliminate barriers (think of listening to music from anywhere), becoming more rhizomatic as they do, their presence is like an invasion to a newly envisioned world.

Thinking in Social Studies

But, what does this have to do with teaching and learning in social studies? In this section, we suggest ways that social studies teachers can help their students take advantage of rhizomic thinking woven throughout the following topics:

Think like a rhizome – find helpful information from anywhere.

For many years, social studies resources have been standardized—vetted and approved by central authorities—mostly in textbook form. Although e-textbooks exist, current social studies teachers are more likely to creatively synthesize classroom resources from a myriad of places. Although we believe it is no longer desirable in social studies to use only standard resources, our tendency as teachers is to stay close to traditional resources. Like rhizomes, useful insights can emerge in a variety of places and students should be encouraged to creatively seek those resources anywhere. An obvious rhizomatic source would be the Internet, as search engines allow students to access information widely. Although such searching carries a need for critical scrutiny, teaching such scrutiny can itself be an important social studies lesson in critical thinking.

Metaphorical differences between trees and rhizomes are noted by Deleuze and Guattari (1983). Trees, for example, organize knowledge along systematic and hierarchical principles, stemming from and flowing to one root system. Rhizomes, however, uproot the philosophy of trees; deconstruct their systematic logic; and provide unities made along lines, layers, and plateaus. In the Western world, tree-like thinking has been our tradition. Students, though, can be taught to break free of "tree thinking" or staying safely close to a single knowledge root. They can be taught to also actively seek unusual insights: conversing, creating, and moving like rhizomes along planes of immanence (ways of thinking in the now).

Social studies teachers can make it a rule to break rules about where information comes from and to work against standardized thinking. Thinking outside the box – even ignoring that boxes exist – revises how and where we obtain insights. Serendipity invites wonderful opportunities from the places we don't usually seek, but might. Students should be encouraged to build upon rhizomatic characteristics such as connectivity, heterogeneity, multiplicity, and cartography. This encouragement comes with the caveat that teachers should establish rules and provide healthy discernment about where students should NOT go, based upon moral, legal, and safety issues.

Embrace the Temporary

The temporary nature of rhizomes is suggested by Deleuze and Guattari (1983). They believe our desire to see and create categories constrains our vision so we can observe neither individual nor contextual flows nor the intensities of life that happen at differing speeds, in different ways, within different contexts. They believe life shifts,

connects, and diversifies as possibilities are produced. These processes are far from linear; and, because people constantly move from one state into another, results are far from predictable. But, they can be seen if searched for.

Two concepts—immanence and univocity—are explicated when Deleuze and Guattari (1983) speak about rhizomes. For them, living on the plane of immanence suggests that social studies students can learn to live fully in the moment, breaking from representational fixations that, in social studies, always seem to be past or future oriented. Students might learn to develop a seize-the-day mentality that opens them to creative thinking that does not always seek transcendental points of reference but allows each day or event to be a day or event unto itself.

Univocity suggests that social studies can creatively bring subject and object together into a novel ontological system by following Spinoza's idea of univocity (one voice) instead of the transcendent idealist and categories-based ontology of Plato and Aristotle. Cartesian dualism continues to posit two unchanging substances: matter and spirit. Univocity discounts this classic subject and object split, bringing insight to "one voice." Because, ontologically, substance grants existence, and for Deleuze and Guattari (1987), substance is in a continuum of change that infinitely and inexhaustibly produces different expressions of itself. These configurations are complexities of physical matter, human groups or networks, and other manifestations of multiplicities. If followed, this way of thinking could allow social studies students to conceptualize change more fluidly. Although univocity is a complex and nuanced concept, for our purposes in this paper, we define univocity as living in and being fully present to teaching and learning

moments, without seeking a transcendent ideal against which to measure or compare life.

Rhizomic thinking sees the potential of developing ideas when dynamic fluidity is a given. The significance of rhizomes as a metaphor is that their growth systems are far less predictable than the growth systems of trees, which categorize knowledge into predictable patterns (like the growth rings of a tree) whose goal is to plot points and fix orders. Rhizomes situate relationships to one another dynamically and, because they do, make present fluctuating realities. The result is that new concepts grow and proliferate, coming together to create assemblages (temporary collections of ideas and concepts, viable in particular contexts only for a time).

