

# **Between Authenticity and Argument: Rhizomatic Writing and Educational Insights**

**by**

**Chloe Humphreys**

M.A., Brock University, 2005  
B.A., University of Victoria, 2001

Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfilment  
of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

in the

Curriculum Theory and Implementation Program  
Faculty of Education

**© Chloe Humphreys 2012**

**Simon Fraser University**

**Summer 2012**

All rights reserved.

However, in accordance with the *Copyright Act of Canada*, this work may be reproduced, without authorization, under the conditions for "Fair Dealing." Therefore, limited reproduction of this work for the purposes of private study, research, criticism, review and news reporting is likely to be in accordance with the law, particularly if cited appropriately.

# Approval

**Name:** Chloe Humphreys  
**Degree:** Doctor of Philosophy (Education)  
**Title of Thesis:** *Between Authenticity and Argument:  
Rhizomatic Writing and Educational Insights*

**Examining Committee:**

**Chair: Dr Dalores van der Wey**  
Assistant Professor

---

**Dr. Charles Bingham**  
Senior Supervisor  
Associate Professor

---

**Dr. Sean Blenkinsop**  
Supervisor  
Assistant Professor

---

**Dr. Allan Mackinnon**  
Internal/External Examiner  
Associate Professor

---

**Dr. Carlo Ricci**  
External Examiner  
Associate Professor, Nipissing University

**Date Defended/Approved:** August 10, 2012

---

## Partial Copyright Licence



The author, whose copyright is declared on the title page of this work, has granted to Simon Fraser University the right to lend this thesis, project or extended essay to users of the Simon Fraser University Library, and to make partial or single copies only for such users or in response to a request from the library of any other university, or other educational institution, on its own behalf or for one of its users.

The author has further granted permission to Simon Fraser University to keep or make a digital copy for use in its circulating collection (currently available to the public at the "Institutional Repository" link of the SFU Library website ([www.lib.sfu.ca](http://www.lib.sfu.ca)) at <http://summit/sfu.ca> and, without changing the content, to translate the thesis/project or extended essays, if technically possible, to any medium or format for the purpose of preservation of the digital work.

The author has further agreed that permission for multiple copying of this work for scholarly purposes may be granted by either the author or the Dean of Graduate Studies.

It is understood that copying or publication of this work for financial gain shall not be allowed without the author's written permission.

Permission for public performance, or limited permission for private scholarly use, of any multimedia materials forming part of this work, may have been granted by the author. This information may be found on the separately catalogued multimedia material and in the signed Partial Copyright Licence.

While licensing SFU to permit the above uses, the author retains copyright in the thesis, project or extended essays, including the right to change the work for subsequent purposes, including editing and publishing the work in whole or in part, and licensing other parties, as the author may desire.

The original Partial Copyright Licence attesting to these terms, and signed by this author, may be found in the original bound copy of this work, retained in the Simon Fraser University Archive.

Simon Fraser University Library  
Burnaby, British Columbia, Canada

revised Fall 2011

## Ethics Statement



The author, whose name appears on the title page of this work, has obtained, for the research described in this work, either:

- a. human research ethics approval from the Simon Fraser University Office of Research Ethics,

or

- b. advance approval of the animal care protocol from the University Animal Care Committee of Simon Fraser University;

or has conducted the research

- c. as a co-investigator, collaborator or research assistant in a research project approved in advance,

or

- d. as a member of a course approved in advance for minimal risk human research, by the Office of Research Ethics.

A copy of the approval letter has been filed at the Theses Office of the University Library at the time of submission of this thesis or project.

The original application for approval and letter of approval are filed with the relevant offices. Inquiries may be directed to those authorities.

Simon Fraser University Library  
Burnaby, British Columbia, Canada

update Spring 2010

## Abstract

In this dissertation I aim to present a place for teachers and students to encounter authenticity in education. At present, our cultural knowledge is imbued by fast moving attention spans that are fixated and entertained by the hyperreal, virtual world. The crux for most pedagogues is whether to compete with this virtual consciousness by reinforcing a traditional modernist's approach to education or to merge with this new consciousness by introducing more technology in the classroom. I offer another insight, one that is grounded in the Real.

I hope to provide a place that engages students and teachers in a Truthful space that exists between the symbolic order of education and the Real matter. By material I do not mean burlap or a conglomeration of atoms, I mean something more ontological and phenomenological: Realness--the spontaneous, unpredictable material that exists beyond the scope of discourse.

By enacting a philosophy of education inspired by Deleuze's and Guattari's figuration of a rhizome, I map a pragmatic territory in which rhizomatic learning and writing is a field for students to experience authenticity in education. The concept of the rhizome as developed by Deleuze and Guattari (1987) in *A Thousand Plateaus* provides the ontology for the style of pedagogy and writing that I am unfolding in this essay. At the same time that rhizomes seem to grow in any scattered direction without structure, they produce a plant above the earth. One that is ordered and visible to any eye. It exists in a completely new terrain but is also interdependently linked to the one below.

There are two planes to this dissertation: one that is formalized, argumentative, and academic, while the other plane is an attempt at authenticity and engagement with the Real. The interpellation of the academic with the authentic voices is articulatory for the ontology of 'becoming' within the rhizome. In this way the Real and Truth are not ignored but discovered *and* created within education. This dissertation is an attempt at embodying the paradoxical ontology of Truth that is essential to authentic philosophical writing and pedagogy.

**Key words:** authenticity; rhizome; truth; phenomenology; writing; pedagogy

## **Acknowledgements**

I thank my supervisor, Dr. Charles Bingham, for his support and teaching. I thank my committee member Dr. Sean Blenkinsop for his insightful feedback and Dr. Carlo Ricci and Dr. Allan MacKinnon for being generous examiners

I thank my family for their support, and for making this possible. I could not have done this without them. I thank Bhuvinder Vaid and Greg Scutt for their intellectual support.

# Table of Contents

Approval .....	ii
Partial Copyright Licence.....	iii
Abstract .....	iv
Acknowledgements .....	v
Table of Contents .....	vi
List of Images .....	vii
<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Dialogue.....</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>Concluding the Introduction .....</b>	<b>104</b>
References.....	106

## List of Images

Image 1. Pictograph circa 1800s .....	17
Image 2. Pair of Shoes, Van Gogh, 1886 .....	24

# Introduction

Most academic essays begin with an introduction that outlines the argument to follow. This can prove redundant if one is going to read the paper anyway, or maybe the paper is redundant and all one needs is the introduction. For standard philosophical arguments, the introduction tells the reader the thesis statement one plans to defend and the strategy used in order to defend it. The introduction can also act as a key to read the map of the paper; this is helpful for longer papers. For some, the introduction entices the reader into reading the rest of the argument; this is the most important component to an introduction and is often overlooked.

Usually, when I read a book, I read the introduction last. I read it last when I have found the piece so interesting that I want to know more. If I have ever read the introduction first, it was because the introduction was so enticing that I could not help but read it. This occurred when reading Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) *A Thousand Plateaus*. And coincidentally, (actually not coincidentally at all because this was my intention in noting this book so early on) this book has provided the ontology and form for this dissertation.

I think it is safe to say that the reader will either read the introduction at the beginning, at the end, or not at all. Rarely does it happen that a reader reads the introduction intermittently throughout the book, a bit of the book and then a bit of the introduction, back and forth until both are done.

Starting with an introduction creates a linear argument--there is a beginning, a middle, and an end. Much like how we view life, I imagine. If writing is the medium through which we convey our knowledge to the reader then writing in a linear fashion establishes a linear ideology in the knowledge presented. And by ideology, I

mean what is assumed but not spoken of; the discourse that shapes what is being spoken of but is never spoken of itself. The introduction places a linear ideology within the writing for both the reader and the writer, because it is a beginning, a starting point. But this is not a new concept. In fact, nothing I have written is new, but then nothing I have written has been written before either.

The most important part to the introduction is the thesis statement. The thesis statement of the paper usually resides somewhere in the introduction, sometimes not. Of course, there are always exceptions. Nonetheless, this is how one is taught to write a standard academic philosophical argument. Mogck (2008), who wrote an authoritative guide on writing philosophy papers in his book titled *Writing to Reason a Companion for Philosophy Students and Instructors*, claimed that "A statement of your thesis and an outline of your game plan should come almost immediately at the start of your paper" (p.29). The thesis statement is the fixed focal point of what everything else in the paper supports, explains, and demonstrates. In the words of a specialist, "The body of your paper follows a strategy to demonstrate your thesis. . . . When you have completed an argument remind the reader of the basic structure of that argument, by briefly stating your conclusion, the premises from which it follows, and the *reasons why* it follows" (Mogck, 2008, p.30). At any point in the argument, the reader should be able to draw what the author is talking about back to the thesis: "If the paragraph establishes something that you do not need for your argument then you have to throw it out, no matter how clever it is" (Mogck, 2008, p.31).

For this project, I acknowledge the impossibility, counter productivity, and inauthenticity of a thesis statement. If I try to convince or persuade the reader of the Truth of a thesis statement, I simultaneously ignore the element of paradox within Truth. From here, I will attempt to write a thesis without a thesis statement

and it may seem that I am trying to trick truth. If truth hides from me when I try to reveal it, what happens when I refuse to reveal it, does it reveal itself?

However, in writing that a thesis statement is impossible or inauthentic, I have written a thesis statement. This is a paradox, and this is an integral strand in rhizomatic writing and pedagogy. Rhizomatic writing opens space for claiming a truth, while simultaneously claiming its opposite. Recognizing paradoxes is important for writing authentically; it means we have come up against the edge of language, where logic fails us and we are jugged up against the Real. And the role of authentic philosophical writing and pedagogy should open space for this. In this dissertation, I hope to open a space in pedagogy and writing for authenticity. Allowing writing and pedagogy to become rhizomatic will encourage more meaningful encounters for students and teachers within education.

In this project, the rhizome is not used theoretically, metaphorically, or hypothetically; it is plugged into and worked from the middle. I have taken heed of the words from Gregoriou (2004), a critical theorist and educational philosopher, in her piece, which examined how to use Deleuze and Guattari's rhizome within pedagogical practices:

The goal is not to represent the rhizome but to implant it in thought. The effect they [Deleuze and Guattari] are after, is not the understanding of the rhizome but a functioning, a whole apparatus that connects disparate, linguistic and non-linguistic things. (p. 240)

Writing is the medium I use in this dissertation. It seems only philosophically appropriate that I critically reflect on the medium in which I use to explore these issues because the medium shapes the meaning of the phenomena that I am searching for, so the medium is as important as the phenomena that I am exploring. Philosophical writing reveals these phenomena and at the same time constitutes it.

And as I demonstrate in the footnotes to follow, pedagogy is also a medium; it is an inbetweeness or an amongness. It, like writing, reveals and constitutes the phenomena or the matter being presented. Pedagogy and texts are the mediums in which I discovered philosophy and perhaps this is the reason for my reflection upon them now.

From here it is important to warn my reader that my dissertation is becoming two planes: the footnotes are formalized and standard and my description is linear, while the other plane, what I will call the introductory plane, is experimental as I make attempts at writing authentically. I say attempts because I cannot claim to write authentically. To claim that my writing is authentic is an inauthentic claim to make; it is akin to claiming that I have spoken the unspoken.

I have put two planes in this essay to embody rhizomatic writing and pedagogy. The intersubjectivity of both planes discovers and creates Truth and authenticity. These planes are on one continuum; they are not a binary. One is not good and the other bad; they give rise to one another while resting in their own. They are, as my reader will see later in this dissertation, an attempt at displaying the symbolic order of one plane and the Realness of the material of the earth that exists beneath the discourse of that symbolic order.

However, it can be difficult to read a dissertation with two planes. The reader can read this in three ways. Actually there are infinite ways, but I will list three here. My reader can read the plane on top first (which I call the introductory plane) and then the footnotes second, or the reader can read them intermittently throughout (I recommend this way). Or the reader can read the shorter footnotes intermittently as they read the introductory plane and then come back and read the longer footnotes second (I also recommend this way).

The footnote to follow takes sail from Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) figuration of a rhizome. It is a territory in which rhizomatic learning is a field for students to experience meaning in education and it explores how becoming more rhizomatic in pedagogy can liberate educators and students from arborescent and replicable ways of thinking and towards more authenticity and meaning in pedagogy and learning. I open a space for uncertainty, paradoxical activity, and engagement with the Real; this allows for authenticity in both writing and pedagogy.

This footnote contains an examination of pedagogical research on experiential learning and rhizomatic pedagogy, while in the introductory plane I explore the same concepts through written experiences. From here, the introductory plane is an attempt, or multiple attempts at writing authentically, Truthfully, and engaging with the Real. By making these attempts, I have also failed, and have not captured what I have set out to capture. But failure is an integral part of authenticity, for both writing and teaching.



I remember being eight years old and my mother and stepfather were building their house. It was a big wooden house and at the time we were living in the basement until the other floors were built. I wanted to help my parents. When I asked them what I could do to help, they gave me a job. They told me to empty the can of nails and separate the little ones from the big ones. And I did, I remember dumping out a paint can full of nails on the rough two-by-four floor, careful not to let them fall between the cracks and I separated all the nails. When I was finished, I told them, although they were preoccupied with putting the roof on before it rained. Later, when they were finished work for the day, I watched my step-father scoop up all

the nails on the floor that I had meticulously separated and put them back all together in the same paint can.

One of the reasons why this memory is still so vivid to me is that it unveiled a certain discourse at a young age: the meaninglessness of the work I did. My stepfather made up a project to keep me busy. My work was not authentic and had no connection or meaning in the real world.

Education, in some ways, also tries to cover up this meaninglessness of schoolwork, with the promise of it being meaningful at some future date. In this linear approach, the here and now within the classroom is overlooked and we can lose authenticity. We can also lose the interest of students if we ignore their desire for real or authentic work and replace it with replication. In the footnote below, I explore some popular critiques of the education system. I also unfold what rhizomatic pedagogy looks like as a possible alternative to the modernist approach to education.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> This footnote offers a scope, or a kaleidoscope, for questioning and challenging accepted structures and practices within education. By enacting a philosophy of education inspired by Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) figuration of a rhizome, I map a pragmatic territory in which rhizomatic learning is a field for students to experience meaning in education. I argue that an important aim of education should be to open pedagogy that is based on a linear, top-down approach in which apical knowledge is represented and finite and move toward a pedagogy in which learning is a horizontal, diagonal, and an axil process that involves continuous engagement with the Real. I believe this creates and allows for authentic learning and meaning in education.

In defining the rhizome, I allow Deleuze and Guattari to speak for themselves; they, after all, birthed the rhizomatic idea. Although this is an unconventionally long quote, I think it is important to put it in their words, so the reader can decide and decipher what this rhizome is:

---

Let us summarize the principal characteristics of a rhizome: unlike trees or their roots, the rhizome connects any point to any other point, and its traits are not necessarily linked to traits of the same nature; it brings into play very different regimes of signs, and even nonsign states. The rhizome is reducible to neither the One nor the multiple. It is not the One that becomes two or even directly three, four, five etc. It is not a multiple derived from the one, or to which one is added ( $n+1$ ). It is composed not of units but of dimensions, or rather directions in motion. It has neither beginning nor end, but always middle (milieu) from which it grows and which it overflows. It constitutes linear multiplicities with  $n$  dimensions having neither subject nor object, which can be laid out on a plane of consistency, and from which the one is always subtracted ( $n-1$ ). When a multiplicity of this kind changes dimension, it necessarily changes in nature as well, undergoes a metamorphosis. Unlike a structure, which is defined by a set of points and positions, with binary relations between the points and biunivocal relationships between the positions, the rhizome is made only of lines; lines of segmentarity and stratification as its dimensions, and the line of flight or deterritorialization as the maximum dimension after which the multiplicity undergoes metamorphosis, changes in nature. These lines, or lineaments, should not be confused with lineages of the arborescent type, which are merely localizable linkages between points and positions...Unlike the graphic arts, drawing or photography, unlike tracings, the rhizome pertains to a map that must be produced, constructed, a map that is always detachable, connectable, reversible, modifiable and has multiple entranceways and exits and its own lines of flight. . . In contrast to centered (even polycentric) systems with hierarchical modes of communication and pre-established paths the rhizome is an a-centred, non-hierarchical, non-signifying system without a General . . .(see Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 21)

What I draw mainly upon with Deleuze and Guattari's notion of a rhizome is the idea of becoming--the dissolution of two distinct objects, of representation, codification, and mimesis. In doing so, I must note that it is impossible to set out an instructional code for teaching with the use of the rhizome and this is fundamental to understanding the rhizome as a mode of learning.

In her essay, "Commencing the Rhizome: Towards a minor philosophy of education" Gregoriou (2004) investigated the Deleuzian idea of becoming and rhizomatic thought within philosophy of education. When Gregoriou (2004) examined pedagogical research done on rhizomatic learning, she complained of the multiple educational theory essays that use the rhizome as a metaphor for delivering normative statements for regulating educational practices. She argued that the attempt to codify the rhizome into a normative pedagogy ignores its nature: A rhizome is an a-signifying multiplicity; it is in the 'and,' always 'in between.' A rhizome connects any point to any other point. It has a relational ontology, not a substantive one. It is not a Lockean substance that holds its attributes; instead, it is the Humean 'bundle of perceptions.' In Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) definition of a rhizome it becomes evident why a rhizome resists codification into a normative pedagogical statement:

---

The rhizome multiple must be made . . . a rhizome as subterranean stem is absolutely different from roots and radicles. Bulbs and tubers are rhizomes. . . Rats are rhizomes. Burrows are too, in all of their functions of shelters, supply, movement, evasion, and breakout. The rhizome itself assumes very diverse forms, from ramified surface extension in all directions to concretion into bulbs and tubers. When rats swarm over each other. The rhizome includes the best and the worst: potato and couchgrass, or the weed. ( p. 7)

The rhizome can be mapped, not as a metaphor but as a setting into work of uncentered growth without foundation or essence; it is a multiplicity and its principle characteristics are connection and heterogeneity. It is contradictory to the nature of the multiplicity to engage with it through substantiation or codification; this is to rob it of its creative force and the nature of becoming.

In drawing out the importance of Deleuze and Guattari's rhizome in learning and pedagogy, Gregoriou rightly explained that the rhizome must be rescued from its "literary over-coding in a pedagogical discourse as a metaphor for excessive multiplicity and radical openness. The rhizome *must be made*" (2004, p. 246, emphasis in original).

Any interpretation of the rhizome that uses it as an icon for anti-hierarchical systems that move against traditional linear knowledge is contrary to the *becoming* of the rhizome and the project that Deleuze and Guattari (1987) try to unfold. The rhizome cannot be pinned down, it is always already something else, always becoming. The rhizome has a relational ontology; it is a multiplicity.

Deleuze and Guattari wrote, "[the rhizome] is a multiplicity—but we don't yet know what the multiple entails when it is no longer attributed that is, after it has been elevated to the substantive" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 4). The unsubstantive nature of the rhizome renders it unable to be represented or replicated as an instructive code for teaching. Instead, in order to engage with the rhizome, it must be used, not as a metaphor, but as a way of pedagogy.

In philosophy of education, in particular, there is a hybridity, or a liminal space, between two institutional enclaves. In the genitive *of*, there is a dehiscence for experimentation. A deterritorialization is at work within philosophy of education that leaves room for experimentation and rhizomatic growth. Philosophy of education, in its ontology, is a sort of becoming, a becoming philosophy of education and becoming education of philosophy. The lack of disciplinary territory leaves room for this experimentation and this becoming other.

Deleuze and Guattari discuss a similar nature to the rhizome as they situate it within an open space as it cuts across the parallel disciplines, "rhizomes are anomalous becomings produced by the formation of transversal alliances between different and coexisting terms within an open system" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 10).

Didactic teaching, recursive learning, grand narratives, and linear arguments are perhaps the prerogative of the arborescent disciplines that rest on a modernist ideology. Philosophy of education springs forth openness for uncodified meaning and rhizomatic learning. Gregoriou (2004) nicely articulated the idea of philosophy and education as providing this open space for rhizomatic learning. She claimed,

---

if philosophers of education are bilingual, it is not by mixing, intermingling, or bridging the languages of the disciplines into a comprehensible discourse that educators can understand and perhaps join, it is by creating an unformed philosophical expression which in pedagogy's encounter with philosophical ideas sustains a field of experimentation, a field that is non-translatable against the barren rationality of representationalism. (p.249)

The field of experimentation is non-translatable because it depends on encounters with what is Real. This engagement is not predetermined and it does not have a representational image.

Now, I will highlight differences between factual knowledge and the experiential process of knowing to facilitate an understanding of Deleuze and Guattari's rhizomatic thought and its connection to education. Factual knowledge is acquired through modernity's arborescent linear education method. Teachers and/or the curriculum design a question, or create a problem, and students are expected to discover and reproduce a pre-determined answer. Knowledge becomes a possessable, clear, and distinct object.

However, as Haraway (1991), in her book *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, maintained, the object of knowledge is not something passive that is acted upon; we are not discovering a pure origin. We constitute the object in our experience: "bodies as objects of knowledge are material-semiotic generative nodes. Their boundaries materialize in social interaction; 'objects' like bodies do not pre-exist such scientific objectivity; the sighting of objects is not about dis-engaged discovery" (Haraway, 1991, p. 208). Factual knowledge lends to recursive learning because it is a pre-disclosed object of knowledge that is acquired through a pre-established linear path.

Recursive learning has modernity's quest for certainty at its roots, Descartes' proof of existence in particular. He claimed an 'I' or a subject to exist before he pronounced his existence. Thinking in the Cartesian sense is not a process but an already pre-established proof of existence.

On the other hand, (as identified by Semetsky 2003) Deleuze asserted that "problems must be considered not as 'givens' that is, requiring the Cartesian method as the search for the clear and distinct solution. Learning is infinite . . . [and] of a different nature to knowledge" (Deleuze, 1994), but of the nature of a creative process as a method of invention" (p. 25).

Factual knowledge, in which students discover solutions to the problems posited by teachers denies subjective experience and creates dependency. The institutionalization, alienation, and mimesis of modernity's arborescent education model can lack meaning for students and teachers. My belief that modernity's linear and factual model of education is in most disciplines meaningless has been augmented and informed by several educational thinkers, who come from different backgrounds but arrive at similar critiques of our education system.

Certain education scholars have articulated critiques within our education system that I think are grounded in the alienation caused by modernity's linear and factual model of educating. The common thread amongst these educational thinkers is that our education system, in most ways, focuses on repetition and codification. The education system is a self-referential system, which closes itself from what is Real.

---

For example, Sir Ken Robinson, whose background is in aesthetics and arts education, offered a critique of education that is articulatory for me: “[our education system] results in alienating millions of kids that don’t see any purpose in going to school” and the “route to it [a degree] marginalizes most of things that you think are important about yourself” (2010, p. x).

Robinson argued that school is not meaningful for students because it is based on outdated models, the intellectual culture of the enlightenment period and the industrial revolution. These two models are motivated by the ideals of putting people to work and reinforcing the institution of academics. These two models, I maintain, derive from the self-referential ideology of the school system: In order to work you need an education because the job requires that you have an education. In order to go to school one must be in school and do well in school. The outdated model that we continue to use ignores the here and now, our temporality. It prioritizes the future over what is happening in the present. The ontological gap between what is here and what will be is grounded in the subject/object gap in modernity.

Coming from a different school of thought, but also recognizing this ontological gap, Freire (2009), who is informed by Marxist and anti-colonialist thinkers wrote: “education is suffering from narration sickness” (p.72). Freire recognized the ontological gap caused by mimesis and called this the banking concept of education in which “the scope of action allowed to the students extends only so far as receiving, filing, and storing the deposits” and repeating them back (p. 72).

Illich (2002) who critiqued both medical and educational institutions, has a searing criticism of school that I think clearly identifies the self-supporting system:

School prepares for the alienating institutionalization of life by teaching the need to be taught. Once this lesson is learned, people lose their incentive to grow in independence; they no longer find relatedness attractive and close themselves off to surprises which life offers when it is not predetermined by institutional definition. (p.47)

Illich has articulated the issue well. Institutions constrain the student from learning outside of the institution.

Pinar, a curriculum theorist, (1995) believed that,

Curriculum has become so formalized and distant from the everyday sense of conversation is a profound indication of its institutionalization and bureaucratization . . . Such social alienation is an inevitable consequence of curriculum identified with academic disciplines as they themselves have been institutionalized and bureaucratized over the past one hundred years. (p. 848)

The self-referential nature of education is connected to Descartes’s proof of certainty. Descartes claimed the ‘I’ to exist because the ‘I’ thought, or doubted. Descartes’s kernel of truth was that everything in the world can be doubted except the ‘I’ because the ‘I’ was doubting. However, in recognizing the absolute nature of the self and maintaining a gap between the self and the world, Descartes undermined the importance of the world. In order for the ‘I’ to doubt one must doubt something outside of oneself, and that is the world. The self-referential education system can also ignore the importance of the world, or what I term the Real.

---

Deleuze and Guattari offer similar critiques to the ones above within modernist thought. In Inna Semetsky (2003) essay on "Deleuze's New Image of Thought, or Dewey Revisited" she underscores an important connection between education and Deleuze's work. In this particular work of Deleuze's, *Spinoza: A Practical Philosophy*, he discussed the Spinozist's idea of freedom of thought from obligations to the state, but in Semetsky's (2003) essay, she has insightfully drawn a parallel to education.

She claimed that

Education, at present, is student's discovery of problems posited by teachers. In this way, pupils lack power to constitute problems themselves, and the construction of problems, for Deleuze, is tantamount to one's sense of freedom. (Semetsky, 2003, p.24). Only if and when "thought is free, hence vital, nothing is compromised. When it ceases being so, all other oppressions are also possible. (Deleuze, 1988, p.4),

Through Deleuze and Guattari (1987), we learn that the tree image is the representational image of modern thought. Gregoriou (2004) eloquently unpacks Deleuze and Guattari's use of trees and explained that "trees are hierarchical structures and stratified totalities that function on binary logic and impose limited and regulated connections between their components. This kind of structure, according to Deleuze and Guattari, has dominated Western thought" (p. 240).

Deleuze accorded the old Cartesian model of thinking with a tree model and as Semetsky (2003), an educational theorist and Deleuzian scholar, elucidated for us, "if a tree is a symbol for the history of philosophy that planted its roots firmly into modern soil, then rhizome belongs to philosophy-becoming: it is more like grass than a tree" (p. 18). Within Deleuze's writing, Semetsky brings forth a type of knowledge, or learning that involves an experience between the student and the other. Learning as an infinite method of invention/discovery or construction of problems, encourages imagination and independency. Semetsky (2003) in accordance with Deleuze, rightly points out that "thought does not end in knowledge as the image representing itself, but is a complex process of knowing" (p.18).

Rhizomatic learning has far -reaching implications for education. The rhizomatic process of knowing is elucidated through Deleuze's metaphor of swimming. For Deleuze, learning to swim is based on a deterritorialization with one's own body. It is throwing yourself into the unknown and in the process we become other than what we were. It is not repetition or representation. As Deleuze (1994) claimed:

Learning to swim or learning a foreign language means composing the singular points of one's own body or one's own language with those of another shape or element, which tears us apart but also propels us into a hitherto unknown and unheard-of world of problems. To what are we dedicated if not to those problems which demand the very transformation of our body and our language? In short, representation and knowledge are modelled entirely upon propositions of consciousness which designate cases of solution, but those propositions by themselves give a completely inaccurate notion of the instance which engenders them as cases, and which they resolve or conclude. By contrast, the Idea and 'learning' express the extra-propositional or sub-representative problematic instance: the presentation of the unconscious not the representation of consciousness. (p.192)

---

Semetsky nicely unpacks Deleuze's metaphor of learning to swim:

The swimmer struggles against the waves because she is facing the unknown, which includes her not-yet-knowing-how-to swim, and the swimmer's movement does not resemble the movement of the wave. Nor does it imitate the instructor's movements given while not in the water but on the shore. The swimmer is learning by grasping [the movement of the wave] in practice as signs. (Semetsky, 2003, p.19)

Semetsky (2003) rightly points out that this example illustrates the experiential process of learning because the novice swimmer is placed in the unknown space of swimming; she is going beyond her knowledge. The encounter with the other, in this example, is the wave. The swimmer is not learning through repetition or reproducing the action of an instructor, but by 'grasping' the unknown, the other, or what is different from her and this is where her experiential learning takes place. This experiential learning is modeled after the Deleuze and Guattari's rhizome because it is a-signifying, not pre-determined, and non-linear.

