Making Space for Disruption in the Education of Early Childhood Educators

by

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B.A., University of Manitoba, 1980
M.Ed., University of Manitoba, 1984

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Supervisory Committee

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ABSTRACT

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This postqualitative inquiry explores the processes that occurred when a group of early childhood education (ECE) students and I engaged with and in pedagogical narrations over one academic term as we attempted to make visible and disrupt the hegemonic images of children and childhood we held. I worked with Foucault's notion of power in this study to attend to those moments when competing material-discursive practices created tensions, anxiety, and contradictions in our thinking as the students and I explored new understandings of children and childhood. Barad's theory of agential realism provided a framework for considering how pedagogical narrations function as an apparatus, that is, as an instrument that intraacts with organisms and matter, within a learning activity to produce disruptions and change in order for generative knowledges to be produced. Positioned within the reconceptualization of early childhood education (RECE), this research is significant in that it extends the reconceptualization focus beyond the early childhood classroom into the education of early childhood educators. Further, the project challenges education from an anthropocentric and logocentric understanding whereby the knower and the known are considered distinct entities in a pedagogical context.

Key Words: *early childhood education, early childhood teacher education, pedagogical narrations, postqualitative research*

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Acknowledgements

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to the memory of Esther Penner, Eva Spence, and Mary Flett. Each of these beautiful, intelligent, and loving children profoundly disrupted my understandings of childhood and of life. I have treasured their memories and those disruptions each day of my life. Esther, Eva, and Mary—when I close my eyes I see us together "in my heart."

Chapter 1: Disruptions, Tensions, and Other Hazards When Real and Mythical Children Collide

As an instructor in an early childhood education (ECE) program, my curiosity was aroused by the discourses around the concept of the child and childhood held consciously or unconsciously by new students. For example, when I asked the students to describe their image of a child, many of the students depicted a child with a universal and fixed identity. It was not uncommon for the students to portray children with words that embody a single image of children, such as *loving*, *happy*, and *always learning*. From my perspective, a large number of the students envisioned all children as "X" with no provision in their image for the absence of "X." It appeared that the students knew all children, and that children exist as a category of humans that can be defined and described and are stable in their nature.

These single images of children became problematic when the students met real children during their first practicum. The students often expressed a sense of confusion and tension. Statements such as "I thought children were supposed to be X but some of the children were Y" were a dominant theme in our conversations during practicum seminars. These statements were usually followed by questions around guidance and discipline in which students requested strategies to make a Y child into an X child to maintain control of the classroom. For example, when students met a child who, from their perspective, was not "innocent," as indicated by the child's use of profanity, the students mourned the child's loss of innocence. This emotion was quickly followed by a desire to eradicate the knowledge that led to the use of profanity, thereby restoring the child's status as innocent.

This dissertation emerged as a response to such observations, and to my own struggle as the students I worked with experienced anxiety in their encounters with children who did not resemble their idea of children. My research explored the processes that occurred when a group

of ECE students and I engaged with, and in, the pedagogical practices of pedagogical narrations over one academic term as we attempted to make visible and disrupt the hegemonic images of childhood we held. Thinking alongside the work of Michel Foucault and Karen Barad, I understood the subject to be unstable and contradictory, therefore I did not design a project to study if or how the practice of pedagogical narrations changed the practice of the ECE students. Such studies often assume that whatever changes might be measured are actually a measure of permanent change within a stable subject. Nor was I interested in producing a narrative that would invite readers to represent or reproduce our processes so as to replicate our experiences. Rather, I hoped to learn with the students as we engaged with pedagogical practices that made visible and disrupted the taken-for-granted assumptions we held around children and childhood. Specifically, I wanted to explore "the continuous process of un-packing and re-packing, un-coding and re-coding, un-folding and re-folding, and perhaps most importantly re-inventing" (Lenz Taguchi, 2010, p. 23) our understandings of children and childhood and how those understandings are connected to our current practices.

When Mythical Children Haunt Our Everyday Practice

In response to my initial curiosity, I began to attend to Britzman's (2003) proposal that "the remnants of our childhood slip in through the backdoor of theories of teaching and learning" (p. 2), becoming the dominant discourses that inform our pedagogical practices. Britzman suggests that teacher education neglects to consider that students enter programs with at least 12 years of experience in observing and engaging with the educational system. These years of observing and participating in education allow students entering teacher education to assume that they already know what skills and competencies are required to be an effective teacher. Britzman (2009b) considers this phenomenon a challenge for teacher education. She asks, "How is our

field capable of changing itself, of developing responsibility for its representations, if everyone involved in teacher education was once a child who grew up in a school and so relies on their infantile archive of education" (2009b, p. 29)? Her question led me to consider whether attempts at reconceptualization within early childhood are similarly challenged. Is change inhibited when those of us working in the field rely on discourses of childhood and an image of the child that we constructed in the past, as children, and extended in the present, as adults living in a world with children, to guide our pedagogical practices?

Current writers, such as Burman (2008a, 2008b), Cannella (1997), Cannella and Viruru (2004), Dahlberg and Moss (2005), Dahlberg, Moss, and Pence (1999, 2007), Hultqvist and Dahlberg (2001), MacNaughton (2003, 2005), and Pacini-Ketchabaw and Pence (2005), assert that hegemonic discourses of childhood act as dominant truths, marginalizing and silencing other ways of understanding children. Dahlberg, Moss, and Pence (2007) argue that if we disrupt these dominant discourses of children, childhood might more easily be recognized as a social construct and children might more easily be seen, not as universal entities, but as complex, diverse, and, at times, contradictory. This recognition would make space to work with an image of a complex and unknown child. It would make space to open up the possibility of multiple ways to provide early childhood education programs for children and families. For example, Moss, Dillon, and Statham (2000) write about the image of a "rich" child as opposed to a child in need; they describe a child who is "born equipped to lead, neither asking nor needing adult permission to start learning" (p. 250). A rich child requires an educator who, as Rinaldi (2006) describes, is a "'powerful' teacher, the only kind of teacher suitable for our equally 'powerful' child" (p. 125). This powerful educator, Rinaldi explains, is open to the unexpected, is one who engages in learning with the child as a researcher in order to be open to possibilities in education.

Myths of childhood: The legacy.

"Mythical" children have haunted the everyday lives of real children for many years. This haunting occurs when a child is greeted with disbelief by an adult bewildered by the child's apparent contradiction to the mythical child. In this moment, the myth collides with reality and the real child appears as a pathological representation of the mythical child. Typically within a North American/Eurocentric perspective, the pathology is revealed in the premature loss of an essential childhood quality, usually as the consequence of the child's participation in activities that are deemed adult only. Kehily (2009) illustrates this collision of the mythical and real child as she recounts the writings of Henry Mayhew (1851) in which he describes his encounter with an 8-year-old girl selling watercresses at London's Farringdon Market. Mayhew tells the reader that he began his conversation with the child by asking her about her toys and the games she would play with her friends. Her response—"Besides it's like a child to care for sugar sticks, and not like one who's got a living and vitals to earn. I aint a child and I shan't be a woman till I'm twenty, but I am past eight, I am" (Mayhew, 1851, as cited in Kehily, 2009, p. 152)—surprises him. Play and pleasure were not a part of her daily life, she explains to Mayhew. "We children never play down there, cos we're thinking of our living" (as cited in Kehily, p. 151), the child clarifies. Kehily interprets Mayhew's astonishment as a reflection that this child disturbed his image of who a child is and of what constitutes childhood.

The preceding example of the collision of the "mythical" and real child should in no way be understood as an assertion of a clear line that divides the mythical child from the real child. Cloke and Jones (2005), in addressing the dangers of seeing children as distinct entities from adults, remind us that "there can be no sharp distinction between real embodied lives of children and the imagined, constructed ideas of childhood" (p. 313). Particular understandings of

childhood and children constrain and regulate children's real lives at the same time as children's bodies and lives shape and change discursive understandings.

From my perspective, Britzman's notion that students enter into an education program in which they are already strongly attached to a discourse connected to what they have chosen to learn should not be limited to education. ECE students arrive not only having the experience of being a student and observing teachers; they also bring with them deeply held beliefs and assumptions of children and childhood from various other contexts, such as popular culture, family, history, and so forth. Like the student teachers Britzman encountered, ECE students arrive with "fantasies" of childhood, and they are ready to bring those childhoods to life for the children they teach. Similar to the notion of education, children and childhood, from my perspective, suffer from a discourse of overfamiliarity, making change in the education of children and those who will be their educators difficult. This sentiment is echoed in Woodhead's (2009) statement that "adults were of course all once children themselves and their experiences of their childhood colours relations with children in everyday life, professional practice and research" (p. 25). Further, Woodhead encourages educators to support education students who will be working with children to consider the perspective in which they are both personally and culturally located. Burman (2008a) refers to this consideration as "placing one's own development" by acknowledging the location (e.g., gender, race, history, and language) from which we interpret and understand children and childhood.

Inspired by Britzman's (2009b) question, I asked: How is the reconceptualization of early childhood education and care possible if, as Gittins (2009) suggests, "each and every one of us has been a child [and] we all believe we know what childhood is or was" (p. 36)? It seemed to me that students entering early childhood education training programs assume a particular

knowledge of all children, as well as the connecting competencies necessary for working with all children within that discourse.

Britzman's (1998) work examining cultural myths of teachers provided me with a starting point for considering that ECE students bring discourses of childhood with them when they enter ECE programs that create a mythical child whose very essence results in seeing real children as lacking or imperfect. Britzman (2003) asserts that each such myth

authorizes a discourse on power, knowledge and the self that works to promote

the impossible desire of assuming the self to be capable of embodying a non-

contradictory subjectivity and capable of asserting a norm of control that depends

upon the individual's unambivalent acceptance of authoritative discourse. Such a

desire makes no room for the complications we live. (p. 223)

These myths, asserts Britzman (2003), provide the student teacher with the discourse to understand who they should become and how to recognize themselves as a teacher. Fenimore-Smith (2004) writes that these cultural myths offer the student teacher a superficial representation of teaching and "serve as a barrier to transformational practices within the classroom" (p. 228).

The myths about teachers identified by Britzman (1998) are problematic in that they recycle a singular narrative of teaching where the teacher's identity is reduced to a normative ideal. Britzman's thesis that overfamiliarity with education is problematic in the education of teachers is supported by numerous studies within the literature (see, for example, Cole & Knowles, 1993; Harper & Cavanaugh, 1994; Pajares, 1992; Pereira, 2009; Vartuli, 2005; White, 2000; Wilcox-Herzog, 2002). Britzman's notion of teacher myths resonates in early childhood education as well. For example, within the context of early childhood education, a normative,

ideal early childhood educator is also perpetuated by myths. Langford (2008) asserts that persistent historical myths of the "good" educator circulating within the public domain have constructed a stereotype that assumes truth. While the identity of the early childhood educator has been and is still contested by academic writers (e.g., Bloch & Popkewitz, 1995; Langford, 2008; Moss, 2006; Osgood, 2006; Varga, 2000), the female early childhood educator, as natural nurturer and caregiver of young children, is an example of a stereotype whose dominance can silence alternative images when it is seen as the truth.

Acknowledging the mythical child in early childhood education.

The focus of this dissertation is how the images of children that ECE students bring with them to their education programs regulate the students' understandings of themselves and children in pedagogical relationships. The issue at hand is that multiple myths of typical children exist within early childhood education, and these myths, if taken up by ECE students, continue to recycle particular ways of being with children. From where I sit as an educator of ECE students, the myths concerning the identity of those who work with young children are deeply entangled in images of the child.

As an instructor working with future early childhood educators, I struggled alongside the students I worked with as they experienced a heightened sense of anxiety when real children did not live up to their mythical image of children. I found myself wondering how to purge students of these taken-for-granted assumptions about children. Toll, Nierstheimer, Lenski, and Kolloff (2004) allude to a similar desire when they describe an "urge to wash [students] clean from the ideas they have learned" (p. 164). Yet, they admit this goal is troubling in that it assumes that knowledge is a truth rather than a social construct, and that a universal consensus on, for example, the nature of childhood can be reached. Further, the urge to "wash away" a set of

beliefs and create a clean new subject, as described by Toll et al. (2004), assumes that the "cleansed" subject is a stable, unified entity who can choose to stay clean. This conflict was present in considering my study. I hoped to disrupt ECE students' existing beliefs, ideas, and assumptions while avoiding practices that attempt to purify and instill the "correct" image of the child. To make visible the potential tensions within my own research, I attended to the following questions posed by Davies (1990):

> How is an individual's subjectivity, their idea of who they are, and their particular way of making sense of themselves and of the social world developed? How is it that we find the words, the concepts, and the ideas with which to say who we are? How do we become one who takes up or resists various discursive practices, who modifies one practice in relation to another, who chooses between the various positions and practices made available? (p. 345)

These questions were critical in that they required me to consider how I understood the concepts of subject and subjectivity in the context of my planned research. Because the researcher's particular theoretical understandings of subject and subjectivity direct issues such as methodology and data analysis (see Chapter 3), I slowly worked towards clarifying the focus and a methodology for my evolving understanding of the study. More specific research questions would await the early stages of the work—and those stages and questions are outlined following a brief description of my place in the disruption of the research.

Disrupting the Mythical Child in the Postsecondary Classroom

My position in the disruption.

Burman (2008b) argues that researchers interested in children need to situate or place their own development so as to acknowledge their geographical and ethical-political position

within their work. Citing the work of Lather (1991) and Davies and Gannon (2005), Burman asserts that, to understand how the individual position resonates in "disciplinary assumptions and dilemmas" (p. 30), researchers must make visible their own disciplinary history and developmental trajectory. Burman eloquently states that, while it may seem narcissistic to "place myself" as the researcher, doing so "inevitably frames the pages that follow" (p. 30).

The following narrative of my disciplinary history exposes to the reader some of the situated knowledge that informs this research project. I entered early childhood education at a time when developmentally appropriate practice, informed by developmental theory, was largely uncontested. Yet, I was inspired in the 1980s as a young graduate student by my supervisor, the late Dr. Imogene McIntire, who challenged my image of the child by her assertion that children are citizens and, as citizens, should be imparted with rights and responsibilities in the classroom setting (1976). As a child life specialist, I had the privilege to work with children who were living with life-shortening conditions. My understanding of children's cognitive development, informed by Piagetian theory, was disrupted regularly as the children shared with me their understandings of life, illness, and death. In my work with children, families, educators, and student educators over the years, my allegiance to developmental theory has been challenged. Today, inspired by the scholars working in the reconceptualizing early childhood movement and by the writings of Michel Foucault, I approach developmental theory cautiously, cognizant of its hegemonic role in education, while acknowledging that it is not without value in education. Recently, I have been drawn to the work of Hillevi Lenz Taguchi who, inspired by the physicist Karen Barad, examines the agentic force of matter in an intraactive relationship with humans in the learning process.

My disciplinary history resonates throughout this research project. I write from the situated position of an educated, middle-class woman with ancestors who, 400 years ago, were among the colonizers of the land now known as Canada, as well as ancestors who were colonized. Burman (2008b) reminds me that my position extends to my particular relations and privileges, which cannot be separated from the writings that emerged from this study. In the same ways, the tensions and uncertainties of living as a person with histories of both colonizer and colonized are not insignificant in my conceptualization of my thinking and my being in this study.

Having now situated myself in the study, I will now provide a brief overview of the process of my work with students that helped shape the research questions I used.

A disruptive practice: Envisioning the study.

This postqualitative research inquiry took place over the course of one academic term, during which ECE students and I shared images of childhood in the form of drawings, photos, works of art, and texts. In small groups, the students and I engaged in conversations that began with three provocations: What understandings of childhoods are portrayed by particular images of children? What are the historical origins of the images of childhood? How are concepts of natural or normal childhood reflected in the images (MacNaughton, 2005)?

During this time, we read literature by writers such as Cannella (1997), Dahlberg, Moss, and Pence (1999, 2007), and MacNaughton (2003, 2005) that provoked and challenged our assumptions and beliefs around children and early childhood education. New questions were formulated and developed within the groups and the class as a whole as we collaboratively explored and contested the pedagogical practices the images brought forth. Using the course readings and their own research as a theoretical framework, the students shared their thoughts,

questions, and tensions around their understandings of children and childhood and how those understandings are connected to practice. The images and narratives produced from the discussions developed into pedagogical narrations. Working in and with pedagogical narrations made it possible for the students and me to work collaboratively, to critically reflect, and to disrupt and problematize our practice with young children. As a pedagogical practice, this work provided an opportunity to make visible the discursive practices and material realities that shaped our understandings of young children and thus regulated our practice in early childhood education.

Disruptive questions.

From these curiosities, and framed within a postfoundational perspective, three general questions emerged that framed my work in the classroom as both instructor and researcher:

1. How will the students and I come to understand disturbances to our images as we collectively engage in pedagogical practices that may displace the discourses of children and childhood we hold?

2. How will the students and I interpret and revise our thinking as we deconstruct the discourses that become visible in our collective learning?

3. How will the students and I construct and adjust our practices with children as we participate in these pedagogical practices in a collective learning process?

These questions provoked the students' and my thinking throughout the study. As an instructor/researcher, I developed provocations from these questions for the students in response to the ideas, images, questions, and thinking that emerged as we engaged in the practice of pedagogical narrations.

Thinking with Michel Foucault and Karen Barad, I developed two research questions that guided the data analysis:

1. How did material-discursive practices discipline and regulate our ability to construct new understandings of children and childhood?

2. How did the presence of the particular artefacts produced in the practice of pedagogical narrations intraact with us, the texts, and the images to make and unmake our shapings and coshapings of children and childhood?

In formulation these questions, Foucault's understanding of power, knowledge, and truth allowed me to attend to how competing and often contradictory discourses work to disrupt and challenge new ways of thinking and understanding the world. At the same time, Barad's work provided me with the theoretical framework to attend to how the agentic force of both the material and discursive are entangled in the production of knowing the world.

An analysis of disruption.

In this research project, my curiosity was focused on the processes that emerged as we worked in and with pedagogical narrations to disrupt our images of childhood. This interest precluded an analysis that looked to the data to uncover, code, and count the changing images held by the students and me throughout our engagements with pedagogical narrations. I turned to a postqualitative process of analysis articulated by Jackson and Mazzei (2012) in their attempt to turn away from orthodox interpretative methods of analysis, which, from their perspective, constrained data into known categories and labels. This process of analysis involves what Jackson and Mazzei refer to as "thinking with theory"; it provided me with analytical tools to attend to process beyond identifying new images constructed. Thinking with Foucault's understanding of the disciplinary power of regimes of truth allowed me to consider how new

understandings were challenged by competing discourses, drawing us back to previous understandings. Barad's onto-epistemological framework afforded me the possibility to consider how the material being of the images intraacted with/in the students, myself, the readings, and so forth to produce new meanings and understandings.

Significance of the Research

This inquiry responds to the call by scholars in the reconceptualizing early childhood education (RECE) movement for new directions and possibilities in understanding childhood and early childhood education (see, for example, Bloch, Swadener, & Cannella, 2014; Cannella, 1997; Cannella & Viruru, 2004; Dahlberg & Moss, 2005; Dahlberg et al., 1999, 2007; Hultqvist & Dahlberg, 2001; MacNaughton, 2003, 2005; Pacini-Ketchabaw & Pence, 2005; Pacini-Ketchabaw & Prochner, 2013). This study moves the reconceptualized perspective from early childhood education, with the focus on children, to classrooms where future early childhood educators are inquiring into childhoods.

Further, this research will add to the new literature examining the pedagogical practices that are part of the early childhood curriculum frameworks being introduced in many provinces across Canada (e.g., Berger, 2013; Elliot, 2010). For example, in BC, the *British Columbia Early Learning Framework* (Government of British Columbia, 2008a) presents pedagogical narrations as a practice that both opens up new possibilities to think about curriculum for ECE education programs and explores how the image of the child is connected to practice. As well, this study will extend the work of researchers such as Lenz Taguchi (2010) and Olsson (2009), who explore the materiality that exists in intrarelationship with the discursive in ECE practices and bring this way of thinking into ECE education programs.

In conclusion, this research study explores the thinking, ideas, challenges, tensions, and curiosities that emerged when a group of ECE students and their instructor collectively engaged in the pedagogical practice of pedagogical narrations. The intent was to document the traces of encounters that disrupted the images a particular group of ECE students held concerning children and childhood. This study examined what happened when spaces were created in the classroom for ECE students to "attend to the politics of what we do, and do not do, at a practical level" (Lather, 1991, p. 13) as we connected our images of children and childhood to practice.