If social studies' students can be taught to see the dynamic tension and fluidity in human actions, they will not fall victim to simplifying understanding, believing that what happens in one human context will necessarily happen in another. Truly, humans share characteristics and act similarly in different times, cultures, and circumstances. Humans also act differently – depending upon context, background, and a host of other factors. It is perhaps wiser as social studies students to see generalizations as helpful, but temporary, ways to understand life – scientific discovery is a good example – and to map possibilities that might exist. Useful questions for students might be: "What would happen if contexts or circumstances changed?" or "What contexts or circumstances might have changed (or could change) human actions or perceptions?"

See the spaces in-between – look for new networks of people and ideas.

The fruitfulness of better understanding the in-between spaces and dimensions of human social activities is suggested by Deleuze and Guattari (1983). They explain how networks of relationships are formed, how concepts create shapes and lines (territorialize), how these shapes and lines break down (deterritorialize), and how patterns might be observed whenever and wherever activity occurs. The resulting and temporary patterns of authentic complexity help explain connections between and across systems, people, and ideas.

Rhizomes, as Amy Herzog (2000) suggests, help us see life "as an assemblage of images in flux with the world of images," because living remains the becoming of true creation, where thought introduces the "stutters and hesitations" that help us access life's movements so that our becoming carries us beyond ourselves (p. 16). Although she is speaking about using rhizomes to better understand film, her note that people live intermezzo and move rhizomatically rings true. Approaching social studies rhizomatically no longer makes the teacher the center of attention or the one responsible for carrying the agenda. A social studies classroom can open to students' becoming.

While living intermezzo is no easy task for teachers who have curriculum to attend to and assessments to give, the in-between can be a dynamic space to occupy because it is so vibrant and surprising. Without seeing human activity (the content area of social studies) in its flexibility, the primary focus moves arborescently through teacher, to root system: all seeming to lead in particular, pre-determined orders. Teaching as becoming (seeing humans and contexts as constantly connecting and changing) offers a different way to consider social studies content and student

involvement. When social studies teachers become intermediaries and not centers of content, the process opens to student learning and the ensuing multiplicities.

Social studies teachers teach a subject area that has always been made up of multiplicities. The premise underlying Deleuze and Guattari's ideas (1983) is that a multiplicity of realities and possibilities are possible for any event or idea; thus, social studies becomes a matter of perspective. Our most basic concept, citizenship, has been a contested term throughout the history of our subject area. . To teach social studies, one must engage many considerations: – these include: the teacher's identity, experiences, and philosophical background. .

Rhizomic thinking offers a revised theoretical framework as a provocative way to think about social studies as a subject area and social studies teachers' professional learning. Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) concepts of difference and multiplicities—rhizomes and their ways of creating assemblages (things that connect or interact)—help us analyze and examine the nature of social studies and the way teachers learn to teach this dynamic subject area. Social studies lends itself to considerations of multiplicities along planes of immanence. As a subject area, social studies always contests different ways of seeing and understanding knowledge from disparate *human desiring machines*. For Deleuze and Guattari, life as a machine means that we look at life as functions and connections instead of imagining a fixed order, purpose, or end. Deleuze and Guattari are thinkers of creation, revolution, and the actual. They are eminently concerned with the transformation of this world and its desire. They engage the in-betweens and the marginalized, productive associations that would benefit social studies teachers and students.

Become cartographers. Create maps of movement and insights.

Rhizomes grow, but do not reproduce themselves. This means that, for social studies, one historical or social event can never truly represent another. For example, historical conditions that sparked the start of one war can never fully explain the start of another war. Or, reasons why one U.S. President or Canadian Prime Minister was elected will never be the same reasons for the election of another. Deleuze and Guattari (1983) believe that seeking similarities for comparison are never fully useful explanations for how humans or the environment act; instead, rhizome-thinking or seeking differences will help social studies' students see and encounter the world differently. Instead of seeing the history of humans in the world as concrete – shaped and understood once and for all - students can seek to discover how the world they view is dynamically transformed as different humans engage different sites contextually. The world transforms before their eyes in ways that rule out any solid, certain reproductions they might hope to make. Instead, mapping these contexts of similarities and differences can offer social studies' students truer insights. As rhizomes encounter each other in place (context), they often assume aspects of the other; yet, sometimes they do not. Rhizomes do not express deep structures or replicate linear systems. If so, one could map human actions as a way to better understand them. As noted before, linear logic represents tracing reproductions, seeing what already exists as ready-made and understandable. Deleuze and Guattari suggest that the world should be mapped. Mapping is productive rather than reproductive because maps are oriented towards experimental contacts with real life. Maps can be drawn in many ways, but they are always open to reconstructing new connections. In rhizomatic thinking, cartography