I agree with Semetsky and I think it is difficult to reproduce the action of an instructor. For example with surfing, it is not as much about reproducing the action of an instructor but understanding the timing of a wave. It may help to have an instructor, not for copying his action, but for assistance in finding the feeling of being pulled back into the wave. One can feel moments on a board looking out on the ocean as it disappears in its magnitude, watching waves roll in, and something about the wave when it is caught that is so brief and so perfect that I feel this is engagement with what is Real. The instructor's job is to assist in finding this connection.

Like the swimmer in the above example, a style of learning can be embraced by encountering the Real. In this way, learning is not something that has been represented and decided in advance based on someone else's experience with the Real, but the student's own encounter with it. The student doesn't learn on land by copying the movement of the instructor but by experiencing the movement of the waves themselves.

The rhizome contains an a-signifying rupture "and only the heterogeneous elements, exemplified by Deleuze in the images of the different species of wasp and orchid, are capable of forming a rhizome" (Semetsky, 2003, p. 20); this is what Deleuze meant as a becoming other of the orchid. In the wasp/orchid example, the wasp is not representing or copying the orchid but there is a becoming between the two. The wasp is like the orchid or vice versa and that is how pollination occurs but there is no direct copying. I attempt to use this wasp and orchid example to show that there can be a becoming between a swimmer and a wave, not a copying but a becoming with this encounter.

The problem solving method of teachers does not allow for the event or the here and now of the situation. Semetsky (2003) eloquently adds to a Deleuzian quote in emphasizing the importance of education recognizing what is Real within the here and now of situation:



In the experiences to follow on the introductory plane, I attempt to explore a way that keeps the child or anyone from losing creativity, through engagement with the Real, and an embodiment of a true sense of wonder. I remember these feelings as a child of how magnificent even the tiniest of places seemed. My granny's closet, or the trail from our garden to the beach, and the small stand of alders next to the sawmill. Sometimes this feeling comes back and I am in awe. But it is often lost for me through repetition. I think engagement with the unknown or what is Real renews this sense of childlike curiosity.

I was born on a barely inhabited island off the coast of Vancouver Island, called Maurelle Island. In those days (1978) my parents had to row a boat to Quadra Island and from there, they would take a ferry to Campbell River to get supplies, if they had the money. It terrifies me when I look back upon it. What if something would have gone wrong when I was born? They were at least 12 hours from any sort hospital or help. My dad, who is no doctor—not even a high school graduate—

---

Deleuze, reflecting on his own teaching days at Vincennes, emphasized that students were not required to take in 'everything, [yet] everyone took what they needed or wanted, or what they could use' (Deleuze, 1995) thus defying the necessity of some superior educational aim which is imposed from without. The multiple rhizomatic connections, produced within each 'here-and-now' (Deleuze, 1994) of every single experiential situation serve themselves as a precondition for the emergence of 'ever new, differently distributed "heres and nows"' (Deleuze, 1994). The added growth is not a property of a hierarchical structuring—Deleuze 'rejected the principle of building up knowledge' (Deleuze,) toward some fixed end—but is an immanent and heterogeneous production of meanings. The making and remaking of concepts always proceeds along a continuously 'moving horizon' (Deleuze, 1994) of a smooth space. (p. 27)

Rhizomatics is a strategy of drawing lines of connections; it is a method of thinking and learning, the craft of making the unconscious conscious, or performing "art on the productivity of desire that creative artists, or children for that matter, have in abundance" (Semetsky, 2003, p. 25).

delivered me, cut the umbilical cord, and popped the water sack I was born in. When I asked him, years later, how he knew how to deliver a baby, he said, "I read a book on it." My mom tells me the story this way: They had friends over in the small one room shack that they built; they were drinking home brew all night and playing poker. Earlier that day my dad's dog Joe had been eaten by wolves in the forest outside their house. There weren't many people on that island, maybe six including my family. My mom went into labour in the loft, she climbed down the ladder and told my dad that she was about to give birth. My dad sobered up and got hold of the book. I came out all right while my brother, a terrified three-year-old, watched from the loft.

I wasn't the sunshine boy, or the Buddha baby that he was, but I survived. And, strangely, being born on a tiny island with no roads and no electricity is probably my biggest accomplishment yet.

The schoolhouse was on Read Island, an island next to ours. If my parents felt like it, (they usually didn't) they would row us to school to with play friends from that island. The schoolhouse was an A-framed shingle roofed house with a kitchen and a wood stove. I remember having to chop wood for this stove over school lessons there, but I rarely went to school.

Later, my mom, my brother, and I moved to the Boundary area. We moved 21 kilometers up the Christian Valley on the Kettle River. Here, we went to school every weekday and we rode a school bus—one and a half hours one-way. It wasn't easy, going from living wild on the coast of Maurelle Island running around bare footed over rocks and barnacles, jumping into salal bushes, swimming in the lake, to taking a bus, sitting in a desk, and listening to a teacher. There is a real distinction between coastal and interior people of BC. Something about the ocean that relaxes people and something about that dry dusty rancher's air that makes people uptight. We had a hard time fitting in, my brother and I. We still were wearing cedar woven

hats that my mom made, clothes that she spun from wool, dyed, and knitted. She'd make us deer liver pate sandwiches that I thought were good until the other kids at school told me they weren't. My brother had an even harder time. Three years older than me, he went a longer time without school. The things he had learned were different: He caught his first salmon at age three; he learned to swim when he fell off the dock into the cold water of the pass because in those days kids didn't wear life jackets. At least, that's what my parents told me.

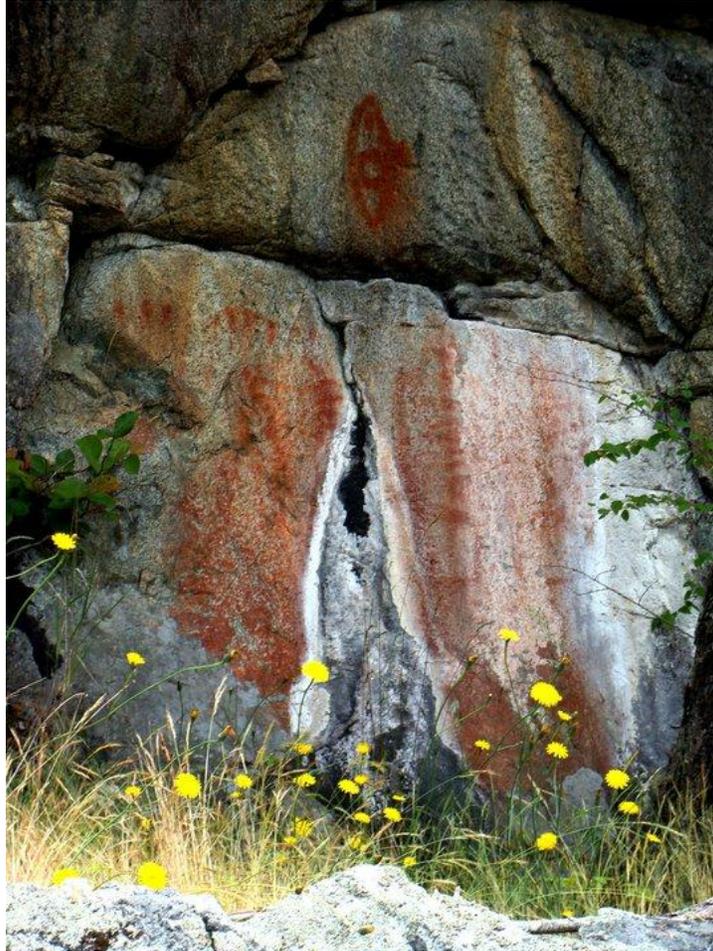
He failed his grade when he entered school and developed a stutter. Years later, when I was in my late twenties, I saw his teacher at a coffee shop in Victoria. I recognized her, and I introduced myself as Forest's sister (that's my brother's name). When I mentioned his name, I could see she still felt guilty, for failing my brother, almost 30 years later. "Oh Forest, he will always be one of my favourite kids. He didn't belong in school; he belonged in the forest. That's why they named him that."

I adapted to school easier. I got it. In the summers, we would return to Maurelle. The release I felt when I got there. Away from strict watchful eye of my stepfather, the skinny fir and pine trees, the dry grass of the boundary area. Here I could stop brushing my hair and start living again. My dad never worked in the summer, so he had time to show us lots of things. My days there were precariously limited and I knew they were going to end. My brother and I spent our days fishing perch off the dock, turning over rocks to pick up crabs, wading in tidal pools to catch tiny bullheads and putting them in a plastic tub. We built a tree fort, swings, stilts, wood boats, we swam in the lake, and we fished.

I go back there to visit my dad and my two half-sisters. It's always a sense of returning to what is Real. It's a feeling that can't be described or put into words. I feel it coming on when I take the ferry from Campbell River to Quadra. The workers on the ferry are different. I don't know how they are different, just

different. And when I hitch hike across Quadra Island and drive out on to the dirt road, past all the rainforest, my whole body feels it. My dad comes in on the open skiff to pick me up at the end of the road on Quadra. My mind is full of chatter and gossip. It is wound up tight from driving, friends, school, thesis, work, people, money, research, Internet. It's hard for me to notice things when I first get there: marbled murreletes in the water, eagles nesting in trees, the sounds the varied thrush makes as it hits every note. I am thinking too much.

We go through Beasley pass, past our old fishing hole where we used to catch salmon and cod. My dad says that there's no salmon there now, and you can't fish because it's a rock cod conservatory but I like to go there and look at the Indian painting on the rock. It's been there for a long time. My dad says a couple of hundred years at least. He said it took him 15 years before he realized it was a painting and now he can see the head with ears and eyes. How did they get it to stay? My dad says they probably used salmon roe and clay. He said they painted it in a perfect spot to perch on and spear seal from. It reminds me of when we used to fish there when I was younger and we would jig for cod, and let the tide pull us down and then row back up, over and over until we had enough cod for dinner.



**Image 1. Pictograph circa 1800s**

*Note.* Photo by author; artist unknown.

His house is a lot different now when I go back. He's built a new one, with a big extension on it I sleep in the guest room instead of under the skylight in his room. He has electricity, thanks to a water wheel, solar panels, and an inverter. We bathe inside now, but still use an outhouse.

My sisters, now 15 and 18, were born in a hospital in Comox, but they grew up on Maurelle. They remind me of my childhood that I never got to fully complete. With all this unlearning that I have done in school, I have lost sight of how to tie a clove hitch, how to run the boat, how to spot a yellow-bellied sapsucker.

When I go to Maurelle, I want to do all the things that I did as a kid. I usually have four days to make up for the all the time I wasn't there. I want to fish the sea cucumbers up from the bottom of the ocean so I can fry them up and eat them, but my dad says they're all gone. I want to put some prawn traps down and he tells me the natives and the prawn fishermen have open license to scoop them all. I want to hike up the hill and go swimming in the lake behind their house. My family and a few friends are the only ones who know about this lake. Dad says he wants to build a cabin up there just to get away from it all. I laugh because he tells me this as we as we are sitting on the porch steps with no one around.

"Away from all this?" I say.

We both laugh, he gets it. But he says,

"In the summers now the Octopus Islands across the channel can get busy with boats."

I know what he means. You will never see another sign of a human up at the lake.

I was recently on Maurelle for my 33rd birthday. I went back to the spot where I was born, in Steam Boat pass. The shack that I was born in isn't there anymore, now there are only salal bushes in that spot. My dad and I sat on the mossy rocks where my mom had the garden and watched the harlequins on the kelp-covered rock in the middle of the pass. He tells me stories of an old killer whale that was caught in that pass for days. He points across the pass to an island on the other side. He says,

That's where I first tried to grow pot. There's an old Indian midden on that island and it was great soil for putting plants in. After I planted them, I had to row five gallons of fresh water across the pass and lug it up to the top of the island every other day for a couple of months. One day a helicopter flew over, and the next day, a zodiac came in and they pulled out all the plants.

My dad doesn't grow weed anymore because nobody wants to buy outdoor.

My sisters made lunch for me when I arrive. They made a rooster curry. They killed the rooster the day before I arrived and had to pressure-cook it because it's a tough old bird. At first, I felt bad about that. At night, they lock the chickens in the hen house and during the day, they let them run free. But they battle with it, because the hens will roost in cedar trees if they don't watch them and then they don't get any eggs. I tell my dad that I feel bad about the dead rooster.

"Oh Chloe you are so sensitive" he says.

I reply, "I guess it doesn't matter too much, chickens aren't that smart."

"Oh you'd be surprised," he tells me. "I snuck in at night, when they were all sleeping and grabbed the rooster. And the next day, all the chickens were eyeballing me. They were really suspicious and they didn't want to get too close to me. They knew I had something to do with the rooster's disappearance."

My dad has this way of telling stories about animals and nature that seem as if they are all living together, and they are. My dad has lived on the island so long that his eyes are the colour of the ocean and his feet look like the roots of the big fir tree that he squats under for shade. Sometimes I think he might not die but just get absorbed by the salmon berry bushes on that island. For 37 years, he has lived there. Sometimes I think Walden Pond is a total joke.

Two years ago, he told me this story: He was sitting outside his workshop watching a spider catch a fly in its web. As the fly flew into the web, it struggled and buzzed and flailed about. The spider climbed in closer to it in the web and as he approached the fly, the fly's wings were buzzing so fast, it smacked the spider straight out of his own web. I laughed so hard when he told me that story. He also told me another story about how when he was drifting in his boat, trolling at Bute Inlet, he heard crashing in the bushes on both sides of the bay. He watched a deer come out one side and a grizzly bear on the other. They both reached the beach at the same time and when the grizzly bear looked up and saw the deer appear out of

nowhere he was so startled by the sudden appearance of the deer that he took off running, and the deer, un-startled, continue to walk the beach. These stories are really funny when my dad tells them but when I reiterate them or put them in writing they kind of lose their humour. That`s what my family talks about mostly.

I can`t really ever talk to them about what I`m doing in school. I can see the disappointment in my dad at how over-educated I am but unlearned in so many ways. I don`t even know what I would tell them. I am doing my thesis on existential phenomenologist`s meaning ontology and its relation to rhizomatic pedagogy. Well they would know what a rhizome was because there is lots of chick weed around there but . . . I don`t have any stories about animals either.

When I leave there, it`s a sad feeling. I always get tears in my eyes. I feel as if my reality has shifted and now I have to go back to all this stuff that`s not important. As he`s driving me back in the boat and I see the shoreline move past, I feel that`s my life and my childhood moving past. It`s a good precursor to the change in time. My life is about to speed up again. My sisters packed me a lunch and gave me stuff from the garden. I eat the sandwich on the bus, they made the bread, the eggs are from their chickens, and they`ve given me rhubarb from the garden. I also have a salmon that I caught up by Stewart Island that needs to stay cold. My dad made me a homemade cooler out of a piece of Styrofoam that he found floating in the bay. He cut it to fit inside of a cardboard box. It works better than a store-bought cooler. I told him how great it was because he was reusing old Styrofoam and cleaning up garbage from the ocean. He gives me a weird look, like I am acting like an environmental city girl. He doesn`t do it because he`s trying to be an environmentalist.

When I get home, I cook the salmon and bake a rhubarb crisp but they seem so out of place on my electric stove. I planted the foxglove they gave me but it didn`t survive. I really want to hold on to the realness of Maurelle. I collect items and

bring them to my house. I don't want to lose that part of me when I come back to the mainland but it slowly drifts.

At first, I am irritated by all the people around me and I know what Holden Caulfield means when he says these guys are a bunch of phonies. I am sitting, waiting in the Nanaimo ferry terminal. I go outside and sit on the rocks by the ocean with my homemade cooler and maple cutting board that my dad made me for my birthday. At this time I feel too sensitive and I'd rather sit with the seagulls. The ferry gets to the other side and I enter Squamish. Normally I love this place, today I don't. McDonalds right at the turn to go into town. I can smell that old deep fried oil, usually I don't notice it. I have this feeling like Gulliver did when he returned from his trip to the island of horses where the humans are underdeveloped greedy yahoos, and the peaceful horses run the island. He describes the feeling when he comes back to his family that he cannot stand the stink of them; they smell like the deformed yahoos on the horse island. That's a feeling that I have when I return from Maurelle. But it slowly drifts as I learn to live in Squamish again.

Squamish is an inbetween place for me. It sits between the tall granite wall of the Chief on the east and the Tantalus mountain range on the west. When I look up at the Chief, I sometimes feel its slow sense of time. It is not static and unchanging but moves so slowly that it seems that it doesn't move at all. In the time and space of my life, the Chief is stationary and grounding but in its own time and space, it perhaps moves quickly.

The mountains in Squamish also have a sense of Realness for me, but different from Maurelle. I stand in awe of them. I don't feel embodied here, and I don't have an amongness or a sense of home. I feel separated, as a spectator looking up at majestic peaks. Squamish is also inbetween the vortex of Vancouver and the wildness of the rainforest and mountains. I feel I landed here because it is the

inbetween of my academic life in the city and my longing for the Realness and rawness of nature. As an inbetween space, it is a compromise between my lives and I am continuously struggling with the Realness I was born into on Maurelle and my connection with philosophical thought in academia. I found writing as the medium for this connection but finding the right writing medium for me to express this philosophical connection is a different strife.

When I first began to study philosophy in 1996, in the cement basement of the Clearihue building at the University of Victoria, I was intrigued to learn that some of the questions that I spent a lot of time thinking about as a youth, were legitimate questions to be pursued. One of the most important questions I found was in the last essay of my philosophy text book, an essay we never had time to discuss in class, "What gives life Meaning?" by Albert Camus. Camus (1955) posited a problem that I considered very real:

There is but one truly serious philosophical problem, and that is suicide. Judging by whether life is or is not worth living amounts to answering the fundamental question of philosophy. All the rest—whether or not the world has three dimensions, whether the mind has nine or twelve categories—comes afterwards. These are games . . . And if it is true, as Nietzsche claims, that a philosopher, to deserve our respect must preach by example, you can appreciate the importance of that reply, for it will precede the definitive act. There are facts the heart can feel; yet they call for careful study before they become clear to the intellect.

(p. 601)

As I completed my undergraduate years at UVic and by the time I was accepted into grad school, I realized the higher level of education I had in philosophy, the further I was removed from these fundamental questions. Questions that were of importance to me, I was not qualified to discuss. What was recommended to me, by my professors, was to find a problem within Kant's philosophy of space, for example, and then research the problem, preferably finding journal articles that had responded to one another and then after reading those I could respond. In the midst of my academic disillusionment I stumbled upon this quote:

A formidable school of intimidation which manufactures specialists in thought— but which also makes those who stay outside conform all the more to this specialism, which they despise. An image of thought called philosophy has been formed historically and it effectively stops people from thinking.

(Deleuze & Parnet, 1987, p.13)

It really is a formidable school. How does education render me unqualified to posit my own problems? In some ways, this is how education can suffocate our natural creativity, childlike curiosity, and essentially our process of thinking, by burying it beneath the thoughts of specialists. Gregoriou (2004) asked: "How can Philosophy of Education renew its ties with what Lyotard calls 'the season of the childhood, the season of the mind's possibilities' and resist its interpellation as a foundations course when interpellated by the 'terrible lunette'?" (p.236)

Growing up my life seemed to be two planes: One in the interior with my mother and stepfather and the other on the coast with my father. Perhaps this is one of my ideologies that have shaped my philosophy. Maybe this is why I feel there are always two planes and that Truth can be found between these planes.

Other thinkers have also found these two planes of existence. In the footnote below, I explore Heidegger's thoughts on artwork and the world. In doing so, I relate Heidegger's ideas of world and earth to my own thoughts on Truth and the Real.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> In *Being and Time*, Heidegger (1962) unveils the essence of equipment as characteristic of the 'world.' Equipment, in its form of *ready-to-hand*, is interconnected with the entities and meanings that surround it. As Heidegger claimed,

taken strictly there is no such thing as *an* equipment. To the Being of any equipment there is a totality of equipment, in which it can be this equipment that is. Equipment is essentially something in-order-to. A totality is constituted by various what of "in-order-to," such as serviceability, conduciveness, usability, manipulability. (p. 9).

---

Equipment is never ‘an equipment’ because it is never explored apart from its connections with other things. It is always a totality of equipment. A hammer is never a mere object (except when it is broken and its *presence-to-hand* comes to the fore) but always within its usability. Equipment is the ‘world,’ it provides the meaning for the entities within this world. A hammer is within a carpenter’s world; it is a tool. However, when a hammer breaks it becomes an object and it stands out against and makes visible its meaning within the world.

Heidegger’s notion of artwork plays a similar role with what I call encounters with the Real. Both of these experiences allow for an unearthing of Truth or authenticity and revelation of the ‘world’ in which we are habituated. These encounters can stimulate authentic meaning and hopefully, even briefly, allow us to view the discourse that governs our learning or writing. Sometimes the discourse that we operate in becomes so *everyday* that we forget or don’t realize that it is not medium of our authentic desires

Heidegger (1971) chose a piece of Van Gogh’s art to show the importance of the striving between world and earth.



**Image 2. Pair of Shoes, Van Gogh, 1886.**

Note. Image taken from *Wikipedia*.

Artwork, according to Heidegger, allows for the revealing of the unknown or of being. In his example of Van Gogh’s painting, he claimed that we, as the onlooker, notice the ‘equipmentality’ of the shoes, but the peasant woman does not notice this. She is so intimately connected with the usability of her shoes that she does not reflect on them. The connection the peasant woman has with her shoes rests on reliability. As Singh elucidates, in his piece *Heidegger and the World in Artwork*, “the reliability of the shoes is part of her belonging to earth and of her assuredness in her world. Because the equipment is repeatedly and reliably used, reliability itself remains invisible” (Singh, 1990, p. 216).

---

The reliability remains invisible in much the same way the hammer within its *ready-to-hand* remains invisible. The objectness of the hammer or the hammer in itself is not noticed. In the world of carpentry, the hammer is seen in its ability and in its serviceability as a tool. Only when the hammer is broken does its objectness come to the fore.

Deleuze and Guattari (1987), in a similar line of flight, explored the concept of plan (e): “the plan (e) can be a hidden principle, which makes visible what is seen and audible what is heard . . . but the plan (e) itself is not given it is by nature hidden. It can only be inferred, induced, concluded from that to which it gives rise” (p. 265). The lines of connectivity between Deleuze and Guattari’s two conceptions of a plan(e) are not in an obvious correlation to Heidegger’s world and earth but there are hints of similarity as these authors make attempts, stammers at the noumenal or that which subsists beneath the “formation of subjects” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 265). I think Deleuze & Guattari and Heidegger are unearthing a space that subsists beneath or amongst the symbolic, signified world.

In artwork truth happens. Artwork allows earth to remain in its concealedness but at the same time earth is brought into the open. Artwork allows for the striving between world and earth to emerge. Artwork is not a preconceived static framework. Artwork allows for the becoming and happening of truth (Heidegger, 1971, p. 69). Artwork displays the world and earth as not separate but as interdependent—they mutually belong to each other. Artwork is historical and it reveals both the world of historical people and at the same time, it allows the earth to jut through into the opening. The earth juts through into the opening as the concealing, as the *unintelligible*, the *unthought*. (It is interesting also to note the pictograph earlier, when Heidegger discusses the jutting through of the earth. The pictograph shows earth jutting through because it is marred by the seeping from the rock.) Truth is not correspondence to something that has happened and is unconcealed. Truth originates in art or more precisely, “art *lets* truth originate” (Heidegger, 1971, p. 75). Like Heidegger’s artwork, the art of writing and the art of teaching can let truth and authenticity originate.

Artwork, as described by Heidegger (1971), remains fundamentally different from aesthetics and traditional thought. Artwork allows truth to happen and this, as Singh (1990) maintained, “does not mean that something is correctly portrayed” (p. 221). Artwork is not a representation that affects a subject. And, unlike metaphysics, art does not treat the world as static and given.

---

The world is in continuous strife with the earth, and the earth, as actively self-closing, keeps philosophical questioning alive. The onlooker, as the preserver, is as essential to the artwork as the creator: “Preserving the work means: standing within the openness of beings that happens in the work” (Heidegger, 1971, p. 65). The preserver is essential to the artwork because she can witness the truth that is happening. This witnessing is best described by Heidegger (1971) as a ‘knowing;’ a knowing that “enables one to experience the world ontologically, by rupturing the familiar world” (Singh, 1990, p. 221). This rupture occurs when the earth comes forth into the opening as the self-closing. We can witness this in artwork; we can see the world of the peasant woman through her shoes. We see this world as a world ‘worlding’ to her. We reflect on her shoes within the artwork. The artwork in its self-subsisting nature reveals a ‘world-worlded.’ And as onlookers we preserve this exposure of the world and its meaning to the peasant woman. By exposing the world of the peasant, we at the same time expose our own world.

Perhaps a teacher can engage in position similar to Heidegger’s onlooker. Or maybe it is not about the ‘teacher’ as a separate subject but it has more to do with the space in which learning takes place. It is a place for encountering the uncanny.

Allan (2004), whose research focuses on inclusive education, suggested that rhizomatics is a form of empiricism in which we privilege experience and experimentation over interpretation of theory: “the key question facing student teachers is how to engage with the marginalized or silenced other without trying to assimilate or acculturate that other” (Allan, 2004, p. 425). Allan (2004) wrote that one might think of the teaching zones “as spaces of engagement with the other” (p. 425). It is the only way to avoid dictating to others what their truth will be. It is a place of engagement, of encountering an unknown. The role the onlooker of art has in exposing her own world through art appreciation is similar to the role of the host/teacher: “it is a place we create when hosting others we change, hybridize our discourse and identities, and let others teach us, from the beginning, how we are different and multiply in ourselves” (Gregoriou, as cited in Allan 2004).

It is important to put into practice this so called theory of teaching because writings remain purely theoretical until one puts it to work. Similarly, Gough (2007) elucidates that concepts for Deleuze and Guattari cannot just be thought but must also be used as a way to think and act.

These concepts do not ask of us our epistemic consent; indeed they ask nothing of us. Rather they are offerings, offerings of ways to think, and ultimately act, in a world that oppresses us with its identities. If they work—and for Deleuze, the ultimate criterion for the success of a concept is that it works—it will not be because we believe in them but because they move us in the direction of possibilities that had before been beyond our ken. (p. 293)



In 2008, when I began my PhD, I also started work as a youth worker at the Squamish Youth and Resource Centre. In my collegiate excitement, I decided to put into practice the theories that I had been researching on rhizomatics.

At the youth centre, we are not teachers or counsellors. We try to offer a safe place free from bullying, discrimination, and drugs and alcohol. We offer programs and resources but we do not tell the youth what they should do. We also keep a detailed log on the youth as they come in the centre so we can keep continuity between the staff and look for warning signs.

One afternoon, sitting on the dog-haired covered couch in the office at work, my colleague told me that the job could be unsatisfying.

She said,

I like jobs where I can make a check list and then tick it off and at the youth centre this never happens. We never have the feeling of changing youth's lives nor do we ever feel any gratitude from the youth. We cannot go into work with a neat and tidy lesson plan and then work through it, feeling a sense of satisfaction that we prepared something and students understood.