Dissertation Overview

In this first chapter, I have introduced the research project and the importance of moving the reconceptualizing early childhood education movement to the postsecondary classroom. Next, in Chapter 2, I explore the social construction of a universal and natural child within Western culture and the discourses that emerged as a result of that construct. I make visible how the cultural hegemony within the concept of a universal and natural child has silenced or marginalized other ways of understanding and being with children. The first part of Chapter 3 provides a poststructural perspective on how knowledge is constructed as truth and reinscribed through power. Working with the ideas of writers such as Foucault, Butler, and Davies, I then consider how a discourse positions an individual to take up a particular subject role and how, when the position of subject is taken up, the discourse is strengthened. The second part of the chapter introduces Karen Barad's onto-epistemological approach, which includes her notion of agential realism. Here I investigate the notion of agency from a postfoundational perspective to consider how change is possible. Chapter 4 provides the reader with information on the methodology selected and chronicles the research processes that emerged during the research project. The method of data analysis is also described in Chapter 4. Chapters 5 and 6 contain the

data analysis. In Chapter 5, reading the data with Foucault's notion of power, I explore how discursive practices discipline and regulate our ability to construct new understandings of children and childhood. In Chapter 6, thinking with Barad's notion of agential realism, I attend to how the material presence of artefacts intraacted with the ECE students and I, the texts, and the images to make and unmake our understanding of children and childhood.

The final chapter returns to my original questions: How did material-discursive practices discipline and regulate our ability to construct new understandings of children and childhood? How did the presence of the particular artefacts produced in the practice of pedagogical narrations intraact with us, the texts, and the images to make and unmake our shapings and coshapings of children and childhood? I respond to these questions by thinking with the work of Michel Foucault and Karen Barad and offering implications for pedagogical practices in the postsecondary classroom. Conceptualizing pedagogical practices as more than anthropocentric endeavours, I argue that we need to consider the agentic force of the matter of learning, such as texts, images, space, time, and so forth. Therefore, we have the ethical obligation to consider what knowledges and realities are produced in the encounters among humans, matter, nonhuman others, and discourses in our pedagogical practices (Lenz Taguchi, 2010).

Now I turn to an exploration of the social construction of a universal and natural child within Western culture.

Chapter 2. Literature Review: The Child, Early Childhood Education Student, and Educator as Subjects of Early Childhood Education

This literature review is divided into four sections. The first two sections provide a general synopsis of the social construction of the notions of the child and childhood within a Western context to illustrate that the images we hold around children are historically and culturally specific. I intentionally locate this chapter's historical overview within a Western perspective; however, I acknowledge that doing so silences within my chapter other historical constructions of children and childhood. I argue later in the chapter that Western perspectives of children and childhood have imposed a worldview on the way in which current early childhood education is understood and practiced. It is also important to recognize that the historical account I present is an incomplete reconstruction of historians' interpretations of found data and records of the historical lives of children (Gittins, 2009). Further, a historian's interpretation is subjective in that it reflects the discourses she or he employs in analyzing the historical data. For example, some historians assert that the sources available to study how children have been constructed over time are themselves highly problematic because they primarily reflect upper-class children and are largely found in art and religious work (e.g., Gittins, 2009; Jenks, 2005, 2009).

In the chapter's third section, I offer a brief account of how the subject of the early childhood student and educator is understood within British Columbia and the broader Canadian context. The section includes a short historical summary of the education of early childhood educators within Canada and closes with a concise review of the current research investigating teacher preparation programs for early childhood educators. This literature review focuses on early childhood teacher preparation programs within Canada, with attention to relevant international research to more fully explore research into the relationship between beliefs and practice.

The fourth and final section of Chapter 2 is a review of the literature looking at how teacher educators are introducing students to the practice of pedagogical narrations or documentation. This section's purpose is to provide the reader with a contextual understanding of how the early childhood educator remains a contested subject and how those tensions are reflected in teacher preparation programs. As well, it aims to demonstrate how this research project will build on and extend the current research in early childhood teacher education thinking within the scholarship of the reconceptualizing movement in early childhood education (see, for example, Cannella, 1997; Dahlberg & Moss, 2005; Dahlberg, Moss, & Pence, 1999, 2007; Langford, 2008; Lenz Taguchi, 2010; MacNaughton, 2003, 2005; Olsson, 2009; Pence & Pacini-Ketchabaw, 2008; A. Taylor, 2013).

The Birth of the Human Condition of Childhood: A Western Perspective

The Middle Ages.

Conversations regarding children and childhood did not begin in the Middle Ages. History, however, is a story, and all stories need a beginning point. The social historian Philippe Ariès is credited with being one of the first scholars to assert that childhood has been socially and historically constructed and does not reflect a universal and biological truth (Cannella, 1997), and Ariès commenced his story in the Middle Ages. Ariès (1962) writes that in medieval society, the notion of childhood did not exist and children were seen as miniature adults rather than as a distinct category of human beings (Gittins, 2009). This view did not mean that children were ignored or neglected, but rather that once a child could manage without the constant physical supervision of a caregiver, he or she functioned within adult society (Ariès, 1962). Gittins (2009) cautions that Ariès formulated the majority of his theory from the way in which children were represented in art over different historical times, ignoring other artefacts that may

have presented different representations of children. During the Middle Ages, Ariès asserts, children were painted as miniature adults or as representations of the Christ child who, according to Jenks (2005), appears as a small man: "a wizened homunculus without the rounded appeal and vulnerability of the latter-day infant" (p. 56). It was not until the end of the Middle Ages that the children painted as part of family groups or in everyday scenes were depicted as being different from adults and were more physically representative of the biological child (Gittins, 2009).

The Enlightenment.

For Ariès (1962), the construction of the child as a distinct entity from adults came about between the 13th and 17th centuries, with Christianity being the dominant influence. The Church's focus on original sin and the need to save individual souls through religious teaching and protection from corruption created the conditions needed to construct an identifiable group that could be saved (Cannella, 1997). Thus began the process of separating children by age, gender, and capacity so as to protect the younger and more vulnerable child from the corrupting influence of older children. At this time, clothes and materials that could identify the child by age were introduced. Male children, for example, went from wearing petticoats worn by both sexes, to a skeleton suit at around age six, followed by a modified adult dress at age ten, moving to full male costume at around 15 to 16 years of age (Ariès, 1962). Given the demands of childhood, namely, "material provision, time and emotion and its attendant paraphernalia of toys and special clothing" (Jenks, 2005, p. 57), childhood was a luxury afforded only by the more wealthy class. The lower classes "kept up the old way of life which made no distinction between children and adults, in dress or in work or in play (Ariès, 1962, p. 61).

Ariès (1962) argues that the modern child emerged around the 18th century in conjunction with the Enlightenment, which saw the rise of capitalism, the middle class, religious reforms, and

the power of science. The thinking of the Enlightenment period opened up the possibility for rational man to use reason and knowledge to seek a better life for both himself and society. John Locke (1632–1704), for example, presented a tabula rasa discourse that asserted that children are born as blank slates and require the direct guidance and training of adults to develop into rational human beings (Kehily, 2009). For Locke, the child was an adult in the making and it was the responsibility of adults to shape and mould children into moral, mature, and responsible citizens (Jenks, 2005).

In contrast, Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778), in his theory of human nature, asserted that morality is not a social construct but that human beings have a natural and innate capacity for reasoning and moral thought (Jenks, 2005). From Rousseau's perspective, human beings were corrupted through their participation in larger society. Rousseau reverently argued that "children embody a state of innocence, purity and natural goodness that is only contaminated on contact with the corrupt outside world" (Kehily, 2009, p. 5).

Both of these positions strongly expressed an interest in the process of growing up as an opportunity to enhance civilization through the education of the young. Jenks (2005) writes that, as a result of the Enlightenment,

> we witness the arrival of a new category of being, one that is fresh and frail and consequently a target for correction and training by the growing standards of rationality that came to pervade the time. Once a concern with the child's physical health and well-being had been institutionalized, along with an attention to their moral welfare, then our model for modernity is almost complete. The child has moved through time from obscurity to the centre stage. (p. 58)

Once viewed as distinct and separate from adults, children were now perfectly positioned to be taken up as subjects of science—subjects who could be defined, quantified, and classified (Rose, 1998).

Modernity and the modern child.

Historians describe the 19th and 20th centuries in Europe and North America as a time of modernization, beginning with the Industrial Revolution. Modernization is most closely connected with industrialization, constant change, and a strong interest in the field of science (Weiner, 1966, cited in Cannella, 1997). The two key process of modernization are secularization and individualization (Cannella, 1997). Secularization refers to the organization of human activities for efficiency and practicality in which science exists as the authority rather than religion. Individualization can be understood as choice, responsibility, and determination, as belonging to the rational and independent individual.

During this time, the French philosopher Auguste Comte (1798–1857) wrote a series of papers in which he outlined an epistemological perspective known as positivism (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009). This vision of science holds that knowledge is attainable given the correct methodology and that the world contains universal truths that can be uncovered (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). For positivists, genuine knowledge was to be employed to resolve the problems of both the individual and of social organizations (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009).

It was in the spirit of modernism and positivism that children and childhood came under society's gaze. Cannella (1997), citing the earlier work of scholars such as Bloch, Burman, Kincheloe, and Woodhead, argued that the new science of psychology had "perhaps the greatest influence on the construction of the child" (p. 32); other writers (see, for example, Burman, 2008a, 2008b; Jenks, 2005, 2009; Rose, 1998; Walkerdine, 1998, 2009; Woodhead, 2009)

agreed. History notes that the first researcher to publish a study of the child was Charles Darwin when he wrote of his observations on the development of his infant son (Burman, 2008b). The principle aim of his study and others that followed was "to discover the origins and specificities of mind, that is, the human mind" (Burman, 2008b, p. 15). Equating the child with a "savage" or the "underdeveloped," researchers assumed that through the scientific observation of the child, the required stages of development toward the rational man would be discovered (Burman, 2008b; Cannella, 1997). This line of thinking was inspired by the theory of recapitulationism, which held that the stages of human evolution are illuminated in the development of the child. Thus the notion that children pass through specific stages of development toward adulthood gained general acceptance, further constructing childhood as natural and as distinct from adulthood (Cannella, 1997).

The historic nature versus nurture debate as to whether the developmental outcome of any given human being rests with the influence of genetic endowment or with the environment was also a question to be explored within this new field of developmental psychology. Francis Galton (1822–1911), an English scientist and a relative of Charles Darwin, coined the term *nature versus nurture* . It is worth noting that while this debate is currently associated with questions regarding the origins of knowledge and learning and is seen as an anthem for change, it originated as a theory to explain the immutability of human behaviour (Burman, 2008a). Within the context of this debate and the social upheaval and unrest of the industrial revolution, politicians and the new professionals of social scientists looked to science to address social problems (see, for example, Burman, 2008b; Cannella, 1997; Gittins, 2009; Walkerdine, 1998, 2009).The nature versus nurture debate became a central component of research that attempted to identify and regulate members of the population who were considered to be of "poor quality"

(Cannella, 1997). Burman (2008a) writes that the concept of "degeneracy that [was] now attached to the further impoverished poor elided mental and moral qualities to the extent that the object of political anxiety and scientific intervention became the 'feebleminded', who came to signify physical, moral, mental and political disintegration" (p. 19). For Ariès (1962), the product of this reformed thinking was the well-bred child in contrast to the unruly child characteristic of the lower classes. The well-bred child, writes Ariès (1962), was to be "preserved from the roughness and immorality which would become the special characteristics of the lower classes" (p. 328).

Technologies such as observation and mental testing emerged as the tools of scientific research for controlling social order (Rose, 1998). Burman (2008a) explains that "the psychological individual was a highly specified and studied entity whose mental qualities and development were understood by virtue of comparison with the general population" (p. 20). Using the comparative scores of an age-graded population obtained from observation and mental testing, a fictionalized ideal child was constructed (see, for example, Burman, 2008a, 2008b; Cannella, 1997; Gittins, 2009; Jenks, 2005, 2009). In this way, the constructed category of children could now be broken down into subcategories, such as normal and abnormal. The more discrete categorization of children then created a need for a two-fold intervention strategy, the first being the surveillance of the normal child to prevent any possibility of a descent into pathology and the second being the identification and regulation of the abnormal child in order to rectify the pathology. With the emergence of the normal child, childhood was positioned as a social construct to become understood as a natural and universal state of being distinct from adulthood.

The natural child.

During the 19th and 20th centuries, positivism was hegemonic as the theoretical framework underpinning the research conducted within developmental psychology. Positivism, as previously stated, is founded on the belief that scientific methods can uncover universal truths about the world. Developmental psychology sought to construct a narrative of mental life in which generalized characteristics of development could be understood in age-graded stages. This objective was achieved in two ways: the development of intelligence tests that measured mental age and equated it to chronological age, and the work of the American psychologist Arnold Gesell (1880–1961), who used clinical observations of children to develop sequential and age-graded characteristics of development. Each month and year of development was attributed to specified achievements and capacities (Burman, 2008a). Chronological age became analogous with developmental age, and, more importantly, these norms and standards, being derived from objective scientific methods, were given the status of universal truths (see, for example, the work of Erik Erikson, Sigmund Freud, Lawrence Kohlberg, and Jean Piaget). The modern child was now understood as natural and universal.

The universal child.

Walkerdine (1998) suggests that principles of development specific to the notion of a known child "have become so taken for granted it is difficult to see precisely what should be questioned about them" (p. 155). These principles of the developing child are enshrined with such high levels of validity and reliability that, as educators, we are often shocked and dismayed when children who are provided with best pedagogical practice experience failure (Walkerdine, 1998). A single image of a typical and, above all, natural child, enshrined in very specific beliefs and assumptions, has led to a constructed image of a universal child (see, for example, Burman,

2008a, 2008b; Dahlberg et al., 2007; Pence & Hix-Small, 2007). Perhaps even more troubling is that these developmental principles, which, as Rose (1998) asserts, have been adopted as natural and normal, are based on research conducted on Western children, thus they disregard the experiences of more than 90% of the world's children (Arnett, 2008; Henrich, Heine, & Norenzayan, 2010; Pence & Hix-Small, 2007).

In reviewing the genealogy of the social construction of a universal child, it is evident that this construct privileges the assumptions, beliefs, and histories of Western culture and, as a result, reflects the inequities and injustices that are found within that culture. For example, the vast majority of research embodied within the universal child construct was conducted by men, and its underlying premise was that the Western male was intellectually superior (Burman, 2008a). In terms of the early child study movement as a scientific enterprise, Burman (2008a) writes, "women were excluded because they were declared constitutionally incapable of regarding their children with the requisite objectivity" (p. 16).

The origin of the universal child is relevant in understanding current pedagogical practices in early childhood education (ECE) and how these practices are interpreted and taken up by the ECE student. Langford (2007) interviewed early childhood teacher educators in Ontario as part of a larger study looking at how ECE teacher education conceptualizes the "good" early childhood educator. She noted that it was common for instructors to represent the good educator as an "individual practitioner who draws upon what is universally known about child development" (p. 343). This is not surprising given that many of the ECE programs emerged with and from the development of the child study movement (e.g., in Canada, the work of William Baltz [Institute of Child Study, University of Toronto, 1951]), whose goal was to identify developmental milestones in order to promote optimal development in all children.

In early childhood education, an ECE student who is located within the dominant culture informing child development may construct a very different meaning of development than a student who is located within a culture silenced by the discourses of child development. Students positioned inside the dominant culture may read the ideas of child development as a confirmation of their culturally constructed understanding of children, resulting in what Burman (2008b) describes as the maintenance of "the colonial legacies structured within its [child development] assumptions and practices; the normalized presumption of home alongside the exoticised abroad" (p. 34). Langford (2006) contends that the discourse of a universal child results in an ECE student

> who is different culturally, linguistically, racially or ethnically and appears to be viewed as less competent (and thus is more marginalized) because first she must learn discourses that are assumed to be commonsense, and second she must shed cultural and material practices (such as teacher direction) incompatible with those of the good ECE. (p. 118)

From my experience, students who do not see themselves as being located in the dominant culture will talk about how their location provides them with a different lens to understand the theories presented in child development. Some of my students who are located within the dominant culture have difficulty seeing how culture is informing their interpretation of child development. This is quite evident in classroom conversations around independence and dependence in childhood. Within child development, independence is cited as a desirable achievement in the development of the child (Berk, 2008). Over the years, I have had many lively conversations with students who contest this assumption as false. MacNaughton (2005) cautions early childhood educators that reproducing and acting on "these allegedly universal

developmental norms [is] committing a form of violence that privileges cultural homogeneity" (p. 37). MacNaughton (2005) contends that it is only through the process of troubling and disrupting these developmental truths that it will be possible for ECE to make space for different ways of understanding the construct of childhood.

The Child as a Known Social Construction

In early childhood education there exist intertwined discourses of children and childhood whose beginnings lie in the social construction of the universal child (see, for example, Cannella, 1997; Cannella & Viruru, 2004; Dahlberg et al., 1999, 2007; Moss & Petrie, 2002). These discourses of children and childhood share a tendency to both naturalize and essentialize childhood as a universal concept that privileges Western concepts of the mature adult as an independent, rational, and self-regulated being (Woodhead, 1997, cited in Rogers, 2009). Within these discourses is a common understanding that the child is the "Other" to the adult, which implies that the adult can identify the child's needs and create programs to meet those needs (Cannella, 1997).

Below I discuss three prevalent Western discourses of childhood: children as sponges, empty vessels, and blank slates; children as innocent, pure, and naïve beings; and children as natural, playful, curious, inquisitive learners. Within the second subsection—my discussion of children as innocent and pure—I consider two iconic females—the Madonna and Lady Bountiful—who work to keep children pure.

Sponges, empty vessels, and blank slates.

Dahlberg, Moss, and Pence (2007) posit that John Locke's child sponge is present today in the image of the child who is empty and can be filled up with knowledge and skills to meet the future demands of citizenship within society. This image of the child is "seen as the first stage in

the process of producing a 'stable, well-prepared' workforce for the future, and thus as a foundation for long-term success in an increasingly competitive global market" (p. 45). This image holds that children are essentially "human becomings" as opposed to human beings (Qvortrup, 2008). Children, in being readied for their future as productive citizens, are valued for their future economic contribution. In this way, their value as a child in the present is marginalized. Within this image, early childhood programs are seen as setting a solid foundation for children to acquire the skills they will need in the future. Dahlberg et al. (2007) write that "each stage of childhood, therefore, is preparation, or readying, for the next and more important, with early childhood the first rung of the ladder and a period of preparation for school and the learning that starts there" (p. 45).

When children are seen as sponges or blank slates, they are positioned as requiring adults to identify the skills and knowledge they will need to have a successful developmental outcome. This image risks preparing children for a predetermined future in which learning occurs on a single pathway that limits possibilities of diversity in the future. Moss and Petrie (2002) argue that by presenting the future as a known commodity, we fail to recognize that it is unpredictable and will hold circumstances we cannot anticipate.

A discourse of children as blank slates has enabled the construction of early childhood programs that privilege the acquisition of skills and knowledge that will prepare children for the next step in their educational lives. As mentioned earlier, this discourse reflects the values of the universal child constructed within a Western paradigm. It can, therefore, pathologize individual children or communities of children who do not conform to universal standards of child development (Phoenix, 1987, cited in Burman, 2008b). For example, when looking at the issue of readiness for kindergarten, Wright, Diener, and Kay (2000) argue that as a result of cultural

and economic inequities, children from particular ethnic groups and lower socioeconomic groups are overidentified as not ready to enter kindergarten. This line of thinking has led to the construction of the good parent who readies the child and the bad parent who does not. The bad parent then requires parenting programs to "smarten up" as parents so that they can provide children optimal experiences to promote development (Millei & Lee, 2007).

Intervention programs designed to rehabilitate children and/or parents have a longstanding historical presence in both education and early childhood education. Historians have noted that the establishment of compulsory elementary school in the 1880s in both England and France was a response to concerns about pauperism and crime. Burman (2008a) writes: "Popular education was seen as rectifying these tendencies by inculcating good habits, or at least keeping potential disorderly groups busy and under scrutiny" (p. 18). Day nurseries and other forms of early childhood education rose to prominence by the end of the 19th century. Established by philanthropists and individuals concerned with social reform, these programs were designed for children of poor, immigrant, and culturally different families and offered instruction for both parent and child in the importance of hygiene, routines, and moral values (Pence, 1989). By the beginning of the 20th century, nursery schools were introduced to the children of the upper class. It was assumed that these families, unlike those from the lower classes, did not need interventions; rather, these programs were created to enhance the child's potential and at the same time share with mothers the emerging knowledge being discovered in the field of child development (see, for example, Burman, 2008a; Cannella, 1997; Dahlberg et al., 1999, 2007; Prochner & Howe, 2000).

Innocent, pure, and naïve beings.