means mapping movements. People who use maps start from anywhere: this includes where they are, which becomes their middle; then, they consider and create paths to where they hope to go. Tracing, on the other hand, works to pursue a given path from start to finish.

If students, for example, come to think of human history as a large map, they can think of humans being in various places on that map and moving anywhere. They can extend maps to create contextual connections. Maps allow novel considerations. Simply stated, map-making allows one to ask questions like: What would happen if we added or removed an element? How would things change? Mapping would then allow students to map how whole assemblages might change as they added, subtracted, connected, opened, or modified and allow them to see plausible affects on the overall system. Finally, maps allow social studies students to see things in their worlds by living, learning, and changing in the moment.

Share Work Openly.

In the botanical sense, a rhizome is a root system some plants (lilies, orchids, ginger, and bamboo) use to spread themselves. The roots of most plants generally point downward; however, a rhizome is a horizontal root system that runs parallel to the ground's surface. The plant sends shoots up from nodes in the rhizome, creating what look like many separate plants. These seemingly unrelated plants are actually all connected, through a system not immediately visible to the eye. In this way, rhizomes spread and extend territory and expand their influence and connectedness.

The Internet has allowed and encouraged rhizomatic methods for sharing information. In 1984 (2001, updated edition), journalist Steven Levy introduced the term *hacker ethic* in his book *Hackers: Heroes of the Computer Revolution*. He believed a *hacker's ethic* was based upon access, freedom of information, and improving the quality of life. Founder of the Free Software Foundation and old-school hacker, Richard Stallman, dreamed of creating *free* software for the people. He believed hackers should share knowledge with those who could benefit because knowledge was a resource that should be used rather than wasted.

The same is true in social studies. Democracy, a core foundation of North American social studies curricula, is based upon the belief that citizens benefit when knowledge is accessible rather than when knowledge is hidden and that citizens working together are wiser than citizens working as individuals. Sharing social studies' knowledge can rhizomatically spread ideas around and extend a rhizome's human territory. Sharing knowledge allows insight to arise along old or new lines. One can never erase shared ideas because they rebound time and time again. This trait is defined as asignifying ruptures. When one file-sharing site is shut down, others replace it. Sharing information can go viral in seconds and change the world in ways never before possible. The exponential potential for classroom 'ruptures' of learning are amazing opportunities for social studies.

Remix Culture.

Rhizomes, as Deleuze and Guattari describe (1983) send out lines of flight. Lines of flight in music refer to the fact that a song can never be re-played exactly the same by

a musician: no matter how minuscule, there will always be some variation in tempo or timbre. In addition, *lines of flight* encompass derivatives. For example, remix culture extends to the many derivative works sung by amateurs on social media sites. Remix culture thus expresses the rhizomatic qualities of heterogeneity as well as multiplicity. This culture is akin to the computer world of Apple® vs. Google®. Both can be critiqued, but one standout difference is their philosophy of information distribution. Google is more rhizomatic and open source; Apple more arboretic and locked into capital. Whether truly an example of rhizome or not, Google promotes open source rather than locked systems. Content resonates poorly with students when it comes 'locked' (pre-packaged) in a binder, PowerPoint, or video from those who *make* curriculum for a living. Better than packaged curricula that points students along a linear path towards a predetermined end are teachers who see the richness of the culture evident in their classroom without trying to orchestrate a replication of a fixed curriculum.