I guess the downside to working at the centre is there is no way to gauge whether we are helping youth. One of the differences between the youth centre and the classroom is we do not have a superior educational aim there and we see mostly students who are marginalized within the classroom. Most of the youth at the centre do not go to school, or they go to an alternative school. The superior educational aim that exists at school is what makes them not want to go. At the centre, we are directly faced with youth engagement; it is situational. We see how

the objective of school can worsen the situation for these youth. It makes them feel alienated because not moving forward from grade to grade defines their lack of societal success at a young age.

The youth centre is in the space of the unknown. We don't know if we are helping youth because we are not ticking off check boxes. Sometimes I think that the symbolic order in the public school system ignores and marginalizes these youth and can worsen their situation. These youth are eruptions of the Real; they are in the space that makes us question the mainstream discourse of education. The problems of these youth are perhaps too Real and too present for the pre-determined and calculated curriculum that we work within. The curriculum does not open space for engaging these youth. The superior educational aim within the curriculum can ostracize and stigmatize these youth and ignore what is Real.

In the footnotes below, I explored what this eruption of the Real means through the research of other experiential theorists but I can only truly understand this encounter to occur through my own experiences. In my writing, and any time I have tried to explain, portray, or represent my engagement with the Real, I have failed. Any representation I have tried to capture these encounters with, have become other than what I tried to capture.

I am also uncomfortable prescribing in advance this Real encounter for others. In further footnotes, I have tried to capture it through writing down different experiences both my own and others but I am not sure I did this adequately. Here I will try to clarify what the Real is.

While waiting to present on the symbolic order of academic writing at an education conference, I was reminded of the importance of embracing paradoxity within learning and teaching. Another presenter went before me. She brought along a small child, ( I assume a refugee from the Congo) and sat him on one of the chairs

with a lap top and head phones, while she presented . Her topic concerned the integration of war-affected youth in Western Canadian schools. In her power point, she explained that these students wanted to focus on academics and did not want to be catered to or treated differently because of the tragedies that they had experienced. They did not want to be reminded of the Real events that occurred in their life. She scrolled through quotes and written stories of the tragedies some these children had witnessed in their war torn country. The irony of our presentations right next to each other was unravelling. My presentation consisted of how to let these Real events erupt the standard and repeatable techniques used in philosophy arguments and pedagogy and her presentation was asking teachers to not remind students of these Real events because the students wanted to focus on succeeding in the academic world. I realized here that there is always truth in the opposite of what one is arguing for and to be authentic within teaching and writing, one always has to leave space for this opposite.

I will also attempt at a clarification and distinction between Truth and the Real; it may seem I use these words interchangeably but I don't. They are interdependent and distinct. In the plane below, I define these terms through the words of other authors, while on the introductory plane I attempt a definition through my own experiences.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> The Real for Zizek is in relation to the Symbolic. Myers (2003), in his book, *Slavoj Zizek* wrote, "A traumatic event represents, for Zizek, the archetypal relationship between the Symbolic and Real Orders. It defines the point where the Real disrupts the smooth running of the Symbolic" (p.26).

It is hard to define the real, because in some sense the real is that which resists definition. Myers (2003) suggested that "the Real is the world before it is carved up by language" (p.25). Myers hints at a moment of the real through a description of Mommy's understanding of the mountain, from the novel *Choke* by Chuck Palahniuk (2001):

Yesterday, I was ski touring in the coastal mountain range. At the top of Tri Counci peak, and before we dropped in to ski the shoot below us, I believe I felt this distinction of the Real and Truth. The Realness existed in the indifference of the tall snow covered peaks surrounding us and the steep shoot below us. The indifference was the mountain's indifference to my life and my presence. The Truth was my engagement with the Real. The Truth was the inbetweenness of the symbolic order of the knowledge of avalanche conditions and the indifference of the Real to this knowledge. Although we had dug an avalanche pit and decided that the ski run was safe to ski, we still did not know this. We could not know this. There was Truth in this uncertainty that existed between the symbolic knowledge of the pit and the impossibility of predictability of avalanches within the mountains. Standing on top of the shoot, I was caught between the intense beauty and awe of the Realness of the mountains and the nervous anxiety of the uncertainty of Truth in my stomach.

In the uncertain space of Truth, where the Real intercepts the Symbolic order, is the space that writing and pedagogy should be open to; this is authentic writing and pedagogy. I have had my own experiences with eruptions of the Real or what Heidegger calls the jutting through of the earth. Maurelle was an eruption of the Real that made my life intelligible within its social, cultural, and historical setting. The space of where the Real and the symbolic order unfolds is the authentic space for pedagogy and writing.

---

For one flash, the Mommy had seen the mountain without thinking of logging and ski resorts, and avalanches, managed wildlife, plate tectonic geology microclimates, rain show, or yin-yang locations. She'd seen the mountain without the framework of language. Without the cage of associations. She'd seen it without looking through the lens of everything she knew was true about mountains. What she'd seen in that flash wasn't even a 'mountain'. It wasn't a natural resource. It had no name. (p. 149)

I have found other notions and descriptions of Truth and the Real in the texts of both Heidegger and Zizek. In the next footnote, I follow Heidegger through his concepts of Truth. I also continue along this plane and explore my illumination of Truth and love through written experience.<sup>4</sup> Of course, written experience is only

---

<sup>4</sup> Heidegger (1971) began his examination of Truth with a critique of western metaphysics because it viewed Truth as a correspondence between knowledge and fact. The fact is the disclosed object into which the subject can gain full access: “truth means today and has long meant the agreement or conformity with fact” (p. 53). The fact, Heidegger argued, must already show itself as a fact if knowledge is to conform to it. In this way the fact must already be unconcealed. A thought or a proposition is true when it conforms to the unconcealed, that is, to what is true. Thus propositional truth is correctness because it only reinforces itself and this correctness stands and falls with the Truth as the non-concealment of beings.

According to Heidegger (1971), the conceptual framework in which science has examined the ‘thing’ is carried over in the way philosophy has explicated art and truth. Heidegger claimed that science loses sight of the thing: “science makes the jug-thing into a non-entity in not permitting things to be the standard for what is real” (p. 168). Science always encounters only what its kind of representation has admitted in advance as an object possible for science. For example, a jug becomes only a conglomeration of atoms and the history, geography, and culture are ignored along with the wine and jug themselves.

Heidegger (1971) exposed the conceptual schema of western ideas where truth is forced into a preconceived framework, thereby obstructing our access to it. What is essential here is that thinking has been closed off in place of the acquisition of knowledge or facts. Facts are already revealed within a pre-established schema. But the non-concealedness of the fact never reveals the concealedness of it. The traditional view of knowledge does not allow that at the same time that truth is the concealedness, it also unconceals. Heidegger (1971) wrote,

Concealment as refusal is not only the limit of knowledge in any given circumstance, but the beginning of the clearing, of what is lighted. But concealment though another sort, to be sure, at the same time also occurs within what is lighted. One being places itself in front of another being, the one helps to hide the other, the former, obscures the latter, a few obstruct many, one denies two. Here concealment is not simple refusal. Rather, a being appears, but it presents itself other than it is. (p. 52)

The illumination makes things intelligible within their social, historical, and cultural setting. Heidegger (1971) concluded that, “the nature of truth is, in itself, the primal conflict in which that open center is won within which what is, stands forth, and from which it sets itself back into itself” (p. 53). In other words, Truth is an open place in which the conflict between concealment and unconcealment is experienced. It is the place where that which is, that which stands unconcealed, is the same place where it can return back into the concealedness of itself.

---

Truth is not correctness. Truth is not correspondence with a fact that is already present and available. Heidegger (1971) wrote “setting-into-work of truth thrusts up the unfamiliar and the extraordinary and at the same time thrusts down the ordinary and what we believe to be such” (p. 72). In the same way that open manifests truth and the concealing, the open manifests the striving between world and earth.

The importance of revealing Truth outside of factual knowledge is so paramount that Heidegger began *The Origin of the Work of Art* (1971) and *Being and Time* (1962) with critiques of metaphysical thought in order to “keep at distance all the precepts and assaults of the above mode of thought, to leave the thing to rest in its ownself” (p. 31).

Beings hide themselves in the unknowable that surrounds the light and beings hide themselves by appearing other than they are. Everything is revealed to us finitely within the light of intelligibility and existing at the same time are the infinite ways that cannot be revealed. I find Kockelmans’ (1985) piece on “Heidegger on Art and Artworks” very lucid in describing this concept. He stated, “for the coming to pass of truth of Being is inherently finite; as a consequence, while it shows itself in letting beings be what they are, it itself hides itself” (p. 164).

Heidegger’s notion of Being is not unlike the rhizome: As soon as we represent the rhizome it hides behind itself and appears other than it is; it becomes a fascist congregation or a tree or a node.

Deleuze and Guattari (1987) explained:

Every rhizome contains lines of segmentarity according to which it is stratified, territorialized, organized, signified, attributed, etc., as well as lines of deterritorialization down which it constantly flees. There is a rupture in the rhizome whenever segmentarity lines explode into a line of flight, but the line of flight is part of the rhizome. These lines always tie back to one another. That is why one cannot posit a dualism or a dichotomy, even in the rudimentary form of the good and the bad. You may make a rupture, draw a line of flight, yet there is still the danger that you will reencounter organizations that re-stratify everything, formations that restore power to a signifier, attributions that reconstitute a subject—anything you like from Oedipal resurgences to fascist connections. Groups and individuals contain microfacisms just waiting to crystallize. Yes, couchgrass is also a rhizome. Good and bad are only the products of an active and temporary selection, which must be renewed. (pp. 9–10.)

Relating these concepts to the curriculum, Allan (2004) argued that

these arborescent structures emphasise factual knowledge and construct learning as a process of representation, . . . Learning in this context is always partial with meaning being lost through continual fracturing, for example in the translation of texts or in the forms of assessment. (p. 423)

an attempt at a distinction. When I was a teaching assistant for Dr. Charles Bingham's class, *Social Issues in Education*, he provided a news story in class about an a tragedy that occurred at an elementary school in the US where a young girl was murdered in the park outside of the elementary school.

The school took the traumatic event, or this eruption of the Real, and created a learning environment out of it. The students worked at making the park safer. This was a meaningful and authentic learning experience and it arose out of a Real event. The event could have been ignored in school but instead the pedagogical technique was to engage students in a project that was meaningful for both them and their community.

Although this event was traumatic, they don't always have to be. This is something I wrote, years ago, while experiencing heartbreak; it was my experience of Heidegger's truth.

The setting-into-work of truth thrusts up the unfamiliar and the extraordinary and at the same time thrusts down the ordinary and what we believe to be such.  
(Heidegger, (1971, p. 72).

Here is a window into my life; this occurred while I was reading the romantics:

Why would I return over and over in a cyclical return back to that moment? I wanted to rupture my familiar, my everyday world with this; it is the most complete form of artwork, my everyday was torn apart. The same trees, the same mountains

---

Through encounters with a Real event, the hidden curriculum that we work within is recognized. Pedagogy and writing can grant the same access to students in the production and discovery of meaning. They are a way to engage the student, in which they can encounter the Real. With a student's 'event' or unearthing of being, learning can take place. This is not at the level of territorialisation or organization in which the truth is already decided in advance, but a deterritorialization that ungrounds the teacher and the student because they both enter into an unknown space. For the student it can be a space that is in connection to an event that juts through and shows itself as meaningful, and reveals intelligibility to its surroundings.

that I saw everyday burst forth from their exact sameness and jut through at me in an intense form of mystique, magic, and beauty. The mystery of life is always there but as an onlooker I usually stumble and let it fall but not at these moments. As a romantic, I catch it as it juts out towards me broken from its categorical sameness. But not just nature, the beauty of nature is easy to see.

What is hard to see is the same mystique in a garbage dump inside of a van. And that is what his van looked like when I crawled inside. Old work boots, cement, nacho cheese dip container open and spilling on the carpeted floor, Tim Horton coffee cups, old pop bottles, cigarette butts, half eaten Kit-Kat bar, gum wrappers, chip bags . . .

The stuff in the van broke out of their meaning as garbage and into being misplaced objects, spread out. The objects maintained the same mystery as the orange oak leaves falling on the winding dirt road we drove on, the same mystery as his dark, wild, unbrushed hair and unshaven face. Intense beauty and love jutting through what to someone else is only a man in a dirty van.

And that is why I returned, allowing myself to fall into the moment, because I wanted to see artwork in the familiar in the known. I wanted my familiar, the predictable, the known world to be disrupted and broken. I wanted all that is normally hidden and concealed from me to jut through as the unpredictable, as material, in this way I romanticize the world. And this is the role as the artist or the philosopher; their duty is to open this space and preserve this opening. Opening this space provides meaning, as Nietzsche wrote: "All of nature's attempts are only valuable insofar as the artist guesses the meaning of her stammering, meets her half way and expresses the real intention of her attempts" (1965, p. 56).

And after, as I walked into my construction zone of a house and up the stairs, there was my roommate, wearing a green bandana, and jeans with paint on them,

crouched down in the corner of my room painting white paint over the pink. In this intense moment that dissolves as soon as I put words on it, I saw her in a glowing beauty. She stood out from her everydayness as a roommate in work clothes. And I realized that I need to nurture these moments instead of abiding to Kant's rule of the categorical imperative.

This love that works like a little tiny spring in a rock wall, slowly pushing out of the rock wall and eventually making it crumble until it is a waterfall; this is what will make us be conscious of others. Not abiding to the universal law or categorical imperative. Emotions come before thought. That is why I feel being moral, in Kant's way, will never be moral because it comes from a sense of duty of abiding to universal law. It is rational not emotional and by being rational and in the form of thought it has already been twisted and skewed by the prejudices, and biases in manufactured language. Emotions stand outside of this.

Artwork in Heidegger's world was love for me on that day.

What is interesting to me now, from reading this piece again, is how intimate I was with the written works of certain philosophers. How the discourse of philosophical text met me in this time of intensity. I think most people who study philosophy have this sense of embodiment with it. It becomes intrinsically connected within our thoughts and feelings. We are imbued in it. At least this is how I feel, and this makes me think that perhaps I have been too hard on the educational discourse of philosophy. The educational discourse has presented philosophy to me in a way that I have become authentically and meaningfully engaged with it.

However, this is not always the case and my disillusionment with the academic setting of texts is not particular only to me.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> There are many educational theorists who have written about the limitation to academic arguments and standardization in texts and papers: Davis (2008), Gough (2007), Kaustuv (2005), Weibe et al. (2007), Honan (2007) among others. Most of these theorists argued that the standardization in academic arguments can silence voices, promote regularity and similarity, while marginalizing differences —it assumes authors, individuals, and single and static truths. Standardization tells us how and what to write in advance; it can remove the incalculable and the spontaneity that exists within the here and now, and the multiple rhizomatic connections in any event. The rigidity of academic arguments allows “differences [to be] reduced to the same so that they do not overpower the mechanisms of control” (Kaustuv, 2005, p.31). This method of standardized academic arguments can suppress creativity, silence voices, and simultaneously reproduces a superior aim hidden in the curriculum. It does this at the ontological level because it squanders subjectivities and the ability to connect with what is different, the other, the Real, or being.

The arborescent linear structures that emphasize factual knowledge, repeatable techniques, and linear academic arguments can close off the marginalized voices from learning and experiencing. In education, there is a responsibility to open this space for one’s encounter with the Real, or the other, not to dictate pre-disclosed knowledge. In this way we can keep thinking alive.

Foucault (1984) recognized this within philosophical discourse and reminds us of the folly of seeing to dictate to others where to find truth:

But then, what is philosophy today - philosophical activity, I mean - if it is not the critical work of thought on itself? And if it does not consist in the endeavour of knowing how and to what extent it might be possible to think differently, rather than legitimating what is already known? There is always something ludicrous in philosophical discourse when it tries, from the outside, to dictate to others, to tell them where their truth is and how to find it, or when it presumes to give them naively positivistic instruction. But it is its right to explore what might be changed, in its own thought, through the practice of a knowledge that is foreign to it. The "essay" - which should be understood as the test by means of which one modifies oneself through the play of truth and not as the simplistic appropriation of others for the purpose of communication - is the living body of philosophy, at least if we assume that philosophy is still what it was in times past, i.e., an "ascesis", an exercise of the self, in thought. (p.8-9)

The standardized essay can close off oneself from engagement with authentic meaning; it can become too focused on mastering a certain style of essay writing and less about one’s own authentic engagement with truth.

---

A rhizomatic style of writing offers a way to subvert the hegemonic language structures in argumentative writing; this involves moving beyond author(ity) and an arborescent linear style of writing where “ the hierarchical structures, linear procedures and repeatable techniques can lack a specific contextualized learning” (Wiebe, Sameshima, Irwin, Leggo, Gousousasis, & Grauer, 2007, p. 266). Rhizomatic writing is a reminder that linear procedures and repeatable techniques can suppress the context, the multiple fluctuations, changes, and becoming of writing. The purpose of rhizomatic writing is to “write ones multiple contradictory selves into the text and make visible the embodied experiences and their effects on the writer and text” (Honan, 2007, p. 536).

However, there is not a clear and distinct dichotomy between rhizomes and trees, experiential learning verses factual knowledge, horizon over hierarchy, or rhizomatic writing verses linear, academic. There is a continuous becoming and continuous strife amongst these. I hesitate to say that argumentative paper are bad rhizomatic writing is good, because the ontology of the rhizome is relational; its existence depends on that of arborescent and linearity. Rhizomatic writing is an appendage to, not a replacement for argumentative writing.

As Davis (2008) explained,

I do not mean to suggest that the standard format of an academic paper is inappropriate for addressing complex phenomena. It is more a case of its being *inadequate for all* reporting, especially when a vital aspect of that reporting is level-jumping. Multiple threaded texts are a compliment to, not a substitute or a replacement for more conventional academic reporting strategies. (pp. 60–61)

Davis’s (2008) suggestion is important to take into account when we consider that there is a “transphenomenal nature of the educational project, a transdisciplinary character of educational research and the necessarily interdiscursive nature of educational thought” (Davis, 2008, p. 260). In addition, philosophy is, by definition, the love of truth/ wisdom. How can we pre-determine and pre-establish where this truth will lie? Davis (2008) explained the inner workings of a rhizomatic essay:

Within such texts, there is no dominant theme or plot, no clear distinctions among coincident threads. However, a single ‘scene’ might serve to connect two or more strands at the same time, layering them atop one another. The driving idea is essentially complexivist: new interpretive possibilities can arise in the interplay of already-coherent threads of thought. (p. 60)

However, there can be a danger to writing rhizomatically. One can confuse rhizomatics with random words strung together with no coherency or meaning. Gregoriou (2004) brings us from theory to practice and introduces the following scenario that was presented to her:

---

I have a student who has been trying to formulate the thematic for a paper for almost a semester now. She comes early in the semester to my office with a very tidy and 'tight' proposal. Her heart is tight too, bound by stress and confusion. We discuss different opinions, different ways to go, various connections and inquiries to attempt. She starts to map various directions. She sounds exhilarated . . . She comes back the next week with a completely different theme. She talks about ways to expand, settles down a new thematic. I suggest a preliminary bibliography. She comes back, again, excited to discover this new author. . . She drifts again. Is this what following a 'line of flight' means? Is this rhizomatics? Is this growth? Am I going to grade this map of disparate things? (p. 237)

Gregoriou (2004) believed that the student's uncertainty is caused by lack of linear format. The ideal for a book, wrote Deleuze (1987), "would be to lay everything out on a plane of exteriority of this kind, on a single page, the same sheet: lived events, historical determinations, concepts, individuals, groups, social formations" (p. 9). How do we take into account this critique of rhizomatic thought, writing, or pedagogy, "where riding every line of flight means not just bad pedagogy but the dissolution of pedagogy into chaos" (Gregoriou, 2004, p. 239).

The ideology that shapes the discourse of writing is based on standardization, efficiency, reproduction, and clarity. University students are taught to want marketable knowledge and a competitive advantage, "[it is] a game where knowledge survives only when [it] changes and becomes operational and in [this] economy learning is circulating along the same lines as money" (Lyotard, as cited in Gregoriou, 2004, p. 238). A discourse where knowledge is marketable then a-signifying rhizomatic pedagogy in which de-reified meaning is produced seems to be undermined. Students will not see the advantage school provides them with, if it only produces scattered thoughts, and debilitating uncertainty.

In essence, Gregoriou (2004) warned us against reinstating a dichotomy between rhizomes and roots: "It is not a matter of exposing the root and announcing the rhizome, there are knots of arborescences in rhizomes and rhizomatic offshoots in roots" (p. 244). The rhizome is not a transcendental saviour against the evils of the immanent power of capital, quite the opposite. Gregoriou further argued, "the rhizome has nothing to do with essence and normative ethics . . . it has already been at work in corporate capitalism, in modulations in order to produce graduates with flexible market skills" (p. 244). This is what Gregoriou called the rhizome's tragic paradox: at the same time that it subverts one hegemony, it reinstates another.

On the other hand, Hardt and Negri (2001) found a triumphant nature to the paradox of the rhizome. They stated "while it unifies and envelops within itself every element of social life at that very moment reveals a new context a new milieu of maximum plurality and uncontainable singularization—a milieu of the event" (p. 25). A capitalist hegemony cannot subsume the entirety of social life under its control because it becomes unrecognizable to itself and ceases to implant a superior hidden aim. This is the paradoxical occurrence when the multiple reaches the substantive. If we codify the rhizome into an icon from which we create normative ethics, it simultaneously becomes other than itself.

One day, lying on a crash pad in the sun, my friend Annie, told me this:

"Oh, I am so glad that I am not in school anymore. I don't envy what you are doing. What a bore writing all those papers. . . I loved the ideas I learned in Architecture grad school but they were ruined for me when I had to write those ideas in an academic paper."

I asked her why.

She said,

"Academic language took all the meaning out of what I was talking about. They would obfuscate concepts deliberately to make it exclusive only for those attending university."

I was irritated when she said this, part of me agreed and part of me wanted to defend the last 14 years of my life.

I asked,

"Do you know what I mean when I say Real? I can't explain it or it will kill it."

She said,

"Yeah, I know, it's one of those words you cannot explain you just know what it is. I felt that when I met Jonathan. It was like there was all this white noise, and when I met Jonathan it just stopped, and a there was this sense of peacefulness and tranquility that came. And when I reflected on what it was like before, I didn't even know the tension that existed with the white noise."

Annie's opinion was irritating for me because I have often struggled between my genuine affinity to philosophy and my reservations of the educational dissemination of philosophy. Perhaps the forced linear pedagogical style of the philosophical argument has bothered me most. I do not like arguing and when I find myself arguing, I am usually covering hidden truths.

In the footnote below, I attempt a comparison between the modernist structure of health pedagogy and its similarity to academic arguments. The footnote is based on my experiences as a teacher for health education at a major Canadian university. In teaching health education, I came to understand that what is expected of a teacher is similar to how one writes standard philosophical arguments. In brief, essays and teaching both start with a cognizable object, one that is clear and distinct. For the essay, the object is the thesis statement and for the teacher it is the knowledge they are teaching. Next, the task is to expound this object, to set out in argumentative style why this object is true. In both cases, the style is linear, non-discursive, and repeatable. In the footnote below I link Crawford's (2006) lineage of health education with written standard philosophical arguments. I think they both rest on a similar ideology and the problem within each is grounded in the discourse of education.<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>6</sup>In his essay, "Health as a Meaningful Social Practice," Crawford (2006) argued that the concepts of autonomy and personal independence in health education are derived from the humanistic or enlightenment ideas of individualization, where the individual bears all responsibility for health. Crawford followed the conceptualization of health from the 17th century onwards. He wrote,

Health practices rapidly became prominent features of modern societies, a sign of their embrace of Enlightenment ideals of rational control and humanistic progress . . . In a health-valuing culture, people come to define themselves in part by how well they succeed or fail in adopting healthy practices and by the qualities of character or personality believed to support health behaviours . . . Health is conceived as the condition of possibility for the good life or even the good life itself. (2006, pp. 402-404)

Crawford explained that one should come to understand health not as cynosure but as a meaningful social practice determined by social, political, environmental, and economical factors. In this way we come to see health as the responsibility of the state. The idea that health is determined by these factors is nothing new, but the anxiety gap that Crawford identifies between the ideal state of health and what is in the control of the individual is novel.

---

The individual can become anxious because he/she feels personally responsible for their health but they cannot control toxins in the air, pesticides in their food, the quality of their water, feelings of alienation and depression that arise from a fragmented and global society, the amount of money they have, or the addictions and defects they have been born into. This is an anxiety that the curriculum can reproduce and augment because it educates or informs the student (I have informed my health class what it means to be healthy, and now it is their responsibility to be so) but the priority of the curriculum is not awareness of the impossibility of this ideal state.

The World Health Organization defined health as “a state of complete physical, mental and, social well-being. Not merely the absence of disease or infirmity” (WHO, n.d., par. 1). Health, as defined by WHO, is an unattainable state; this creates a gap between the ideal object of health and the individual. If we teach health as an absolute perfect state, we maintain the modern gap between subject and object. The object of health is separate from the fluctuating states of the individual.

Crawford (2006) tied in the idea of the cynosure of health with the identity of the individual: “Health maybe reasonably described as a social cynosure, a meaningful and an emotionally charged fixation—both a goal and a source of anxiety, a value for self and others, integral to identity, a state of being that is continually assessed and the organizing concept for a vast organization of social action” (p.404).

Dovetailing Crawford’s critique of the dissemination of health practices is the textbook I was given to teach from for a Health Education 371 course; it began with these instructions for the students:

Your goal is to achieve very awesome health. Very awesome health is the highest level of health possible. It includes keeping your body and mind in excellent condition, expressing your feelings in healthful ways, and having high quality relationships. As you begin your health course, you are at the starting line. Your textbook and your teacher will help you reach your goal. You will learn about eight hurdles—the health education standards. A health education standard is something you must know and be able to do to be healthy . . . When you master all eight health education standards you will reach your goal—totally awesome health. (Meeks, Heit, & Page 2009)

Often within health education, we emphasize the importance of instruction and information on health-- proper nutrition, exercise etc. – in which the student takes responsibility for his/her health. However, it is not sufficient to teach the nutritional value and importance of vegetables, because this gives students (especially at risk youth) an anxiety. It is an anxiety that stems from an incompatibility between an ideal situation, in which we all had access to organic, locally grown, non-GMOed vegetables, and the reality of the situation: they do not have money, the parents (if they are around and coherent) do not provide the house with vegetables.

The enlightenment ideals inherent with health education that Crawford spoke of bares resemblance to academic philosophical arguments. The cynosure or the object of knowledge handed to us through ancient metaphysics can create an anxiety for the philosophical writer because clearly identifying an object of knowledge or thesis statement is equated to the good student or the good philosopher.

The documentation of my educational experiences has been through writing. Looking back upon this, I realize that my writing was articulatory of my struggle between authenticity and the symbolic order of education. Combining my Real experiences of Truth with the educational discourse of philosophy was deployed through the medium of writing and reading. I have here, on this plane and in this thesis, attempted to find a medium to allow this authenticity to unfold.

Writing my personal experiences connects me to this work. The dichotomous gap between the written and me is absolved and there is intersubjectivity between the

---

Standard philosophical arguments are written objectively. As Maritinich, in his book *Philosophical Writing*, claimed, “the more objective the author’s standpoint is the better . . . The student, the philosophical author, should maintain a transcendent perspective of omniscience and omnipotence” (1989, p.7). Teaching a philosophy student to write objectively places a responsibility on the student; it asks them to write as if they have a priori knowledge. The responsibility rests heavily on the student’s shoulders to convince their reader of a specific point; however, convincing the reader to believe this to be truth, when the student writer may not know it, prohibits authentic writing in philosophy and creates anxiety. This anxiety stems from a gap that resides amongst the multiple fluctuating states of the individual, the opaqueness of Truth, and the universality and clarity of the thesis.