Childhood as a time of innocence and purity is an image that is the ghost of Rousseau's child who, as previously mentioned, was born with an innate sense of morality and rationality. "In modern thought," Burman (2008b) writes, "the child represents the original, natural, romanticized source and core of personhood" (p. 190). This image of the child calls the adult to provide the child with protection, to shelter the child from the corrupting influences of society (Dahlberg et al., 2007). The child is positioned within the discourse of innocence as needy in contrast to the adult who is powerful and can therefore meet the child's needs.

It is within this discourse that we can talk about the loss of childhood experienced by children when they experience activities or events not deemed natural for children. The idea of innocent children, Burman (2008b) contends, makes it possible for us to view children who have lost their childhood as unnatural and in need of saving or redemption. Children living with the possibility of a loss of a natural childhood as result of child labour, war, sexual activity, or other experiences deemed to be unnatural are considered "at risk" and requiring special intervention. This discourse is prominent in the global context of early childhood education in which children living in countries considered to be underdeveloped are the focus of international aid campaigns designed to save children's childhoods (Burman, 2008b). In local, Western contexts, this loss of a natural childhood is more likely attributed to the lack of natural maternal care due to a mother's inability to "properly" care for her children or the absence of maternal care in the case of the child cared for in a day care setting. The desire to eradicate poor mothering in Western society is exemplified in Head Start programs in which mothers are taught how to be "good mothers" through classes that help them learn how to communicate with their children and provide them with the necessary educational experiences (Cannella, 1997). To reduce the perceived harm from

the lack of consistent care by one maternal figure, staff-child relationships within these programs are often modeled on the mother-child dyad constructed within the framework of attachment theory (Dahlberg et al., 2007).

John Amos Comenius (1592–1670), a minister and the creator of the first children's picture book, wrote that "learning in the mother's lap for the first six years of life served to be the root of all knowledge" (Cannella, 1997, p. 6). Pence (1989) argues that "one of the most powerful of all North American beliefs is the belief in the power and importance of Motherhood" (p. 140). A recent Google search of the question "is day care bad for children" found 3,310, 000 matches. The power of the image of motherhood is evident in the high level of interest in the possible negative effects of day care despite the lack of academic research demonstrating that "young children necessarily suffer harm or that their relationship with their mother is invariably undermined if care is shared" (Dahlberg et al., 2007). Interestingly, Pence (1989) cites a review of child care-giving patterns of 186 societies around the world in which Weisner and Gallimore (1977) found that "mothers were the principal caregivers in less than 20% of the societies studied; that in 32% of these societies, young children spent half or less of their time with their mothers" (p. 14). However, as Varga (2000) points out, this finding is not transferred to early childhood education in the context of the socio-biological ideology "that child care is a natural instinct of women, with non-familial child care simply being an extension of women's domestic activities" (p. 91).

Just as the historical figure of Florence Nightingale still haunts the image of nurses today, I would argue that the ghost of Lady Bountiful (Ford Smith, 1993, cited in Harper & Cavanaugh, 1994), who haunts the elementary classroom, is also present in early childhood education, and both ghosts work to keep children innocent and pure. Harper and Cavanaugh (1994) describe

Lady Bountiful as a representation of the white lady missionary or white lady teacher who emerged during the time of British imperialism (p. 42). They write:

> Lady Bountiful, to be bountiful, must know and feel what is wrong and be able to fix it. She needs to be at the centre but at the same time her needs—her own "self"—remain absent. (p. 42)

Meiners (2002) asserts that the legacy of Lady Bountiful in education is that of the "good teacher who is white, feminine, and middle class and who undertakes, through love, a calling and natural aptitude to save at risk children" (p. 89). Other writers (e.g., Ailwood, 2007; Burman; 2008a; Cannella, 1997; Dahlberg, Moss, & Pence, 1999, 2007; Jones & Osgood, 2007; Moss & Petrie, 2002; Pence, 1989) also describe the feminization of teaching and note that maternalism is seen as the basis of a good ECE teacher. The desire to make a difference or to change children's lives has been identified in the literature as motivation for becoming a teacher (see, for example, Langford, 2008; Meiners, 2002).

The legacy of Lady Bountiful is evident in the request of many of the students I work with to be placed in practicum sites that provide service for children who "really need good early childhood education." When I question them around their request, they often tell me that the children who live in a prosperous community such as West Vancouver (which is one of the communities within our university's geographical boundaries) are not "as interesting" as children in lower-income neighbourhoods and "don't need their help." When I consider my students' requests to work with a particular group of children, I wonder how they see themselves in relationship to these children and their families. These students talk about helping others and wanting to make a difference in the world, which on the surface sounds pretty good, yet I wonder, do they consider these children as the "exotic" other who, through their intervention,

will become just like them? Issues of power and colonization enter my thoughts. What discourses are my students engaging in when they see themselves as needing to "save" particular groups of children, yet other groups of children do not require their attention at all? Meiners (2002) writes that she too struggles with how to invite female students to challenge the fantasy of Lady Bountiful when that very desire to help drew them to the field of education. She asks, "how does one reconfigure the metaphors and historical images that structure and define a professional image" (2002, p. 86)? In my work with the students, I, like Meiners with her students, felt the agentic force of Lady Bountiful calling out for pedagogical practices that rescued young children.

Natural, playful, curious, inquisitive learners.

A third discourse coming out of the Western concept of a universal child is the assumption that all children naturally develop through stages in which they learn through active interaction with their environment. The focus of this discourse is on "the individual child who, irrespective of context, follows a standard sequence of biological stages that constitute a path to full realization or ladder-like progression to maturity" (Dahlberg et al., 2007, p. 46). This progression to maturity, as discussed earlier, is considered normal and natural despite being constructed from research data that reflect the experiences of less than 10% of the world's children (Arnett, 2008; Pence & Hix-Small, 2007; Pence, 2013). Within the context of early childhood education, this concept of the known child, and of a "right" way of experiencing childhood that is definable and thus measurable, has been adopted (Fendler, 2001). A known child allows the ECE field to engage in discussions of "best practice" for all children and to construct questions and develop procedures meant to measure the quality of early childhood environments (Dahlberg et al., 2007).

The "active, discovering, problem-solving, playing child," Burman (2008b) argues, is a reflection of Western children that serves to denaturalize children living in other parts of the world. Bloch (1986, cited in Cannella & Viruru, 2004) states: "The idealized version of childhood that is represented through play as natural and normal perpetuates Western dominant ideologies that are hoped to ultimately prepare children to be like the more 'advanced' Western male adult" (p. 107). Play, Cannella (1997) argues, is a cultural artefact and a central tenet in the child-centred practices of Western ECE programs. She writes:

> The 'naturalness' of play results in the perfect construct for use in education at home and school, intervention, evaluation, and therapy. We allow children to play; we encourage them; at times, we even teach them to play. We judge whether the type of play is normal for a particular age group, productive of cognitive or social growth, advanced, beneficial or even therapeutic. (p. 124)

Ariès (1962) suggests that from a historical perspective, people of all ages within Western culture played, and when that play was differentiated, it was along socioeconomic lines. Within the context of developmentally appropriate practice, play behaviours are age specific and require particular materials and experiences to ensure that children engage in meaningful and appraised play (see, for example, *Developmentally Appropriate Practice: Curriculum and Development in Early Childhood Education,* 4th ed. [Gestwicki, 2011]). Burman (2008b) contends that the definition of play "has been so commodified that it now requires that especially purchased objects are marketed for their qualities of skill or concept development" (p. 192). Additionally, Burman (2008b) argues that play, when understood as the work of children, serves to further segregate children from adults.

The cultural hegemony of play is illuminated in the current debate surrounding child labour and the notion that the absence of play in a child's life can be considered a key measure of childhood oppression (Burman, 2008b). Cannella and Viruru (2004) assert that while children and adults need protection from unsafe work environments, "child labour laws and marketing restrictions have in some cases thrust families and entire villages into poverty as well as denied the significant social contributions that can be made by children" (p. 194). This debate is reflected in the number of publications responding to Article 31, Convention on the Rights of the Child (United Nations, 1989), which notes play as a distinct right of the child as the child's natural way of learning (see, for example, Burman, 2008a; 2008b; Cannella, 1997; Cannella & Viruru, 2004; Grieshaber & McArdle, 2010; MacNaughton, Hughes, & Smith, 2007; Penn, 2005) In this way, Burman (2008b) suggests, the playful child maintains the historical discourses of colonization in which Western images of childhood are imposed on the world.

The preceding provided an overview of the social construction of the notions of child and childhood within a Western context to exemplify that the images of children held are historically and culturally biased. This research project was not an attempt to extend the current literature by confirming that the students I worked with held these images identified within the research or to demonstrate that they held different images of children and childhood. Rather, my research takes seriously the idea presented within the literature that hegemonic discourses make particular images of children and childhood possible, which in turn invites specific pedagogical practices. My research extends this work by examining how those discourses operated within the postsecondary classroom as the students and I attempted to disrupt our existing images of children and childhood.

Who and What Constitutes the Early Childhood Educator?

In British Columbia, the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) and Ministry of Health (MH) are the two legislative bodies that define the qualifications of an early childhood educator. Sections 25 through 28 of the Child Care Licensing Regulation (CCLR), Community Care and Assisted Living Act (Government of British Columbia, 2002), delineates the requirements for application for a certificate to practice as an early childhood educator. Schedule D of the CCLR provides a list of all postsecondary institutions in BC that offer approved ECE training. The Early Childhood Educator Registry (ECE Registry), located within MCFD, is the body that issues and renews the licence to practice for all early childhood educators and assistant educators under Section 24 of the CCLR. The director of the ECE Registry has the legislative authority to investigate and take action on an educator's licence (e.g., place conditions on, suspend, or cancel the licence) if there are concerns regarding the educator's practice. The ECE Registry also has the authority to approve and monitor the ECE training programs offered by postsecondary institutions and to certify early childhood educators who are currently certified in another jurisdiction in Canada.

The CCLR and the ECE Registry portray early childhood educators as having specific knowledge and skills to ensure the health, safety, and dignity of children in care, which is the standard of care stated in Section 7 of the Community Care and Assisted Living Act (Government of British Columbia, 2002). The knowledge and skills outlined in the CCLR, Section 25, and the required areas of instruction as stated by the ECE Registry refer to competency in the areas of child development; guidance; health, safety, and nutrition; program planning; and interpersonal communication. The requirement of specialized skills and knowledge reflects a professional view of the early childhood educator and sets the educators as

experts with a claim to "esoteric knowledge and technical capacities not available to others" (Rose, 1998, p. 84).

The early childhood educator is also portrayed in the CCLR as an individual of "good character [who] has the personality, ability and temperament necessary to manage or work with children" (Section 19, CCLR). The ECE Registry requires evidence, in the form of a letter of reference, that an applicant for an ECE licence to practice is of good character and has the personality and temperament to work with children. Langford (2006), using a Foucauldian conceptualization of academic discourses, writes that the "discourse of the good early childhood educator represents a corpus of statements whose organization is regular, systematic and rule bound" (p. 9). One of the rules within the discourse is that certain personal qualities are required of the good early childhood educator. Langford's research suggests that students and instructors in ECE perceive the personality and temperament of a good early childhood educator to embody "passion, caring, happiness, inner strength and alertness to children's individual needs" (p. 9). It is as if Meiners' (2002) Lady Bountiful is indeed the model early childhood educator embodied in both myth and regulations.

Producing the early childhood educator in the postsecondary system.

Prochner (2000) provides an in-depth historical overview of early childhood education in Canada, starting with the first formal programs in 1828 Montreal to provide care and education for poor children. Following a similar pattern of development to that in the USA, early childhood programs for the poor multiplied and expanded to provide education for the wealthy. A report by the Montreal Infant School Society (1831, cited in Prochner, 2000) explained, "Although originally introduced for the poorer classes, the system of instruction is equally calculated to produce correct principles in the children of all classes" (p. 20). Prochner concludes his

discussion by citing Patricia Schultz's (1978) assessment that early childhood education in

Canada has never outgrown "the stigma of its charitable origins or its reputation as a low-status,

inferior substitute for home care" (p. 61). This conclusion is significant to research looking at the

education of early childhood educators because it speaks to who is called to teach in the early

years and how they and others see their role in the lives of young children and their families.

Prochner's conclusion, however, should not be mistaken as an attempt to position ECE students

as objects of study who can be defined and known. Rather, it is to remind myself, as researcher,

of the complexity of educational research and its position within multiple historical, political,

racial, social, gender, and other discourses.

Meiners (2002) comments that, as a teacher educator in the United States, she cannot help

but wonder how the image of Lady Bountiful, who possesses the desire and natural aptitude to

help children in need, calls "particular bodies into teaching and not others" (p. 86). She describes

asking her students to introduce themselves to the class on the first day of school by sharing why

they wanted to become a teacher. Meiners writes that the students, the majority of whom were

female, said they had "always loved children" and described being called to the profession of

teaching with a desire to make a difference in "underprivileged" children's lives (p. 89). She

shares with the reader that she struggles with how to invite students to critically engage with and

"confront the Lady Bountiful fantasy that inhabits our teacher education classrooms" (p. 92). She

writes that "deviating from the ready-made mold" of traditional representations of the good

teacher "will require a little self-deconstruction and the capacity to invent" (p. 90). Meiners'

recommendation that dominant understandings be disrupted, analyzed, and reframed is a

foundational message that is taken up in my research project. The work done within this study

is framed within her acknowledgment that images cannot simply be ignored or dismissed;

rather, we need to pay attention to how images have been produced and are maintained in our classroom practices.

As noted by Prochner (2000), early childhood education in Canada has historical roots in the project of intervention to "save" the lower classes. The same is true for the elementary school system, where the Lady Bountiful legacy is entangled in its historical and present-day practices. Harper and Cavanaugh (1994) explain that Lady Bountiful emerged during the time of British imperialism when the white teacher in the colonies was seen as the "embodiment of chastity and purity who acted as a 'civilizing' force" (p. 42). In a review of current Canadian documents at the time of their research, they found that Lady Bountiful is still present in multicultural education that continues to require families to share their culture, while keeping the culture of whiteness silent. Harper and Cavanaugh argue that within education there is less of a need to "probe" others for cultural information than there is to make visible how discourses of race, gender, and ethnicity keep Lady Bountiful's legacy alive. The work of both Meiners (2002) and Harper and Cavanaugh is central to my work because it suggests that in order to answer questions of how to evoke change within education, the historical images and metaphors that regulate pedagogical practices must be made visible and interrogated.

Varga (2000) presents a historical account of the education of early childhood educators in Canada. She notes that there have been two distinct educational paths for early childhood educators in Canada, one for educating teachers to teach in the school system and the other educating caregivers to work in childcare programs. Students educated as teachers have the option of working in the school system, which includes kindergarten and preschool programs as well as full-day childcare programs. For example, in Manitoba, university-educated teachers may work in both kindergarten and preschool programs that operate in the elementary school system

and in preschool programs operating under Manitoba Early Learning and Child Care. Those students prepared as caregivers, however, are limited to working in programs outside the school system. Within the Manitoban context, early childhood educators receive their training in college programs and can only teach in preschools and full-day programs operating under Manitoba Early Learning and Child Care. Adding to the complexity of training issues, teacher education varies among and within provinces depending on whether the students are enrolled in Francophone, Anglophone, or religious institutions (Varga, 2000). Young and Boyd (2010), in a review of governance of teacher education in Canada, note that there still exists a disparity in teacher education across provinces. They found that in some provinces the role of accrediting teacher education programs is the responsibility of teachers themselves through the construction of colleges of teachers. In other provinces, governance is given directly to the universities, while other provinces maintain governance within the government.

Kindergartens entered the public school in 1887 in Ontario, and provisions for the instruction of kindergarten teachers was established in normal schools in the late 1800s (Varga, 2000). Normal schools, the first one opening in Toronto in 1847, were designed to "normalize" teaching so that all "individual styles and behaviours of teaching were replaced with the government approved model" (Varga, 2000, p. 68). By 1914, because it was deemed too restrictive to train teachers only for kindergarten, the primary stream of teacher education was developed to include kindergarten through grade 3. Varga notes that while this increase in teaching opportunities may have contributed to an increase in kindergarten teachers' salaries, it has resulted in several problems, most significantly the "increased subject orientation of kindergarten classrooms" (p. 77). The number of normal schools operated by provincial

ministries of education declined in response to the critique that they prepared teachers in a prescriptive practice.

Starting with the University of Alberta in 1945, teacher preparation moved to universities. By the end of the third quarter of the 20th century, the preparation of teachers in the public school system in Canada was located solely within universities and their faculties of education (Young & Boyd, 2010). Currently in British Columbia, student teachers interested in kindergarten may choose to take courses focusing on the primary grades (kindergarten through grade three), but these courses are not a requirement to teach kindergarten. Therefore, it is possible to find a teacher with no teaching experience or education in primary or early childhood education teaching 4- and 5-year-old children in a kindergarten.

Training for early childhood educators was not offered or required in Canada until the mid to late 1900s (Varga, 2000). In the first early childhood programs, with their emphasis on health and wellness, matrons who were skilled in household management provided care for older preschoolers, while trained nurses cared for younger children (Varga, 2000). In response to research in developmental theory, more importance was placed on caregivers' knowledge of child development (Varga, 2000). In the 1930s, the University of Toronto and McGill University began to offer specialized courses in the care of young children. As demand for early childhood programs increased, and with some provinces introducing training regulations, the preparation of early childhood educators became part of community college programs. Currently only two universities in Canada offer degrees in early childhood education, Capilano University in British Columbia and Ryerson University in Ontario.

The two streams of education are also present in the United States. Blank (2010) explains that the existence of separate streams reflects the tension between early childhood education

within and outside of the school system because it raises the question, "What does it mean to be a qualified early childhood teacher" (p. 394)? In a historical overview of the education of early childhood teachers in the US, Blank notes that the introduction of kindergarten teacher education sparked a debate about the best place to educate early childhood teachers. Those practicing as early childhood teachers in the school system are legitimized as teachers by the confirmation of a degree, while those without a degree remain outside the world of professional teachers. This debate is significant not only in that it continues today, but also that it is connected to the ambiguity of what and who an early childhood educator/teacher/caregiver/professional is. Further, it continues a quest within the academy to answer the question of what is best practice as demonstrated by high-quality teaching (Blank, 2010).

According to Blank (2010), one of the challenges of achieving consensus on what constitutes good practice in a field is the lack of consistency across education programs. Not surprisingly, Hyson, Biggar Tomlinson, and Morris (2009) note that when they randomly surveyed approximately half of all postsecondary institutions in the US offering early childhood teacher preparation programs (roughly 567 institutions), they found a substantial variability among programs. Blank (2009), commenting on the complexity of early childhood teacher education, notes that the question of how to prepare teachers is "complicated by ambiguity about what teachers should accomplish" (p. 391). Further, Whitebook (2009) states that the field has spent too much time considering the optimal length of training programs rather than focusing research into the content and practices of early childhood teacher training and education. My research is a response to this call. Its focus is not on the efficacy of a four-year degree program over a two-year diploma program. Instead, it attends to a content area (discourses of childhood)

in relation to practice within an investigation of a specific pedagogical practice (pedagogical narrations).

Research examining early childhood teacher education.

Kirylo and McNulty (2011), in their introduction to a special issue of *Childhood Education*, assert that early childhood and elementary teacher education programs are facing unparalleled demands for change to meet the needs of children in the 21st century. They cite numerous sources, from Harvard University to the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, that call for an increase in rigour, accountability, and assessment to ensure that student teachers learn *the* methods, skills, and techniques that are required to produce a quality education system at all grade levels. While Kirylo and McNulty do not deny that continued reform and change are foundational in the growth of any profession, they warn that a call for "sweeping changes" reflects a belief that teaching is a technical skill—a belief they feel ignores "the complexity and political nature of teaching" (p. 316).

The assertion that teacher education is merely a recycling of technical practices is not a recent revelation. George Counts, in an editorial written in 1935 for the *Teacher College Record,* strongly criticized the increase in the length of teacher education from two years to four if the mechanistic emphasis on practicality over transformative practices were to remain. Within the Canadian context, the establishment of normal schools for teacher preparation in 1847 was trumpeted as the way to ensure "sound education for the masses" so as to ensure that students had the "habits, predispositions, loyalties, and sentiments" to comply with government authority (Curtis, 1988, pp. 102–103, cited in Varga, 2000, p. 68). The call was clearly for teacher education to prepare children to be citizens of the future.