Teaching from the mindset that both curriculum and learning in social studies is best developed as it is re-mixed between what one has already and where one might be going can be a liberating way to celebrate the natural diversity students bring to classrooms. When social studies teachers and students become aware of the possibilities of remixing culture and knowledge as ways of learning, the result is rhizomatic learning that does not come from kits but inherently resides in teachers developing social studies curriculum. Work on student engagement (Taylor & Parsons, 2011) suggests that students become more engaged when they talk more about what they have learned. We believe they should talk more about the content of their learning, what learning means

to them, the cultures they identify with, and the processes of their learning. "Conversational pedagogies" (Parsons, 2012) include assessment for learning, differentiated instruction, and inquiry-based/problem-based learning are productive ways to promote student engagement. When students are able to share their stories and "remix" them with other circulating stories of the classroom, school, and world, they gain a glimpse of their rhizomatic existence and are able to see the importance of their connections with all things: human and environment.

Live as a rhizome – connect to build classroom community.

The rhizomatic environment can become a way social studies teachers actively live, display, breathe, and view the world. Living as a rhizome is not something one can rehearse, like a teacher working to establish classroom control by creating perfectly articulated lesson plans. The concept of a rhizome can help students view themselves as connected to their environment, Jasmina Sermijn, Patrick Devlieger, and Gerrit Loots (2008) suggest. Rhizomatic thinking helps turn social studies from a subject isolated and distinct from others into a subject constructed and connected by the community where one resides – including the classroom.

To think and live within a rhizomatic community helps break free from unhealthy self-foci towards a sense of connection to other students also in the process of becoming. Instead of seeing curriculum and assessment as a competitive way to set students apart and against others, students as rhizomes would be encouraged to view their lives *with* those around them as deeply interconnected and interdependent realties. These connections include family and relatives but also those in assemblage with them

through their neighborhood, the stores where they shop, the places they hang out, and their schools. Student's stories are no longer told with individualistic centerpieces, but include assemblages of stories of other people and other things woven together.

Finally, living like a rhizome allows teachers to relax classroom control. Classroom management seems, for young teachers, like a life preserver on a swirling ocean. The techniques taught offer a sense of stability for the challenge of hands-on practice in day-to-day classroom chaos. When teachers worry about classroom control, some days are simple matters of survival. Rhizomatic thinking encourages teachers to risk and release classroom control. This challenge is difficult for beginning teachers or those unwilling to open themselves to interconnecting with students' lives in ways that feel risky. Alternatively, what would one envision? A classroom built upon fear and control, subjugated by a hierarchical binary of teacher over student? Is it worth allowing life to return to its original difficulty for students and social studies teachers? Could we give up the commodifying impulses that place teachers over students to see students as only economic machines looking for jobs? A ringing challenge is provided by Lara Handsfield (2007):

> A key question for me as a teacher educator is how to encourage teachers to recognize and actively nurture the production of difference at the same time that they may be engaged as subjects of the state in the project of standardization. This is no small task. What might be the usefulness for teachers of rhizomatic ways of thinking about teaching and learning?" (p. 249)

Develop new concepts, discourse, and postures.

How we speak and position ourselves with the world reflects how we live in the world. Language is a powerful transformer of the reality we see or ignore. Rhizomatic thinking shifts paradigms from concepts that objectify and fall prey to reductionism to paradigms that creatively and connectively point out difference – not to compare against but to celebrate. Deleuze and Guattari discuss what they call a rhizomatic *posture* that positions itself in the world in a specific way.

This posture, as Peter Smagorinsky, Sharon Murphy Augustine, and Karen Gallas (2006) elaborate, "redistributes authority by sharing intellectual capital and is inclusive with respect to the stakeholders' multiple perspectives on classroom processes, relationships, and outcomes" (p. 87). A rhizome is "binary busting" and could be used to reposition how social studies educators develop curriculum around concepts and postures open to a world of difference rather than simplifying content towards constructions of similarity (Smagorinsky, Augustine, and Gallas, p. 88). While conceptual clarity can leave students certain they understand, complexification keeps conversation going and allows perplexity to become a common classroom posture.

We recognize the challenges inherent in reframing social studies, but believe shifting from a standardized and solidified search for a shared, basic social studies knowledge is a positive shift in a changing world. Rather than continuing to add content to the curriculum, making social studies a subject area where all students gain the same foundational understandings, using rhizomatic thinking engages the study of humans and events in a world dynamic with information and possibilities. We believe rhizomatic thinking can help social studies create a curriculum that outlines ideas, concepts, and events that are important to different geographical areas, better maps globalized

contexts and human networks, and encourages a freedom of daily choices teachers might use to engage their teaching as rhizomes living among rhizomes.