In this gap, the writer/philosopher posits a truth in the thesis statement, and argues for it. If the thesis statement is wrong and their argument is weak then the responsibility falls on the writer and the paper they have written is bad. The writer may experience a certain type of anxiety, in which the author takes individual responsibility for clearly articulating a well-defined thesis statement to the reader, when this statement may not manifest itself to the writer in a clear or intelligible manner.

A clearly stated, tightly focused, intelligible thesis statement, in which the author provides a reasoned defense for, can create a sense of meaninglessness for the writer. The writer/subject becomes uncomfortable with the idea that they must find a truth and then provide a reasoned argument for it, because they are essentially asked to ignore or cover up their uncertainty with the opaqueness of Truth. Through this ignoring or ignorance, Being is ignored and we have lost authentic meaning.

Writing and pedagogy are both mediums in which we can open space for uncertainty and even paradoxical situations. The awareness of the opaqueness of Truth or the insolvability of problematic situations creates a more authentic space for learning. A health educator’s aim is not only to construct health goals in which the student cannot reach but to be open and aware of paradoxes, or contradictory events.

Perhaps a better method of pedagogy would not only be to inform the students but also to understand that the health goals we teach, ignore the students’ situation and can create anxiety. Health is immanent and heterogeneous; it is not an ideal state.

work and myself. The introductory plane has allowed my reader to understand that the Truth I attempt to convey is intimately connected and inseparable from my world. Truth is not an object existing independently from my writing but its ontology, in part, rests on my world and me. Writing personal experiences allows my reader access to my world and that which makes up my *everydayness*; in some ways my reader has a deeper understanding of the discourse I write within more than I do.

However, the *everydayness* of the individual can be questioned. Based on the Foucaultian notion of the subject I explain, in the footnote below, the reasons why personal narratives may not be an adequate writing style for philosophy:<sup>7</sup>

On the introductory plane, I have introduced myself, not my name, but what I have come to understand as my self. I have created a beginning, or the beginning for me was already created, when I was born. But of course, I wasn't born brand new. I

---

<sup>7</sup> Foucault's (1980) deconstruction of the subject helps us understand the problem with personal narratives as a substitute for philosophy papers. For Foucault, the subject is created through relations of power; mainly this power is found within discourse, confessions, writing, and disciplinary power. Hendricks, a Foucault Scholar, wrote that for Foucault, "discipline ties us to our individual identity by documenting it and asserting it as the "truth" of the self, one's true nature and character; and confession enjoins us to find our "true self" deep inside and express it to others" (Hendricks, 2002, p.156). Through confessions, one starts to believe that there is a hidden self; this type of self or individuality is imposed upon us, through the "government of individualization." The government of individualization means that one's desires, potentials, and possibilities are already pre-established and governed (Hendricks, 2002).

The subject, or the self, is a topic of contemporary debate. A personal narrative may not be the writer's True experiences but an experience that has been fabricated through the construction of a subject. So in this way, are these experiences even True for the writer or are they only constructed truths based on other mechanisms of power outside of the control of the subject? And if so, then the project of philosophy is to uncover these mechanisms or discourses that are creating the subject and allow access to something more authentic that does not exist within a solipsistic essay. If philosophy accesses something Real or Truthful, it must go beyond that of an individual. A narrative may have meaning for that individual but we must also uncover the discourses that help to create this meaning.

was born into a world already under sway. I was born into several discourses: political, social, economic, and under a certain house of technology. I was a part of the T.V. generation and later the virtual world.

When I write a personal narrative, these are the aspects of me that are inherent but never spoken of. They are my ideologies. In a personal narrative, I may write in the attempt to find Truth but there is much of my invisible backpack that is never unpacked and examined; it stays neatly intact. If I want to write authentically then writing about my experiences may be too personal of a medium to disclose it.

Perhaps, personal narratives are inadequate as a medium of writing philosophy because we are accessing a Truth or a Reality that goes beyond the symbolic order of the individual. However, at the same time that we cannot smother Truth in solipsism, the Truth cannot be out of our reach.

Like most argumentative essays, I began with an introduction but, unlike other arguments, I am still introducing on this introductory plane because the beginning to my thesis is not brand new, as if it was born out of nothingness; it was born under the discourse of education. In some sense, my thesis has already been constituted by the academic world that has surrounded it before its birth.

The Heideggerian notion that we are born into world already under way is nothing new, nor is it a new idea to claim that writing is only a reiteration of the discourse that holds sway. The reason for continuing this introduction throughout the dissertation is, in part, a technique to make my reader read the introduction throughout the dissertation so that the introduction becomes heterogeneous and immanent; thereby undoing the traditional linear style of writing. There is also something more that I am trying to unfold; this introduction, much like my birth, is continuously happening. It doesn't just stop and start. I, like anyone, is constantly

being born I am borning over and over and so is this introductory plane. Things that are new don't just happen in the beginning and the rest is not just a reiteration of this new born, but we are always becoming different within the heres and nows.

Within in this introductory plane, I feel personal experiences have been stretched as far as they can. Truth and authenticity are still out of my reach because I have not recognized them outside of myself and the way they manifest for others. I am not sure it is possible to step outside of myself and perhaps it is narcissistic to even try.

My attempt is paradoxical and rooted in a historical philosophical debate of objectivism and subjectivism. It is a paradoxical moment that Nietzsche identified when he claimed that Plato's forms were impossible for one to know because we understand everything through perspective. We only have opinions and beliefs, and we cannot possibly have knowledge of a world that is not constituted by perspective because "we see all things by means of the human head, and cannot chop it off" (1984, p.9). Identifying the paradox of Truth as present and inaccessible in its entirety, is not an issue that should be solved or ignored but opened for us to be situated in and worked from, as a place of uncertainty and authenticity within writing and pedagogy.

From here in the introductory plane, I attempt something new. I allow for more voices, through the medium of a dialogue. However, it is not clear which plane to put this dialogue on. Should the dialogue go beneath in the footnotes like a standard researched argument or should it go in the introductory plane that has up until now only been dominated by experiences and my voice? If I could put the dialogue in between these two planes I would, but actually I cannot in this document. I will lay the dialogue on this plane, but I would like my reader to keep in mind that it doesn't necessarily belong here and in a way it is pulling my two distinct planes apart by bringing them closer together on one continuum. The

footnote below provides an argument for dialogues as a style of philosophical writing, while the introductory plane becomes dialogue.<sup>8</sup>

What is about to follow is a dialogue between two philosophers. They met on a virtual dating site, and are now in a bright café, with white walls, and two aluminum chairs seated next to a round table. In the corner, there is a TV and on the wall,

---

<sup>8</sup> A dialogue is another avenue in which to write a philosophy paper; it eases the tension between linear academic arguments that have an inherent objective ideology and a personal narrative that could be subject to certain “middle class narcissism.” A dialogue allows the protagonist to unfold personal experiences and the antagonist to deconstruct these experiences. Freire (2009) claimed, “people develop their power to perceive critically the way they exist in the world with which and in which they find themselves; they come to see the world not as a static reality but as a reality in process, in transformation” (p.83). For Freire (2009), understanding reality as not fixed or static is fundamental for the elimination of the oppression by the oppressors ; it means the oppressed do not passively accept their reality as something unchangeable but reality, through dialogue, “roots itself in the dynamic present and becomes revolutionary” (p. 84). The dialogue opens space for the writer to present two sides to a problem and work through the issue. A dialogue does not persuade the reader; it opens thought.

The dialogue *unfolds* truth; it fluctuates and has movement; it “perceives reality as a process, as transformation, rather than a static entity” (Freire, 2009, p.92). The dialogue is not linear; there is no formal introduction nor is there a conclusion. In this way the future of the dialogue is not predetermined; it is dynamic and fluctuating. This is in contrast to the linear academic philosophy paper. Horban, a senior lecturer in the Philosophy Department at Simon Fraser University, claimed, in his piece *How to write a Philosophy Paper*, “there must be a specific point that you are trying to establish - something that you are trying to convince the reader to accept. The next task is to determine how to go about convincing the reader that your thesis is correct. In two words, your method must be that of *rational persuasion*” (Horban, 1993).

At present, academic philosophy arguments are not unlike the banking concept of education, in which it “distinguishes two stages . . . During the first, he cognizes a cognizable object [the thesis statement]; during the second, he expounds about that object [the rational persuasion]” (Freire, 2009). The cognizable object that is clear and intelligible can close off Truth or reality. This is the problem-posing style of writing in which there is a clear identifiable problem and the writer convinces the reader through argumentation of a solution. The teacher also uses the same linear style of pedagogy in which we find a truth, or an object of knowledge and a lesson plan that provides students with the reasons for the truth of the statement. The teacher identifies at the beginning the topic or goal of the lecture and then spends the rest of the class explaining this. Both linear writing and pedagogy are using the same formula. Not only does this formula close off creativity but this fixed reality can be oppressive. A dialogue is a questioning that is open for critical thought.

there is a painting of a knife, a spoon, and a fork. There is an eagle and there is a snake. The eagle is there first.

# Dialogue

## Interior Day

Eagle, in her late 30s, sits in a chair by herself, sipping on a coffee. She wears glasses without rims. She is listening to her iPod. She checks her watch.

Snake, in her late twenties, comes into the coffee shop. She wears horned-rimmed glasses. She has a shapeless figure—no breasts and no hips, just a curve where her stomach spills over. She looks across the room and sees Eagle. Eagle looks up and catches her eye.

Eagle looks disappointed.

Snake looks disappointed.

Eagle hesitates.

Snake hesitates. (Pause) Eagle gestures for the snake to come over.

Snake walks over to Eagle's table.<sup>9</sup>

Snake: Hi, I'm Jenn. (extends her hand)

Eagle: Hi Jenn, I'm Janet. (shakes her hand) Have a seat. Join me.

Snake: (drops her bags and sits) Thanks. (pause) Is there service? (looks over at a rat in a white apron taking an order at another table. She turns back to Eagle) Sorry I am late. (unwraps the scarf from around her neck and hangs it on the back of the chair. Pause) What were you listening to?

Eagle: Oh, it's a CBC podcast on Don Tapscott. He claims that our education system has not evolved since the industrial revolution. The argument

---

<sup>9</sup> At this point, you may wonder how an eagle and a snake can sit in a coffee shop. But it is very simple. The snake coils the bottom half of her body underneath, which acts as a base for her top half and her top half is stretched up like a cobra. The eagle sits with her feet stretched beneath the table and her tail feathers act as a comfortable seat. She is a bald eagle, with a shiny, white head.

is that the education system needs to embrace more virtual or technological devices in the classroom to keep students engaged.

*From here, the conversation between Eagle and Snake loops and jumps, is non-linear, non-directional, multiplicative, simultaneous, and displays a tendency to follow paths of least resistance, not unlike the Tao. Though it will probably be read in a linear fashion, it doesn't necessarily advance from beginning to end. The purpose is to stimulate thoughts, allow for movement away from a pre-established writing path, and perhaps encourage ideas that are usually lost outside of the confines of margins.*

*The discussion unfolds:*

Snake: (excitedly) Oh! I am writing a paper on a similar idea. The topic of concern for me revolves around the definition and application of modern and postmodern as it applies to education. In this paper, I explore how our education system is modern in a postmodern world. But I have slight luddite inclinations so I don't advocate more technology in classrooms to keep our students engaged. I am working on a different idea for inclusion and engagement in education.

Eagle: (dryly, almost condescendingly) I suppose you define, like any good philosopher, the terms postmodern and modern?

Snake: (unsure) I haven't yet . . .

Eagle: (stirs her coffee and taps the spoon on the side of the cup) Well, the way I see the core of modernity is the 19th and 20th century world of nation states, capitalism, urbanization, rationality, anti-traditionalism, secularization, faith in science, faith in technology, large-scale industrial enterprise, individualism, enlightenment ideals, and an ideology in which progressive, humanitarian ideals are prominent. (pauses, seems satisfied) What is postmodernity?

Snake: (recoiling, a little nervous) I feel uneasy when asked that question, as if the very question makes it modern, as if we needed a particular definition and just one definition at that.

Enter Rat. (he has gelled back hair, yellowing teeth and a dirty, white apron)

Rat: Are you ready to order?

Snake: um, yes, I'll have a coffee with cream and sugar, please.

Rat: (with feigned patience) the cream and sugar is on the table (he gestures towards it with his claw) and to eat?

Snake: Oh, I'm good with coffee thanks.

Rat: (turns his nose up and sniffs) Of course.

*(Snake turns toward Eagle and continues)*

Snake: I feel that perhaps in some ways and in some instances there are multiple meanings: recognition of the biases, prejudices, and subordinatory effects of modernity, questioning the assumption that there are universal truths and that we, as western academics, have the access to these truths, and we know how one ought to go about attaining these truths. Postmodernity also questions structures and hierarchies of knowledge, rationality, scientific facts, large-scale industrial enterprise, patriarchy, and the self as an autonomous agent, to name a few. But further, postmodernism may also blur dichotomies between, self/other, signifier/signified, mind/body, human/animal, nature/technology, and masculine/feminine.

*(The rat returns with her coffee and places it in front of her)*

Foucault, Nietzsche, Baudrillard, Deleuze are all different but fundamental to this postmodern movement. Foucault and Nietzsche were both influences on the eradication of a self, beginning more precisely with Hume, but we will leave that for now. Baudrillard necessarily contributed to the debifurcation of signifier and signified through simulacra and Deleuze for a rhizomatic way out.

*(Snake adds coffee and cream to her coffee and stirs.<sup>10</sup>)*

Eagle: (cocks her head to one side and with a slight smirk asks) Are we in postmodernity now?

Snake: (takes a sip and says) I feel that our western, North American culture is postmodern but our university curriculum is modern.

Eagle: (easing into the conversation) Well, based on your description of postmodernity, I think there are reasons for this. Students need to learn skills that help them compete in the job market. For example, when I teach how to write a philosophy paper, I teach reason, rationality, and objectivity. This standardized manner for essay writing is essential for students to learn to write clearly, objectively, and to communicate ideas efficiently.

Snake: (defensively) What's wrong with including personal feelings in philosophy papers?<sup>11</sup>

---

<sup>10</sup> Again, you may ask how Snake stirs her coffee but the answer is quite obvious if you think about it. Just like you or I would.

Eagle: (choosing her words slowly and carefully) Well . . . it admits that your ideas are not based on truth but on personal feelings. Feelings and moods hinder your access to truth and prohibit seeing other points of view; this is what I teach: 'points of logical vulnerability.' (the eagle starts searching through her iPhone until she finds this quote):

what [I] mean is that this person has great difficulty in being objective on this topic. He or she finds it difficult, in some cases, to consider the evidence impartially and draw a sensible, justified conclusion. [Sometimes] "A psychological commitment to a certain belief or against another belief keeps the person from weighing fairly the evidence for each side of the question. (Seech, 2005, p. 2)

Snake: (sarcastically) Oh, how interesting. How do you teach someone to be objective? (she smiles coyly)

Eagle: (ignoring her flirtation leans forward, with a straight face) We teach students better thinking skills so they are able to look at things in a rational, justifiable way; this was Plato's intention in the *Republic*, when he wrote on how to educate. (pause) I am sure you are familiar with the *Republic*. A fundamental aspect of Plato's philosophy is how to access the Form of the Good, the rational truth beyond experience, and the access to this truth is through the intellect. The education system should teach us that truth is not subject to the whims of mood, historical epochs, or biases but is accessed by clear and intelligent thought.

(Snake, becoming anxious from the seriousness of Eagle, puts more sugar in her coffee and stirs)

Snake: I enter any moment with a mood, feelings, and emotions. I am multiplicities and subjectivities and my access to truth is always only accessible to me through these perspectives. Separating truth from the self, like any of our traditional dichotomies, is dangerous. It is dangerous because it creates binaries and binaries always privilege one over the other: reason over emotion, science over arts, masculine over feminine, the forms over the earthly realm, and eagles over snakes.

---

<sup>11</sup> Snake was getting quite emotional about this topic and couldn't help but interrupt Eagle.

*(Rat, holding a coffee pot comes up to their table, sees that they haven't drank much, sniffs the air and leaves).*

Eagle: (calmly takes a sip of her coffee. She crosses her legs) Objective intellect allows us to understand universal truths. I agree with you, masculine/feminine, self/other, and eagles and snakes should be treated as equals. This is a universal truth. We both understand this because we have the intelligence to see this.

*(Snake blushes. She looks shy for a brief moment).*

Ethically speaking, this is moral realism you're discussing and I completely agree.

*(Snake stirs her coffee again, this time in the other direction)*

Snake: How can we assume the notion of objectivity as if one of us has the ability to have a god's eye view to truth? And why would we assume there is no truth in emotion and we can only have access to this truth once we step outside of perspective; this very way of accessing truth disregards, suppresses, and ignores other ways of accessing truth. There are infinite different ways that an object can be revealed to us and there are multiple ways of knowing including embodied knowledge, emotional knowledge, and experiential knowledge.

*(Snake pauses and pulls out her moleskin notebook, starts flipping through it, talking as she does)*

Snake: For example, this is what I read in LaRocque's book:

Long standing conventions hold that objectivity must necessarily entail the separation of world from the self. As, a scholar I am expected to remain aloof from my words; I am expected to not speak in my own voice. But I am a Native woman/writer scholar engaged in this exciting evolution/revolution of Native thought and action. My primary socialization is rooted in the oral literatures of the Plains Cree Métis, which does not separate the world from the self. Furthermore, there is ample evidence in the study of justification literature for the argument that objectivity can be a self-serving tool of those accustomed to managing history. (1993, p. xxi)

Eagle: (takes a sip of her coffee, calmly, and uncrosses her legs) The purpose of remaining aloof from your words is so that we do not become subject to bias and prejudice within our writing. (she reads from her iPhone again). "Our biases create points of logical vulnerability. In other words, we can be blind and thus vulnerable to

errors in reasoning because we favour one way of looking at an issue" (Seech, 2005, p. 4). Writing subjectively as opposed to objectively is dangerous because our reasoning becomes coloured by hate, anger, racism, sexism, etc.

Snake: (she takes a quick sip of her coffee and puts it down quickly, coffee spills on to the saucer) This is where a fundamental problem within which modernity, objectivity, rationality, technique, and scientific thought are located; it assumes to be objective and not biased but the biases, the prejudice, racism, and sexism are already inherent and masked by objectivity. (becoming more excited as she talks) It assumes that certain academic individuals have access to this objective truth and can decide the best way to reason, think, act, write, talk, argue, learn, and educate and the people/animals that do not fit within these language games are continuously marginalized. But it is an invisible marginalization, one that is 'always already' and is present within thought, language, education, science, and technology. So when the marginalized try to understand why they do not flourish in this system, the response is that they need to learn how to think more rationally or learn how not to be coloured by their experiences. (Snake starts nervously flipping through her moleskin. A few awkward seconds go by until she finds this quote)

Reflexivity is not just a matter of being aware of one's prejudices and standpoints but of recognizing that, through language, discourse, and text, worlds are created and recreated in ways of which we are rarely aware. The key questions then become how we both constitute and are constituted by language and where lies the power to interpret and control meaning.

(Usher & Edwards, 1994, p. 16)

Eagle: (interrupting her) This is what is termed 'metaphysics of the present.' Within metaphysics of the present, there is a prioritizing of what is most real or present and whatever represents this presence is a falling away from it. Words or writing can never accurately capture the thing in itself; they will always misconstrue the presence, in one way or another. Writing can hinder one's access to the truth because it is a signifier and can be untrustworthy and open to misinterpretation. That is why it is essential to write as clearly and objectively as one can.

Snake: (sits back in her seat, feeling slightly exasperated) It is precisely this idea of misinterpretation or misrepresentation that is problematic. Our ideas of things are not merely a mirroring of the

way they are, but through acts we constitute the object. So there is no true way that an object is but this object is constituted and created in the way we perceive it. Writing is not just a representation or a misrepresentation of knowledge but it constitutes it. That's why I think we have to be so careful in writing because it reinforces the ideology of the curriculum in which it is situated and that's what I am trying to say in this essay that I am writing.

Eagle: (speaking slowly) Okay, but if there are multiple ways to perceive an object then there must be some ways that are better than others. We both know when something is an illusion and when something is real. If we know when something is an illusion then we know this is a false way of looking at something. If there is a false way to view something then there also is a right way to view an object . . .

Snake: (interrupts the eagle) If we assume there is one correct way of interpreting something, then we assume that there are certain individuals who have access to this true interpretation and, consequently, we assume there is an authority on truth. If there is a true author and we can fix our ideas upon his thoughts then we can then make conclusions about what he really meant. The author holds the access to truth and we can gain access to this truth by reading his text. Based on this, we will also decide that there is a right and wrong way to interpret what he says. ((Snake pulls out a coffee stained paper and starts reading from a highlighted section) This is what Hendricks wrote about in her essay on Foucault:

Intellectuals in the modern west, according to Foucault, are closely tied to the current regime of truth as agents who are entrusted with the location and dissemination of truth and knowledge. Those who are established as speakers of truth achieve that status through structure and practices of power and they exercise a certain amount of power as authorities on the 'truth.'

(Hendricks, 2002, p. 156)

*(pause. Eagle looks at her, the snake looks around nervously, takes the scarf from her chair and wraps it around her neck and continues in a quieter voice)*

Snake: Foucault's deconstruction of the subject helps us understand the role of the author, not as fixed or static, but as a multiplicity. For Foucault, the subject is created through relations of power; mainly this power is found within discourse, confessions, writing and disciplinary power:

discipline ties us to our individual identity by documenting it and asserting it as the 'truth' of the self, one's true nature and character; and confession enjoins us to find our 'true self' deep inside and express it to others.

(Hendricks, 2002, p. 156)

Through confessions, one starts to believe that there is a hidden self; this type of self or individuality is imposed upon us, through the government of individualization. The government of individualization means that one's desires, potentials, and possibilities are already pre-established and governed.

*(Eagle sighs, checks her iPhone, and then has another sip of coffee. This date is not what she wanted. Snake continues)*

The idea of a true self that can be found/created through mechanisms of power is connected to the idea of authorship and authority. Having a true self that one can gain access to only through psychoanalysis or confessions, creates a power dichotomy between one's self and those who allow you access to this self—the priest, the psychotherapist, the doctor. Authorship creates the same power dichotomy within texts. (the snake reads again from the same coffee stained paper)

The practice of appending an author's name to a text can thus perpetuate a system of truth and power wherein truth is located, analyzed, disseminated, and to a certain extent owned by discreet individuals who are accorded the status of its authorities.

(Hendricks, 2002, p. 156)

Foucault believed that:

carrying on the social role of author can help to ensure that there continue to be individuals who act as agents of truth, whose status as authorities on truthful discourse continue to affect how their texts are received and who continue to mold the thoughts and actions of their audience through their power as speakers of true.

(Hendricks, 2002, p. 159)

Eagle: (long pause, deep breath) I understand this point you're making; however, Foucault, in leaving the author's place as empty or anonymous, did not fully erase our notions of authority or power within these texts. I have read this same paper too, a close colleague of mine wrote it and if you look I believe on page 159 or so, Hendricks also claims that "Such an appeal to utter anonymity may not ultimately be effective, because this does little to change the expectations of others that an identifiable author exists and should be located" (Hendricks, 2002, p. 159). Whether Foucault loses the author or not

does little for the removal of the place that the author held— someone wrote it even if no one claims to have. So, we will look for a correct interpretation of whoever wrote it. (pause. Eagle looks sympathetically at Snake for a second and continues in a softer tone) You must admit that some interpretations are better than others, or this is relativism.

Snake: Yes, but the difficulty arises when we assume that elite intellectual have access to this truth . . . (Snake starts to trail off . . . takes a sip of her coffee, glances up the TV screen, awkward moment, lasts a few seconds. She continues talking while looking at the TV) A positive aspect of postmodernism is its upheaval of this bifurcation of signifier and signified and the allowance of the signifier to become as 'real' as the signified. If you give me a second I can find a great quote for you. (She starts frantically searching through her stuff almost a minute goes by before she finds this quote and reads)

In modernism, meaning is established through a clear representational relationship between the referent (the 'real' object) and the sign consisting of the signifier (the word/image that 'names' the object) fixed to a signified (the concept associated with the word/image). Postmodernism problematizes this relationship by not only questioning the very notion of representation and the relationship between sign and reality, but also by arguing that because the word/image (signifier) is no longer attached to a fixed signified, the sign becomes the signifier and therefore becomes its own 'reality.' (Usher and Edwards, 1994, p. 14)

Eagle: (looks down at her iPhone and starts scrolling through it with her feather, looking for her notes on Baudrillard and talking as she does) If the sign has become its own reality then we have lost ourselves in nihilism. Anything is real because nothing is real. "Illusion is no longer possible because the real is no longer possible" (Baudrillard, 2001, p. 180). (looks up from her iPhone) For example within the art world: there would be no difference between Van Gogh's art and a bicycle wheel put on a stand. There is no difference between any art from a salon and any person making art (she gestures at the amateur painting of the fork, spoon, and knife on the wall) and while this may free multiplicities of subjectivities to express their art, it removes any standards, and if we are removing standards, we are removing the role of education. Because what is the purpose of education if it does not help one create better art, better writing, better thought, better investigation, better technology. (returns to looking at her iPod)

Snake: (speaks quietly and firmly, staring at Eagle as she quotes Nietzsche from memory)

nihilism is an effect of modernity and the ideals of the Age of Enlightenment, not a result of postmodernism: "the faith in the categories of reason is the cause of nihilism. We have measured the value of the world according to categories that refer to a purely fictitious world. (Nietzsche, 1967, p. 13)

Have you heard of Baudrillard's theory of seduction?

Eagle: (not committing to a yes or a no) tell me about it.

Snake: Baudrillard favoured a model based on what he calls "seduction." (she goes back to her moleskin and reads) Seduction plays on the surface thereby challenging theories that 'go beyond' the manifest to the latent . . . theories like Marxism, psychoanalysis, and structuralism . . . all privileged forms of rationality. (Poster, 2001, p. 5)

*(The rat returns to their table holding the coffee pot. He fills their cups.)*

Rat: Would you guys like to order something to eat?

Snake: (irritated that her conversation was interrupted, shakes her head)  
No, thank you.

Eagle: Coffee is fine, thank you.

Rat: Maybe something small, like a piece of pie or a cinnamon bun. We have delicious cinnamon buns they were fresh baked today, they have walnuts. . .

Eagle: (interrupts him) No thank you.

Rat: (He looks at Snake this time) we also have salads if you want something a little lighter.

Snake: I'm good. Thanks. (she looks away, waiting for the rat to leave)

*(Rat opens his mouth to say something then closes it. Lingers there for a few seconds longer and then leaves.)*

*(Snake and Eagle sit quietly for a few moments after the rat leaves. Eagle becomes interested in her iPhone. Snake tugs at the scarf around her neck. She bites her lower lip.)*

Eagle: (clears her throat) I've always had a problem within postmodernism and in particular Baudrillard's theory. (she pauses, looks toward the corner of the ceiling and pretends to think) If there is no real, only simulacra, as you say, then there is no oppression, no domination, no subordination, no one is being suppressed and nothing is suppressing because it is all simulacra. There is no 'real' subordination, only replicas. After listening to this CBC program I can't help but think

that in a postmodern education in which foundational goals allow the multiplicities of marginalized voices to manifest, it seems this foundation has been undermined. What 'real' voices are there, if there is only just the hyperreal?