Saracho and Spodek (2003) note that while a 1996 report by the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future "assumes that well qualified teachers have a great impact on children's learning," few studies investigate the effectiveness of teacher education programs (p. 3). Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1993, 1999) argue that teacher education research at all levels of education is necessary to enhance teaching and learning for all students. They describe research investigating the concepts of *teacher* and *teaching* as being historically dominated by two paradigms. They contend that the most common form of research is framed within a paradigm in which the teacher is positioned as a technician, and so attempts "to capture the activity of teaching by identifying sets of discrete behaviors reproducible from one teacher and one classroom to the next" (1999, p. 6). The second paradigm understands teaching as a "highly complex, context, specific, interactive activity in which differences across classrooms, schools and communities are critically important" (p. 6). Yet, Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999) argue that research within both of these paradigms limits or conceals teachers as active participants in the generation of knowledge around teaching and learning. Extending the work of Lawrence Stenhouse (1985, cited in Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2006), they call for research into teaching, including in the postsecondary classroom, to be understood as "systematic and intentional inquiry" conducted by teacher-researchers (p. 7).

Building on their previous writings, Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2006) argue strongly that "the model of teacher development as training and retraining is retrograde and is inconsistent with contemporary understandings of teaching and learning" (pp. 687–688). They assert that teacher education should not be a training program, but that the focus should be on learning, which means attending to the beliefs, values, attitudes, and knowledges that student teachers

bring to teacher education. Cochran-Smith and Lytle write that students and teachers need to see that teaching

> requires the intentional forming and re-forming of frameworks for understanding practice. It is about how students and their teachers construct the curriculum, commingling their experiences, their cultural and linguistic resources, and their interpretive frameworks. Teaching also entails how teachers' actions are infused with complex and multilayered understandings of learners, culture, class, gender, literacies, social issues, institutions, "herstories" and histories, communities, materials, texts, and curricula. (p. 691)

The work of Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1993, 1999, 2006, 2009) is significant to my research on multiple levels in that they are calling for inquiries conducted by teacher-researchers that acknowledge the complexities and contradictions within education.

Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2009) assert that the academy has moved in the direction of seeing teachers as researchers in the areas of teaching and learning, but there still exists an underlying belief that research into education should be conducted on teachers and students. These authors continue to call for adoption of the idea that teachers at all levels are "deliberate intellectuals who constantly theorize practice as part of practice itself and the goal of teacher learning initiatives is the joint construction of local knowledge, the questioning of common assumptions and thoughtful critique" ("Theorizing and Contextualizing," para. 4). While Cochran-Smith and Lytle's work speaks mainly to school-based education, they strongly call for studies that direct the researcher's gaze at their own university classroom and interaction with students. Wisniewski (2000) echoes similar sentiments in his admonishment of universities for studying every aspect of education from kindergarten to grade 12 while "parallel behaviours in

our institutions … remain largely unexamined" (p. 8). Cochran-Smith (2003a) asserts that in order for there to be teachers who are agents of change in the school system, teacher educators themselves have to adopt a "process of continual and systematic inquiry wherein participants question their own and others' assumptions and construct local as well as public knowledge appropriate to the changing contexts in which they work" (p. 25).

While these scholars do not mention the education of early childhood educators, a literature review of that topic reveals a paucity of research. For example, Lobman, Ryan, and McLaughlin (2005) write that "the world of early childhood teacher preparation, in general, is under-researched, and little evidence exists to inform practice" (p. 1). Cooper (2014), the current editor of the *Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education*, speaks to this point in an editorial in which she states that "early childhood teacher educators must critically engage research and theory on multiple levels if we are to effectively produce, gauge or respond to changes in the field" (p. 1). However, Castle and Paris (2010) acknowledge that research into the field of early childhood educator education with a focus on practice does not carry the same legitimacy as broad-based empirical research and therefore is not undertaken by many scholars. They write that it is "risky business" to engage in research that critiques self and colleagues (p. 203). However, they also assert that when research is undertaken, "hard questions bravely pursued reveal paths of revisioning our programs and our profession" (p. 204).

Brown (2010) contends that when postsecondary teachers engage in research focusing on their own practice, they are contributing to a paradigm shift in which teachers are not merely the beneficiaries of research but are themselves part of the production of knowledge. By pointing out that it is often easier to obtain ethical approval for a venipuncture than for asking a student about a favourite book, she alludes to the ethical challenges that can prohibit teachers from researching

their own practice. She reminds the reader that an added layer of ethical complexity exists when the lines between researcher/teacher and student/participant are blurred, making questions of coercion difficult to answer. Within the Canadian context, Crocker and Dibbon (2008) find that "little evaluative research" has been undertaken in Canada to measure the success of preservice teacher education (p. 36). In their own research examining the practices of 56 postsecondary institutions in Canada, they relied extensively on international research to understand current models, reforms, and critiques of teacher preparation programs.

In the next section, I present research into early childhood teacher education and relevant research in general teacher education that focuses on disrupting student teachers' thinking.

Unpacking early childhood educator education.

As presented in Chapter 1, the beliefs of student teachers play an important role in regulating their practice with children and their understanding of education (see, for example, Britzman, 2003, 2009b; Cole & Knowles, 1993; Haniford, 2010; Harper & Cavanaugh, 1994; Pajares, 1992; Pereira, 2009; Vartuli, 2005; White, 2000; Wilcox-Herzog, 2002). Within early childhood teacher education research, a number of studies focus on particular beliefs that early childhood students bring to teacher preparation programs and beliefs held by early childhood educators. One study conducted by Avgitidou, Pnevmatikos, and Likomitrou (2013) investigates the beliefs that ECE students bring regarding childhood. The research questions framing their work were as follows: "Do preservice teachers systematically attribute specific characteristics to childhood?" "What are their beliefs about children's ability for decision-making" (p. 393)? Three hundred and sixteen students were interviewed and their responses were coded and analyzed. The results indicated that the "participants treated all children as belonging to the same social category without any hint for possible differentiations among its members" (p. 396). Avgitidou

et al. recommend three strategies to disrupt students' beliefs and assumptions so as to invite a practice that reflects a more complex, diverse, and competent child. The first is for students to be given the opportunity to acknowledge their own assumptions, and those held within the larger society, of childhood and children. The second is to provide the students with multiple theoretical frameworks with which to reinterpret their beliefs around children and childhood. The third is to have students participate in lived experiences with children, observe children and themselves in those experiences, and engage in discussions that allow the students to revisit the observations to reflect on their thoughts, assumptions, and beliefs, using different theoretical perspectives. This study is foundational to my research project because it argues that "opportunities for preservice teachers to systematically observe children in educational settings, followed by discussion of specific examples from the observations and reflection on their thoughts, assumptions, and interpretations, [are] crucial for a transformation of framework theory to take place" (Avgitidou et al., 2013, p. 402). My research project speaks directly to this request by introducing the practice of pedagogical narrations into the postsecondary classroom to support students in a process to make visible and disrupt hegemonic images of childhood.

Other studies have looked at other beliefs, such as understandings of play, inclusion, and so forth held by students entering early childhood education programs. For example, Sherwood and Reifel (2010) conducted a qualitative study looking at the beliefs that ECE students hold around play. Their findings suggest that students enter programs with diverse understandings of play and its role in early childhood education. Significant to my research study is Sherwood and Reifel's suggestion that ECE students need to spend time within their course work exploring the multiple and competing discourses within ECE. Langford (2008), in an examination of the

discourses that call young women to become early childhood educators, also recommends that course work and assignments should allow for adequate time to engage with and contest the dominant discourses that regulate ECE practice.

Patterson and Fleet's (2006) work with early childhood educators using written narratives to share their experiences highlights the importance of having artefacts that a group can revisit to disrupt their taken-for-granted assumptions and reframe their understandings. They conclude that this practice is relevant to early childhood students as a way to engage with the complexities of early childhood education. Patterson and Fleet recommend that ECE educators allow students the time to repeatedly revise and revisit their narratives so as to "recognize learners' concerns and open windows to new possibilities for insight and critical understanding" (p. 76).

In a study looking at the relationship between ECE students' beliefs around creativity and their practice, Eckhoff (2011) writes that

> preservice teacher learning communities are rich with potential for promoting
>
> relevant, authentic professional development around complex, critical issues
>
> facing the field of early childhood. Realizing this potential depends upon the
>
> willingness of preservice teachers and faculty members to engage with each in a
>
> mutual search for understanding. (p. 252)

Kroll (2013) writes that "exemplary" early childhood teacher education programs support student teachers in making visible underlying assumptions and beliefs so as to engage in a more socially just practice. Similar studies (see, for example, Broderick & Hong, 2011; Caudle & Moran, 2012; Collin, Karsenti, & Komis, 2013; Han & Neuharth-Pritchett, 2010; Kim & Kemple, 2011; Langford, 2007; Riojas-Cortez, Alanis, & Flores, 2013; Vartuli & Rohs, 2009; Yoo, 2009) exploring the relationship between beliefs and practice advocate for early childhood

teacher education programs to engage with pedagogical practices that invite students to examine, contest, revise, and reinterpret hegemonic discourses. A more recent study by Long, Volk, López-Robertson, and Haney (2014) extends this call, advocating for educators of ECE students to "continue to examine our own biases, practices, and ability to enact the critical perspectives we espouse; put ourselves in the company of activists who make a difference, study and learn from and with them" (p. 161).

The work of Toll, Nierstheimer, Lenski, and Kolloff (2004) around the beliefs that students bring to teacher education was particularly significant in supporting my thinking around my methodology and work with students. These authors, as I mentioned in Chapter 1, refer to their "urge to wash [students] clean from the ideas they have learned" (p. 164). What spoke to me in this statement was their acknowledgement that this goal is troubling in that it assumes that knowledge is a truth rather than a social construct. Their work brought forward questions around the concept of the subject, as the urge to "wash away" a set of beliefs and create a clean new subject requires a stable, unified entity who can choose to stay clean. Further, Toll and colleagues' urge to wash their students clean was a tension in my own work as I consciously strove not to wash clean either the students or myself.

Attending to the complexity of education and teacher training.

As noted in Chapter 1, Britzman (2003) asserts that learning how to be a teacher "concerns coming to terms with one's intentions and values, as well as one view of knowing, being, and acting in a setting characterized by contradictory realities, negotiation, and dependency and struggle" (p. 31). In the initial stages of planning my research and within my data analysis, I was cognizant of the multiple and competing discourses encountered by early childhood students in early childhood education and the field of education in general. Cochran-

Smith's (2003b) statement that "teaching is unforgivingly complex" (p. 97) succinctly captures the sentiments of scholars whose work reminds us that the very nature of teaching and education itself is contradictory, messy, and problematic (see, for example, Britzman, 1996, 2003; Cochran-Smith, 2000, 2003a, 2003b; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2006, 2009; Jackson, 2001). As I began my research, a study by Jackson (2001) helped me to appreciate how this complexity resonated in my own work with student early childhood educators. In her study, Jackson described the "wrenching, uneven experience" of one student teacher, Annie, who took on such completely different personas and teaching practices as she moved between two classrooms that she required assurance that she was not "schizophrenic" (p. 388). Observing Annie taking up competing discourses as she struggled to understand her identity as teacher, Jackson noted that the identity of the teacher as unfixed subject opens up the category of teacher from a normative ideal to a "descriptive feature of experience" (p. 395).

In the context of early childhood education, Blank (2009) explored two teachers' experiences as they encountered multiple and, at times, contradictory scripts. Blank argues that "early childhood teaching is situated in particular school contextual contradictions that have the potential to be both indoctrinating and transformative forces" (p. 251). Therefore, she calls for teacher preparation programs to provide student teachers with the opportunity to recognize teaching scripts so as to be able to make visible the values and beliefs embedded within them. One such script is child-centred practice, which calls for early childhood educators to engage in particular behaviours, using words that have particular meanings. Chung and Walsh (2000) write that the term *child-centred practices* hides "complex and contradictory underlying assumptions about children and their learning and development that should be addressed" (p. 231) within the ECE field. This call is repeated in other research within teacher education that seeks to bring to

the forefront the complexity of teaching that results from taken-for-granted understandings that mask the political, historical, and changing meanings of discourses (in the Canadian context of early childhood education, see, for example, the work of Rachel Langford, 2006, 2007).

Helsing's (2007) work explores what she terms "the uncertainty of teaching," that is, the times when there is not a right answer or a right way to be a teacher. Helsing asserts that teacher training programs need to help students attend to the ambiguities and uncertainties of teaching, so that as teachers they do not see these challenges as "anomalous, indicating that they are teaching well, or are aspects of the job which should and will vanish with time and increased expertise and experience" (p. 1330).

Next, in this chapter's fourth and final section, I review the literature on using pedagogical documentation in ECE teacher education. My purpose is to provide the reader with a contextual understanding of how the early childhood educator remains a contested subject and how those tensions are reflected in teacher preparation programs.

Pedagogical Documentation in ECE Teacher Education

A review of the literature revealed a number of studies investigating ECE students' engagement with pedagogical documentation as a tool for inquiry and reflection in their work with children. A number of studies investigated how the techniques of documentation are learned and applied by student teachers in their work with children (Edwards et al., 2007; Hong & Trepanier-Street, 2004; Kline, 2008; Tegano & Moran, 2005; Wein, Guyevsky, & Berdoussis, 2011). Within these investigations, student teachers worked through the documentation process with a focus on interpreting children's engagement in the classroom as part of developing emergent or negotiated curriculum. Germane to my work was the significance these researchers

placed on providing students with time to engage with the documentation in a cyclical manner to allow for revisions and refinements to the collective thinking process.

Of particular relevance to my work was a study in which Bowne, Cutler, DeBates, Gilkerson, and Stremmel (2010) worked with ECE students over a three-year period to examine collaborative dialogue and documentation as tools of pedagogical inquiry. The researchers met weekly with small groups of students to engage with the pedagogical documentation using the Project Zero format (see *Making Learning Visible* at Harvard Project Zero: http://www.pz.gse.harvard.edu/making_learning_visible.php). Their study focused primarily on how the Project Zero format supported the students in understanding the process of documentation as a tool for inquiry. Significant to my work is Bowne et al.'s statement that their work provides evidence that early childhood teacher education needs to provide opportunities for students to "talk with one another to exchange ideas, work on problems, revise thinking, share understanding, accommodate when differences arise and create documentation pieces to make learning visible" (p. 57). Referring to their work as an exploratory study in early childhood teacher education, Bowne et al. call for further study in which students engage in pedagogical documentation as a collaborative inquiry. My study takes up this call as I look at how pedagogical narration is a practice that exists in a collaborative process with a commitment to the public exchange of ideas for the purpose of coconstructing knowledge.

Similar to Bowne et al. (2010), MacDonald and Sánchez (2010) emphasized the importance of collaborative engagement, which "required that students attend to multiple 'readings' and/or perspectives within the group and to both express their interpretation(s) and listen to the perspectives of others" (p. 27). They developed a "protocol for educational dialogue," which they used with ECE students at a community college and teacher education

students in an undergraduate program to support the students in their use of pedagogical

documentation as a tool for inquiry (p. 26). I relied loosely on MacDonald and Sánchez's

protocol in my study as a way for the students to initially structure their discussions.

Hillevi Lenz Taguchi's (2007, 2010) work with ECE students and pedagogical

documentation in Sweden was foundational in the development of my research project. In *Going*

Beyond the Theory/Practice Divide in Early Childhood Education: Introducing an Intra-active

Pedagogy, Lenz Taguchi calls for the use of pedagogical documentation to extend from a

practice used solely with/by young children and their teachers to a practice in the postsecondary

classroom. In her book, she shares with the reader her work with pedagogical documentation and

a collaborative writing process in a one-year reconceptualized early childhood teacher education

program in Stockholm. In the program, the students' learning processes are documented and the

instructors and students work with the documentation so that the students have the opportunity to

learn how to read the documentation with theory "or put theories to work in relation to their own

lived experiences " (Lenz Taguchi, 2010, p. 119). As part of this reconceptualized early

childhood teacher education program in Stockholm, Lenz Taguchi's colleague Anna Palmer

(2009) used pedagogical documentation in teaching a mathematical course to support student

teachers in coming to understand their subjectivity as mathematicians. Palmer's work with the

student early childhood teachers demonstrates the challenges involved in reconstructing

mathematical subjectivity and, germane to this study, how pedagogical documentation is a

pedagogical tool for making visible hegemonic discourses that shape understandings and

practices. The work of Lenz Taguchi and of Palmer underscores the need for research to

investigate the ways in which pedagogical practices such as pedagogical documentation in a

teacher education are critical to the reconceptualization of the early childhood teacher.

Summary

In this chapter, I have provided a brief overview of the social construction of the concepts of the child and childhood within a Western context to demonstrate how the images we hold around children are historically and culturally biased. I also explored the current literature to illustrate how the early childhood educator exists as a contested subject and how those tensions are reproduced in early childhood teacher education programs. I concluded the chapter by looking at the current research in the area of early childhood teacher education, focusing in particular on research that looks at the use pedagogical documentation in postsecondary education.

Next, in Chapter 3, I work with the ideas of Michel Foucault (1926-1984) and other poststructural writers to examine the notions of power, knowledge, and truth from a poststructural perspective. My intent is to demonstrate how particular discourses of the child and the early childhood educator have become hegemonic within the ECE field. I also introduce the work of Karen Barad, who extends Foucault's discussion of power to attend to agentic forces of the material and discursive. Barad's work provides me with a framework to then consider how material-discursive practices regulate understandings of childhoods and how matter matters in learning.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework: Agency, Subjectivity, and Other Teacher/Researcher Problems

Doing theory requires being open to the world's aliveness, allowing oneself to be lured by curiosity, surprise, and wonder. . . . Theories are living and breathing reconfigurings of the world. (Barad, 2012, p. 207)

The previous chapter provided a historical overview of the construction of the child and how the child has been positioned within early childhood education (ECE). The latter sections of the chapter consisted of a brief account of how the subjects of the early childhood student and educator are understood within British Columbia and the broader Canadian context and a concise review of the current research investigating teacher preparation programs for early childhood educators.

This chapter looks at how issues of truth, knowledge, and power regulate the child and educator's subjectivity and pedagogical practice in early childhood settings. The chapter takes a socio-material turn, beginning with Foucault's understanding of the working of power to then account for, with the work of Barad (2007), "the agential contributions of all material forces (both 'social' and 'natural')" (p. 66).

Truth, Knowledge, and Power

Knowledge, from a Foucauldian perspective, cannot be understood as simply technical expertise or the knowledge of common sense (Foucault, 1972). Rather, the culture, history, gender, language, beliefs, and practices in a community construct knowledge. In this way, knowledge is neither neutral nor objective, but rather is local, partial, and situated (Foucault, 1972). Knowledge, Foucault writes, makes possible what can be thought, said, or written. Knowledge can be thought of as an understanding that is specific to a particular time in history

or to a particular group of people, and it is used as a lens for interpreting the world. This means that knowledge is always in a state of construction. It is never seen as a whole, and it is understood as an interpretation rather than an objective fact or truth (Hacking, 1999). If knowledge is seen as incomplete, it cannot be generalized, applied, or replicated. That is, there are no universal truths from which standards or norms can be generated to measure, for example, the normal age for the acquisition of independent toileting skills. If there is no normal age at which children are more likely to be able to manage toileting independently, then independent and assisted toileting routines for children would be supported equally in both an infant-toddler space and a preschool space.

Foucault strongly asserts that knowledge and power are not identical, but intertwined. He writes that "knowledge and power are integrated with one another and there is no point in dreaming of a time when knowledge will cease to depend on power (Foucault, 1980, p. 52). The question of analysis for Foucault is not "What is knowledge?" but "How is knowledge created and maintained?" The central question in analyzing knowledge is how is it produced, spread, changed, and used?

Foucault (1972) asserts that discourses are made possible not by objective reality but by the existence of particular social and historical conditions. Histories, contends Rose (1998), set forth the conditions that create the divide between what can be said and what cannot be said. By disturbing the history, we are better able to understand how it was possible for what we know as a truth or reality to have been established (Rose, 1998). This understanding is accomplished by "examining the historical spaces of the past and present in which (that) knowledge is socially constructed" (Popkewitz & Brennan, 1998, p. 535).

Discourse

Foucault was interested in discourse, not as a study of language, but rather for what discourse does. In *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, Foucault (1972) describes discourse as "the general domain of all statements, sometimes as an individualizable group of statements, sometime as a regulated practice that accounts for a certain number of statements" (p. 80). Discourse produces knowledge in that it governs the way in which we can not only talk and think about something, but also how we can act or practice in relation to something. Weedon (1987) writes that discourses "constitute the 'nature' of the body, the unconscious and conscious mind and emotional life of the subjects which they seek to govern" (p. 105). Yet while discourse, for Foucault (1990), was a vehicle of control, it was also an instrument for resistance: "Discourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart it" (p. 101).

Why discourse?