Conclusion

When we turn on the water faucet or, as Deleuze and Guattari (1983) would say, when our domestic water machine turns on, our human forms have become a translation point in a flow of water that goes from river to processing station to pipes to faucets to mouth to stomach to arteries to cells to veins to bladder to toilets to pipes to processing station to river to ocean to vapor to clouds to rain and back to the river. This is how philosophers Deleuze and Guattari would suggest we look at how life works. This paper has explored how a rhizomic way of social studies thinking can change how social studies is taught.

We have suggested that rhizomic social studies teaching can be used to create non-linear, non-binary ways of thinking about social and human phenomena. By embracing the seeming chaos of life and allowing natural orders to be seen and mapped, social studies might help students emerge from preconceived ideas that sometimes artificially control historical moments and capture historical insight within a framework of power. When control is artificially placed upon dynamic life, the flow of the moment is broken and insight is hidden. But, by studying the moment rhizomatically, social studies might help create flows of immanence and insight that open understanding more widely.

Social studies is a subject area of difference: it engages different insight and knowledge, different ways of seeing ideas or events, different values, and different

semiotics. Deleuze and Guattari's ideas can help both teachers and students learn to grapple with dynamic theories that are always open to possibilities. Teaching social studies, thus, means creating possible realities for both teachers and the students, and heterogeneous ways of explaining how the world is seen through networks of desiring machines that create temporary assemblages.

We believe social studies teachers can help open up more possibilities for observation, reaction, discussion, and critique. The ways in which curriculum discourses for social studies have been situated within disciplinary traditions tend to ignore the seemingly incoherent and unproductive possibilities of acknowledging and moving beyond notions of disciplines. We also believe that Deleuze and Guattari's (1983) ideas of multiplicities reveal new sites for exposing the ways social studies – as studies in humanity and the world – can recognize the differences among the disciplines that comprise the social studies. Social studies, thus, can become a rhizomatic, rather than an arborescent, study. We believe Deleuze and Guattari are thinkers of creation, revolution, and the actual who care about global transformation.

The interesting thing about Deleuze and Guattari's work is that, although emerging thirty years ago with the publication of *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* in 1983, it has come to present thought generally within the past decade. Looking forward to the next ten years, teachers influenced by their concepts can embrace trends that support connectivity, heterogeneity, and multiplicities as ways to expand new ways of knowing. Because a key principle of the rhizome is connectivity, seeing things rhizomatically means focusing on the connections between and within what might otherwise be thought of as discrete entities. Multiplicity includes both the

multiple and variations of the original. Difference is about intensities and flows and force, rather than about subjects. This shift in perspective could revolutionize social studies and teacher's approaches to pedagogy as it decenters the subject and opens to the multiple.

Finally, Deleuze and Guattari (1983) see human agency differently. Subjects are not the agent; rather, agency emerges from the distribution of forces between elements in a network. Thought, desire, creativity come from elsewhere, from outside, in the tangle between mapped neurons, objects, and forces. Thinking with the rhizome means mapping connections, which is ultimately an unbounded exercise in experimentation. Deleuze and Guattari also argue that lines of flight are primary. The question becomes how matter and energy in our chaotic universe with infinite potential become drawn into organized systems, some of which become so mired in residue that they are rigid and nearly inescapable.

Shifting towards seeking to understand *difference* as a primary concept allows a release from hierarchies that restrain creativity: hierarchies of knowledge, of teachers *over* students, of certain epochs over others, of one ethnicity over another. Already in motion, teachers can contribute their specific competencies without embracing or reinforcing hierarchies. Thus, we become a world of "leaderless," organizations (see *Starfish and the Spider* by Ori Brafman). Recognizing, in a world of Internet hyper-connectivity, that not every aspect of the human social milieu can be captured in the curriculum could open the potential for teachers to develop regionalized communities of knowledge while, at the same time, develop connections all over the world without heavy restraints on forcing specific knowledge on every student. Our young people are

already acting rhizomatically in multiple ways; maybe, in this case, they will become our teachers.

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