Snake: (sounding defeated) I am unsure that I can answer this. I am not particularly loyal to his theories either: however, what I do take from Baudrillard is the way in which we think and learn in our postmodern culture. Sometimes, I think that because people are thinking differently due to technology: iPods, Internet, Facebook, texting, tweeting, youtubing, online dating, shopping, gaming, and researching, it is no longer a specialized rooted system in which we dig deep for a particular meaning, or thing, or author, or soul mate (she glances a way, blushes for a second and then continues) but we are moving rhizomatically, like a ginger root, in different directions, all along the surface, connecting any point to any other and not bordered by boundaries or disciplines.

Eagle: How is serial online dating better or more authentic than finding a soul mate? (pause. Eagle looks like she is about to say something and then changes her mind at the last minute) Without a pre-established standard on how to write, how can we understand what is written? How do we evaluate written work? How do we educate people on how to write? If students already know how to write and are allowed to write what they want, what is the purpose of this education system? How does this not dissolve into complete subjective relativism with a total disregard for a system established over many years?<sup>12</sup>

Snake: (matter-of-factly) I am not disregarding the current curriculum. I am adding an appendage to the curriculum, an appendage that allows for expression instead of replication. Writing a philosophy argument within the discipline of philosophy is an example of how capitalism's ideology of efficiency, standardization, replication, and commodification of knowledge and writing is present within these arguments. (Eagle begins to look bored so she starts speaking quickly) By writing a pre-established standardized argument, truth or what is written about is already presupposed. It is already within the technology of writing. It does not open new pathways for the concealed or the marginalized to be revealed. Within our education

---

<sup>12</sup> At this point, Eagle had drunk so much coffee that her heart was beating quite quickly and couldn't help but firing off so many questions at once.

system, how we grasp and understand the truth through intellect is already processed through the ideology in which we operate. If writing or education is the medium in which Truth is discovered and created then we must carefully look at this medium and what this ideology has previously admitted as Truth. Do you see what I mean?

Eagle: (sounding slightly confused) I think so. . .

Snake: (brief pause. She takes a sip of her coffee and starts speaking more slowly) If you want to write your emotions on suppression, on subordination, on marginalization, on alienation, you have to do it through the voices of the authorities and within a standardized argument; it is a replication of the same formula. Knowledge is commodified; the discourses of science and philosophy do not a search for Truth but are the carrying out of a pre-established ideology. If we truly want to change and allow other voices to be heard we must change how we write in academia. If we follow pre-established paths, the result will always be the same. (pause. Sips her coffee). The mark of an expert in capitalist ideology is whether you can reproduce the same thing over and over, without differences.

*(at this point in the conversation, the rat places a billfold on the table. Snake starts to fiddle with the billfold on the table without opening it. Pause. Eagle rubs her beak where her glasses rest)*

Snake: I am proposing a style of writing that is an 'and,' a connecting to what is already in place; this encourages me to write in a way that allows for my becoming, a way that allows for my multiple changing selves. Do you see what I mean?<sup>13</sup>

*(Eagle shrugs and looks off to the side. The rat returns)*

Rat: Do you need change?

Eagle: No, we haven't put money in.

Rat: Do you need me to run your credit card through?

Eagle: Not yet.

*(The rat continues to stand there.)*

---

<sup>13</sup> Snake is starting to feel like she is being too aggressive for a first date but she can't help herself.

Snake: (ignoring the rat and staring at her empty coffee cup, turning it slowly in her hands she continues to speak softly, poetically) Deleuze and Guattari help us with the notion of rhizomatic writing when they explain that a book like most things has neither subject nor object; no subject because each one of us is many. (she takes a moment to find her book and then reads from it) "To attribute the book to a subject is to overlook this working of matter, and the exteriority of their relations. It is to fabricate a beneficent God to explain geological movements" (1987, p. 3). And a book has no object because it is an assemblage; it is capable of producing many effects, not just an organized unity producing one dominant reading. (Continuing to read) As Deleuze and Guattari tell us,

as an assemblage, a book has only itself, in connection with other assemblages and in relation to other bodies without organs. We will never ask what a book means, as a signified or signifier; we will not look for anything to understand in it. (1987, p. 4)

*(The rat leaves the table.)*

A book without subject or object removes the dichotomy of self/book or author/ book and it replaces the idea of an object with attributes with a book as a multiplicity: "A multiplicity has neither subject nor object, only determinations, magnitudes and dimensions that cannot increase in number without the multiplicity changing in nature" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p. 8). There is no central agency, no Hobbesian absolute sovereign or general. The firing squad fires in unison: "communications runs from any neighbor to any other, the stems or channels do not pre-exists, and all individuals are interchangeable, defined only by their state at a given moment" (1987, p. 20).

I think Rhizomatic writing opens space for authenticity and doesn't just focus on convincing or persuading the reader. Writing is expression not replication. Truth is in writing; writing does not hide or misconstrue truth.<sup>14</sup>

---

<sup>14</sup> At this point, Snake has become very conscious of the fact that she has been talking a lot and in the fear of turning this into pontification or a monologue and making her friend think that she is a boring person she stops talking and allows the eagle a chance to speak.

Eagle: Aphorisms, poetry, science fiction, these are all valid ways of writing and you are free to write this way but it is not an appropriate medium for academic philosophy. (finishes her last sip of coffee and stuffs her iPhone in her pocket) I try to look at how this will work in my Philosophy 100 class. My Critical Thinking course is one of my most popular philosophy courses because it develops qualities that are valued by employers, such as problem solving and communication and this is why the majority of students go to universities. They want an edge on the job market, increased earning potential, a wider range of opportunities, and a more rewarding career. Universities are job oriented. If I teach students to write rhizomatically, think rhizomatically, and explode boundaries, if I teach them to question instead of problem solve, this will ruin them for job potential. If I teach my First Nations students how to speak their marginalized voices, how does this help them? It only deskills them and makes them less competitive within the job market. They need to know standards of how to write, how to problem solve, and how to communicate efficiently. It will only be a disservice to try to teach them to think otherwise.

*(The rat returns to the table checks the billfold and sees that still no money has been placed in it and then explains this to Eagle and Snake.)*

Rat: I understand that you are engaged in this philosophical topic and it is of utmost importance to you but you haven't noticed that I placed the billfold in front of you. Every table is money. The more tables I turn the more money I make. It is now 6:00 p.m., there is a line up at the door, people are hungry, and I want to make money. You have sat here for almost three hours and have ordered nothing but coffee, please pay your bill, so I can seat another table.

*(Eagle and Snake opened the billfold and written on the top of the bill, in scribble that could only have been scratched by a rat, it read with a reference):*

We are always complicit in that which we struggle against.

(Usher and Edwards, 1994, p. 28)



Although I claimed this dialogue belongs between these two planes, I hesitate to say that it is actually between. The content in actuality does not split the difference; it operates on the ontic level and has ignored ontology. The dialogue is an eagle and a snake anthropomorphized; it allows for two voices to be heard in a dialogical style but I am unsure that what I attempt in this dissertation was adequately captured in this dialogue. In the footnote below the problems with dialogues as a mode of philosophical writing are expressed.<sup>15</sup>

---

<sup>15</sup> A dialogue is not a new idea. Many philosophers have written dialogues: Plato, Hume, and Berkeley, for example. A dialogue usually involves two, working against each other in strife but it does not allow for the multiplicity of things working together or an event unfolding.

In Freire's (2009) dialectic between the oppressed and the oppressor, there are subjects and there are objects and they have a codependency but there is a fixed duality. Freire (2009) claimed, "Neither objectivism nor subjectivism . . . is propounded here, but rather subjectivity and objectivity in constant dialectical relationship" (p.50). Freire's dialogic recognizes the relation between the teacher and the student, the oppressor and the oppressed, or the subject and the object. But there is much more to the scene of the student and the teacher, there is also the knowledge being taught, the space that they are in, the particular day, the time, the era, the language, the mood of the teacher or of the student. There is also the plane that is not yet, before manifestation. The plane of the virtual, where possibilities and potentials reside (see footnote 20). In other words pedagogical space and of course philosophical writing is an event that unfolds with multiple things present and coming to be. I don't think the dialectic between student and teacher or a dialogue within writing is adequate for capturing this multiplicity.

For Freire the "Dialogue is the encounter between men, mediated by the world in order to name the world"(p.88). The dialogue resides on the level of formed subjects, the symbolic order, it exists within language, it is epistemological and it is among men, all else is ignored. The dialogue is two in strife within one another to create a different reality. However, for the purpose of this dissertation and philosophy papers in general, I want to look at something different, a becoming amongst things, a learning or writing that involves a becoming that not only resides in the symbolic world between two, like in Freire's dialectic but also encounters the Real. Writing should not ignore the multiplicities that cannot engage in language; it is a becoming with these multiplicities.

Freire's dialogue assumes the subject and object; the teacher and student, or oppressed and oppressor, but it does not allow for teacher/student/knowledge/class all as a sort of becoming. And if we are talking about meaning in education and writing and encountering the Real, it is not just two or three formed subjects, but multiplicities.

Dialogues have this subtle hint of argumentation or of two things working against; they reside on the symbolic level and ignore what is outside of discourse. This dialogue did not embody the ontological inbetweenness that is particular to the rhizomatic. But perhaps that is the issue; it is inbetween and between always involves two things. I don't want to create a binary. I want to create an inbetweenness, or perhaps amongness is a better word because it gives a sense of polyphonic, instead of two.

Truth and its relation to meaning is not a subjective creation on behalf of an idealistic individual, nor is it pure discovery, as if it existed prior to and independent of the subject, like an object beyond the reach of the individual. The intersubjectivity of subject and object and meaning constitution is explored in the footnote below.

In the following footnote, I aim to provide an experiential ontology for rhizomatic pedagogy and writing. Although many educational theorists have written about rhizomatic writing and experiential pedagogy, the ontological basis for this has been ignored. Through the works of Husserl, Sartre, Deleuze and Guattari, Ueda, and Nagao I attempt to unfold a phenomenologist's ontology for rhizomatic learning, writing, and pedagogy. It is important to warn my reader that this is a longer footnote, so if you have decided that you are reader type three then give this footnote a miss now and circle back to it later.<sup>16</sup>

---

<sup>16</sup> Make a rhizome. But you don't know what you can make a rhizome with, you don't know which subterranean stem is going to make a rhizome, or enter a becoming, people your desert. So experiment. (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 246)

---

When I began this project, I wanted to relate Deleuze and Guattari's figuration of a rhizome to phenomenology's meaning ontology. I did not know if this could be done adequately, and now I still don't know if it can be done, but I have experimented. It is difficult to discuss 'relation' in the sense that the rhizome cannot be related. A comparison is not in order because that includes a structured, hierarchal tree, in which we draw filiations between rhizomatic pedagogy and phenomenology. I cannot posit a rhizome on one side and phenomenology on the other and compare the two because the rhizome is in between, in the intermezzo, but so is meaning ontology; it connects the signified and the signifier. Instead, in this paper, I map dots and I draw lines between these dots.

It is circular to look for a relation when the rhizome and phenomenology *are* the relation. Maybe not 'are' in the static Cartesian 'I am' way but they are-*ing*; they are becoming because they are not static; they are relation-*ing*, moving. As Deleuze and Guattari (1987) explained,

becoming is a rhizome, not a classificatory system or genealogical tree. Becoming is certainly not imitating, or identifying with something . . . ; neither is it corresponding, establishing corresponding relations; neither is it . . . producing filiations or producing through filiations. Becoming is a verb with a consistency all its own; it does not reduce to, or lead back to, "appearing," "being," "equaling" or "producing." (p.237)

There are no filiations to be drawn between phenomenology and rhizomatic pedagogy, "a becoming is not a correspondence between two relations. But neither is it a resemblance, and imitation, or, at the limit an identification" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 237). Perhaps this project fails before it starts because I cannot compare two things that are not 'things' at all but are already in between. However, I am reassured that I am writing the right project because as Deleuze and Guattari (1987) maintained,

it is inevitable that the Plan (e), thus conceived, will always fail, but that the failures will be an integral part of the plan (e) . . . because it is not a plan (e) of organization, development, or formation, but of non-voluntary transmutation. (p.269)

The rhizome is the means in which this paper is written and the paper is written about something else, namely phenomenology and pedagogy. A rhizome allows this paper to become, like a plane of consistency. "[T]he plane itself is not given. It is by nature hidden. It can only be inferred, induced, concluded from that which it gives rise (simultaneously or successively, synchronically or diachronically)" (Deleuze & Guattari 1987, p. 265). This is its importance to pedagogy; the rhizome emphasizes the meaning between the knower and the known, the signified and signifier. Knowledge is not represented and finite. Knowledge is an unknown process and learning and experiencing will reveal it in its infinite ways. Pedagogy is situated within the rhizome, in the liminal space of meaning.

---

I argue that an important aim of education should be to embrace a rhizomatic pedagogy because it allows for meaning constitution. I base this idea of rhizomatic pedagogy on a phenomenology's meaning ontology, where ontology is an interdependent relation between subject and object. Each subject is a multiplicity of perceptions that arise co-dependently with a multiplicity of object matter. Every unity is a multiplicity. With a phenomenologist perspective, we can shift a pedagogy based on a linear, top-down approach where knowledge is represented and finite to a pedagogy in which knowledge is a multiplicity in an interdependent unity with another multiplicity, the student, like a wasp and an orchid. Meaning constitution in rhizomatic pedagogy allows for continuous becoming and the engagement with the event.

In this footnote I add appendages and connective tissues with phenomenology's meaning ontology and its unity with pedagogy, while simultaneously experimenting with rhizomatic writing. I continue down different lines of flight: Deleuze and Guattari (1987), Husserl (1958), Sartre (2001, 1965) old school (1967) and new school (1991) Yogacara Buddhism. My intention is not to look at what each thinker actually meant but to move horizontally, quickly, like a rhizome in the subterranean because there are many thinkers taking different lines of flight from experiences with the real. Husserl (1958) and Sartre (1965, 2001) are engaged, not in a linear fashion, but as another layer of sediment. In particular, the co-dependent arising of *noema* and *noesis* (meaning constitution) and Sartre's critique that being precedes knowledge are emphasized to show the relation to rhizomatic pedagogy. I also draw lines of comparison from Sartre's primacy of being to old school and new school Buddhism's *vijanna* in order to unfold the ontology of rhizomatic pedagogy. I encourage my reader to envision this footnote as if it was laid out flat and not only vertical but horizontal and diagonal as well because there are many lines drawn between and around different thoughts and thinkers.

In exploring a common ground between phenomenology and rhizomatic pedagogy, I focus on the relation between subject and object. According to Deleuze and Guattari (1987), a book, like most things, has neither object nor subject. No subject because each one of us is many. And no object because, as the authors claim, a book is an assemblage, it is capable of producing many effects, not just an organized unity producing one dominant reading. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) suggested,

as an assemblage, a book has only itself, in connection with other assemblages and in relation to other bodies without organs. We will never ask what a book means, as signified or signifier; we will not look for anything to understand in it. (p. 4)

A book without a subject or object allows the attributes to be the substance and a book becomes a multiplicity: "A multiplicity has neither subject nor object, only determinations, magnitudes and dimensions that cannot increase in number without the multiplicity changing in nature" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 8).

Here a return to our Lockean philosophical roots will illuminate this idea. Locke's idea (1975) of the substance with attributes, or the self as a blank slate that subsists in self-consciousness and is identical even as the person goes through numerous changes, is succeeded by the Humean idea of no identical self. Hume (1978) claimed that

the identity which we ascribe to the mind of man is a fictitious one . . . it is not able to run the several different perceptions into one, and make them lose their character of distinction and difference, which are essential to them. (Hume, 1978, book 1, part iv)

---

For Hume (1978), the self is a bundle of perceptions. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) extend Hume's idea of a bundle of perceptions to a multiplicity, in their example of a puppet, in which the strings are not tied to a single will but to a multiplicity of nerve fibers.

The multiplicity is the rhizome; multiplicity is in the "and;" it's always "in between." Deleuze and Guattari (1987) believe, "unlike trees or their roots, the rhizome connects any point to any other point" (p. 21). There is no central agency:

communication runs from any neighbor to any other, the stems or channels do not preexist, and all individuals are interchangeable, defined only by their state at a given moment—such that local operations are coordinated and the final, global result synchronized without a central agency. (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.17)

Rhizomes are not dichotomous; Deleuze and Guattari (1987) are not simply positing that roots are bad and rhizomes are good. Rhizomes are both Territorilization and deterritorialization. They explained,

you may make a rupture, draw a line of flight but there is still the danger that you will reencounter organizations that restratify everything, formations that restore power to a signifier, attributions that reconstitute the subject—anything you like from Oedipal resurgences to fascist concretions. (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 9)

Territorilization and deterritorialization are always intimately connected with one another, like the wasp and the orchid. It is not mimesis or a copying between the wasp and the orchid but a true becoming. The orchid does not only imitate the wasp, territorialisation on the level of strata, but also there is a true becoming, a becoming wasp of the orchid and a becoming-orchid of the wasp (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). The becoming-wasp and becoming-orchid appear exploding on a line of flight in a common rhizome. The idea of becoming, most likely a Nietzschean idea removes the dichotomy between subject and object, between here and there, between two species.

it is the wolf itself, and the horse, and the child, that cease to be subjects to become events, in assemblages that are inseparable from an hour, a season, an atmosphere, an air, a life. The street enters into composition with the horse, just as the dying rat enters into composition with the air, and the beast and the full moon enter into composition with each other. (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 262)

No position is ever stagnant; it is always moving and engaging with others in events, a will to power. One will overpowers the next. The self sheds its skin and changes its nature. But in order for it to be continuous becoming, it must also become what it is not. It must then become stagnate, crystallize, or become fascist congregations.

---

What the arborescent system provides us with in its act of discovery is its already pre-established channels of communication and individuation. The unconscious is pinned into a Freudian Oedipus complex. The unconscious should not be traced to the Oedipal complex but produced, “the Oedipal myth and its institutionalization in psychoanalysis, stands directly in the way of understanding the productive unconscious” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 14). If we understand desire as Lacanian lack or as fundamental Oedipal desire, then we have obstructed desire from producing, “once a rhizome has been constructed, arborified, it’s all over, no desire stirs; for it is always by rhizome that desire moves and reproduces . . . by external, productive outgrowths” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 14).

Deleuze and Guattari (1987) propose schizoanalysis to replace psychoanalysis; psychoanalysis, with General Freud, allows for the power dichotomy between patient and doctor. The schizoanalysis, with its multiple entry points and breaks, escapes some of the strictures of Oedipus and does not force consciousness into a preexisting tree model:

For both statements and desires the issue is never to reduce the unconscious or to interpret it or to make it signify according to a tree model. The issue is to produce the unconscious, and with it new statements, different desires: the rhizome is precisely this production of the unconscious. (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p. 18)

What has been outlined above is that the old dichotomic, territorial, psychoanalytic, tracing, root-tree model has been expanded by an a-central, a-parallel, rhizomatic, schizoanalytic model. In this model, there is no subject or object and no transcendent ruler. Production is at the level of desire; desire and consciousness are not forced into an Oedipus complex but are allowed to produce. However, I don’t believe Deleuze and Guattari (1987) are painting a utopia. Nor is this a blueprint for a revolt. This is a mapping of what is already in play. The Hobbesian sovereign is brought down into Foucault’s (1978) biopower; power and control are not lost; they have become immanent.

Rhizomatic pedagogy is the indistinguishable relation between the wasp and the orchid. It is deterritorialization and reterritorialization. There is a unity of the two. One does not exist prior to the other and there is not a pure imitating of one to the other, there is a co-dependent arising of the two. Knowledge is not an object waiting to be discovered nor is it purely invented. It is both.

Haraway (1991) in her book, *Simians, Cyborgs and Women*, critiqued the traditional, objective, method of discovering): “technology does not discover T-cells but creates them . . . technology produces meaning” (p. 208). The notion of discovery implies that cells are passive, unaffected objects that technology objectively defines. Haraway (1991) deconstructed this notion of discovery by claiming that technology actually creates these objects; technology does not discover objects. We constitute the object; we do not discover it. The object is not something passive that is acted upon, but the object reacts with technology; we are not discovering a pure origin. We constitute the object in our experience. As Haraway (1991) maintained, “bodies as objects of knowledge are material-semiotic generative nodes. Their boundaries materialize in social interaction; ‘objects’ like bodies do not pre-exist such scientific objectivity; the sighting of objects is not about dis-engaged discovery” (p. 208).

---

Haraway (1991), like Husserl (1958), argued that both science and technology do not provide us with knowledge of an objective world. The world understood through science and technology is a constituted world; that is, a world created and structured by science and technology. Technology has both constituted our material body and the framework through which we view the world.

Here, I bring in Husserl's (1958) idealism because it is important in understanding the ontology of experientialism and meaning constitution. Although, as I will later explain in this footnote, Sartre's critiques of Husserl are also integral to my project and in understanding phenomenology, because they lead us out of Husserl's idealism and into an ontology that is not epistemologically grounded.

Within Husserl's (1958) idealism, it is clear that we do not merely reflect or represent an object within our mind; we constitute that object. Similar to Husserl's (1958) idea of meaning constitution, Deleuze and Guattari (1987) claimed that there is an indistinguishable combination of the two, that of pure becoming. This pure becoming is indicative of the wasp and orchid. The wasp does not merely imitate the orchid but there is becoming-wasp of the orchid and becoming-orchid of the wasp. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) wrote, "we fall into a false alternative if we say that you either imitate or you are. What is real is the becoming itself the block of becoming, not supposedly fixed terms through which that which becomes passes" (p. 238).

It brings two things that are different and marks a deterritorialization. It is not a reflection of the way things are nor is it a mimicking. It is a becoming different for both things involved. Relation and representation impoverish the becoming. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) rename this an 'involution' instead of evolution. Evolution conceives

nature. . . as an enormous mimesis: . . . in the form of a chain of beings perpetually imitating one another, progressively and regressively and tending toward the divine higher term they all imitate by graduated resemblance, as the model for and principle behind the series. (p. 235)

I maintain that this notion of rhizomatic becoming provides an ontological basis for learning because it engages and allows for a becoming of the student and knowledge. It is not a method of imitation, nor of regurgitation, nor is it a corresponding, it is a becoming other. It is not a mimesis; it is an unfolding in which both the student and knowledge constitute each other. This engagement and becoming provide an inclusive space for students, a place where students combine their meaning with an unknown other in the space of becoming. The ontology of becoming can replace the modernist's replicatory approach to learning.

The mimesis or reproduction technique is common within modernity's pedagogy and the teaching of writing. As Deleuze and Guattari (1987) have noted

a first type of book is a root book. The tree is already the image of the world, or the root the image of the world-tree. The book imitates the world, as art imitates nature . . . the law of the book is the law of reflection. (p.5)

This modernist view embraces a subject/object dichotomy that does not allow for becoming of the event within writing. The technique of representation is critiqued within the ontological process of art creation as well.

---

A painting that is faithful to replication and imitations of externalities is not true becoming. In order to imitate nature, a gap between reality and nature must be emphasized, thus reinforcing a subject/object dichotomy. . In a chapter on Taoist art Moeller (2004) explained,

the pattern of representation is based on the gap between the full reality of the signified and the deceptive reality of the signifier. Within this pattern the two constituting elements (signifier and signified) are not equally real. One is more than the other. This representational structure creates an ontological hierarchy between the signifier and the signified. (p.140).

In the rhizome, there is not an ontological gap between the signified and the signifier because the rhizome is in the middle; it is always 'in between.' This 'in between' of the rhizome is not unlike the co-dependent arising of the *noema* and *noesis* that Husserl (1958) described.

In a similar project to Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) rhizome, Husserl (1958) performed a phenomenological reduction in an attempt to dissolve the subject object dichotomy. The distinction between the subject and the object is the foundation for what Husserl (1958) termed the natural attitude. From the perspective of the natural attitude, the world is posited as existing independent of the subject. It is the natural attitude that Husserl (1958) attempted to overcome within his doctrine of the lived world (*Lebenswelt*). Husserl (1958) contended that in order to understand the world, we must understand it as open to experience. For example, "the feeling of a pencil in my hand and the felt pencil are indistinguishable" (Levinas, 1995, p. 45). There is no absolute separation between the subject (my self/ hand) and the object (the pencil); they are intimately connected within lived experience

Understanding the world in terms of lived experience allowed Husserl (1958) to perform the phenomenological reduction. The phenomenological reduction brackets the world as it may or may not be beyond conscious experience. The bracketing subtracts the naive ontological and metaphysical assumptions of the natural attitude. The real world becomes the experienced world and Objects become objects of experience via the *epoch*. In order not to confuse the objects of lived experience with Objects, Husserl (1958) termed lived objects *noema* (the seen) and the experiencing subject *noesis* (the seeing). Perhaps we could draw a line of connectivity to the notion of a rhizome here: the *noema* and *noesis* are already in-between they are already in the middle because they are interdependent within multiple connections.

---

In a different line of flight stemming from perhaps the same rhizome, Deleuze and Guattari (1987) claimed, “the only way to get outside the dualisms is to be-between, to pass between, the intermezzo . . . the girl is like the block of becoming that remains contemporaneous to each opposable term” (p. 277). In this passage, Deleuze and Guattari (1987) relinquished the dichotomous thoughts that separate a girl from a woman, or a man, or an animal. There is no clear distinction between them; they are intimately connected in the becoming of an event. A girl does not wake up one morning and has become a woman, there is a continuous becoming of woman and there is also a becoming girl of woman. A quick comparative movement to Husserl (1958) lets us know that the root of Husserl’s idealism is revealed as the doctrine of meaning-sense bestowal. In other words, the object’s ontological value depends on the meaning we give it. Husserl (1958) explained: “Experience alone prescribes their meaning, and indeed, when we are dealing with things that are founded on fact it is actual experience in its definitely ordered empirical connexions which does the prescribing” (p.148).

Husserl’s doctrine of meaning-sense bestowal can be connected to Kant’s (1965) theory of spatial intuition. In Kant’s theory of space, intuition exists within our subjective constitution. It is our spatial intuition that organizes the manifold of sense data and thus turns the sense data into ordered and understandable objects. Perhaps going even further than Kant, Husserl claimed that we not only give objects their spatial arrangements but we also give them their meaning; “we constitute and manifest the objects through ‘interest,’ ‘feeling,’ ‘will,’ and ‘aesthetic judgment’” (Levinas, 1995, p. 45).

In unfolding Husserl’s ideas (1958), it is important to reveal the differences between Husserl’s idealism and Berkeley’s (1975) idealism; this is something that Husserl identified as well: “[I]f anyone objects, with reference to these discussions of ours, that they transform the whole world into subjective illusion and throw themselves in the arms of an idealism such as Berkeley’s, we can only make answer that he has not grasped the *meaning* of these discussions” (p. 168). When performing the phenomenological bracketing, Husserl (1958) did not deny the existence of things beyond this bracketing; however, he believed that beyond sense bestowal and meaning donation the object is unknowable. This is simply to say that it is unimaginable what a thing may or may not be like beyond our conscious experience of it.

Berkeley (1975), on the other hand, does not allow for the possibility of existence beyond perception. He contended that to be is to be perceived; an object must be perceived in order to exist (1975). Berkeley believed that God is the ultimate perceiver and this explains why objects exist when no one is there perceiving them. Husserl did not need this continuous perceiver to explain the existence of objects. For Husserl, to be is to be known and objects are constituted in terms of meaning only (1958). Objects may still exist outside of subjective constitution but they are meaningless and inconceivable to us. Thus, Husserl’s idealism is not as radical as Berkeley’s.