The question of analysis for Foucault (1990) is the way in which discourse is produced and the procedures that constrain discourse. Foucault (1984), in response to a question on disciplinary power, noted that the success of schools and school discipline is "in making children's bodies the object of highly complex systems of manipulation and conditioning" (p. 67). Building on his response, it could be suggested that in a Foucauldian analysis of child development, for example, the focus would not rely on developmental theory to access a linear progression demonstrating the acquisition of skills and knowledge. Rather, the focus would be on how developing beings are regulated and disciplined to acquire particular skills and knowledge, and the technologies that are in place to exclude the acquisition of other skills and

knowledge. It could be hypothesized that in looking at development, Foucault's interest would be on the discipline of the body and the control of the population.

Procedures of exclusion.

Foucault (1990) asserts that power and knowledge are intertwined in discourse. In his 1971 lecture "The Order of Discourse," Foucault explained that in every society "the production of discourses is at once controlled, selected, organized and redistributed according to a certain number of procedures" (p. 8). Foucault refers to these techniques as "rules of exclusion" (p. 8). Further, he asserts that three forms of prohibition rules speak to objects, practices, or rituals pertaining to the circumstance, and other rules govern who has the privilege to speak on a specific topic. The first rule, he writes, is what is prohibited: "We know perfectly well that we are not free to say anything, that we cannot simply speak of anything, when we like or where we like; not just anyone, finally, may speak of just anything" (p. 8). The second rule of prohibition speaks to the notion of division or rejection. Using the example of insanity, Foucault argues that the content of the "madman's" speech did not exist, "it was taken for mere noise" (p. 9). The speech of the madman was rejected, excluded by the division between what is seen as reason and what is viewed as insanity. The third rule of prohibition addresses the conflict between true and false, which Foucault terms the "will to truth" (p. 10). The will to truth is connected to the way in which "knowledge is employed in a society, the way in which it is exploited, divided, and, in some ways, attributed" (p. 11). The will to truth can be understood as exclusionary tactics whose function it is to determine which statements can be considered true and which ones false. Sheridan (1980) writes that that the will to truth has "proved to be the most dominant and most all pervasive" form of exclusion (p. 123). In the desire to seek and know truth, Sheridan explains,

"it is as if true discourse cannot recognize the will to truth that informs it" (p. 123). In this way, particular statements are understood to be common sense, normal, and natural—the truth.

Regime of truth.

When particular understandings that are officially sanctioned as truths by culturally normative knowledge (e.g., child development) are woven together, they become a "regime of truth" that possesses the power to inform and direct our way of understanding and being in the world (Foucault, 1980). Once a discourse becomes "normal" and "natural," St. Pierre (2000) explains, "it is difficult to think outside of it" (p. 485). For example, MacNaughton (2005), relying on the work of Foucault, labels developmental theory a regime of truth that regulates understandings of what beliefs, values, language, practices, and so forth are acceptable in an early years setting. Gore (1993) writes that a set of truths operating as a regime of truth produces an authoritative consensus about what should be said, done, and thought in a particular field.

An analysis of truth.

Foucault argued that truth is socially constructed; therefore, the point of analysis is to reveal the complex and varied strategies in place that support and reinforce truth and those that exclude or challenge alternative versions of events. Within the analysis, those practices that bring to life and maintain particular regimes of truth can be exposed (Gore, 1993).

For Britzman (1994, 2003), both the identity and the role of the teacher are constructed through discourses and discursive practices of education. Discourses are the metaphors, images, rules, practices, and languages that construct an understanding of a concept or object; they direct the ways we think and talk about an idea or concept (Foucault, 1972). Equally important to the understanding of discourses is that they create the conditions that allow particular practices, voices, and ideas to be silenced or excluded (Foucault, 1972). In this way discourses make it

possible to talk about an object in one way and not another. For example, a discourse of

childhood that assumes that innocence is synonymous with childhood allows us to speak of "lost

childhoods" in circumstances, such as those of a child soldier or prostitute, in which such

children are no longer considered innocent (Burman, 2008b).

Returning to my previous example, when I asked the students to describe an ideal

teacher, I noted that they frequently used the adjective *patient*. When I press the students to

elaborate, I am told that a "good" teacher is never frustrated by children, that "patient" means

always being understanding of the "more difficult children," and that a "good teacher" knows

what to do to be patient with children. Many of the students share memories of "bad" teachers

who expressed frustration, anger, and other so-called negative emotions in the presence of

children. It is my perspective that within this discussion, a discourse emerges of a teacher as a

non-emotive being. In addition, there exists a discourse that characterizes children as good or

bad. Britzman (1994) asserts that these discourses are glorified images containing "non-

problematic scripts" that dismiss the complexity of teaching and treat the teacher's role and

identity as one and the same.

Foucault (1972) argues that concepts (e.g., childhood) that are produced and officially

sanctioned by culturally normative knowledge (e.g., child development) function as dominant

discourses that govern and regulate ways of thinking, acting, and feeling. Various authors (e.g.,

Bloch & Popkewitz, 1995; Cannella, 1997; Dahlberg, Moss, & Pence, 2009; MacNaughton,

2003, 2005) have argued that the hegemony of child development within the early years

literature has silenced other ways of thinking about young children. This is not to suggest that

child development theory is intrinsically bad or entirely incorrect; however, its dominance has

privileged one body of knowledge over others. In this way, child development theory operates in many early years spaces as what Foucault (1972) would call a regime of truth.

An example of how child development operates as a regime of truth is illustrated in Langford's (2007) examination of the "good" early childhood educator as conceptualized by students and instructors and within the textbooks used in ECE college preparation programs. Her analysis of the discourses flowing within these three key bodies shows that a single, normative identity is constructed from the knowledge of child development. Langford (2008) explains that within the college preparation program, knowledge about child development distinguishes "those who are and those who are not good early childhood educators" (p. 348). In this way, the discourse of child development and the discursive practices associated with it construct an illusion that there is a "non-problematic script" and a single, normative identify for early childhood education students to master as they develop into an early childhood educator. For Britzman (2003), to "speak and act as if there is a monolithic culture of teacher, students, or schools is to take up a discourse that is at once authoritative and impossible" (p. 71).

From a poststructural perspective, the purpose of discourse analysis is not to discover meanings (because meaning is fluid and cannot be grasped) but to make space for questions that consider the conditions in which the discourse exists and functions (St. Pierre, 2000). Bové (1990) presents the following as critical questions to be considered within a poststructural perspective: "How does discourse function? Where is it to be found? How does it get produced and regulated? What are its social effects? How does it exist" (p. 54)? MacNaughton (2005) contextualizes Bové's (1990) questions to consider how the discourse of child development exists within early childhood education. She asks: "What is the right/true way to understand and practice your work in early childhood? What authority do these understandings and practice

have? Who will sanction you if you don't conform to these understandings and practices" (p. 41)? MacNaughton's questions are helpful in that they ask educators to reflect on the truths that regulate and govern their practice with young children.

The disciplinary power of discourse.

Foucault (1980) argues that disciplinary power, unlike the historic power of sovereigns, is power that both circulates and is productive. Power is productive as it forms the subject and creates the condition of possibility that enables the subject's actions (Davies, 2000). Functioning at the individual level or the level of the body, disciplinary power operates through technologies of power, which Foucault (1988) defines as those "which determine the conduct of individuals and submit them to certain ends or domination, an objectivising of the subject" (p. 17). He argues that when liberal, democratic governments could no longer rely on physical domination to control the population, their goal became instead to create rational, productive citizens who would self-govern and conform to society's rules (Popkewitz & Brennan, 1998). The use of technologies that scrutinize, regulate, and govern all citizens to insure they will self-govern in such as way as to conform to the desires of the state is what Foucault (1980) refers to as the concept of governmentality.

For Foucault, disciplinary power is not always repressive (Gore, 1993). At the level of the body, it often operates through technologies of the self (Gore, p. 233). Foucault (1977) contends that disciplinary power arose with the development of modern institutions (e.g., hospitals, schools, and factories) and has extended throughout society, functioning in technologies of self. Technologies of self can be understood as those techniques that the subject uses to discipline the self, for example, to conform to standards of normality. This is illustrated, for example, when early childhood educators regulate their practice so as to conform to the

standards of developmentally appropriate practice in order that other educators will perceive them as "normal" or "appropriate." Foucault (1984) explains that the techniques of self are often invisible and are "linked to the techniques for the direction of others" (p. 370). He uses the example of education, whereby teachers, in regulating their students' behaviour, teach the students how to regulate their own behaviour.

Question of analysis.

In an analysis of disciplinary power, the question for Foucault is not "who is the oppressor and who is the oppressed?" Instead, Foucault is interested in how the mechanisms of power are being enacted by and on the human being in the process of becoming a subject (1988). In terms of how techniques of power regulate the discursive-material practices of pedagogy, Gore (1998) has examined how pedagogical practices bring to life and maintain hegemonic pedagogical truths. She writes that, according to Foucault, "the distribution of bodies in space— arranging, isolating, separating, ranking—contributes to the functioning of disciplinary power" (p. 240). When early childhood educators take up practices that conform to a truth, we then act to inscribe that truth as a normal part of everyday life. In acting out a truth, we strengthen its power, thus reinscribing a regime of truth.

Gore (1998) identifies these technologies of power as surveillance, normalization, exclusion, classification, distribution, individualization, totalization, and regulation. Her research is significant because it focuses our attention on how, by engaging in the practices made possible by a discourse, we bring to life and strengthen regimes of truth within an educational setting. MacNaughton (2005) extends Gore's work by looking at how early childhood educators bring dominant discourses to life through particular pedagogical practices. She suggests, for example, that the technology of classification allows the early childhood educator to use developmental

truths to classify children on the basis of their development in comparison to an idealized standard of development. Each time an educator classifies children in this way, developmental truths are brought to life in the classroom.

In my own research, to understand how power is entangled in practice and how knowledge is materialized in practice, I worked with Foucault's understanding of knowledge and power to examine how the temporal and organizational aspects of an early learning space were regulated by the dominant discourse of developmentally appropriate practice (Kummen, 2011). My analysis within this study also relies on Foucault's work that examines how power operates at the level of the body by examining the multifarious relationships among power, knowledge, and self.

Discourse and matter.

It would be an oversight not to remind the reader that Foucault's attention to discourse included a denial of the material (see Barad 2007, 2008; Gore,1998; Hekman, 2010). In the final chapter of *The History of Sexuality* (Vol. 1), Foucault (1980) writes:

> I do not envision a "history of mentalities" that would take account of bodies only
>
> through the manner in which they have been perceived and given meaning and
>
> value, but a "history of bodies" and the manner in which what is most material
>
> and most vital in them has been invested. (pp. 151–152)

Barad (2008), in her analysis of the preceding quote, states that Foucault's writings suggest that the physical body is relevant in understanding power relations. However, she notes that Foucault does not explain how the material and discursive are "bound together" (p. 127). Hekman (2010) provides a particularly cognizant argument calling for a reinterpretation of Foucault as a scholar interested in the complex interaction between the discursive and the

nondiscursive. Citing Foucault's obsession with and copious writings on power, she reminds us that Foucault himself argued that "nothing is more material, physical, corporal than the exercise of power (1990, p. 57). Hekman continues by discussing Foucault's focus on the materiality of power, that is, "how power affects us, particularly our bodies" (p. 53). She asserts that Foucault's analysis of the discourse of power focused power's consequences.

My initial readings of Foucault did not produce an understanding of Foucault that privileged discourse over the material. I was drawn in particular to an explanation of the mechanisms of power as "thinking rather of its capillary form of existence, the point where power reaches into the very grain of individuals, touches their bodies, inserts itself into their actions and attitudes, their discourses, learning processes and everyday lives" (Foucault, 1980, p. 39).

The acceptable language in early childhood education.

Within a poststructural framework, the conditions of possibility construct the actions of the subject, and the governance of language makes possible how the subject can be expressed in both speech and text (Heyning, 2001). Bourdieu's (1991) concept of authorized language asserts that "authority comes to language from the outside . . . language at most represents this authority, manifests it and symbolizes it" (p. 109). The discourse of a subject creates a "structural censorship" that signifies the set of rules from which the subject can be discussed (Bourdieu, 1991). Bourdieu's concept of authorized language creates the space to examine text as a socially constructed discourse by asking different questions (Heyning, 2001), for example, in the case of the early childhood educator, asking whose voice has the authority to define who is a child and what childhood should look like. If we accept that the concept of a universal and natural child is a social construction of developmental psychology, we make visible how the language of

developmental psychology operates as an authoritative voice to sanction "official, orthodox and legitimate speech" (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 109) within the context of early childhood education. To recognize the dominant discourse that constructs the current understanding of the early childhood educator, the language of authority must be made visible. When one language is officially sanctioned, other languages or forms of expression are silenced or marginalized. Foucault (as cited in MacNaughton, 2005) labels this process as violence in that it privileges homogeneity and marginalizes diversity.

The Notions of Subjectivity and Agency

The next section of this chapter explores the notions of subjectivity and agency to consider the possibility of disrupting identities and representations within the field of early childhood education. From a humanistic perspective, the subject's actions are the direct result of self-determination and choice is controlled by the subject's own reasoning (Wallace, 1999). This understanding of agency is termed *rational agency*; within it, change "requires simply that one choose to do what one believes one has reason to do" (p. 242); Wallace (1999) asserts that "the capacity for this kind of choice is what makes us agents in the first place" (p. 242). Yet from a poststructural perspective, the rational subject is considered problematic, therefore inferring that rational agency is also problematic. From a poststructural perspective, agency is not located in the subject, but rather the subject is mutually constituted in social practices and discourses (St. Pierre & Pillow, 2000). Butler (1992) writes that the agency of the subject is found in its recurring constitution in that "the subject is neither a ground nor a product, but the permanent possibility of a certain resignifying process" (p. 13). I conclude the discussion of agency by considering agency and subjectivity in early childhood when the material world exists as a performative agent (Barad, 2007).

Disrupting identity.

It is the notion that the identity of the child and teacher is not a universal, stable truth that I wish to explore further. As previously mentioned, the literature is replete with studies asserting that student teachers (and I add to this ECE student teachers) have problematic beliefs and assumptions around education and the role of the teacher. Yet, from my perspective, many of these studies assume a modernist understanding of knowledge whereby the "right" identity and the "right" understanding of children can be achieved if only the appropriate pedagogical practice is employed. Toll, Nierstheimer, Lenski, and Kolloff (2004) allude to this sticking point when they describe the desire to purge students of undesirable beliefs as an "urge to 'wash them clean' from the ideas they have learned" (p. 164). They admit that this goal is troubling in that it assumes that knowledge is a truth rather than a social construct and that a universal consensus on, for example, the role of the teacher or the nature of childhood can be reached. This intent to have an agreement or consensus on a discourse is, for Lyotard (1984, cited in Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009), troubling and a barrier to change:

> Disturbances and contradictions will always be an element of every dialogue
>
> worth its name; and what is more the goal of the dialogue is not consensus (this is
>
> only an intermediary stage) but 'paralogy'—a fruitful dissensus which
>
> undermines the prevailing discourse. (p. 192)

Further, the urge to "wash away" a set of beliefs and create a clean new subject, as expressed by Toll et al. (2004), assumes that the "cleansed" subject is a stable, unified entity who can choose to stay clean. This tension is highlighted in a similar way by Davies (1990) in a study of "Mr. Good," a teacher of children ages 8 to 11, who struggles with helping children develop a sense of agency, while at the same time wanting them to be compliant, successful students. The

analysis of the data suggests that "Mr. Good" engaged in discursive practices that position the children to be agentic within an environment of strongly held beliefs and assumptions that children should not be agentic. This conflict will be present in my study, as I hope to disrupt ECE students' existing beliefs, ideas, and assumptions, while avoiding practices that attempt to purify and instill a "correct" image of the child. To make visible the potential tensions within my own research, I recognize that I need to attend to the questions posed by Davies (1990):

> How is an individual's subjectivity, their idea of who they are, and their particular
>
> way of making sense of themselves and of the social world developed? How is it
>
> that we find the words, the concepts, and the ideas with which to say who we are?
>
> How do we become one who takes up or resists various discursive practices, who
>
> modifies one practice in relation to another, who chooses between the various
>
> positions and practices made available? (p. 345)

The multiplicities and complexities of the poststructural subject.

The term *subject* in everyday use refers to "the person," "individual," or "human being"; in psychology, it stands for the "individual" (Henriques, Hollway, Urwin, Venn, & Walkerdine, 1998). The humanistic subject is understood as a rational, conscious, stable, unified, knowing, and agentic individual (St. Pierre & Pillow, 2000). Within a humanistic paradigm, for example, a teacher can be understood as a known entity with essential traits that identify the subject as a teacher. In this way, the immature student teacher is seen as developing into a mature teacher. This perspective is similar to a developmental understanding of childhood as process of progressing from immaturity to maturity. The subject is seen as fixed and complete.

Central to the humanistic subject is agency; the subject is assumed to have the power to make choices and decisions regarding his or her own life (Davies, 2000). The humanistic

position "tends to see the individual as the agent of all social phenomena and production, including knowledge" (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009, p. 93). St. Pierre (2000) writes: "As the centered center of his world, the Cartesian ego founded modern philosophy, and the humanist-individual became the origin of truth and knowledge" (p. 300). Within this paradigm, all persons have access to agency and can achieve freedom of action by exercising their inherent free will. Agency is seen as an individual matter in which the individual has the innate right and power to envision an action and know how to accomplish it.

From a humanistic perspective, the student teacher Annie in Jackson's (2001) study, mentioned in Chapter 2, was not constrained by the discourses of teaching available to her but rather was a rational human being simply exercising her free will in choosing to teach in a particular way. Simply put, Annie had a choice and she exercised that choice as a rational person.

The humanistic subject has not been without challengers, including Walkerdine and Lucey (1989, cited in Davies, 1990), who assert that "the ideal of individual freedom or agency is a middle class, liberal humanist sham" (p. 340). St. Pierre (2000) writes that the humanist subject has "taken some heavy blows from Marxism (Karl Heinrich Marx, 1818–1883) and psychoanalysis (Sigmund Freud, 1856–1939; Jacques Lacan, 1901–1981), in particular" (p. 501). These challenges have been taken up and extended by writers influenced by poststructuralism.

Poststructural thinking provides a theoretical framework to challenge theories and practices based on the assumption that a knowable world exists that contains absolute, universal truths (Dahlberg, Moss, & Pence, 2007). Within the poststructural paradigm, universal theories or principles can be thought of as myths or grand narratives and should be replaced by microhistories, which are local, conditional, and incomplete stories (Alvesson & Sköldberg,

2009). Poststructuralists, contend Alvesson and Sköldberg (2009), are concerned with

"discursive and linguistic patterns central to the production of subjectivity and identity" (p. 181).

These authors raise a skepticism regarding the ability of language to represent a universal truth

of an external reality: "Language is considered ambivalent, evasive, metaphorical and

constitutive, rather than unequivocal, literal and depictive" (p. 183). The human experience is

understood in, and not outside of, language, and the lived experience is thereby discursively

constituted. Some scholars consider this linguistic emphasis on the interpretation of experience

problematic because it excludes the material aspect of experience (see, for example, Hacking,

1999; Hekman, 2010; Henriques, et al., 1998; Thrift, 2008). I explore this critique later in this

section.

The creation of the subject.

A poststructural perspective challenges the humanist paradigm by asserting that the

subject "emerges through the processes of social interaction, not as a relatively fixed end

product, but as one who is constituted and reconstituted through the various discursive practices

in which he or she participates" (Davies & Harré, 2000, p. 89). In other words, the scripts,

languages, knowledge, rules, and values that construct a specific discourse can coerce the subject

into a particular way of being (Jones & Osgood, 2007). Davies (2000) explains that the

poststructural position does not seek so much to destroy the humanist subject but to "enable us to

see the subject's fictionality, while recognizing how powerful fictions are in constituting what

we take to be real" (p. 133). The poststructural subject is never fixed because it is continually

positioned and produced by the discourses encountered. The condition of being a subject is

termed *subjectivity*, a term that is used to understand the process by which subjects are

positioned and produced by discourses (Henriques et al., 1998). The notion of subjectivity

provides a framework to interpret Britzman's (2003) assertion that the myths of education are taken up by student teachers as if they are truths.