Deleuze and Guattari (1987) have a similar way of looking at the process of experience and the objects that exist outside of this experience. Deleuze and Guattari (as cited in Semetsky (2007),

---

Experience cannot be limited to what is immediately perceived: the Deleuzian line of flight or becoming is real even if 'we don't see it, because it's the least perceptible of things' (Deleuze). The Deleuzian object of experience is presented only in its tendency to exist, or rather subsist in a virtual, sub-representative state: it is *unthought*, yet capable of actualizing itself through multiple different /citations (p. 207).

Deleuze and Guattari (1987) spoke of an unknown anonymous matter that exists outside of the world of experience.

Returning to Husserl (1958), it should always be kept in mind that the fundamental purpose of Husserl's idealism is to reveal to the sciences that our foundations for acquiring knowledge are not found in an objective outside world but in the subjectivity that constitutes this world. Husserl (1958) wrote,

Absurdity first arises when one philosophizes and, in probing for ultimate information as to the meaning of world, fails to notice that the whole being of the world consists in a certain meaning which presupposes absolute consciousness as the field from which meaning is derived. (p. 169)

Husserl (1958) did not think we represent knowledge; we constitute it through experience and *meaning*. Husserl contended that "things" (*das Ding*) are not similar to our idea of them. Our ideas of objects (*noema*) are not a mirroring of these objects, but through acts of consciousness, the ego constitutes the object (*noema*). The object gives itself to us in the different viewpoints that we have of it; the object is revealed differently to us in the different ways we move around the object and examine it. In different "*abschattungen*," the object's being is both constituted and manifested by the ego. Levinas (1995) clarified this for us,

[t]o say that there is an analogy between the sensible qualities and the sensations is not to say that the various sensible qualities of objects are 'reflected' in my consciousness but they are constituted through my freely moving around and adopting new view points. (p. xiv).

The metaphysical notion of reflection that occurs within the dichotomy of the subject and object has implications for modernity's image of an arborescent book. Similar to how Husserl (1958) argued against the natural attitude and the idea of reflection, Deleuze and Guattari (1987) argued against this reflective technique that is common within the book. They claimed:

The book imitates the world, as art imitates nature: by procedures specific to it that accomplish what nature cannot or can longer do. The law of the book is the law of reflection, the one that becomes two. How could the law of the book reside in nature, when it is what presides over the very division between world and book, nature, and art. One becomes two: whenever we encounter this formula . . . 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 (p.5).

---

Deleuze and Guattari (1987) explained that within nature, there is no natural dichotomy; things are woven within the same ontological fabric and can be inseparable; this is what Husserl (1958) also recognized and it is what compelled him to perform the phenomenological reduction.

By bracketing the objects of natural science, Husserl (1958) revealed these objects as primarily constituted as *noema*. Through phenomenological bracketing, Husserl also revealed the correlate of the *noema*, the *noesis* (the seeing). Husserl (1958) deconstructed the independent subject and replaced it with the empirical ego. The empirical ego gives rise to the *noesis*. The *noema* and the *noesis* are immanent within consciousness; they do not transcend consciousness. The *noesis* is the act of consciousness arising from the empirical ego and the *noema* is the seen or meant object and it arises from the *hyle* (sense matter).

In Miller's (1986) essay, *Husserl and Sartre on the Self*, he nicely unpacks Husserl's notion of the empirical ego. According to Husserl (1958), the empirical ego is revealed by way of phenomenological bracketing; it is a structural aspect of experience. The empirical ego is the embodied "I" that takes itself to be a person in the world—it is both spatial and temporal. For example, when we experience a tree, we are never in doubt as to who is experiencing this tree; it is the embodied "I" that allows me to know that it is me experiencing this tree. The importance of the empirical ego lies in its ability to distinguish us from all else—it is how I know my pocket is my pocket and not your pocket. The empirical ego also explains continuity: I am the same person as yesterday; this "I" that worked on this essay yesterday is the same "I" that is working on it today; this "I" is the empirical ego (Miller, 1986, p. 534).

For Husserl (1958), the empirical ego is constituted by the transcendental ego. The transcendental ego is the constituting dimension; it is outside of time. The world, including the empirical "I," is the product of the transcendental ego. Husserl arrived at the notion of the transcendental ego through phenomenological bracketing. The transcendental ego is what remains after he performs the phenomenological bracketing. The empirical ego gives rise to the *noesis* and the *hyle* is a correlate of the *noema*. The *hyle* is the sense matter; it is represented in consciousness through sensation. For example, the feeling of roughness represents the *hyle* of roughness. Husserl believed, according to Levinas' (1977) interpretation, "[w]e learn, moreover, that those elements of which are deprived of intentionality constitute a special material or *hyletic* level which is the object of the phenomenological discipline, the *hyletic* discipline, which describes the structure of that level" (p. 38).

Here is a place in which to add, as an appendage, Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) notion of two planes: the plane of organization and the plane of immanence. The plane of organization is the side the 'body without organs' faces. It is the plane where chronological time, space, and subjects are formed and organized "[it is] a transcendent plan (e) that organizes and develops genre, themes, motifs and assigns and develops subjects (personages, characters, feelings)" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 267). The other plane is the plane of consistency:

---

here there are no longer any forms or developments of forms; nor are there subjects or the formation of subjects. There is no structure any more than there is genesis. There are only relations of movement and rest, speed and slowness between the unformed elements. (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 266)

The plane of immanence is not within time or space but in speeds of slowness and fastness. The plane of organization could be related (if we are in the habit of relating things) to Husserl's (1958) empirical ego. The empirical ego is the formation of a subject that exists in relation to a noumenal something. Husserl's transcendental 'I' is above all of temporal space and time, but his empirical 'I' operates on, what Deleuze and Guattari (1987) later call the plane of organization as a formed subject. For Husserl, the transcendental 'I' gives rise to the empirical 'I,' the self. The empirical self is not absolute it is immanent within consciousness. Absolute consciousness constitutes both the seeing and seen parts of consciousness. The seeing is the subjective side of experience and it arises from the empirical ego. The seen (*noema*) is the lived object and it is derived from the *hyle*, the sense matter. For Husserl, both the *noema* and the *noesis* are co-dependent on each other: the seen gives rise to the seeing and the seeing gives rise to the seen. The sense matter is the unthought, the unknown, and the unexperienced. Using Deleuze and Guattari as ventriloquists for Husserl, the *hyle* "can only be inferred, induced, concluded from that which it gives rise; it is an anonymous matter" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 267). For Husserl, it is the *hyle* that gives rise to the formed objects (or *noema*) and for Deleuze and Guattari it is the plane of immanence that gives rise to formed subjects. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) explained,

perhaps there are two planes, or two ways of conceptualizing the same plane. The plane that can be a hidden principle, which makes visible what is seen and audible what is heard, etc., which at every instant causes the given to be given in this or that state, at this or that moment. (p. 265)

The second plane, or the other way of looking at the same plane, is the plane of Nature. This plane of nature is the plane of immanence or consistency, of longitude and latitude: "Its numbers of dimensions continually increases as what happens happens, but even so it loses nothing of its planitude. It is thus a plane of proliferation, peopling, contagion" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 265). It is a proliferation of the unknown material level. This is not unlike Husserl's *hyle* perhaps.

Rhizomatic pedagogy can operate on these two planes; it incorporates a plane of organization and stratification but also in another dimension it allows for encounters with the unknown or the unthought or engagement with the cloudy *hyle*. Engagement with this elusive *hyle*, or this plane of immanence that is not along pre-established lines of thought, is fundamental to learning because it allows engagement with a material level. By material I do not mean atoms or burlap, I mean the unknown immanent plane of nature.

---

Engagement with this hyle or Real material is also prevalent with learning and teaching in Health Education. For example, the abstract studying of organs on paper does nothing to help the subject feel their own material body and the organs within it. The invention, implementation, and teaching of medical terminology can alienate and prohibit one from self- understanding of health and awareness. Illich (1976) writes, “Social iatrogenesis is at work when health care is turned into a standardized item; . . . when the language in which people could experience their bodies is turned into bureaucratic gobbledegook” (p. 49).

Engaging on this unknown and immanent plane of nature, or what I have termed, the Real allows for a different type of learning, one that is unpredictable, immanent, and grounded in experience with Real material. In contrast to the modern education approach to health. The Ingano Natives of Columbia learned about the medicinal role of plants. The quote below is an example of how the Ingano of Colombia learned from experiences with the plants of the Amazon; this learning was immanent and grounded in the Real material of the plants of the jungle.

The following is taken from a book called “One River” by Wade Davis; he’s following in the footsteps of his Harvard mentor Richard Schultes, the OG ethno botanist who traveled through the Amazon from 1930s to 1950s and who documented every plant in the jungle as seen through the eyes of the Indians. Here’s a passage from his time amongst the Ingano of Colombia’s Rio Caqueta. It starts with his discovery of a hallucinogenic plant called yagé, aka ayahwasca:

On the evening of February 28, 1942, Schultes made the following notes:

---

“Yagé is taken often by some, infrequently by others. It is a most violent purge and often acts as a vomitive. Extremely bitter. Some say the after effects are an exhilaration and feeling of ease and well-being; others that it is a day of discomfort and headache. The bark of yagé is scraped off and small pieces are heated in water. The water is drunk. People take it alone or in small groups in houses, often with a sick person who is to be cured. The curandero takes yagé to see the proper herb or herbs the sick man needs. Usually taken alone, but in Puerto Limón it is taken sometimes together with the bark of another vine—the *chagropanga*. It is said to be almost the same leaf, but a harder and stouter vine.”

Schultes was not sure what to make of this, but two themes intrigued him. First was the realization that the healer embraced yagé both as visionary medium and as teacher. The plant made the diagnosis. It was a living being, and the Ingano acknowledged its magical resonance as reflexively as he accepted the axioms of his own science. Second, at the same time there was evidence here of pure empirical experimentation of a specificity he had never before encountered . . . his Ingano informants insisted that by manipulating the ingredients of the preparations—in this case, by adding a plant known as *chagropanga*—it was possible to change the nature of the experience.

What astonished Schultes was the underlying intellectual question that the elaboration of these complex preparations posed. The Amazonian flora contains literally tens of thousands of species. How had the Indians learned to identify and combine in this sophisticated manner these morphologically dissimilar plants that possess such unique and complementary properties? The standard scientific explanation was trial and error—a reasonable term that may well account for certain innovations—but at another level, as Schultes came to realize on spending more time in the forest, it is a euphemism which disguises the fact that ethno botanists have very little idea how Indians originally made their discoveries..

The problem with trial and error is that the elaboration of the preparations often involves procedures that are either exceedingly complex or yield products of little or no obvious value. Yagé is an inedible, nondescript liana that seldom flowers. True, its bark is bitter, often a clue to medicinal properties, but it is no more so than a hundred other forest vines. An infusion of the bark causes vomiting and severe diarrhoea, conditions that would discourage further experimentation. Yet not only did the Indians persist but they became so deft at manipulating the various ingredients that individual shamans developed dozens of recipes, each yielding potions of various strengths and nuances to be used for specific ceremonial and ritual purposes...

Though trained at the finest botanical institution in America, after a month in the Amazon Schultes felt increasingly like a novice. The Indians knew so much more. He had gone to South America because he had wanted to find the gifts of the rain forest: leaves that heal fruits and seeds that supply the foods we eat, plants that could transport the individual to realms beyond his imaginings. Yet within a month he had learned that in unveiling the indigenous knowledge, his task was merely to identify

---

new sources of wealth but rather to understand a new vision of life itself, a profoundly different way of living in the forest.

Arborescent linear pedagogy operates on a plane of stratification and pure organization; this rigid style of pedagogy can interfere with our connections to the *hyletic* material level. The hyletic level or the plane of immanence is where learning, experimentation, and creativity are dehisced. Creativity occurs within involution; this space is not mimesis; it is where the knower does not imitate the disclosed knowledge but they unfold together. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) identify this within the diagram that is not a sign; “it does not function to represent, even something real, but rather constructs the real that is about to come, a new type of reality” (p. 142). Semetsky (2007) maintained, “thought is broader than knowledge representing true facts; it is a complex process of knowing” (p. 200).

In my own life, the example of learning to ski demonstrates this complex process of knowing that involves the unknown *hyletic* level or plane of nature. In teaching one to ski, instructors usually rely on a ‘do as I do’ style of skiing, in which the student copies the instructor as they ski down the hill. The student turns when the instructor turns and copies the body position of the instructor; this technique essentially ignores the natural and fun elements that are involved with skiing. Primarily skiing is about controlled falling; this combines an unthought, uncontrolled level of falling that is natural to coming down a mountain, but it is also important to simultaneously maintain control so one is not actually tumbling down the mountain. In order to ski one must intuitively come to an understanding of the natural ‘fall line’ to the mountain, where one can engage with an unknown level, where the mountain ‘teaches’ one to ski. At the same time that one must naturally fall down the mountain, we are not completely passive in this act. We have to actively engage and control the fall.

Husserl (1958) maintained an idealism, a subjective essence, which ignores the importance of the unknown *hyletic* level. I am guessing that Husserl would prefer a style of skiing in which his absolute consciousness told the mountain where he would turn. He also included the empirical ego within consciousness; this helps when learning through an instructive ‘do as I do’ technique but can interfere when allowing your body and unconscious to connect with a natural flow to the mountain. In emphasizing the ‘being’ of the mountain in learning to ski, I now turn to Sartre’s critiques of Husserl’s idealism. Sartre reinstates the transcendence of the object.

Sartre (1965) critiqued Husserl’s doctrine that ‘to be is to be known.’ Sartre maintained that reducing being to the knowledge we have of it leads to infinite regress—the known must be known by a knower and that knower must also be known by a knower ad infinitum; therefore, knowledge does not precede being. In exploring this critique, Sartre asked, “Is the phenomena of being the same as the being of phenomenon” (1965, p. 5). In other words, does the knowledge we have of an object equate the being of this object? And can we know the being of an object through its appearance? Sartre claimed that “the being of phenomenon, although coextensive with phenomenon, cannot be subject to the phenomenal condition” (p. 7) (i.e., to exist in so far as it reveals itself). I will clarify this, being does not depend on the knowledge we have of it. The being of appearance occurs simultaneously to the knowledge we have of it; consequently, being surpasses our knowledge.

---

This is an important critique of Husserl's (1958) phenomenology for our pedagogical inquiry. Ontology precedes epistemology or at least it occurs simultaneously. Epistemology does not precede ontology. In this way, knowledge occurs after experiencing the unknown being. The all-encompassing Husserlian consciousness is subordinate to the experiential connections between the *noema* and *noesis*. In the words of Deleuze (as cited in Semetsky, 2007), "multiplicities are 'neither unities nor totalities.' They are constituted by multiple sets of relations, and it is a relation per se that maintains an ontological priority" (p. 204).

The second critique is Sartre's belief that Husserl's reduction of consciousness to the knowledge we have of it, reaffirms the Cartesian cogito (Sartre, 1965). Sartre claimed that reaffirming Descartes' cogito also reintroduces the subject/object dichotomy. The Cartesian cogito is an intellectual intuition and as an intellectual intuition, consciousness becomes a truth—"I think therefore I exist." Turning consciousness into a truth makes consciousness an object for itself and this splits consciousness into an object and a subject; the subject intuits the object (the truth).

The main problem with the Cartesian cogito, as identified by Sartre (1965, 2001), is that the cogito remains split from consciousness. Descartes carried out the cogito with the intent to prove a truth (his existence), but the intent occurred after his existence was already established. The intent to perform the cogito was a reflection of an already existing pre-reflective consciousness. The Cartesian cogito is a manifestation of consciousness. Sartre argued that there is a pre-reflective consciousness, which is the condition for the Cartesian cogito and this "pre-reflective consciousness establishes the rights of the Cartesian cogito" (1965, p. 14). Sartre gave the example of counting to illuminate his ideas of a pre-reflective consciousness: When he counts the cigarettes in a case, the property appears to him that it is known but he does not know himself as counting. The property of a dozen cigarettes appears instantly, not just after reflection. For example, if someone were to ask him what he is doing, he would reply, "counting cigarettes." This reply aims not just at the instant moment of counting but also to the previous pre-reflective moments of counting. In Sartre's words, "[e]very positional consciousness is at the same time a non-positional consciousness of it self" (1965, p. 116). There is an immediate non-cognitive relation of the self to the self and this is the condition for cognition of the self to occur. Understanding the ontological priority of the pre-reflective consciousness is fundamental for understanding the ontology of experiential learning.

Experimentation and encounters with the *unthought* all precede thethetic cogito. The primacy of this *unthought* is a rhizomatic pedagogy in which learning is total 'becoming' not a pre-established knowable 'I am.' Perhaps the conclusion that we can draw from this is the importance of experimentation and engagement of the non-reflective type and not to follow a pre-determined, well-trodden, and disclosed path of knowledge because learning does not occur here, especially if learning is a 'becoming' and an engagement with the unknown.

The third critique Sartre has of Husserl's idealism is that reducing consciousness to the knowledge we have of it makes consciousness relative. The statement 'to be is to be known' contradicts Husserl's claim that consciousness is absolute. Consciousness cannot be absolute if it depends upon our knowledge of it. Sartre argued that we must abandon the primacy of knowledge if we are to maintain consciousness as absolute:

---

[b]ut precisely because the question concerns an absolute of existence and not of knowledge, it is not subject to that famous objection according to which a known absolute is no longer an absolute because it becomes relative to the knowledge we have of it. (p. 17)

Sartre (1965) avoided reducing consciousness to relativism because he maintained the coexistence of being and knowledge. He contended,

But it is precisely because consciousness is pure appearance, because it is total emptiness (since the entire world is outside it)—it is because of this identity of appearance and existence within it that it can be considered as the absolute. (p. 17)

The problems Sartre (1965) revealed within Husserl's idealism stem from one main source: Husserl did not remain faithful to his original doctrine of a pure translucent consciousness. Husserl's idealism not only led to infinite regress and reduced consciousness to relativism, but it also made a contradiction of passivity and activity occurring within consciousness. I now address this as the last critique of Husserl.

Sartre (1965) argued that passivity of the recipient demands equal passivity of the agent. In order to know one must be known and to be known demands that the known must be passive in order to receive the action of the knower. Husserl maintained the doctrine of consciousness as pure intentionality and the doctrine of the primacy of knowledge and, consequently, he encountered a detrimental contradiction: If consciousness is purely intentional then it is purely active but in order to know, consciousness must be known and in order to be known consciousness must be passive. Sartre believed this is why Husserl introduced the *hyle*; the *hyle* introduces passivity into the *noesis* and allows for consciousness to have in it both activity and passivity. But Sartre maintained that,

the *hyle* in fact could not be in consciousness, for it would disappear in translucency and could not offer that resisting basis of impressions which must be surpassed toward the object [on the other hand] . . . if the *hyle* derives its being from itself alone, we meet once again the insoluble problem of the connection of consciousness with existents independent of it. (p. 20)

The introduction of the *hyle* does not relieve Husserl from the contradiction of passivity and activity within consciousness. The introduction of *hyle* only serves to introduce two other problems: first, if the *hyle* is in consciousness it makes consciousness opaque and second, if the *hyle* is outside of consciousness then it brings Husserl back to the original problem of surmounting dualism. Husserl introduced the cloudy *hyle* to overcome the problem of how ideas of different objects come into the consciousness. Husserl did not clarify the origin of the *hyle*, in other words, is the *hyle* in consciousness or outside of it? If the *hyle* is in consciousness then this introduces something to consciousness that is not consciousness. If, however, the *hyle* is outside of consciousness, how does consciousness experience it?

The introduction of objects within consciousness led Husserl into an insoluble problem. Sartre (1965) evaded this paradox because he believed that consciousness is not opaque. Sartre (1965) maintained that consciousness is translucent and that there is a transphenomenality of being: Being does not exist only insofar as it appears, being transcends its appearance. Objects exist beyond our consciousness of them.

---

It is not my intention here to examine Sartre's transcendence of being, however, I would like to keep in mind as I explore Yogacara Buddhism that Sartre did not propose a doctrine of consciousness *without* objects but consciousness is always empty.

The unfolding of the subject and object is properly disclosed within old school Yogacara Buddhism. I explore two interpretations of Yogacara Buddhism. I contrast the philosophies of Nagao with Ueda. In doing so, I will also illuminate the congeniality of Husserl's idealism and the doctrines of Nagao and I will reveal similarities between the philosophies of Sartre and Ueda.

Nagao (1991) and Ueda (1967) relinquish the notion of a subject/object dichotomy; however, this is the parting junction for them. Nagao (1991) (like Husserl) rejects the dualistic attitude in favour of an idealistic doctrine. Ueda, on the other hand, maintained that Yogacara Buddhism is not an idealistic doctrine.

To understand Nagao's (1991) idealistic interpretation of Yogacara Buddhism, it is important to understand how he views evolving consciousness (*vijnanaparinama*). He believed *parinama* to mean "the evolution of the seeing and seen parts of the *vijnana*" (consciousness) (p.157). Nagao (1991) believed that evolving (*parinama*) occurs in consciousness (*vijnana*). He stated, "[e]volving means the evolution of cause to an effect, that is becoming different and evolving is simultaneous" (p.126). The evolving that occurs is the transforming of the seeing and the seen parts (Nagao, 1991). The transformation occurs within consciousness by the *karana* and *karya* (cause and effect). According to Nagao (1991), *Karana* and *Karya* occur simultaneously and are mutually dependent. The *karana* is active and the *karya* is passive (Nagao, 1991). They are mutually dependent and simultaneous because the activity (seeing) is realized simultaneously with its outcome (what is seen) but they are not the same thing. He claimed, "[t]he outcome (*karya*) is understood as different from activity (*karana*) itself" (p.126).

Nagao (1991) then introduced the Sanskrit terms *phala* and *hetu*; *hetu* is the cause and *phala* is the effect. *Hetu* and *phala* are not interchangeable. *Hetu* is the cognizer and *phala* is the cognizable. The cognizer cognizes the cognizable, but the cognizable does not cognize the cognizer; therefore, the relationship is unidirectional. Nagao's view of transformation, in terms of *hetu* and *phala*, introduces the subject/ object dichotomy within his philosophy. In order to surmount this dichotomy, Nagao placed *hetu* and *phala* within the *alayavijnana*. In other words, "[t]he mountains and rivers which are thought to really exist by ordinary man are none other than the seen part of *alayavijnana*" (p.158).

According to Nagao (1991), within the *alayavijnana*, *karana* is the seed of *hetu* and *karya* is the seed of *phala*. It can then be said that the *karana* produces the *karya* (the phenomenon) and the *karya* in turn 'perfumes' the *karana*; therefore, they have a mutually dependent relationship. The mutual evolving of the *karana* and the *karya* is the *vijnanaparinama*. The transformation of the *karana* and the *karya* is mutually dependent and simultaneous within the *alayavijnana*. Nagao contended that, "[p]roducing and impressing should constitute the real contents of the 'evolving of cognition'" (1991, p. 129). The evolving exists *within* consciousness but does not exhaust it entirely.

---

Nagao's (1991) philosophy of *vijnanaparinama* is similar to Husserl's idealism. Husserl (1958), as aforementioned, dissolves the subject/object dichotomy by introducing the empirical ego and the *hyle*. The empirical ego is the embodied "I" and it gives rise to the seeing (the *noesis*); this is similar to Nagao's (1991) idea of *karana* as the seed of *hetu* within the *alayavijnana*. Also, Husserl's (1958) idea of the *hyle*, which gives rise to the seen (the *noema*), is similar to Nagao's (1991) idea of the *karya*, as the seed of the *phala* in the *alayavijnana*.

Husserl and Nagao both maintained that the seer and the seen are immanent. For Husserl (1958), the seer and the seen reside inside of the transcendental ego and Nagao (1991) maintained that the *karana* and the *karya* reside inside of the *alayavijnana*; the evolution of consciousness exists inside of the *alayavijnana*. Nagao's (1991) idealistic interpretation, however, is different from the interpretation that Ueda (1967) holds.

Ueda (1967) argued that the *vijnana* is nothing but the *parinama*. The *parinama* exhausts the *vijnana* entirely. He contended, "[a]ccording to Sthiramati, *vijnanaparinama* means that the present *vijnana* is different from the previous *vijnana*" (p. 161). In other words, the evolving *is* consciousness. There is no separation; it exhausts it entirely. The transformation does not exist within consciousness because it *is* consciousness. Ueda does not agree with an all-encompassing *alayavijnana*. According to Ueda, the seeing and the seen are not *parts* of the *vijnana* but *are* the *vijnana*: "[v]ikalpa is not merely the 'seeing part' of *vijnana* but it is the same as *vijnana* itself" (p. 158).

Ueda (1967) contended that the idealists have not surpassed conceptualized thinking. The idealist's interpretation conceives things as existing *in* consciousness and consciousness is conceptualized—it is that which all things exist in. In order to surpass idealism, one must understand consciousness as translucent. Ueda tells us,

as long as he (the yogin) is in this state of mind [idealism] even though he thinks that all things in the world are none other than *vijnana*, he has not yet abode in the consciousness-only, because since he is grasping (that is conceptualizing) that all is none other than *vijnana*, he is setting up something before himself and has not yet abode in the realm where there is no conceptualized object. (p. 163)

Ueda's critique of the idealist interpretation of Yogacara Buddhism is similar to Sartre's (1965) critique of Husserl (1958). Ueda's (1967) claim that the idealists conceptualize consciousness is similar to Sartre's (1965) critique that Descartes and Husserl have turned consciousness into an object. The reflective consciousness that declares 'I think therefore I exist' has objectified itself. By turning consciousness into an object, Descartes and Husserl have introduced a dualism within consciousness; they do not understand consciousness as empty. Both Sartre and Ueda saw consciousness as translucent; consciousness is empty of all objects (including itself). Sartre (1965) claimed that there is nothing inside of consciousness. He believed that consciousness is empty: "[c]onsciousness. . . is pure 'appearance' in the sense that it exists only to the degree to which it appears . . . it is total emptiness (since the entire world is outside it)" (1965, p. 17).

---

At this point, I would like to make clear a difference between Ueda's (1967) critique of idealistic interpretation of Yogacara Buddhism and Sartre's critique of Husserl. The difference is fundamental because Sartre has to account for the cause of the existence of objects and Ueda does not. The objects within Sartre's theory are transcendental. Sartre (1965) maintained that consciousness is empty; consciousness is always consciousness *of an* outside object. In this sense, consciousness is dependent on outside objects; it exists insofar as it is consciousness *of*. Although consciousness is dependent on outside objects, objects exist independently of consciousness; they are transcendental.

Ueda (1967) disagreed with the idea of objects existing outside of consciousness. He claimed that the mind will see itself as it really is when it does not have an object to grasp onto (1967, p.164). When the mind sees itself without an object it truly sees itself: "[t]his does not mean the mind sees itself as its object by objectifying itself, for there is no object except the mind itself" (p. 164). When the mind is free of objects and no longer objectifies itself, it can see things for how they really are. Ueda holds an affinity with Sartre's (1965) theory that consciousness is empty, however he does not hold Sartre's view that objects exist outside of consciousness. Ueda did not maintain the view that objects exist in the world as independent and, therefore, he did not have to account for the existence of these independent objects.

For Ueda (1967), objects do not exist independently outside of consciousness nor do they exist within consciousness. The seeing and the seen parts *are* consciousness entirely. Ueda did not believe that there is an ultimate consciousness that holds the seeing and the seen parts, nor does he believe there is a translucent consciousness with absolute objects existing outside of it. For Ueda, the seeing gives rise to the seen and the seen gives rise to the seeing. The *parinamavijnana* does not exist inside of consciousness; it *is* consciousness.

This is an important distinction here for pedagogy, because we have not slipped back into solipsism or idealism in which the subject ignores the rawness of nature. The subject is not transcendental.

On the other hand, understanding consciousness as empty or the relational ontology of the subject does not mean the object is transcendental or pure objectivity. Understanding consciousness as relational and the object as independent can lead to critiques, in which there is a misconception of discovering pure objectivity. There is a transcendence of the object, in Sartre's view, that demands a passive subject, which ignores how active the subject actually is in constituting that object; this view, when related to pedagogy, can be dangerous. It demands that the subject be an empty vessel to be filled by objective truth or knowledge. In this view, knowledge is not relational but the subject is.

Freire (2009) warned against the danger of ignoring the objectivity of reality. Politically speaking, pure subjectivity is akin to blaming the victim or espousing an 'it is all in your head' type of mentality. If there is no objective reality to speak out against then the voices that are minoritized or marginalized are lost in pure subjectivism. One cannot claim to be marginalized if that hegemony does not objectively exist. However, Freire unlike Sartre also emphasized the importance of subjective mobility. He wrote,

---

Since it is a concrete situation that the oppressor-oppressed contradiction is established, the resolution of this contradiction must be objectively verifiable . . . To present this radical demand for the objective transformation of reality, to combat subjectivist immobility which would divert the recognition of oppression into patient waiting for oppression to disappear by itself, is not to dismiss the role of subjectivity. Neither can one exist without the other, nor can they be dichotomized. (Freire, 2009, p. 50)

For Freire the student/subject is not a passive consciousness waiting to be filled by the transcendental object of knowledge. There is interdependence and interconnection of the two within experience, and this is the process of learning. The place of pedagogy is to allow for the encounter or the experience with the unknown *hyletic* level; this prevents pure subjectivity, in which the student engages in a solipsistic tangent. On the other hand, pedagogy should not propose pure receptivity, in which the subjectivities of the student are ignored and silenced.

Davis, a curriculum theorist at the University of Calgary, spoke of the interdependent relation of simultaneous unfolding of knowledges and knowers; he claimed that “knowers and knowledges can be considered separately, even if they cannot be considered separate. One cannot exist without the other; they are enfolded in and unfold from one another” (2008, p. 53). He quoted Dewey (1902/1956) in dealing with the experiencer/experienced simultaneity within education:

Abandon the notion of subject-matter as something fixed and ready-made in itself, outside the child’s experience; . . . see [the child’s experience] as something fluent, embryonic, vital; and we realize that the child and the curriculum are simply two limits which define a single process. (Dewey, as cited in Davis, 2008, p.53)

Although Davis, in his essay *Complexity and Education Vital simultaneities*, made these claims, he did not explain how this ontology works, much like Heidegger’s (1962) observation of previous philosophers in which the question of being is already assumed but never uncovered. Further, I believe Davis (2008) maintained a primacy of epistemology, which may run him into the same contradictions that Husserl encountered. I believe I have fleshed out and uncovered this assumed ontology with Husserl and Sartre. I further explored the ontology of rhizomatic pedagogy that some experience-based educational theorists assume to exist but do not explain. In doing so, I moved beyond Eurocentric thought and took a different flight into the orient. I believe old school Buddhist thought to have properly identified the basis for experiential pedagogy in their description of relational ontology.

In this way, my project here differs from other educational theorists on Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) notion of rhizomatic experience because there is an ontological level that has been assumed but not explored in detail. When Semetsky (2003, 2007), Allan (2004), Gough (2004, 2006, 2007), and Davis (2008) speak of rhizomatic learning and experiencing, there is never an uncovering of the ontology of experience. Is it experience on behalf of the subject or object? Does it include both? How are they simultaneous but not identical? How are they the same but different? It is a difficult problem and I believe that old school Yogacara Buddhism has fleshed out this idea of experiential ontology most fully.

The ideas explored in the footnote below could also be expressed in aphorisms. It is a different style of writing philosophy that allows for more activity on the part of the reader. There is less reading and interpreting and perhaps more thinking. Aphorisms free up time and provide more space for the reader. There is less emphasis on the structure and validity of arguments and more space for thought and interpretation.

Unlike the dialogue that remained on a symbolic argumentative level between two subjects or the personal narrative that consisted of only one voice, I now attempt away of writing that opens space for the Realness of material to seep through. On the introductory plane I use Taoist quotes that embody emptiness and allow for the *Way*, while in the footnote below I examine Miller's (2004) research on the ability of aphorisms for exploring philosophical thought.<sup>17</sup> The aphorisms to follow

---

<sup>17</sup> In his essay, "Aphorisms as an Instrument of Political Action", Miller (2004) explored the aptitude of aphorisms for expressing philosophical thought and truth. He wrote: "Aphorisms bring beginning and ending together in one sentence. Its tempo is such that it hardly has time for characters or plot." (p.72). Their brevity lends to an honesty that Nietzsche (1984) identified: "One word too many gets away from even the most honest writer when he wants to round off a phrase." (Aphorism 191). The extra words required for proper sentence structure and syntax, "force even the most honest writer to add that fatal extra word just to make the sentence a sentence, to round it off" (Miller, 2004, p.73).

Because aphorisms are non-linear, they allow the reader more space for interpretation. The text is not forced into a rational argument, and the truth of the text is not decided upon in advance, based on an argumentative schema. The truth of the text is more situational and allows space for interpretations; it becomes more about Truth as it relates to the reader and less about the validity of well-structured argument. The text is not strangled in the author's argument but it floats and the empty space around the text is also allowed to speak.

For the writer, the aphorisms can free the many fluctuating states of her consciousness and in this way truth is not fixed and neither is the subject, because "We and our consciousness are never the same from one moment to the next and we have to take advantage of this continuous variation of plasticity to produce plateaus of intensity in whatever way we can" (Faustus, 2005, p.34). Aphorisms are a way to escape a certain discourse or hegemony that can be reinforced in linear arguments.

intertwine with the previous footnote; they are another way of unfolding the arguments I presented on Husserl and Sartre.

When I am going to make the bellstand, I take care never to squander any energy on it. I make sure to fast to still the heart. After fasting three days, I do not care to keep in mind congratulations and reward, honors and salary. After fasting five days, I do not care to keep in mind your blame praise or, my skill or clumsiness. After fasting seven days, I am so intent that I forget I have a body and four limbs . . . only then do I go into the mountain forests and observe the nature of the wood as Heaven makes it grow. The aptitude of body attains its peaks; and only then do I have a complete vision of the bell stand, only then do I put my hand to it. (Chuang-Tzu, 2001, p.135.)

I think Sartre's (1965) view that consciousness is empty and always conscious *of* is not unlike the Taoist philosophy that in order to know the way of the *Tao* one must be empty of a material and psychological 'I' or the ego, in order to understand the nature of what one is about to create. The process of perfect Taoist art extends to learning. For example, the Taoist master of swimming was asked by Confucius for 'philosophical' instruction. The story, as described by Moeller (2004), goes like this:

---

In fact, aphorisms embrace paradoxical activity. Miller explains, "A good aphorism is both stone-like and edible, both permanent and changing, in a paradoxical combining of opposites . . . the aphorism is the great paradox of literature, the intransitory amid the changing. . . It is the place of assertions that are against ordinary doxa or received wisdom" (Miller p.74). An aphorism allows for the closed and open nature of Truth. Truth is both closed in on itself and at the same time intelligible to its surrounding world. (see footnote 7) "The paradox of the aphorism. . . is that it is closed in on itself, like that rock which would break any tooth, even the tooth of time and at the same time open itself to the outside, to the larger whole of which it is part" (Miller, p.76). Writing in aphorisms can emancipate the writer from the responsibility of a luminescent truth that is clear and intelligible. It is no longer on the writer's shoulders to reveal Truth in the style of rational persuasion.

Confucius, while travelling around with his disciples, visits a famous and dangerous waterfall. At these falls the water dropped two hundred feet, streaming foam for thirty miles; it was a place where fish and turtles and crocodiles could not swim. The waters were too treacherous even for “natural” swimmers! Confucius, however, spots somebody who jumps down into the floods. He thinks that he saw someone committing suicide and—out of a deep Confucian feeling of sympathy and care—sends out his disciples to help the man or at least recover his body. Surprisingly, the man soon comes out of the water, strolls along the banks and, being not at all in a depressed mood, and sings a tune. Confucius is quite impressed with this sight and rushes to meet the extraordinary athlete to inquire about his most unusual method and skills. Confucius wants to know if the swimmer has a particular “Way” (*Dao*) of swimming. The strange swimmer at first denies having such a particular Way, but proceeds to give the following somewhat cryptic—at least for the non-Daoist Confucius—explanation of his art:

No I have no Way. I began with a grounding, grew up [in accordance] with the quality [of things] and completed [my] destiny. I enter the vortex with the inflow and leave with the outflow, follow the Way of water without acting on my own. This how I bring it on the Way. (Zhuangzi, in Moeller, 2004, p.110)

The swimmer, in this example does not act on his own. In this way, there is an emptiness or passivity within the swimmer, in which he receives the *Tao*, or as I claim, encounters the unknown, unconscious *hyletic* level. Sartre (1965), similar to this Taoist view, critiqued Husserl's allowance of the ego into conscious. He claimed that consciousness has to be empty in order to receive objects of the outside world.

At this point it seems I am trying to whittled writing down to nothing so there is more emptiness for the Real to reveal itself (or as these aphorisms write, allow the way of the Tao). Aphorisms are an attempt at writing and not writing because there is empty space surrounding the text where interpretation usually lies. Sometimes I think whole philosophical texts could have been summed up by using aphorisms. The space where I try to open text and pedagogy to the space of the Real is an unspeakable space, but in having spoken that, I have lost it. The moment I codify it through language is the moment it becomes other than it is.

I am unsure if I have fully captured what I wanted to with these aphorisms. I am unsatisfied because aphorisms lack a certain contextualization. Aphorisms are too concrete and solidified. They operate as if they existed only in an empty space, not embedded in the same ontological fabric as the writer, reader, text, and world. They act as "something hard and self-enclosed that seems to have fallen from the sky, from the silence of infinite spaces, into our human atmosphere" (Miller, 2004, p.73). The author's position in aphorisms is ignored and, as Miller claimed, it seems that these quotes have fallen from the sky, out of god's mouth and the reader is left thinking that these are hard self-enclosed truths and not out from the context of the writer's world. Aphorisms can give a sense of untouchable, mystical truths.

The abruptness of the aphorism pushes me out of the world of the written work because the lack of characters and plot inhibits the writing from taking on its own voice; it does not speak for itself. A fictional story, however, can capture this intrinsic flow within plot and characters. The characters within a written story can speak for themselves. This event happens to playwrights, as they claim once they have developed a proper character, the character in turn speaks for itself. It is no longer the writer writing the words of the character but the character has taken on a life in which it dictates its own words to the writer.

Sometimes this becoming, where the writing takes on a life of its own happens within fictional writing. The following footnote supports the idea of fictional writing as a way of philosophical work. In some sense, my introductory plane and the footnotes are now merging intertwining and giving rise to one another as if they

were at work on the same plane. There is perhaps a becoming of the two planes.<sup>18</sup>

The footnotes are the reasoned arguments for the points made in the introductory plane, so in some sense these planes are becoming indistinguishable.

---

<sup>18</sup> How Gough (2007) described rhizomatic writing lends itself to the lively character of Truth, when he propounds the importance of science fiction writing. He performs a narrative experiment “that takes seriously Deleuze’s argument that a work of philosophy should be, in part, a kind of science fiction, and also takes inspiration from Le Guin’s Science fictional stories of ‘changing planes’ to generate productive and disruptive transnational agendas in curriculum inquiry” (p.279). The science fiction stories of Le Guin (2004) , Gough wrote, allow for intellectual break through, through defamiliarization, or making the familiar strange. It allows the imagination to move beyond our present everydayness into other alternate forms of existence, and disrupts what we normally see as common, familiar, or expected.

He argued that science fiction provides fabulations in which he can emancipate himself from his current planes of immanence and move to another. This is also what he terms “defamiliarization (often rendered as to make the familiar strange,) assumes that the tactic of surprise may serve to diminish distortions and help us to recognize our own preconceptions” (Gough, 2007, p. 287).

Gough (2007) used a science fiction story written by Le Guin to demonstrate how experimentation in thought leads to intellectual breakthrough and allows altering planes of immanence:

Le Guin’s particular gift as a storyteller is her capacity to invent plausible and detailed alternative societies, and in *Changing Planes* she creates a succession of strange places, peoples, and customs that disrupt assumptions about what is standard, settled, and normal. For example the inhabitants of Frin share their dreams. The people of Asenu become almost entirely silent when they reach adulthood, which leads obsessive scholars from other planes to generate Talmudic exegeses of the rare words spoken by the Asenu they identify as mute ‘sages’. On Islac excessive and imprudent genetic engineering has generated a vast range of beings. Some of whom are tragic traversities of naïve wish-fulfillment, such as chess-playing cats and talking dogs –‘there are talking dogs all over the place, unbelievably boring they are, on and on and on about sex and shit and smells, and smells and shit and sex, and do you love me, do you love me, do you love me’ (p.13)—but some whom literally flower unexpectedly, like the woman who is four per cent maize (Gough, 2007, p. 290).

I understand the life of writing to have an underlying connection to Truth. There is an amongness with the writer, the writing, and the written, an indistinguishable unfolding of them and Truth in this way is revealed. Truth is not pure intention on part of the writer but also a reciprocal constitution on behalf of the unknown. The writer loses the structure of an imposed linear piece of work and allows a becoming to take place.

Becoming is also found within fictional writing where the fictional character starts to become its own character. The writer is no longer writing as separate from the written piece but there is an indistinguishable becoming. Hesse (1971) embodied this becoming with his fictional character for Siddhartha. In fact, he explored this notion of becoming through the character of Siddhartha:

---

Gough (2007) wrote that Le Guin's (2004) science fiction stories offer a rhizosemiotic connection to Deleuze and Guattari's figuration of the plane of immanence. Gough compared Le Guinn's "Changing Planes" to Deleuze and Guattari plane of immanence to highlight the background world that give rise and meaning to our concepts. In order to change planes of existence, one, through the use of science fiction stories, can travel to another discourse of thought or plane. This disrupts the underlying assumptions of what is everyday, standard, and normal. Deleuze's assertion that "at the frontiers of our knowledge, at the border which separates our knowledge from our ignorance and transforms the one into the other" (1994, p. xxi) is what Le Guin achieved when she creates alternate forms of existence for the reader to experience (Gough 2007).

Gough (2007) wrote that these modes of science fiction writing are rhizomatic, as they use rhizosemiotic play to move through different boundaries and discourses and create defamiliarization "that is potentially a tool for intellectual breakthrough" (Gough, p. 287). And if "Western philosophy has been aligned too closely with dominant interests in promoting identity and sameness and marginalizing difference" (p.287), then perhaps a new style of writing will allow one to travel beyond a certain plane of historical philosophy. Gough (2007) wrote:

Deleuze and Guattari show us how to perform philosophy in ways that can produce similar effects to Le Guin's storytelling arts, what is, to create a perspective through which the worlds takes on a new significance: '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) (p.285)

Gough (2007) believed that the changing of planes, which give rise to our concepts, is fundamental for philosophy because it allows one to move out a certain discourse of thought and to imagine and create new possibilities by making the familiar unfamiliar.

Instructed by the eldest of the Samanas, Siddhartha practiced self-denial and meditation to the Samana rules. A heron flew over the bamboo wood and Siddhartha took the heron into his soul, flew over forest and mountains, became heron, ate fishes, suffered heron hunger, used heron language died a heron`s death. A dead jackal lay on the sandy shore and Siddhartha`s soul slipped into its corpse; he became a dead jackal, lay on the shore, swelled, stank, decayed, was dismembered by hyenas, was picked at by vultures, became a skeleton, became dust, mingled with the atmosphere. And Siddhartha`s soul returned, died, decayed turned into dust, experienced the troubled course of the life cycle. He waited with new thirst like a hunter at a chasm where the life cycles ends, where there is an end to causes, where painless eternity begins. He killed the senses, he killed his memory, he slipped out of his Self in a thousand different forms. He was animal, carcass, stone, wood, water and each time he reawakened. The sun or moon shone, he was again Self, swung into the life cycle felt thirst, conquered thirst and felt new thirst.` (p. 15)

However, there is always a danger within the notion of becoming that we lose distinctions between things. There is a difference between self and other or subject and object without them being independently existing. In both the footnotes below, I explore the reasons why merging philosophy with fictional writing may lose what is Real to philosophical writing.<sup>19</sup>

---

<sup>19</sup> Gough`s insight into the potentialities of fabulations may do a disservice to the philosophical mode of thought; it erases the boundaries between what is True and false, and maintains that Truth can be found through fiction. Fiction does not allow access to Truth; it confounds it.

Fictional writing loses sight of the Real. There is a Realness to Truth that exists beneath the symbolic world. The Realness exists beyond the subjectivities that arise in the symbolic world.

How then do we write philosophy authentically and allow for eruptions of the Real? The question should also be asked of pedagogy: how do we ensure meaningfulness and authenticity within learning.

Writing philosophy and pedagogy maintain a deeper sense of the individual; one that is connected to the unknown where instincts and intuitions arise in connection with the Real and that is also formed in the symbolic world. Pedagogy and writing should

---

For example, in the Introduction to Philosophy class that I was a teaching assistant for during my master's, students were asked to read Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-four*. As an activity in one of our seminars, I asked the students if they found any parallels to Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-four* to the present day. I thought the student's, through Orwell's hyperbolic narrative, may come to understand social injustice, the discourse of newspeak, mind control, and pervasive government surveillance. By reading the everyday life of the protagonist, Winston Smith, we step outside of our own everydayness and come to recognize social injustices, the discourse of media, hegemonies, and our own perpetual war. However, no one in the class came forth with any parallels. They understood *Nineteen Eighty-four* as fiction, with no resemblance to truth. Now I realize that perhaps these students were right. Orwell has written fiction and not truth. Truth resides in Real and (not fabricated) authentic events. Truth is more philosophically profound than science fiction stories allow because it exists in Real events.

Philosophy written through science fiction stories loses its authenticity. We no longer attempt Truth but mix Truth and fiction so they are indistinguishable. There are no clear boundaries between what is Real and what is fiction and, in this way, we ignore the real material world and lose sight of learning that comes from Real events.

The loss of the distinction between the real and false, for me, creates despair. We have no sense of the Real. I think this bares similarities to Baudrillard's simulacra. The loss of the Real means that we have lost clarities between real and false. Disney land becomes more real than the Real. There is nothing beyond language or a phenomenal schema. The map precedes the territory. Nietzsche (1974) described this feeling with the following musing,

What were we doing when we unchained this earth from its sun? Whither is it moving now? Whither are we moving? Away from all suns? Are we not plunging continuously? Backward, sideward, forward, in all directions? Is there still any up or down? Are we not straying as through an infinite nothing? Do we not feel the breath of empty space? Has it not become colder? (p. 125).

allow for paradoxes because these are the indications that we have jugged up against the Real, at the edge of language. Writing has an intelligible grasp on Truth, while letting it slip between its words; it maintains cohesiveness and a sense of a narrative and at the same time eviscerates this narrative.

Philosophical writing constitutes Truth and at the same time moves around it, not allowing it to be completely visible. Writing this way plays a similar role to Heidegger's artwork; it allows an event to happen between the reader, the writer, and the written. An event is a becoming; this is how one accesses the Real and unfolds authenticity and Truth in writing. It is no longer the writer writing the words but the words write the writer and the reader and an uncanny event unfolds.

In one last attempt at revealing Truth and the Real, I will try something different, a Paradoxical intervention. I go with the resistance of Truth and the Real and hopefully this allows the Real to reveal itself. If I resist the resistance of Truth by explaining what it is not, it may provide a glimpse into what it is. Maybe by looking at what Truth is not, it will come to be.

This technique is not unlike the one I sometimes used as child when trying to capture my horse. If I went out into the field with bridal and rope in hand, heading straight toward her, she would take off kicking and running into the woods. But if I found her in the field and walked past her, with bridal and rope hidden, and then sat on a stump and read a book, she would come up to me because she was curious and I could capture her. Of course this technique didn't always work. Sometimes she didn't care and would let me pretend to ignore her as long as I liked.

Perhaps when we are asked to write philosophy papers, in which "clear writing reflects clear thinking; and that, after all, is what you are really trying to show" (Horban 1993) clear thinking and writing stem not from Truth but from a truth

that exists within in a discourse capable of clarity and intelligibility. But the Real exists outside of discourse and refuses to be bridled.

What is not within our current discourse is less likely to lend itself to clarity; this is the learner's paradox: we cannot know what we do not already know. Clarity comes from what we already know and if we don't understand it perhaps it is because it has never been disclosed to us within the discourse that holds sway.

Writing philosophy arguments is a discourse. This discourse has a certain notion of Truth. I believe the question is not *if* writing and education constitute Truth, in part, but *how* should writing and pedagogy discover and create Truth so that they allow for authenticity.

From here, the introductory plane takes one last turn, a last attempt at opening a space for Realness and authenticity, in the form of a silent film. This film is a visual exploration of the footnote below and the role of the virtual world within learning and life.

These planes are moving away from the unity or a congregation that they shared within text. They embody a rhizomatic movement that becomes other than it was. The plane below is a philosophical argument that calls attention to the potential dangers of universities that hold classes in Second Life or to teachers who use the

virtual world to educate.<sup>20</sup> (Please go to vimeo.com: Username: chloesimone2005 @ yahoo.ca Password: simulacra) to watch the film. While on the introductory plane I

---

<sup>20</sup> A recent episode of CBC broadcasted a topic concerning our “delivery based” model of pedagogy and learning; it hosted a series of speakers who claimed that our education system has not changed since the industrial revolution (Jan 24, 2012). One of the guest speakers, John Seely Brown, believes that new models of pedagogy, enabled by the digital revolution, will change how content is developed-- less delivery based learning and more collaborative learning. According to Brown, the increase use of technology in the classroom— iPods, iPads, iPhones, video gaming, Internetting, virtual living, and classes in Second Life<sup>20</sup> etc.—cultivate student engagement and amplify curiosity in the classroom. In short, John Seely Brown argued that “the digital age unleashes more passion than ever” (2012). I think this raises some important questions about the digital world and education.

Initially, when listening to this program, I was concerned that increased participation in the digital world encourages students to spend more time on computers and on phones, and less time outside or interacting in real time with their peers. The less obvious but more fundamental problem is more complex and I will attempt to map it out in this paper; it is the misguided view that desires are unleashed through the digital world.

According to Brown (2012), allowing the use of digital media in the classroom “can hook” students into learning. In Brown’s view, teachers should encourage student’s passion for videogaming and Internetting and then incorporate this passion for the digital world into pedagogy and learning. The assumption made in this statement is that students independently desire engagement in the digital world. I think the reverse of this claim. The digital world doesn’t unleash desire, it constitutes it. In this footnote, I argue that the digital world in general, and Second Life in particular, are not virtual territories to express desires but desires are constituted by corporate researchers in this digital space and this has immense implications within education and the real world.

Holding classes in the virtual world of Second Life, or the increased use of iPods, Facebook, video gaming, and YouTube in classrooms, are examples of how education will be dictated by the discourse of the virtual world and thereby avoid the evading and creative force of the real. The digital world and Second life are examples of a semiotic/linguistic paradigm whereby we witness the material world taking a backseat to the world of signs.

In a similar vein, Paul Messinger at the University of Alberta has a five-year sponsor from SSHRC for conducting research in Second life. His research consists mainly of helping large corporations “determine the best way to communicate, advertise and market products and services in these virtual worlds” (SSHRC, 2009).

The question I asked when reading this article is why is SSHRC sponsoring research in Second Life? The reason given in the newsletter is “to help Canadian businesses to a bigger piece of the e-commerce pie” (May, 2009). Upon further reflection I realized that we are dealing with a much deeper problem than the issue of education time and research being used to help large corporations advertise in the digital world and this article portrayed a standpoint opposite to what was actually happening.

---

What SSHRC is really funding is not the mapping of consumer behaviour but the mastery of a political space. As told by Baudrillard, "Since Machiavelli politicians have perhaps always known that the mastery of a simulated space is the source of power that the political is not a real activity or space but a simulation model, whose manifestations are simply achieved effects"(2001, p.161). The digital world is not a neutral space to be used by pedagogy, but it is already a source of political and corporate power. Desires are not unleashed but are predetermined and fabricated here, thereby interfering with a student's Real source of creativity.

Baudrillard believed that the mastery of a simulated space is a political source of power. I think this is so for two reasons: first, because the virtual operates in the semiotic level -- where language resides-- and second, because the digital world is a much easier space to control than the old forms of power that dealt on the material level.

### **Foucault's Biopower and The Virtual World**

Second Life and the digital world are a political source of power. In the following section, I unfold how the virtual world operates on a new paradigm of power that is not on a material or manifest level but is in the ubiquitous arena of the potential. Hardt and Negri explained,

In the passage from disciplinary society to society of control a new paradigm of power is realized which is defined by the technologies that recognize society as the realm of biopower. . . . When power becomes entirely biopolitical, the whole social body is comprised by power's machine and developed in its virtualities. (2001, p. 24)

Hardt and Negri (2001) argued that disciplinary society passed into a new form of control—what Foucault termed biopower—in which "power is now exercised through machines that directly organize the brains (in communication systems, information networks, etc.) and bodies toward a state of autonomous alienation from the sense of life and desire for creativity"( p.23). In this space, power is not only exercised through the use of apparatuses and its disciplines--the self-regulation of whether one is crazy, delinquent, or sick and thereby controlling behaviours based on the extended discipline of the particular apparatus, the asylum, the hospital, the prison (disciplinary power) -- but biopower within society of control is exercised at a much more immanent level, that of the virtual.

The notion of biopower that Foucault (1978) introduced is radically different from the power developed through the monarchy. Monarchical power (similar to Hobbes's absolute sovereign) was in a binary relation to society and limited freedom through fear and sanctions. Monarchical power viewed the state of nature as 'nasty brutish and short' and "faced with a myriad of clashing forces, these great forms of power functioned as a principle of right that transcended all the heterogeneous claims, manifesting the triple distinction of forming a unitary regime, of identifying its will with the law, and of acting through mechanisms of interdiction and sanction" (Foucault, 1978, p. 87).

The monarchical power was in a static relation to society. It operated on fear; fear of society in its state of nature, without some sort of social contract and fear of the punishment imposed on from the absolute sovereign. But Foucault argued, in the 1970's, that power was no longer in the form of the absolute sovereign. Power was penetrated by new mechanisms other than monarchical:

---

These power mechanisms took charge of men's existence, men as living bodies . . . the new methods of power operations are ensured not by right but by technique, not by law but by normalization, not by punishment but by control, methods that are employed on all levels and in forms that go beyond the state and its apparatus. (Foucault, 1978, p.89)

Power is no longer in a static or binary relations with its subjects but it is multiple, varied, and immanent and its form of control is not reactionary or repressive. Power is more ubiquitous when it identifies itself, not with the law or the suppressor, but as normalization. Power is no longer in the form of a face but is now understood as force relations. Foucault claimed, "We must at the same time conceive of sex without the law, and power without the king" (1978, p.91).

Power understood in force relations is what Foucault (1978) termed biopower. Biopower is complete immanence and regulates life from within. He claimed, "Power must be understood in the first instance as the multiplicity of force relations immanent in the sphere in which they operate and which constitute their own organization" (1978, p.92). Power is no longer the ultimate suppressor and consequently rebellion and revolution do not overthrow power, but power is completely immanent within the rebellion. Where there is power, there is resistance, and this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power.

The existence of power relations depends on a multiplicity of points of resistance: these play the role of the adversary, target support of handle in power relations. These points of resistance are present everywhere in the power network. Hence there is no single locus of great refusal, no soul of revolt, or pure law of the revolutionaries (Foucault, 1978, p.96).