It would follow, then, from a poststructural paradigm that in becoming an early childhood educator, the subject does not choose to teach in any way. Rather, the subject chooses to teach "from the conditions of possibility—the discourses which prescribe not only what is desirable but what is recognizable as an acceptable form" (Davies et al., 2006, p. 26). For example, Davies and Hunt (2000) describe a "teaching-as-usual" discourse whereby the discourse informs the students on "how to behave and in doing so become members of those social scenes in which the teacher is positioned as authoritative teacher and they are positioned as cooperative students" (p. 108). In this way, students understand themselves and other students by their ability to interpret and adhere to rules of behaviour and language embedded in the discourse. However, from a poststructural perspective, discourse does not determine the subject; agency exists but must be theorized differently "since the discursive subject clearly is not free to do whatever it will" (St. Pierre, 2000, p. 502). I return to the notion of the agentic subject within a poststructural paradigm throughout this section of the chapter.

Critical questions for a poststructural analysis of the subject include the following: Who are the privileged subjects within a discourse and who is marginalized or excluded? Who is given access to particular discourses and who is excluded from taking up a position within a discourse (see, for example, Davies, 2000; MacNaughton, 2005; St. Pierre, 2000)? Power, truth, and knowledge become significant concepts in understanding the subject within a poststructural paradigm. Davies (2000) argues that one of Foucault's major contributions was that he made it possible for us to consider that what we understand as an essence of being human has fundamentally changed over time as our understandings of knowledge and truth have shifted.

The death of the subject.

In describing his work, Foucault (1982) writes that his objective has been "to create a history of the different modes by which, in our culture, human beings are made subjects" (p. 777). This claim is not particular to an individual being made a subject, but rather to the processes by which human beings have been understood as subjects over time (Davies, 2000). For example, as the state began to consider populations instead of people, it became possible to classify people into population categories rather than view them as individuals making up one large, undifferentiated mass of people. A person could be categorized, for example, as working class, and as a member of the working-class population would have particular discourses and practices available from which they would take up the role of subject. Foucault (1982) explains that this is a form of power that

> applies itself to immediate everyday life, which categorizes the individual, marks
>
> him by his own individuality, attaches him to his own identity, imposes a law of
>
> truth on him which he must recognize and which other have to recognize in him.
>
> It is a form of power which makes individual subjects. (p. 781)

Foucault (1982) describes a subject as having two meanings. The first is where the individual is subject to the control and understanding of the other. In being categorized as a teacher, for example, the individual is recognized by others within the educational discourse of a teacher. In this way, the individual is seen and recognized as a subject. The second meaning is "tied to his own identity by a conscious or self knowledge" (Foucault, 1982, p. 781). Here the individual takes up the position of subject, for example as a teacher, and recognizes him or herself as such. In other words, "both meanings suggest a form of power which subjugates and makes subject to" (Foucault, 1982, p. 781). Subjection, for Foucault, is a "kind of power that not

only unilaterally acts on a given individual as a form of domination, but also activates or forms the subject" (Butler, 1997, p. 84).

Modes of objectification.

Foucault (1982) offers three related yet distinct ways in which the human being becomes an objectified subject. He refers to them as "modes of objectification" and these modes more or less reflect a chronology of his work (McLaren, 2002). The first mode is connected to the "modes of inquiry" that take on the status of science (e.g., linguistics, economics, biology). McLaren (2002) explains that Foucault's "archaeological work explored these modes of objectification and the subjects produced by them" (p. 64). In this way, for example, the living subject is produced by biology, whereby at one time "alive" meant the presence of visible life signs (such as breathing or a heart beat), while at the present time, the absence or presence of a specific type of brain activity defines life (Zamperetti & Bellomo, 2009).

The second mode of objectification Foucault calls "dividing practices" whereby the subject "is either divided inside himself or divided from others" (Foucault, 1982, p. 778). Here the subject is objectified, for example, as being sane or insane or being a criminal or noncriminal. This mode reflects Foucault's genealogical work and is an analysis of the dividing practices that are employed by institutions to objectify the subject (McLaren, 2002). This practice is evident in the concept of school readiness, in which specific measurements claim to identify factors that indicate a child's readiness to learn in kindergarten (see, for example, Dockett & Perry, 2002; Graue, 2006; Scott-Little, Kagan, & Ferlow, 2006).

Foucault (1982) refers to the third mode as his study of "the way a human being turns himself into a subject" (p. 778). His analysis of the domain of sexuality examines, for example, "how men have learned to recognize themselves as subjects of sexuality (Foucault, 1982, p. 778).

Davies (2000) writes that Foucault was curious about the way in which an individual took up the role of the subject, constituting the self as subject. Returning to the student teacher "Annie" (Jackson, 2001), the curiosity from a Foucauldian perspective would relate to how Annie recognized herself as a teacher within the classroom and how she took up the teacher subject.

Foucault's work offers the following questions regarding how one view of the subject came to be and how another may be formed:

> How is one kind of subjecthood or another made possible? How does one set of possibilities become normalized such that the subject cannot imagine itself otherwise? And most important, how can the human subject evolve beyond the current sets of actions and reactions? (Davies, 2010, p. 55)

These questions are significant to my research into Britzman's (2009b) questions: How did it come to be that a particular understanding of a child and early childhood educator are held as true while others are excluded? How do we as subjects within the discourse of early childhood education make room for other understandings?

Extending Foucault's understanding of the subject.

Some feminist writers (e.g., Benhabib, 1991, cited in Zipin, 1998; Zipin, 1998) have criticized Foucault's notion of the discursive self as leaving very little space for agency and resistance. Zipin (1998) describes the Foucauldian shift as a break from the structuralist emphasis on the significant role of structures as the foundation for social positions and the notion that human agency can change structural constructions. Benhabib (1991, cited in Zipin, 1998) posits that the poststructural paradigm proposes the "death of the subject" and "negates the possibility of emancipatory reasoning about ethics" (p. 317). Harrer (2005), however, asserts that this is a misinterpretation of the poststructural subject and interprets Foucault's early and later

work to allow for a subject that is both constituted and self-constituted by discourse. Harrer (2005) contends that, seen from the broader perspective of Foucault's history of the subject, "the mechanisms and techniques of how subjects constitute themselves as moral agents are inseparably linked to his analyses of the techniques of subjection or subjugation" (p. 78). In this way, the formation of the subject, from a Foucauldian perspective, is a two-sided process in which the subject is both constituted and constitutive. The suggestion that Foucault's later work, in which he explores the active constitution of the subject, has not received adequate attention or is misunderstood is one that McLaren (2002) agrees with. Davies (2000), too, supports this notion by arguing that it is the result of some writers reading poststructural writings through a structuralist lens. Davies (2000) argues that readers need to move away from the "self as a noun (and thus stable and relatively fixed) to the self as a verb, always in process, taking its shape in and through discursive possibilities through which selves are made" (2000, p. 137). In my reading of Foucault, I am drawn to his definition of the subject as having two meanings, the first tied to the control of the other and the second connected to self-knowledge. This notion of the subject being both subjugated and activated to become a subject at the same time is expanded in Judith Butler's work, which I discuss below.

A critique of the subject is not the death of the subject.

Judith Butler has written extensively on the formation of identity and subjectivity. Her work offers the field of education a way of understanding how power, knowledge, and truth constitute the subject into a particular position (Davies, 2006). Segal (2008) states that it would be hard to overestimate Butler's influence because she has aroused "unprecedented levels of adulation . . . [and] triggered equal measures of hostility" (p. 382). Butler's work is inspired by the writings of Hegel, Freud, Lacan, Marx, Althusser, and Foucault and, in particular, the work

of such feminist scholars as Simone de Beauvoir, Monique Wittig, Luce Irigaray, and Gayle Rubin (Salih, 2002; Segal, 2008).

Butler offers up a critique of the humanist subject, which she argues is "not a negation or a repudiation of the subject, but rather, is a way of interrogating its construction as a pre-given or as foundationalist premise" (Butler, 1995, p. 42). Yet, according to Butler (1997), the term *subject* is not interchangeable with terms such as *individual* or *person*; rather, the subject should be considered a linguistic category or placeholder. She writes: "Individuals come to occupy the site of the subject (the subject simultaneously emerges as a 'site') and they enjoy intelligibility only to the extent that they are, as it were, first established in language" (Butler, 1997, p. 11).

Power and the subject.

Employing Foucault's understanding of power, Butler (1995) asserts that the subject is shaped by power and that power creates the conditions from which the subject is formed. Butler (1997) explains that, "following Foucault, we understand power as forming the subject as well as providing the very condition of its existence" (p. 2). Subjection, from Butler's perspective, is the process of submitting to power and the process of becoming a subject. Power is both the site of the subject and is external to the subject. She explains this contradiction by stating that "no subject comes into being without power, but . . . its coming into being involves the dissimulation of power, a metaleptic reversal in which the subject produced by power is heralded by the subject who founds power" (Butler, 1997, p. 16).

According to Butler, Davies (2006) writes, "at the heart of becoming a subject is the ambivalence of mastery and submission, which, paradoxically, take place simultaneously—not in separate acts, but together in the same moment" (p. 426):

The process of subjectification, then, entails a tension between simultaneously becoming a speaking, agentic subject and the co-requisite for this, being subjected to the meanings inherent in the discourses through which one becomes a subject. (Davies, 2000, p. 27)

The concept of mastery and submission is critical to Butler's understanding of the process of subjectification. Butler (1995) describes this process as follows:

The more a practice is mastered, the more fully subjection is achieved. Submission and mastery take place simultaneously and it is this paradoxical simultaneity that constitutes the ambivalence of subjection. Where one might expect submission to consist in yielding to an externally imposed dominant order, and to be marked by a loss of control and mastery, it is paradoxically marked by mastery itself . . . the lived simultaneity of submission as mastery, and mastery as submission, is the condition of possibility for the subject itself. (pp. 45–46)

This concept is illustrated by Jackson (2001) as she describes the "wrenching, uneven process" experienced by the student teacher Annie as she negotiated both being and becoming a teacher in two extremely different contexts (p. 388). Jackson explains that Annie's process of taking up multiple subject positions "was never seamless and never without tensions" (p. 388). How Annie "moved among theses spaces was in response to the power structures within the context of a particular classroom" (p. 388). Further, the "pain [Annie] experienced as a subject in process was evident in everything that she did, signifying compliance or resistance to opposing norms of what is meant to be a teacher" (p. 390). As Annie submitted to the differing discourses of the teacher, she also mastered the differing teaching practices demanded by each discourse, a process by which she felt that she herself was becoming "schizophrenic" (p. 388).

Returning, With Barad, to the Problematic Notion of Agency

As mentioned previously, the poststructural notion of the subject emerged from a structuralist paradigm whereby free will or agency was tantamount to being a human (see Butler, 1995; Davies, 2000, 2010). Davies (1997) explains that poststructuralist theory does not seek to "destroy the humanist subject nor to create its binary other, the 'anti-humanist subject' (whatever that might be), but to enable us to see the subject's fictionality whilst recognizing how powerful fictions are in constituting what we take to be real" (p. 272). In this way, the poststructural subject exists with agency, although, as Davies (2000) explains, it is a conditional agency in which "subjects can reflect and examine the conditions that make subjecthood possible so that subjects can resist and obscure the discursive powers that both act on them and that they enact" (p. 426). Butler (1995) addresses this notion of agency in the following statement:

> To claim that the subject is constituted is not to claim that it is predetermined; on the contrary, the constituted character is the very precondition of its agency. For what is it that enables a purposive and significant reconfiguration of cultural and political relations, if not a relation that can be turned against itself, reworked and resisted? (p. 45)

It is critical to understanding this notion of agency to recognize that the subject is never complete and is always in a process of construction. Change, then, is possible as the subject resists, eclipses, or ruptures existing discourses, opening up space for new understandings and ways of being in the world (Butler, 1995; Davies, 2000, 2010).

Yet this understanding assumes a socially constructed reality whereby agency is centred on the human subject and discourse. Barad (2008) and other scholars (see, for example, Bennett, 2010; Coole & Frost, 2010; Grosz, 2010; Hekman, 2010; Lenz Taguchi, 2010) challenge and

extend this line of thinking, arguing that the constructivist, discursive, and poststructuralist perspectives do not include the material world as an agentic producer of meaning. They argue that in placing agency only within discourse and culture, the agentic force of matter is excluded in our understandings of the world. This notion that matter is agentic is important in early childhood education, as I discuss in the following section.

Taking Matter Seriously

Early childhood educators work in spaces filled with human bodies that literally and metaphorically encounter each other. Each encounter invites the other body to act in particular ways. The space is also filled with materials and objects that are distinct to the early childhood education context and call out to others (including me) in the space to act in very specific ways. For example, clay, paint, and blocks—common materials in early childhood education—invite very different behaviours than do workbooks, lined paper, and test sheets. How do these things, both organic and inorganic, act on our understandings of the world and of those with whom we share the space? These questions are part of the critical reflection engaged in with students as we work to make visible the images we hold of children and childhood.

As I have argued above, a poststructural view proposes that hegemonic discourses make space for subjects to engage in particular practices while denying the possibility of other practices. Language, from this perspective, is understood as agentic in that it constitutes the practice of humans and their understandings of reality. Referred to as "the linguistic turn" by the American philosopher Richard Rorty (1967, cited in Lenz Taguchi, 2010), this position has been challenged by writers across disciplines (see, for example, Barad, 2007; Hacking, 1999; Hekman, 2010; Heron & Reason, 1997) for ignoring the existence of a material reality. Law (2004) asserts that this dualism whereby the human/culture is active and the object/nature is

passive is hegemonic Euro-American thinking and that "there is much fuss, perhaps especially in the social sciences, if the distinction is ignored" (p. 132). Hekman (2010) argues that privileging discourse as the constituting agent maintains a dualism of nature and culture. Lenz Taguchi (2010) states that when materials are seen as equally agentic to discourse, thinking is not restrained by an either/or debate. She writes that we can think "in terms of the discursive being immanent to the material and the material being immanent to the discursive. This means that they depend upon each other and are mutually constitutive" (p. 29).

Barad (2007) asserts that the material exists as a performative agent. She writes that agency should not be understood as limited to the discursive, and calls for "a robust account of the materialization of all bodies—'human' and 'non-human'—including the agential contributions of all material forces (both the 'social' and the 'natural')" (p. 66). The concept of matter as agentic, reflective of a posthumanist perspective, is illustrated by Lenz Taguchi (2009) in a scenario in which children, presented with buttons of different shape, colour, and size, are asked by a teacher to divide the buttons into equal amounts. However, instead of dividing the buttons as requested by the teacher, the children begin to sort and classify the buttons. The colour, shape, and size of the buttons exert an agentic force that asks the children to sort and classify, and that force is stronger than the teacher's request to divide the buttons. Lenz Taguchi writes that the buttons seem to "practically scream out: 'sort me!'; 'put me into piles!'" (p. 9). "Everywhere there is agency . . . the universe is filled with agency," writes Law (2004, p. 134). According to Hekman (2010), "dogmatic adherence to linguistic constitution cannot account for the reality and agency of that world" (p. 2).

Lenz Taguchi (2010) calls for early childhood educators to take a material turn when considering our understandings of children as part of the "un-packing and repacking, un-coding

and re-coding, un-folding and re-folding, and perhaps most importantly re-inventing" (p. 22) that

make up the process of professional development. She invites us to consider that

> children and students can be understood to be materialised and materialising
>
> themselves into existences. . . . We do and materialise our own and the students'
>
> discursively inscribed subjectivities as teachers and learners as we handle books,
>
> learning, material, furniture and school architecture in our daily practices. Hence,
>
> these materials and artefacts are to be understood as materialised ideas of
>
> knowledge and learning too, as well as active performative agents in a
>
> simultaneously ongoing process of change in societal notions and discourses. (p.
>
> 22)

The significance of entertaining agency as both discursive and material is made evident

by revisiting the study by Jackson (2001), described in Chapter 2, which examined the student

teaching experience of Annie, "who took on such completely different personas and teaching

practices as she moved between two classrooms" (p. 388). Deconstructing Annie's experience

within a feminist poststructural perspective, Jackson (2001) asserts that Annie constructed

multiple identities as a teacher as she took up competing discourses of teaching presented by her

two cooperating teachers. What was interesting in reading the excerpts of Annie's interviews

contained within the article was that Annie herself identified that the physical reality of the

classroom required her to teach in very particular ways even in the absence of any verbal

direction from the cooperating teacher. For example, Annie states that in one of the classrooms,

worksheets requiring the right answers were used for instruction. The worksheets, for Annie,

spoke to the students and to her as a student teacher, telling a story of pedagogy requiring

students to "copy, memorize, and reproduce materials for a test" (Jackson, 2001, p. 390). Annie

described an organized room in which everything "was colour coded, from her teaching files to her grade book" (p. 391), a room that organized everything and everyone into their correct place. In her discussion, Jackson focuses on the agency of the discursive on the student, yet her narrative is littered with the material. Neither the objects nor the temporal and spatial nature of the room were passive; they called to Annie, telling her how to teach in the same way her sponsor teacher provided verbal instructions on teaching.

The need to take matter seriously when considering issues of subjectivity, agency, and knowledge is also exemplified in a study by Barry (2001, cited in Sørensen, 2009) that examines science museums. Barry noted that interactive displays of museum artefacts made possible a different way of being a visitor to a museum. The introduction of interactive displays turned the visitor from a passive subject to a participatory subject. When materials such as glass cabinets and ropes surrounded museum artefacts, museum visitors were positioned to be observers of artefacts. In this example, materials or the lack thereof were agentic; the visitor was either active or passive depending on the presence of particular materials.

In his argument that agency is also located in objects, Law (2004) refers the reader to attend to the Aboriginal world, where agency is assumed to be present in ceremonies, dance, artefacts, and works of art. Law writes that agency, for example, is produced in the traditional form of painting seen in contemporary West Desert artwork. Sutton (1989, cited in Law, 2004) states:

> A painted design or sculpted form may . . . be considered not merely a human
> being's depiction of ancestral Crocodile (or Kangaroo Woman), but an instance of
> that Dreaming's manifestation in the world. This is why pictures and carved

figures can make people sick, give them strength, or cause accidents to happen—

or so many Aboriginals people believed. (p. 134)

As mentioned previously, numerous scholars call for matter to be taken seriously by scientists and researchers across the disciplines. Barad (2008) uses the following quote from Steven Shaviro's *Doom Patrols* to introduce her chapter advocating for renewed acknowledgement that matter matters:

Where did we get the strange idea that nature—as opposed to culture—is

ahistorical and timeless? We are far too impressed by our cleverness and self-

consciousness. . . . We need to stop telling ourselves the same old anthropocentric

bedtime stories. (Shaviro, 1996, p. 37 cited in Barad, 2008, p. 120)

In the next section of this chapter, I return to where I started in my argument that matter matters, with Karen Barad and her theory of agential realism. My intent is not to provide an in-depth summary of agential realism, but to offer the reader information on aspects of the theory that extend the discussion of agency and the subject that I began in this chapter. As well, I hope to provide the reader with the necessary framework as I utilize Barad's ideas to think with the data in Chapter 6.

Subjectivity and Agency When Attending to the More Than Human

Barad (2003) explains that she expands on the ideas of Michel Foucault and Judith Butler so as to extend the work of Niels Bohr (1935 through 1958). She also acknowledges that her work is inspired by the writings of Donna Haraway, Vicki Kirby, Joseph Rouse, and others. In an interview with Juelskær and Schwennesen (2012), Barad stresses that she "walked along" with theorists/scholars to move along ideas and theories. She (2007) explains this position using the example of atoms, saying "atoms aren't what they used to be" (p. 353). In the 19th century, Barad

writes, a large number of physicists were antirealists in their position on atoms, whereas today no physicist would doubt that atoms are real. However, she cautions the reader that this example is not to be read as saying that former understandings of atoms were wrong or that atoms are simply social constructs that reflect changing knowledge. The story, she declares, is much more captivating and nuanced than either a realist or social constructivist position. Rather, she writes, "not only has our image of the atom changed, but our practices of imaging and imagining and intra-acting with them have changed and so have we" (Barad, 2007, p. 354). Further, she stresses that she understands the turn to materialism not as move that dissociates from previous theories. Rather, it is "a matter of inheritance and indebtedness to the past as well as the future" (Barad, 2010, interviewed in Juelskær & Schwennesen, 2012, p. 13).

Højgaard and Søndergaard (2011) illustrate an example of the significance of Barad's notion of intraactivity in extending the work of Foucault and exploring the material-discursive practices that positioned and maintained one girl in her position of victim of school bullying. Højgaard and Søndergaard assert that agential realism is useful because it "transforms the analytic foci in a number of ways, which may prove helpful, if the ambition is to enhance the complexity-sensitive analysis in relation to empirical studies of the subjectification process" (p. 348). In their analysis, agential realism allowed them to decentre the humans within the bullying event to attend to nonhuman forces, such as a cell phone and a computer.