Biopower, as a means of control, is more effective than old monarchical regimes because individuals embrace and embody biopower. For Foucault (1978) the immanence of biopower is most prominently deployed through sexuality. Through the technologies of sex, power is able to multiply and reach the bedrooms of individuals. Foucault argued (1978) the deployment of power through sexuality began with discourse. Through the deployment of sexuality, power is able to break from its old form of a static, dichotomic relation to individuals and become immanent and life producing. Power is no longer under the guise of one ruler but it branches out everywhere:

Never have there existed more centers of power; never more attention manifested and verbalized never more circular contacts and linkages; never more sites where the intensity of pleasures and the persistency of power catch hold, only to spread elsewhere. (Foucault, 1978, p.49)

Biopower is not a law or a repression of freedom but through the discourse of sex, it runs through our will to know. Through the discourse of psychoanalysis, the hysterization of women, and population control, sexuality was not repressed but was created and used as a nucleus for power over society. The bourgeoisie believed truth was hidden in sex and sex must be thoroughly discoursed and uncovered in order to understand its truth.

Foucault (1978) claimed,

---

The society that emerged in the nineteenth century—capitalism—did not confront sex with a fundamental refusal of recognition. On the contrary, it put into operation an entire machinery for producing true discourses concerning it. Not only did it speak of sex and compel everyone to do so; it also set out to formulate the uniform truth of sex. (p. 143)

The new form of power in terms of its discourse of sex is biopower because it does not act as a repressor but an investigator. Biopower does not use fear of punishment or death over individuals but uses the enhancement of life and sex as a form of control over society. The traditional monarchical and atomic regime of suppressing the individual with threat of death transformed into using power *through* the individual, as a cultivation of life. Through the deployment of sexuality, the techniques for subjugating bodies under control explode into multiple veins of society. These veins of power run through society cloaked as population control and as providing knowledge to physical and mental health.

The use of power as the cultivation and enhancement of life allows it into the reproducing forces of life. Society, spurred by its will to know and by its desire to enhance life, grabbed the discourses of sexuality; power, cloaked as a dark secret and as the cultivator of a good life, attracted society and adjusted it easily to it. After the eighteenth century, death in the form of famine and epidemics ceased to threaten life so directly. Power took the form of life enhancement in terms of different fields of knowledge-- agriculture techniques, medicine-- and it was this “taking charge of life, more than the threat of death, that gave power its access even to the body.” (Foucault, 1978, p.143).

### **How is Second Life a Branch of Biopower?**

The old forms of disciplinary power-- schools, asylums—are in a static or perhaps binary relation to its subjects. They affect the subjects on the material or manifested level, not the virtual, or the semiotic level. Second life is the second order of power because it is not in the manifest or material space but is immanent; it is in the space where desire and creativity are conceived but not yet produced. Second Life is the realization of the potential, the possible, or the not yet; it does not exist in a static or binary relation with those that use it but individuals believe they choose or desire it. People believe they desire engagement in the digital world.

Before our creativity, needs, and desires are manifested, they are already constituted through the virtual world of Second Life. In the virtual space of Second Life an Avatar, based on predetermined options, can choose the hair, the skin, the body type they want, as well as choosing clubs, meeting people, buying land and of course taking universities classes. One of allures of Second Life is that it allows someone to have a life unaffected by the uncontrollability of the Real. My main concern with Second Life is that it controls the jutting through of the real or material world. We cannot have real or authentic creativity unless it comes from a place that is not already prefabricated or constituted by a world of virtual signs. Creativity and production do not happen in this space only reproductions of the same, based on one of many linear, predictable passages ways already formed by the digital world. When we use the digital world for passion based learning,—the passion for the Internet is the base for learning and pedagogy— we have to ask if it is real passion or passion already constituted by a digital form of power.

---

The average North American child can recognize over 1000 corporate logos and less than 10 plant names (Bateman, 2000). This child is 'passionate' with in this artificial world of signs because that is what he/she knows but this does not mean this is the child's real passion. It means that more corporate semiotic power has imbued the child than real nature. It means that in the space of recognition and conceptualization a child has learned corporate signification.

The virtual world also operates within the second paradigm of power because it threatens the distinction between the real and the imaginary. Like the dissolution of the old binary forms of power and the rise of biopower, the distinctions of reason/folly, sick/healthy, delinquent/citizen, and most importantly, what exists in the imagination and what exists in reality are blurred within the virtual simulated world. Second life is a virtual territory where one spends real money, falls in love, has sex, connects with people, works and shops.

Second Life is a virtual territory where desires are constituted. A person (or Avatar) does not first have desires in the material (real) world and then express those desires in the virtual world. Desires are constituted in the virtual world and then expressed in the material world. In other words, signs are not mirrors of reality but precede reality. The virtual world does not replicate reality but constitutes reality. The research done in Second Life is not a mapping of consumer behaviour but a production of consumer behaviour.

We are not mapping out what economic needs and desires are in Second Life (as Messinger believes) and we are not unleashing desire through a digital medium (as Brown sees it) but we constitute these needs and desires. The simulation, the simulacra, the virtual comes before the reality. Second Life is first life because it accesses us at the level of our consciousness and social relations. It accesses us at the moment before the potential becomes the real, in the moment of the not yet, the world of possibility. Before the not yet becomes material or manifested it has already been constituted by discursive power.

Ideas and creativity stem from prefabricated ideas in the virtual world. One desires a product or an idea in the virtual world that has already been constructed by the digital program they are using; this is not a real desire or passion but a digital semiotic one.

The virtual world accesses us at the level of the not yet. Language has essentially provided the blueprint for the virtual world in its ability to access us at the level of the not yet. Language/signs do not mirror reality but they precede the material world through a semiotic framework.

### **Language and the Virtual World**

Perhaps at the heart of this linguistic turn where signs do not mirror reality but provide a conceptual framework for it to be understood is Saussure (1977). For Saussure ready-made ideas do not exist before speech.

The linguistic sign unites, not a thing and a name, but a concept and a sound-image. . . The psychological character of our sound image becomes apparent when we observe our own speech. Without moving our lips or tongue we can talk to ourselves or recite mentally a selection of verse. (Saussure, 1977, p. 66)

---

The material thing becomes the concept and the name is the sound image; these both together make up the sign. The concept is the signified and the sound image is the signifier. For example, the materiality, or the thingness of a dog, becomes the concept of 'dog' or the signified. The name of 'dog' becomes the sound image or the signifier, both the signifier and the signified make up the sign. Language precedes the material spoken word and it exists in our consciousness.

It is important to note here that to precede does not mean to exist prior in time, but prior in constitution. Similar to Kant's (1969) idea of space, I think that language belongs to our subjective constitution. Language is subjective but not mental, i.e. it belongs to a collective consciousness but not individual consciousness. I maintain that the signified and signifier relationship is similar to Kant's idea of appearance insofar as Kant's expressions "appearance" and "thing in itself" refer to two different ways of considering empirical objects. We know that an empirical object, such as a pen is an appearance, i.e. an empirical object is directly present to someone's consciousness in sensory awareness. The question is: does the pen have any being apart from its relation to language consciousness or apart from it being a sign.

Kant (1969) argued that our senses and understanding present us with a knowable appearance, but this appearance is not the true world. The true world, the thing in itself, is a grounding for appearance but cannot be known empirically: "objects in themselves are quite unknown to us, and that what we call outer objects are nothing but mere representations of our sensibility . . . the true correlate of our sensibility, the thing in itself is not known, and cannot be known, through these representations" (Kant, 1969, p.74). Kant (1969) denied knowable access to things in themselves and allowed only for faith to bridge it. Nietzsche argued that nihilism begins to manifest itself within Kantian philosophy because our purpose, where we place our absolute morality and knowledge, becomes unachievable to us. He claimed that the metaphysical world of Kant may be true, but this knowledge is inconsequential. If we cannot know this knowledge, what is its significance to us? He wrote,

No matter how well proven the existence of such a world might be, it would still hold true that the knowledge of it would be the most inconsequential of all knowledge, even more inconsequential than the knowledge of the chemical analysis of water must be to the boatman facing a storm. (p.18)

Saussure undermined, if not ignored, the importance and Reality of the material thing with his notion of the signified. The material thing becomes a sign and we no longer consciously have access to the material (real) world. Saussure (1977) argued that we no longer have access to the real actual or material world because our language constitutes the conceptual framework within our consciousness.

---

Further, Saussure (1977) unhinged the connection between the signified with the thing by saying that the sign is arbitrary: there is no inner connection between the sign and the material thing. The thing has no connection or force in asking what it is to be named. Saussure disconnected the affectivity the material world has on language. On the other hand, the individual has no power in changing the language she uses because language has preceded the individual with history. Saussure (1977) also dissolved the affectivity the individual has on language. Because the sign has no connection with materiality in the first place, then we cannot look for an origin of language. Because we cannot trace the origin of language, we cannot change the sign. This is what Saussure (1977) means when he says the sign is both arbitrary and immutable.

Saussure made us question what is outside of language. Have we only reintroduced Kantian nihilism? Where does that take us? Here I believe is the movement towards Second Life, this is the seduction of the simulacrum.

### **Simulacrum and Discourse**

There is a simulacrum that is at the heart of reality. It hides itself through seduction. Seduction has become the multiplication of objects without the original. (Baudrillard, (2001) p. 177)

Like discourse, the virtual world accesses us at the level of the not yet. Like discourse, the virtual world is made up of signs.

Signs constitute our conceptions of the material world. We understand the real material world through the virtual world. Things make sense first in the virtual world and then in the material world. Before an idea is realized as a formed idea, it has been intercepted by a sign. Discourse is the means in which we make sense of the world. We understand the world through language, images, and signs. The metaphysical seduction of signs is the nullification of the real.

Saussure (1977) changed our perceptions of the real through signification of language. According to Saussure, we do not have access to the real but only to the signified and the signifier; this is the seduction of signs. What has happened to the material world? Baudrillard told us,

Their insignificance is offensive. Only objects without referents, out of context—like these old newspapers, these old books, these old nails, these old boards, these scraps of food-- only destitute and isolated objects, ghostly in their deinscription from all discourse, could portray the mood of a lost reality. (2001, p.158)

It could be argued that the virtual world is a world of signs representing sign; it is a second order of signs. Where the signs in language are one step removed from reality, the virtual world is signs representing signs; the second order of signs. Saussure eschewed reality through the sign and now the sign is animated in the virtual world.

The production of the virtual controls chance events in the material world because it exists within the conceptual framework prior to the material. The virtual space of Second Life is able to dictate reality through a predetermined discourse. There are no chance events and no jutting through of the unpredictable world and in this way there is no room to evade the powers of the virtual. Learning does not come from the unknown real world.

---

There is much knowledge to be gained from natural or real events and this is lost through learning that operates within a digital world. Bateman (2000) suggested that the best way to encourage passion for nature within children is through education: “We need to reverse this situation and reverse it fast—and the best way to do this is through education. . . . If we give our children the tools they will get to know their plant and animal neighbours and grow to love the world of natural wonders” (p.27).

Through the interception of signs within the virtual world, corporations are able to construct the desires of the individual. Baudrillard believed (2001) “Far from the individual of expressing his or her needs in the economic system; it is the economic system that induces the individual function and the parallel functionality of objects and needs.” (p. 70). An individual can lose the freedom to have real desires or needs. These desires are already constituted. The virtual world provides a controllable venue in which corporations can shape these needs.

### **Biopower, Discourse, and the Virtual**

Every educational system is a political means of maintaining or of modifying the appropriation of discourse, with the knowledge and the powers it carries with it. (Foucault, 1972, p.227)

If discourse has branched into the virtual world and the not yet is maintained through the virtual then perhaps this is why corporations are mastering this political virtual space—because desires are easier to control through the virtual. Desires are easier to manipulate within the virtual world because they are prefabricated through signs. The unpredictability of the real material world is kept outside. The use of the digital world in the classroom is a political means of maintaining the educational world, ‘with the knowledge and the powers it carries with it’ (Foucault, 1972).

Foucault (1972) argued that within discourse is the will to truth. Discourse maintains the canon of thought on truth and truths do not exist outside of discourse. Discourse is maintained by the power that distributes it through means of exclusion and inclusion (Foucault 1972). He stated,

In every society the production of discourse is at once controlled, selected, organized and redistributed according to a certain number of procedures, whose role is to avert its powers and its dangers to cope with chance events, to evade its ponderous awesome materiality.(1972, p.216)

The truth that is revealed within a certain discourse is masked by that discourse. Because we are so imbedded within the discourse of the particular social and economic ideology, we are incapable of seeing that truths are constructed through this discourse. We learn to understand, speak, learn, and think within a certain discourse and this discourse dictates what truths we will uncover. Our conceptions of true and false are based on correctness with in the digital world not within the material world. However, we continuously fail to realize that these truths do not exist outside of the discourse that has constructed them.

introduce a film in which I attempt to explore what happens with the loss of the Real through the simulated world of the virtual. In doing this I hope to open a

---

What I have outlined in this footnote is that discourse constructs our will to Truth. Truth is constituted through the dominant discourse. Universities are one institution whose function is to preserve or reproduce discourse. The division between true and false is a system of exclusion that governs our will to truth. For example, the speech of the madmen falls outside of our system of discourse. The madmen's speech exists in a void; it exists outside of the system of inclusion and exclusion. The madmen's speech is not considered to be true or not true because it is not allowed within rational discourse. The madman's speech falls outside the discipline of reason or folly, or true or false, and exists in a void because rational discourse is not able to carry that speech (Foucault, 1972).

The system of truth that is constructed by discourse is not unlike the virtual world that constructs our will to truth. As it is difficult for an individual to seek truth unbridled by the world of discourse, it is now becoming difficult for the individual to have creativity or desires outside the virtual world and increasingly difficult if the digital world is disseminated and encouraged within education.

The discourse that has governed pedagogy and learning has been based on the industrial model, a time of efficiency and mass production, where learning is delivery based in pre packets of knowledge, where the goal is to effectively disseminate the most of amount of knowledge to the most amount of students with the least amount of time and money spent. This industrial based discourse is now changing; academics now look at a new way to educate. But as we step out of one discourse and into another, it is important to look at how authentic the next discourse is.

Discourse precedes truth and the map precedes the territory. We come to understand what the territory is if we first see it through the map. The territory is revealed and constituted by the map. In this way, we can close our selves off to the truth and knowledge of the real territory. Exploration now takes place first in Google Earth. The seduction of the digital world leaves the territory rotting and faded and one no longer desires the real territory.

Second Life is a space primarily of corporate capital; it is clear that the discourse that is now coming to dictate, constitute, and reveal truth, where universities are putting their time and funding, is the world of virtual corporations. The truths that are allowed within this discourse are how best to help Canadian businesses to a bigger piece of the e-commerce pie and how to determine the best way to market and sell products within the virtual world. What this truth hides and masks is the will to truth—what the dominant discourse covers up is that this discourse has naturally taken place within the virtual world. That we are in a virtual paradigm is assumed, whether we should be here is a question that falls outside of this discourse. The speech of a madman who questions the virtual, corporate territory exists in a void; it exists outside of the virtual capital discourse. The madman who questions the disappearance of the real exists in a string of incoherent questions. The speech we can understand is how best to help Canadian business within the virtual world and how to use the digital world to encourage students to learn.

space for the Real not by displaying what it is, but displaying what it is not. Of course I must make note of the change in medium. We have left the possibility of the materialness of the text behind and have entered into a different discourse, one that is inseparable from the virtual world.

It is a fictional film and unlike academic philosophic writing, in which the medium allows one to offer a range of critics, and situate oneself within a myriad of traversing discussions/possibilities, and in some ways complexify the discussion, the film is isolated in a particular position and telling a tale. It distances itself from the scrutiny of binaries.

The change in mediums also unravels something different and perhaps unexpected in some ways. The minimalist, low budget, nature of this film is the main decision maker; it is the reality of the situation pushing back. Of course, with a limitless budget this film turns out differently and the choices made are based on other decisions but the underlying, somewhat invisible, driver in this is the constraint of funds. Text on the other hand does not have the same restriction. Money, space, time, lighting, actors, weather, equipment, and sound have very little to do with how a text unfolds Truth.

The obvious irony and paradoxical nature of this film perhaps gives us a unique glimpse of Truth, by revealing our own virtual symbolic world. (The film's visual dystopic view of virtual living, while accessible only on the Internet. The apathetic and detached visuals of the computer work are ironic as I spent days in a dimly lit room behind a computer editing these shots.) The life I try to distance myself from and through exaggeration of how mundane the life of these characters life, is the one I am complicit in. This film is a reflection of how one looks as they watch the film. Watching someone watch film is boring and although our minds are actively engaged, our body position is stagnant and our life to the onlooker looks

mundane and depressing. In no way is this making fun of the viewer or myself, but only revealing a certain discourse, the one in which we are situated.

The film also addresses the misconception that the virtual world and the Internet can unleash passion, as argued by some academics. The Internet is the second layer of the symbolic order and constrains eruptions of the Real.

Like artwork, this film is made by the viewer; it is open to interpretation and its meaning is not prescribed in advance but constituted in part by the viewer. To go further with interpretation through text undoes the art of the film.

## Concluding the Introduction

Returning to the introduction, what an introduction really does, in its full essence, is it introduces the paper; it does not conclude the paper, although, some conclusions are not unlike the introduction. Mogck (2008) wrote, "the conclusion of your paper explains the conclusion of your argument . . . the conclusion should restate the thesis you have defended, briefly explain how you have argued for it" (p. 34); this is not unlike the rules of an introduction and it is fine to have the conclusion like the introduction because some of us read the introduction at the end. I started my introduction with a paradoxical thesis statement. I tried to open for authenticity and eruptions of the Real within pedagogy and writing, but I noted the impossibility of this. In claiming Truth, I have done the opposite. So, I claimed the impossibility of a thesis statement for this paper, but by claiming the impossibility of a thesis statement, I simultaneously created a thesis statement. The paradox that I identified at the beginning, I have returned to. Not through restating the thesis statement and the arguments supporting it but by embodying the paradox in this paper. I have concluded with a paradoxical moment.

The film, as a hyperlink, has shed the materiality of this text. This text is no longer material but is now intimately connected within the virtual world. In some ways, this dissertation is in between the virtual world and the material world. The virtual end to my paper performs what I am disclosing in this dissertation because it virtually flies away from binaries between what is Real and what is symbolic or simulated.

In this thesis, I attempted at opening a space for the Real material and I succeeded in closing off this Real space in this dissertation. However, this paradox is an appropriate end for this dissertation. Pedagogy and writing should

open space for this paradoxical nature of Truth because that is where authenticity in pedagogy and writing lie.

## References

- Allan, J. (2004). Deterritorializations: Putting postmodernism to work on teacher education and inclusion. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 36(4), 418–432.
- Battiste, M., Bell, L. & Findlay, L. M. (2002). Decolonizing education in Canadian universities. *Canadian Journal of Native Education*, 26, 2, 82–95.
- Baudrillard, J. (2001). *Selected writings*. M. Poster (Ed.). California: Stanford University Press.
- Bateman, R. (2000). *Thinking like a mountain*. Ontario: Penguin Group Inc.
- Berkeley, G. (1975). Philosophical works including the works on vision. Great Britain: The Guernsey Press Co. Ltd.
- Brown, J.S. (Jan.24, 2012). CBC Sunday edition: Recivilization. On Air Show. Retrieved from: <http://www.cbc.ca/recivilization/>
- Berkeley, G. (1975). Philosophical works including the works on vision. Great Britain: The Guernsey Press Co. Ltd.
- Camus, A. (1955). *The myth of Sisyphus and other essays*. J. O'Brien (Trans.). New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.
- Camus A. (1955). What gives life meaning? In J.A. Gould and R.J Mulvaney (Eds.), *Classical philosophical questions*. New Jersey: Upper Saddle River.
- Chuang-Tzu (2001). *The inner chapters*. A. C. Graham (Trans.). Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing.
- Crawford, R. (2006). Health as a meaningful social practice. *Health: An Interdisciplinary Journal for the Social Study of Health, Illness and Medicine*. 10 (4): 401-420.
- Davis, B. (2008). Complexity and education: Vital simultaneities. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*. 40(1), pp. 51–65.
- Davis, W. (1996). *One River: Explorations and discoveries in the Amazon rain forest*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Deleuze, G. (2004). *Desert islands and other texts*. M. Taormina (Trans.). Los Angeles: Semiotext.
- Deleuze, G. (1988). *Foucault*. S. Hand (Trans.). New York: The Athlone Press.
- Deleuze, G. (1988). *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*. R.Hurley (Trans.). San Francisco: City Lights Press.

- Deleuze, G. (1994). *Difference & repetition*. P. Hatton (Trans.). New York: The Athlone Press.
- Deleuze, G. & Guattari, F. (1987). *A thousand plateaus capitalism and schizophrenia*. B. Massumi (Trans.). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Deleuze, G. & Parnet, C. (1987) *Dialogues*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Edwards, R. (2006). A sticky business? Exploring the “and” in teaching and learning. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 27(1), 121–133.
- Foucault, M. (1984). *The Use of pleasure. The History of sexuality Volume 2*, Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin.
- Foucault, M. (1980). What is an author? Rethinking popular culture. C. Mukerji & M. Schudson (Eds.). Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Foucault, M. (1978). *History of sexuality: An introduction (Vol. 1)*. R. Hurely (Ed.). New York: Random House Inc.
- Foucault, M. (1972). *The Discourse on language an Appendix to the Archaeology of knowledge*. A.M. Sheridan Smith (Trans.). New York: Pantheon.
- Freire, P. (2009). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. M. Begman Ramos (Trans.). New York: The Continuum International Publishing Group Inc.
- Gough, N. (2004). RhizomANTically becoming-cyborg: Performing posthuman pedagogies. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 36, 253–265.
- Gough, N. (2006). Shaking the tree, making a rhizome: Towards a nomadic geophilosophy of science education. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 38, 626–645.
- Gough, N. (2007). Changing planes: Rhizosemiotic play in transnational curriculum inquiry. *Studies in Philosophy of Education*, 26, 279–294.
- Gregoriou, Z. (2004). Commencing the rhizome: Towards a minor philosophy of education. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 36(3) 234-251.
- Haraway, D. (1991). *Simians, cyborgs and women*. New York: Routledge.
- Hardt, M. & Negri, A. (2001). *Empire*. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.
- Heidegger, M. (1971). *Poetry, language, thought*. A. Hofstadter (Trans). New York: Harper & Row.
- Heidegger, M. (1962) *Being and time*. J. Macquarrie & E. Robinson (Trans.). New York: Harper & Row.
- Heidegger, M. (1971). *On the way to language*. P. D. Hertz (Trans.). New York: Harper & Row.

- Heidegger, M. (1977). *The question concerning technology*. W. Lovitt (Trans). New York: Harper & Row.
- Hendricks, C. (2002). The author[s] remains: Foucault and the demise of the author function. *Philosophy Today*, 46(2), 152–169.
- Hesse, H. (1971). *Siddhartha*. H. Rosner (Trans.). New York: Bantam Books.
- Honan, E. (2007). Writing a rhizome: An implausible methodology. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 20(5) 531–546.
- Horban, P. (1993). *Writing a philosophy paper*. Retrieved from: <http://www.sfu.ca/~horban/writing1.htm>
- Hume, D. (1978). *A treatise of human nature*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Husserl, E. (1958). Ideas general introduction to pure phenomenology. G.W.R. Boyce (Trans.). New York: The Macmillan Company.
- Illich, I. (2002). *Deschooling society*. New York: Marion Boyars.
- Illich, I. (1976). Limits to Medicine medical nemesis: The expropriation of health. New York: Penguin Books.
- Kant, I. (1969). *Critique of pure reason*. Norman Kemp Smith (Trans.) New York. Macmillan and Co.
- Kockelmans, J. (1985). *Heidegger on art and artworks*. Boston: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers.
- Kaustuv, R. (2005). Power and resistance: Insurgent spaces, Deleuze and curriculum. *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing*, 21(1) 27–37.
- La Rocque, E.(1993). Here are our voices-- who will hear? In S.Vance (ed.), *Writing the Circle*. Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press.
- Levinas, L. (1995).The Theory of Intuition in Husserl's Phenomenology. A. Orianne (Trans.). Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.
- Locke, J. (1975). *An essay concerning human understanding*. New York: Oxford University Press Inc.
- Martinich, A. P. (1989). *Philosophical writing an introduction*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc.
- Meeks, L., Heit, P., & Randy, P., (2011). Comprehensive school health education: Totally awesome *strategies for teaching health*. 7<sup>th</sup> edition. New York: McGraw Hill Companies Inc.,
- Miller, I. (1986). Husserl and Sartre on the self. *The Monist*. 69, 534–545.

- Miller, J. (2004). Aphorisms as instrument of political action in Nietzsche. *Parallax*. 10 (3) 70-82.
- Moeller, H. (2004). *Daoism explained*. Chicago: Open Court.
- Mogck, B.D. (2008). *Writing to reason a companion for philosophy students and instructors*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- Myers, T. (2003). *Slavoj Zizek*. London: Routledge.
- Nagao, G. (1991). *Madhyamika and Yogacara: a study of Mahayana philosophies*. Kawamura, L.S. & Nagao, G.M. (Eds.). Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Nietzsche, F. (1974). *Gay Science*. W. Kaufmann (Trans.). New York: Random House Inc.
- Nietzsche, F. (1984). *Human, all too human*. M.Faber.(Trans.). Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press.
- Nietzsche, F. (1965). *Schopenhauer as educator*. James W. Hillesheim & M. R. Simpson (Trans.). South Bend, Indiana: Gateway Editions Ltd.
- Nietzsche, F. (1967). *Will to Power*. W.Kaufmann and R.J. Hollingdale (Trans.). New York, New York: Random House.
- Nietzsche, F. (1976). *Zarathustra*. W. Kaufmann (Trans.). New York, New York: Penguin.
- Orwell, G. (1990). *Nineteen eighty-four*. New York, New York: Penguin.
- Palahniuk, C. (2002). *Choke*. New York, New York: Anchor Books.
- Plato. (1992) *Republic*. G.M.A Grube. (Trans.). Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company.
- Pinar, W. F., Reynolds, W. M., Slattery, P., & Taubman, P. (1995). *Understanding curriculum: An introduction to the study of historical and contemporary curriculum discourses*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Robinson, K. (2010, October 14). Changing education paradigms. [Video file]. Retrieved from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zDZFcDGpL4U>
- Sartre, J. P. (1965). *Being and nothingness: An essay in phenomenological ontology*. New York: Citadel Press.
- Sartre, J. P. (2001). *The transcendence of the ego*. F. Williams & R. Kirkpatrick (Trans.). New York: The Noon Day Press.
- Seech, Z. (2005) *Open minds and everyday reasoning*. California: Wadsworth.

- Semetsky, I. (2003). Deleuze's new image of thought, or Dewey revisited. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 35, 17–29.
- Semetsky, I. (2007). Towards a semiotic theory of learning: Deleuze's philosophy and educational experience. *Semiotica*, 1(4), 197-214.
- SSHRC. (2009). *Newsletter*. Retrieved from: <http://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/newsletter-bulletin/spring-printemps/2009/messinger-eng.aspx>.
- Singh, R. R. (1990). Heidegger and the world in an artwork. *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 48(3), 215–222.
- Ueda, Y. (1967). Two main streams of thought in yogacara philosophy. *Philosophy East and West*. 16, 154–167.
- Saussure, F. (1980). *Course in general linguistics*. W. Baskin. (Trans.). New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co.
- Usher, R., & Edwards, R. (1994). *Postmodernism and education*. New York: Routledge.
- WHO (n.d.). *Health*. Retrieved from: <https://apps.who.int/aboutwho/en/definition.html>
- Wiebe, S., P. S., Irwin, R., Leggo, C., Gousouasis, P. & Grauer, K. (2007). Reimagining arts integration: Rhizomatics relations of the everyday. *Journal of Educational Thought*, 41(3), 263–280.