Barad (2007) asserts that "matter and meaning are not separate elements. They are inextricably fused together, and no event, no matter how energetic, can tear them asunder" (p. 3). This assertion is explained in her theory of agential realism, whereby she posits an onto-epistemological approach to truth and knowledge. In framing her approach, Barad offers up

concepts to support thinking/being with/in the issues of subjectivity, agency, truth, and knowledge.

Below, I provide a brief overview of several key terms that are germane to my research project.

Agential realism.

As noted above, Barad (2008) asserts that "language has been granted too much power…. Discourse matters. Culture matters. There is an important sense in which the only thing that doesn't matter anymore is language" (p. 120). Within agential realism, Barad sees matter and the discursive as mutually constituted, whereby neither is privileged and neither exists in the absence of the other. Barad (2007) contends that "matter is produced and productive, generated and generative. Matter is agentic, not a fixed essence or property of things" (p. 137). Following this line of thought, agency is also no longer a possession of the human subject; rather, agency is "understood as attributable to a complex network of human and nonhuman agents, including historically specific sets of material conditions that exceed the traditional notion of the individual" (Barad, 2007, p. 23). This statement is exemplified in a study by Stevens (1999), published in the *British Journal of Haematology*, which traces the spread of hemophilia through royal marriages over the course of 150 years and the force that its presence exerted in the political landscape of Europe. Stevens' work illustrates how much more complicated and accurate events become when one looks "at the intersection of the 'real' and the 'socially constructed' for a more complex and nuanced understanding" (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, p. 114). In this case, our understanding of an event is enriched by attending to the consequences of the material presence of a recessive gene, responsible for hemophilia, in its entanglement with

political, economic, and other forces that contributed to the revolutions and acts of violence that took the lives of millions of people and changed Europe's political landscape.

To examine how matter comes to matter, and to attend to the inseparable relationship between the discourse and the material, Barad (2003, 2007) proposes a theory of agential realism. She explains that agential realism "allows matter its due course as an active participant in the world's becoming, in its ongoing intra-activity. And furthermore it provides an understanding of *how* discursive practices matter" (2007, p. 136). Barad uses the term *intra-activity*, not *interaction.* The latter refers to the encounter between two presumed discrete and preexisting entities, while intraactivity implies that entities are not distinct and inseparable, but exist in an ongoing becoming in which entities do not precede each other but "emerge through their intra-action" (Barad, p. 33). In my analysis in Chapter 6, for example, thinking with Barad's notion of intraaction, I considered *how* material intraactions among humans, text, and images make and unmake understandings of children and childhood.

Hekman (2010) summarizes the four key advantages of agential realism as identified by Barad:

> First, it grounds and situates knowledge claims in local experience. Thus objectivity is literally embodied. Second, agential realism privileges neither the material nor the cultural; rather, production is material/cultural. Third, agential realism entails the interrogation of boundaries and cultural reflexivity. Drawing different boundaries has different ontological implications. Fourth, agential realism underlines the necessity of an ethic of knowing: our constructed knowledge has real, material consequences. (p. 73)

In short, for Barad, agential realism asserts that there is a "there," but that it does not preexist. Rather, it exists in intraaction with the discursive. Barad reminds us throughout her work that we come to understand the world only through our intraaction with the world. With this understanding of agential realism, the next step is to consider how Barad uses specific terms, such as *agency, subjectivity*, *materialdiscursive*, *onto-epistemology*, *phenomena*, *agential cut*, and *spacetimematterings*.

Agency.

As noted earlier in this chapter, "agency takes on different meanings and is ascribed various levels of importance as accorded by the paradigmatic perspective from which one is located" (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, p. 113). Within an agentic realism perspective, Barad (2007) extends and challenges the work of both Foucault and Butler going beyond an anthropocentric understanding of agency (Hekman, 2010). Barad writes that, "agency is cut loose from its traditional humanist orbit. Agency is not aligned with human intentionality or subjectivity" (p. 177). Agency, for Barad, "*is a "doing" or "being" in its intra-activity. It is the enactment of iterative changes to particular practices*" (p. 178). This understanding of agency is significant to this research project in that it allows me to attend to the agentic force of both matter and discourse circulating in the practice of pedagogical narrations. Lenz Taguchi (2010) asserts that the text, images and photographs produced "put things in motion be means of its own agentic force and materiality. Thus new possibilities for intra-action with other matter and organism will emerge" (p. 64).

Subjectivity.

Within the preceding sections, a poststructural understanding of subjectivity was presented that relied on the work of Michel Foucault and Judith Butler. In her theory of agential

realism, Karen Barad's thinking with Foucault and Butler suggests an understanding of subjectivity in which bodies and matter, both human and more than human, are active material discursive agents (Hekman, 2010). As Højgaard and Søndergaard (2011) explain, "subjects are part of the intra-action processes that make up the world, but they are not the point of departure in the world, they are not privileged above discourse, matter, nature, culture, technology, etc." (p. 347). In this way, within an agential realism framework, subjectivities are continually being constituted and reconstituted in an intraactive material-discursive relationship.

This understanding of subjectivity allowed me to attend to multiple forces, both discursive and material, that are always already part of the process of subjectification (e.g., how the colour of a child's skin can intraact with the discursive to produce a particular understanding of a child).

Materialdiscursive.

Barad (2007) writes material and discursive as one word, materialdiscursive, to highlight how each exists with the other in a mutually constituted relationship. She explains that the "relationship between the material and the discursive is one of mutual entailment. Neither is articulated/articulable in the absence of the other, matter and meaning are mutually articulated" (p. 152). From this perspective, materialdiscursive practices are

> specific iterative enactments—agential intra-actions—through matter is
> differentially engaged and articulated (in the emergence of boundaries and
> meanings), reconfiguring the material-discursive field of possibilities in the
> iterative dynamics of intra-activity that is agency. (Barad, 2008, p. 140)

For Barad, the material does not simply provide the conditions to maintain certain discourses, nor is it important only because it adds to discourse. Rather, "*matter comes to matter*

through the iterative intra-activity of the world in its becoming" (Barad, p. 140). Within my study, for example, I attend to how the bodies of different children call on educators to enact different practices depending on the materialdiscursive intraactions at play. Lenz Taguchi (2010) illustrates the concept of materialdiscursive in an example in which a student teacher responds to a group of boys using sticks as guns and rifles to shoot at other children. The student responds to the children's use of the stick by offering the children different materials with the sticks. She recounts that the children began to transform their use of the sticks from weapons to dolls to other objects. She cautions the reader, however, that this shift in the use of the sticks should not be read simply as the children acting on the sticks with materials to transform their use. Rather, in shifting our gaze to consider the perspective of the materials, it becomes "possible to see how the material realities can be understood to have agency in relation to what happens in the material-discursive intra-active processes taking place between the materials, the children and the student" (p. 35). That is, by considering the possibility that materials given to the children are themselves agentic forces, there is space to consider how the materials invited the children to use them in ways that the children had not previously imagined. Lenz Taguchi writes that the sound made by the material, the appearance of the material, and so forth connect to the child's discursive thinking, transforming the play with the sticks. In this way, dynamic intraactive transformation occurs many times as the materials, the sticks, the space, the children, and the children's discursive thinking intraact.

Onto-epistemology.

The above example cited by Lenz Taguchi (2010) highlights Barad's (2007) assertion that knowing and being coexist and cannot be reduced to privilege one over the other. Hence Barad is asserting that theories of being or ontology and theories of knowledge or knowing

cannot be understood or considered in isolation. Simply put, "we don't obtain knowledge by standing outside the world; we know because we are of the world" (Barad, 2007, p. 185). Barad refers to this line of thinking as onto-epistemology, that is, to "think of knowing in being" (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, p. 117). Onto-epistemology is significant in educational research because it implies that learning and the learner are not separate. Lenz Taguchi explains that humans are in "an interdependent relationship with the world that we come to know through intra-activity within the material-discursive embodied realities we live with" (p. 39). She goes on to ask us to consider the implications for early childhood education of adopting an onto-epistemological stance whereby "we cannot clearly separate the learner from what is learned, and if ways of being in the world depend on our knowledge of it and our knowledge depends on our being (and continuous becoming) in the world" (p. 42). It is the consequences of this stance that I will be considering with my data analysis and, more deeply, in the implications that emerge from that analysis for early childhood teacher education.

Phenomena and agential cuts.

To appreciate pedagogical narrations within the context of this study, it is critical to understand how Barad (2007) uses the terms *phenomena* and *agential cuts*. Barad's concept of phenomena was developed with inspiration from Bohr's post-Newtonian theory of philosophy-physics. Recall that Barad conceptualizes matter "*not as a thing but a doing, a congealing of agency. Matter is a stabilizing and destabilizing process of iterative intra-activity*" (2007, p. 15). Barad understands phenomena as the smallest units of matter, produced in the intraaction between matter and an apparatus. In other words, phenomena are not merely the consequences of humans' actions with an apparatus, but are constructions of knowing, that is, they are "constitutive of reality" (p. 140). Within this study, the pedagogical narrations function as an

apparatus in their intraaction with the students, texts, images, and so forth. The phenomena in the study are the events of disruption or learning that occur in the intraactive process.

An apparatus, for Barad, should not be understood as a measurement or observation, but as the "*material conditions of possibility and impossibility of mattering*" (p. 148). That is, apparatuses are the material practices, events, and objects that set the conditions for what is possible and what is not possible. Further, apparatuses enact agentic cuts, that is, they "produce determinate boundaries and properties of 'entities' within phenomena, where phenomena are the ontological inseparability of agential intra-acting components" (p. 148). Within this research project, the pedagogical narrations exist as an apparatus that enact agential cuts as they make particular understandings of children visible while excluding other understandings.

Spacetimematterings.

Barad (2011) also conceptualizes space, time, and matter as "mutually constituted through the dynamics of iterative intra-activity" (p. 123). She explains that she uses this term in contrast to interaction, "which presumes the prior existence of independent entities" (p. 125). In other words space, time, and matter exist in an inseparable entanglement. They do not exist in a prior state whereby they follow a trajectory. Therefore, becoming and learning are not seen as "unfolding in time but the inexhaustible dynamism of the enfolding of mattering" (p. 180). Barad uses the example of the rings of a tree, which illustrate the tree's history, as marks of history that are produced as "part of its ongoing becoming—it is ingrained and enriched in its becoming" (p. 181). In the same way, she does not conceptualize space as prefixed; rather, spaces are reworked and refigured in their intraaction with time and matter (Barad, 2011). This notion of spacetimematterings is significant to this study because it provides a way to conceptualize learning as phenomena that do not occur within a predictable trajectory whereby a particular

pedagogical practice can be studied in isolation and reapplied in different contexts.

Summary

This chapter has provided a conceptual framework for this research project, beginning with an examination of how truth, knowledge, and power regulate both the child's subjectivity and pedagogical practice in early childhood settings. The second part of the chapter brought in materiality through the work of Barad (2007, 2008), who extends Foucault's understanding of the workings of power to account for "the agential contributions of all material forces (both 'social' and 'natural')" (Barad, 2007, p. 66).

Next, in Chapter 4, I present the pedagogical practice I brought into my classroom to make space for ECE students and myself to make visible and disrupt the discourses that both consciously and unconsciously regulate our work with young children. For, as St. Pierre (2000) contends, it is only when teachers (in the case of this research project, ECE student teachers) "can locate and name the discourses and practices … [that] they can begin to refuse them" (p.486).

Chapter 4. Methodology: Collaborations, Contestations, and Disruptions

As I have shared with the reader, the purpose of this study was to engage in a process of disruption in order to consider how discursive practices disciplined and regulated our ability to construct new understandings of children and childhood. I also wanted to look at how particular artefacts produced in the practice of pedagogical narrations intraacted with us, the texts, and the images to make and unmake our understandings of children and childhood? Operative verbs such as *deconstruct*, *disrupt*, *document*, *engage*, *experience*, *question*, and *challenge* depict the actions of the study participants. My challenge in selecting a methodology was my requirement as a researcher that the methodology complement a process of disruption. Jackson and Mazzei (2012) express a similar frustration when describing their desire to move away from the restraints of representation and meaning making, which are the traditional aims of qualitative research. Thinking with Patti Lather and Elizabeth St. Pierre (1993), they state that their "methodological aims are against interpretative imperatives that limit so-called 'analysis' and inhibit the inclusion of previously unthought 'data'" (p. viii). This was my goal, too: to engage in a research process of disruption whereby I was working with methods not to capture and explain phenomena, but to disrupt and make space for different perspectives, ideas, and questions. This goal led me to engage with/in various concepts, theorists, and methods to weave together a methodology of disruption.

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first, "A Methodology of Disruption," provides the reader with information on the concepts, theorists, and methods that framed the study. The second, "A Practice of Disruption: The Narration of the Pedagogical Narrations," chronicles the processes that emerged from the research project. The third, "Plugging In: Thinking with Theory," describes the method of data analysis.

A Methodology of Disruption

The critical issues identified in the conceptualization of my research can be summarized in the following statements. First, informed by both posthumanist and poststructural theory, the research was a collective process in which teacher (researcher) and learners (early childhood education students) used pedagogical narrations to deconstruct, disrupt, and revise our understandings of children and how those understandings are connected to practice. The focus of the research was on the *process* of learning and change as experienced by the participants, as opposed to the *product* of change. Equally important to the conceptualization of my research is the collaborative context in which these actions occurred. My curiosity was focused on the process that emerged as we worked with/in pedagogical narrations to disrupt our images of childhood. This interest precluded an analysis that looked to the data to uncover, code, and count the changing discourses held by the students and myself. In light of the critical issues identified in the conceptualization of my research, I wove together aspects of collaborative inquiry and pedagogical narrations as a methodology of disruption framed within an onto-epistemological position.

Collaborative inquiry.

Collaborative inquiry (CI) is defined as a "process consisting of repeated episodes of reflection and action through which a group of peers tries to answer a question of importance to them" (Bray, Lee, Smith, & Yorks, 2000, p. 6). The CI model is inspired by and aligned with (but not identical to) the cooperative inquiry model proposed by Heron (1988). Bray, Lee, Smith, and Yorks (2000) break the CI process into three elements: the cycle of reflection and action; the concept of the inquiry group as peers; and the research question. Each of these elements provides a structure that frames, rather than dictates, the CI process.

The cycle of reflection and action draws on a model proposed by Kolb (1984, cited in Bray et al., 2000) in which learning is a cycle that involves "reflection on experience, devising conceptual meaning schema from this reflection, engaging in active experimentation based on this schema, leading to new experience" (p. 8). The second element of a collaborative inquiry is the belief that "human inquiry is best carried out when the line between researcher and subject is eliminated" (Bray et al., 2000, p. 7). Within CI, each participant is both a co-inquirer and a cosubject. Bray et al. (2000) assert that as a co-inquirer, each participant has a voice in designing the inquiry, shaping and exploring the inquiry question, and coming together to construct meaning. As a cosubject, each participant shares his or her personal experience both inside and outside the inquiry group to create documentation for analysis and to construct meaning. The inquiry question is the third element of the CI process, and it acts as the invitation to potential participants. Within the CI model, the initial inquiry question is tentative in nature because it is open to negotiation as the participants work through the inquiry process (Bray et al., 2000). The inquiry question in CI may be modified as the participants acquire new insight and understandings that permit an enhanced ability to articulate the focus of interest.

By adopting the term *collaborative inquiry* to describe their research methodology, Bray et al. (2000) believed they were afforded a level of flexibility and were able to avoid the public perception that their work was claiming to adhere to a particular set of rules and guidelines associated with any specific model of inquiry. My research is inspired by their work and should therefore be viewed as subjective, reflecting the particularities of the context in which the research is being conducted and the diversity of the participants.

Principles guiding the participants.

Guided by a phenomenological approach, Bray et al. (2000) posit two principles that guide the participants in the CI model. The first principle is that all participants are able to explore the question through their own experience. In other words, each participant can take action outside of the group to extend their understanding of the inquiry question and explore their own experiences. In the case of my research, the students were participants in the inquiry, whereby we reflected together on our image of the child, yet they engaged outside of the group in their own practice with children.

During the last five weeks of the ten-week course, the students spent one day a week working in childcare programs licensed under the provincial childcare regulations, with children aged two and half to five years of age, as part of their first practicum. These visits provided the students with the opportunity to experience encounters in which their image of children "collided" with real children. The students brought back to the group their experiences and thoughts, which were unique to each of them as inquirers. They then had the opportunity to share and listen to experiences and ideas that occurred outside of the group's shared experiences. Through this process of collaboration in which participants' experiences merge, opportunities arise for meanings to be disrupted and (re)constructed, opening up possibilities for change to occur.

The inquiry question also positions all participants as equal inquirers while acknowledging and valuing their differences in knowledge and experiences (Bray et al., 2000). In this way, each participant has an obligation to monitor for inequities that may emerge in the inquiry. Bray et al. (2000) assert that the experience of exploring the question acts as the equalizer; every member is seen as equal in their attempt to investigate the question and in

sharing their experience in the investigation. Differences in understanding and meaning are expected as they bring forth a multiplicity of perspectives and meanings, thus creating a more authentic understanding of the experience under investigation (Heron & Reason, 1997).

The design of my study involved both students and me engaging with pedagogical practices that made visible and disrupted discourses we held around children and childhood; in that way, the students were both researchers and participants. I acknowledge that a reader might contest the notion of instructor and students as peers, working as co-researchers and cosubjects. Within the structure of an academic institution where I am an instructor and the other participants are students, it would be logical to claim that our relationship is hierarchical. Further, from a poststructural perspective, both the students and I as an instructor hold discourses that make possible particular understandings of the relationship between teacher and student that may or may not include the concept of peer. As well, the physical arrangement of our bodies within a classroom, where I stand (or sit) at the front and they sit in desks facing the front, tells us that our relationship is located within a hierarchical academic setting. Yet, Reason (1988) asserts that these realities are not necessarily a barrier to a collaborative inquiry, although they do require careful consideration. I discuss these considerations later in this chapter.

Participatory paradigm.

It is significant to my research that CI is a methodology positioned within a participatory paradigm, as outlined by Heron and Reason (1997). The participatory worldview takes a material turn in that it asserts that material reality does not exist independent from our existence; it exists in a reciprocal relationship with us (Guba & Lincoln, 2005; Heron & Reason, 1997). For Heron and Reason (1997), the constructivist paradigm reflects a Kantian view, and Kant himself failed to recognize "that the mind is also meeting a given reality through participation in what is

present, in what is there" (p. 276). They assert that an actual encounter with the living world cannot be confused with the symbolic constructs of that encounter. For example, in taking hold of a child's hand, you have a sensory experience in which your subjective image of the child encounters the child's material being. This moment is then understood with and through the embodied experience of meeting a living child entangled in the symbolic construct of a child. A participatory paradigm allows for space within research for a discussion in which both the discursive and the material matter.

Further, in the participatory paradigm, the knower exists in a social context in which knowing happens through interactions, encounters, and exchanges with the beings that exist in reality. Thus, critical subjectivity can be extended to mean critical intersubjectivity. Therefore, within the participatory worldview, methodology must support knowing that comes from the collaboration between participants and researchers. Methodology must allow for a way of knowing "that is based on a participatory and dialogical relationship with the world . . . a move away from distance and separateness of objectivity" (Reason, 1988, p. 10).

As previously mentioned, in qualitative research, the ontological and epistemological assumptions are the foundation of the inquiry, providing the researcher with a structure to determine the nature and process of the study (Blaikie, 2007). A researcher located within a particular framework would ask research questions based on a particular assumption of what reality is and how knowledge is produced. Having multiple frameworks with different assumptions about reality and knowledge would create a condition of incongruence. The theoretical framework would be a group of contradictory beliefs with contradictory demands regarding the nature and process of the research study (Blaikie, 2007).

The purpose of my research is to consider how to make visible and subsequently disrupt discourses that both consciously and unconsciously regulate work with young children. Yet, inspired by posthumanist theory and the notion of materiality, I understand that discourse and reality intraact so that neither precedes the other. Barad (2007) explains: "The relationship between the material and the discursive is one of mutual entailment. Neither discursive practices nor material phenomena are ontologically or epistemologically prior" (p. 152). My research, then, was not limited to understanding the discourse in absence of the material. The participatory worldview, as described by Heron and Reason (1997), is clearly not troubled by the issue of matter, and the linguistic element of an experience is not privileged over the reality of the experience (Hekman, 2010). Heron and Reason (1997) contend that "the participatory worldview allows us as human persons to know that we are part of the whole rather than separated as mind over and against matter" (p. 275).

Pedagogical narrations: A methodology.

In this research project, the data were drawn from the pedagogical narrations created by the students and myself working in small groups over one semester. The term *pedagogical narrations* extends the notion of pedagogical documentation, originated over 40 years ago in the infant/toddler programs and preschools of Reggio Emilia, Italy, as a tool to support teachers and children in their learning within a collaborative context. Carla Rinaldi (2006), executive consultant for Reggio Children and a professor at the University of Modena and Reggio, describes the purpose of pedagogical documentation as follows:

> To ensure listening and being listened to is one of the primary tasks of
> documentation (producing traces/documents that testify to and make visible the
> ways of learning of the individuals and the group), as well as to ensure that the

group and each individual child have the possibility to observe themselves from

an external point of view while they are learning (both during and after the

process). (p. 68)

Pedagogical documentation takes many forms. Artwork, writings, narratives,

photographs, videos, and other mediums or artefacts provide a way of revisiting ideas, theories,

and questions posed by the group. Rinaldi (2006) explains: "By means of documenting, the

thinking—or the interpretation—of the documenter thus becomes material, that is tangible and

capable of being interpreted" (p. 69). Participants publicly present artefacts so that learning can

be made visible (at least partially) and subject to public interpretations, questions, and

challenges.

Inspired by work with the practice of documentation in Reggio Emilio and Sweden, as

well as learning stories in New Brunswick and New Zealand and action research in Australia, the

practice of pedagogical narrations has been taken up in the work of early childhood educators in

British Columbia (*BC Early Learning Framework*, Government of British Columbia, 2008a).

Pedagogical narrations is understood as the process of observing, recording, and interpreting,

individually and collectively, a series of related ordinary moments in your practice. Within this

research project, I use the plural form, pedagogical narrations, to draw attention to the multiple

nature of the practice (see Berger, 2010; Hodgins, 2012; Hodgins, Kummen, Thompson, & Rose,

2013). Pedagogical narrations can be thought of as an "ongoing, cyclical process that occurs in

and with a community of learners" (*From Theory to Practice*, Government of British Columbia,

2008b, p. 13). Dahlberg and Moss (2010) explain the process in the following statement:

The idea is simple—making practice visible or material, thence subject to

research, dialogue, reflection and interpretation (meaning making). But its

application, doing documentation, is anything but simple, as are its consequences.
For it acknowledges and welcomes subjectivity, diversity of position and multiple
perspectives: in short, it values plurality. (p. xiii)

Pedagogical narrations, as a method for data collection, provides space for collaborative analysis. It is similar to Lather's (1991) description of data presented as a rich text that invites multiple voices into the interpretative process. In this process, the text is turned into a display and interaction among perspectives so as to work against the locus of authority (p. 91). In this study, pedagogical narrations, both as a practice and a method of data collection, created the possibility for the students and me to "more easily see, and ask questions about, which image of the child and which discourses we have embodied and produced" (Dahlberg et al., 2007, p. 152). Pedagogical narrations, asserts Lenz Taguchi (2000, cited in Dahlberg & Moss, 2005), can be understood as a practice of resistance in which educators can resist taken-for-granted assumptions about their understandings of children and education.

As a pedagogical tool, pedagogical narrations made it possible for the students and me to work collaboratively, to critically reflect, disrupt, and problematize our practice with young children. Pedagogical narrations was not a tool that cleansed our thinking; rather, it offered the possibility of disturbing our thinking. Lenz Taguchi's (2010) description of the intent of her work using pedagogical documentation with student teachers echoes my intent: "to practice with student-teachers teaching and learning practices that the students themselves were supposed to practice with children in their preschools and schools" (p. 124).

In my readings leading to writing the proposal for my doctoral research, while I was intrigued with Lenz Taguchi's work with pedagogical documentation with student teachers, I was more than a little curious about how her work with the practice of pedagogical

documentation took a material turn. She writes that materialization "is understood as an active, ongoing process where specific notions and ideas are not only performed but have become an embodied routine and habit in our daily routine, rendering them into a state of naturalness and taken-for-grantedness" (2010, p. 22). For my research, the notion that agency is both discursive and material is an invitation to attend to the agentic power of the discourses of the child in tandem with the agentic power encountered with the material reality of the child and childhood. From the work of Lenz Taguchi (2010) and Olsson (2009), I understood that pedagogical narrations provide an opportunity to make visible the discursive practices and material realities that shape our understandings of young children and, in turn, regulate our practice in early childhood education, inviting us to consider such questions as, "How does the physical being of a child invoke us, as teachers, to act in a particular way?" or "How does the discourse held by the teacher make possible particular pedagogical practices?"

Further, pedagogical narrations are tangible objects that speak to us, inviting us into political action with their presence and creating political *space* for discussions (Berger, 2010). In constructing our thinking as physical objects, our thoughts and ideas move into the public sphere. That is, if we think of Arendt's (1998) understanding of the public sphere, pedagogical narrations create the conditions for public discussion in which multiple perspectives reveal or perhaps expose differences. The classroom is acknowledged as a public sphere in which the actions of participants are seen as public disclosures of their identity and are therefore open to scrutiny.

CI as an articulated methodology within the literature provided a known framework within which I positioned my research. However, in the doing of the research, pedagogical narrations emerged as more than a congruent method within a CI framework. Aspects of pedagogical narrations within this study appeared to be functioning with CI to create a

methodology of disruption. Pedagogical narrations were more than a pedagogical practice within this study; they were working as "an apparatus in the disruption of constraining discourses, the generation of new knowledges, the illumination of material-discursive phenomena, and the transformation of practices" (Hodgins et al., p. 3).

A Practice of Disruption: The Narration of the Pedagogical Narrations

The following narration provides the reader with the mechanics of my qualitative research project. This presentation should not be misconstrued as a narrative written to provide the reader with adequate details that would allow for a replication of this study so that similar findings may be obtained. Such an undertaking would be incongruent with the paradigm that frames this study. Rather, this narration is an incomplete history of my actions as a researcher engaged with particular students, in particular settings, in a particular context, and so forth.

The context.

My research project took place at a small urban teaching university where I am employed as an instructor in early childhood care and education (ECCE). The university is situated on land that is the traditional home of an Indigenous nation, and, as a result of colonization, is now claimed by the local municipal government. The appropriation of the land, while a historical event, is present in this study through the legacy of colonization as it resonates in/with the educational institution and the daily life of the community.

The inquiry took place in an ECCE classroom that included an art studio and a traditional classroom for adult learners, equipped with tables and chairs. The walls within the classroom room held artefacts (such as pedagogical narrations, drawings, and photos) that reflected the student educators' work in their ECCE classes. The studio walls contained artefacts (e.g., pedagogical narrations, drawings, and photos) that are traces of the work that the children,

students, and educators had been engaged in within the studio. All of these factors created an environment in which a variety of artefacts could speak to the students with multiple voices: the voices of children, of other students, and of instructors. The table and chairs, for example, invited the students to engage in traditional teacher/student roles, yet the art studio in which teachers and learners worked in tandem fractured that notion. In this way, the physical space of the room provided all present with contradictory discourses of the children, learners, teachers, and pedagogy.

The participants.

The participants were 32 students enrolled in a first-year course that has been a part of my regular teaching assignment for the past five years. In this way, my role as the instructor existed prior to my role as researcher and the course was not a product of the research. This course is required for all students enrolled in both the ECCE diploma and degree programs. One of the course's learning outcomes is to recognize how societal values and beliefs (e.g., gender, race, and culture) affect educational philosophy and practice in order that students might work toward equity and social justice within early childhood education. This outcome was congruent with my research questions. Therefore, the course provided me with the space to engage with/in the research questions with the students as part of the regular delivery of the course.

As research participants, the students shared commonalities and differences that were known and unknown. All but three students were in their first year of either the diploma or degree program and had not yet completed a practicum in ECCE. Although some of the students had experience working with young children in a group setting, others had little to no familiarity with early years settings as an adult. Four students had children who were attending an early learning program, and many had attended an early learning program themselves as a young child.

The students ranged in age, with some students enrolling in the program directly after high school graduation and others returning to university after spending time in the work force. All of the 32 students self-identified in their registration papers as female.

The university draws students from a large urban area with a population of approximately 2,116,581 people (BC Stats, 2006) and the class demographics appeared to reflect the general community population. Some students were of Aboriginal descent or heritage, some were born in Canada, some were permanent residents, some were new citizens of Canada, and some were international students. Students of non-Aboriginal heritage generally, though not exclusively, identified as having a heritage from Asia, the Middle East, or Europe. The most common languages spoken in the classroom in addition to English were Korean, Chinese, Mandarin, Farsi, Arabic, and Hindi.

The group's diversity was critical to the study because the pedagogical practice of pedagogical narrations is predicated on individuals bringing to the group their different experiences, knowledge, and so on in order to be able to engage in a collaborative learning process. For example, in describing pedagogical narrations, Olsson (2009) writes, "each child contributes to the process in his or her specific and absolutely singular ways, but the contribution is caught up in the group's process" (p. 21).

Prior to the start of this research project, ethical approval was sought and obtained from the ethics review committee of the postsecondary institution where the research was conducted and the Human Research Ethics Board at the University of Victoria.

The practice.

The research project was introduced to the students at the beginning of the term at the same time they were introduced to other course activities and assignments. Students' permission

to use the artefacts they had constructed as pedagogical narrations was requested after the course had finished and final grades were posted in accordance with university procedures. In this way, consent for their participation in the research process was not requested because it was part of the course requirements. However, their consent was requested to use the data generated by the research process.

In week 3 of the 15-week term, I began the process of pedagogical narrations by asking the students to bring their image of the child to the classroom in the form of drawings, photos, and texts. I used the Moodle learning management system to randomly place the students into four groups of six and two groups of seven. Each student showed their image to the other students in her group without any explanation or background information. The other students wrote down their thoughts, questions, and assumptions, focusing on what understanding of childhood was being portrayed by the image, what the image's origins were, and how the concepts of natural or normal childhood were understood (MacNaughton, 2005). This process was repeated until each student had shown her image to her group. The forum then opened up to allow the group to share what they had written and engage "in acts of contesting, disrupting and negotiating meaning" (MacDonald & Sánchez, 2010, p. 26). Here, students engaged in dialogue using the course readings (refer to Appendix A for a list of the course readings for each of the 15 weeks) to assist them in making visible the assumptions, values, and beliefs embedded in the images. The 20- to 30-minute discussion ended with the students being asked to share their thoughts as to how these images ask educators to perform particular pedagogical practices and inhibit other practices.

One student per group was randomly assigned to transcribe the discussion and post the text online in the class Moodle site by the beginning of the fourth week. As well, all students

were required to post their image of a child within their Moodle discussion group with an accompanying four- to five-sentence description of how the image connected to the student's understanding of children or childhood.

I then compiled the images to create a slide presentation displaying all the images for all of the groups (see Appendix B). These initial artefacts became the empirical material that formed the foundation for the content of the pedagogical narrations and existed as tools to guide the research project. Each group also had a large envelope containing these artefacts as well as others that were collected over the term. I brought these envelopes to our classes.

As part of the course activities, students were required to review the posts made by each student in each of the six weeks we returned to the images. Students posted their questions, concerns, or comments regarding the post to support an ongoing dialogue. While the groups could not post comments to other groups, all of the groups' discussions were visible to all students for reading. As the instructor, I too read the posts and provided comments, thoughts, and questions to provoke dialogue and support students in their learning.

During week 5, the students revisited the images they had initially brought to class. I asked them to think with the readings to answer the question, "How might one image of childhood marginalize other images of childhood?" Each student selected one of the existing images to assist her in answering the question. After each student had shared her response, the discussion was opened up so that all students could consider the implications for children whose childhood is marginalized when they enter an early years program. As with the previous discussion, one student was randomly assigned to transcribe the discussion onto the Moodle site in the form of a reflective summary. Other students and I responded to the reflective summary by the end of the following week.

In week 7, I brought to class three images of childhood that challenged the hegemonic view of innocent, happy, playful children (see Appendix D). Students were asked to lay these images out alongside the images they had brought to class. Using the readings, the students then responded to the images. To continue our conversation around the concept of abnormal childhoods, in week 8, the students brought with them a memory of a moment in which their own image of the child was challenged. These memories were shared and discussed with the readings using the same format as in previous weeks.

As I reviewed the images the students had initially brought to class, I separated those with photos or drawings of children from the other images. Of the 15 images of children, I noted that only three of the children appeared to be children of colour. For week 9, I created a slide presentation with all 15 images (see Appendix E) and displayed it on the projector, asking the students to think about the previous readings and consider the 15 images on the screen. Instead of breaking into groups, we discussed the images in a large group. I share this discussion in more detail during the analysis section of this dissertation. A member of each group posted a reflective summary of the class discussion on Moodle and, as we had done in previous weeks, the students and I responded to that summary.

In week 11, the students brought out the images to engage in a discussion around Foucault's notion of a regime of truth and how that connected to the images of childhood we had brought to class. Our final session with the images occurred in week 12. The students revisited their images and forum posts to consider how their thinking had been disrupted and how that disruption was being felt in their weekly visits with children.

To the first class of week 13, the students brought an image of children and childhood that reflected their new understandings. They were also asked to write about how this new image

of children and childhood was reflected in their work with children. During week 13, using the

course readings and their own research as a theoretical framework, the students shared their

understanding of our thinking, disrupting, and reframing processes through the construction of

pedagogical narrations. Students were asked to focus on their collective learning in which they

explored and perhaps reinvented understandings of children and childhood and how those

understandings are connected to practice (see Appendix F, Group Revised Images of Children

and Childhood).

The data from this course are stored on the course Moodle site, which is the learning

management system used at Capilano University. The only people who had access to the Moodle

site during the research project were the students who were enrolled in the course and myself.

Once the course was completed, the pedagogical narrations, memories, and all other artefacts

related to the proposed research project were downloaded onto two separate memory sticks.

They are now securely stored in my office at the university.

Plugging In: Thinking with Theory

To analyze the data, I required a data analysis method that would present the reader with

the process of our lived experience, allowing the reader to feel the reverberations of disruptions

in both our understandings of children and our practice. To achieve this goal, I turned to a

process of analysis articulated by Jackson and Mazzei (2012) in which data are "plugged in" to

multiple theoretical perspectives to construct new meanings and understandings as an

assemblage in formation. Jackson and Mazzei describe plugging in as a process in which

researchers go beyond being knowledgeable about particular theories and data to being attentive

to the particular situated details of both. That is, the researcher focuses on a specific concept

within a theory, working with particular data, and then reworking the same data with a specific

concept of another theory. Plugging in is a "constant, continuous process of making and unmaking" (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, p. 1). In this way, the same "chunks of data" are reworked and revisited with theoretical concepts to generate multiple new understandings of the data.

In a traditional analysis relying on data codification, the artefacts and pedagogical narrations created by the students would have been analyzed for sets of consistent themes or concepts. In fact, known themes were evident in my data and a predictable process of change was represented in the narrations. Thus my data could be examined to create a narration of a process of change. A cursory examination of the students' original images of children and childhood (see Figure 1 below) demonstrated three predominant themes: Rousseau's natural child, the active Piagetian learner, and John Locke's empty vessel.

Images removed for copyright reasons

Figure 1. Three original images of childhood.

At the end of the course, the students brought in a second set of images of children and childhood to engage in conversations that reflected their new understandings of childhood (see Figure 2 below).

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Figure 2. Three revised images of childhood.

These images could have been read as evidence to suggest a process of change in the students' thinking. The images chosen reflected themes consistent with Moss, Dillon, and Statham's (2000) rich child, as well as the socially constructed child offered up in the writings of Jenks (2005) and Prout (2005). However, this method of analysis, focusing on common themes and linear change, would not have produced new knowledge, but rather would have confirmed the existence of known themes.

Further codification of the data would reflect a singular agenda to "cleanse" the students' traditional understandings of children and childhood. My intent was not to remove the students' images of children and childhood that were not congruent with a reconceptualized understanding of early childhood education. Nor was my aim to produce a particular type of educator. Positioned within a postfoundational perspective, I do not subscribe to the coherent, rational, stable humanist subject. Rather, inspired by postfoundational scholars, I understand the subject to be contradictory and unstable, and subjectivity to be constituted and reconstituted with/in material-discursive practices (Barad, 2007). Therefore, I did not assume that if the students'

original images of children and childhood were disrupted, they would then take up a new image during the course of the research project that would stay with them as they moved into their practice with children.

My curiosity was focused more on the processes that emerged as we worked in/with pedagogical narrations to disrupt our images of childhood and less on the products created from the process. I wanted to focus on the moments when competing material-discursive practices created tensions, anxiety, and contradictions in our thinking, to consider how, in reconstructing our understandings, we produced new challenges to our thinking, and, finally, to attend to how the artefacts of the pedagogical narrations acted as tools to disrupt our thinking simply by their presence. In short, my intent was to examine the moments of tension, contradiction, and anxiety in the data that emerged as we attempted to disrupt images steeped in our own personal values, beliefs, and assumptions. MacLure (2011) describes "hot spots," or irruptions in the data "that obstruct the work of analysis, making it hard to break things up into categories or boil them down into themes" (p. 1003). She asserts that researchers should not avoid the difficult places within the data, but "instead treat them as possible openings onto wonder" (MacLure, p. 1004). To attend to these irruptions or hot spots in the data, then, I turned to a process of analysis articulated by Jackson and Mazzei (2012).

The process of plugging text into another.

Jackson and Mazzei (2012), in an attempt to turn away from more traditional interpretative methods of analysis, which, from their perspective, contain data into known categories and labels, looked at a process of analysis that involved thinking with theory. To think with theory requires the researcher to engage in a process of plugging in data, theory, and method so that he or she can focus intently "on specific data chunks that could be repeated and

re-viewed across . . . various theorists and concepts" (p. 3). Plugging in involves three

manoeuvres:

1. working philosophical concepts to demonstrate the way in which theory and practice constitute one another;

2. making visible the analytic questions made possible by explicit theoretical concepts; and

3. repeatedly examining the same data chunks to generate "an overabundance of meaning." (Jackson & Mazzei, p. 5)

Jackson and Mazzei write that the process of plugging in invites "qualitative researchers to use theory to think with their data (or use data to think with theory) in order to accomplish a reading of data that is both *within and against interpretivism*" (p. vii). MacLure (2013) argues that it is critical that materialist research adopt postrepresentational methods that reject the "hierarchal logic of representation and practices such as interpretation and analysis conventionally understood" (p. 658). St. Pierre (2013) contends that interpretivism relies on a belief that the goal of research is to uncover a coherent meaning or truth from data. Such an approach requires a belief in brute datum, that is, a belief that an object existed prior to interpretation that can be observed, made sense of, and then represented. Postrepresentational methods ask researchers to move away from an analysis that attempts to organize, sort, or categorize data using known themes to produce a singular understanding in an attempt to uncover truth. Jackson and Mazzei (2012) assert that the traditional methods noted in the preceding statement "reduce complicated and conflicting voices and data to thematic 'chunks' that can interrupted free of context and circumstance" (p. viii). Plugging in works within and against interpretivism in that it does not dissect data to locate data pieces that reflect a known

theoretical concept. Rather, the data are reread multiple times within different theoretical perspectives to open up the data so that new understandings can emerge.

Jackson and Mazzei (2012) use Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) notion of assemblage to conceptualize the notion of plugging in. Deleuze and Guattari employ the example of a book to illustrate their concept of an assemblage. As an assemblage, a book, for example, can be thought of as a little machine: "literature is an assemblage" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 4). "When one writes," they argue, "the only question is which other machine the literary machine can be plugged into, must be plugged into to work" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987 p. 4). A book exists and is understood only in relation and in connection to the author, the text, and the concepts expressed in it. The book is plugged into an author who plugs into concepts, which are then plugged into text that is plugged into the book. In this way, the book is a machine in which all of the parts have meaning and produce meaning in their connection to each of the other parts. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) describe the assemblage in this way:

> There is no longer a tripartite division between the field of reality (the world) and a field of representation (the book) and a field of subjectivity (the author). Rather, an assemblage establishes connections between certain multiplicities drawn from each of these orders, so that a book has not sequel nor the world as its object nor one or several authors as its subjects. (p. 23)

Jackson and Mazzei (2012) conceptualize the process of plugging in as an analytical assemblage. In their view, the analytical assemblage is a process of plugging together multiple fields: "a field of reality (data, theory, method), a field of representation (producing different knowledges, resisting stable meanings) and field of subjectivity (becoming researcher)" (p. 2). They provide three figurations to illustrate the fields that make up the analytical assemblage. The

plugging in represents the field of reality; here is where thoughts, concepts, methods, theories, and data are connected to each other. A threshold denotes the space in which all of the literary machines (the concepts, theories, data, and so forth) are plugged in together and thinking is paused—making space for new knowledge to be produced. Finally, the figuration of folding and flattening signifies the field of subjectivity and performs "a process of data/theory/writing that is at once and the same time using, producing, and questioning the practices that are and have been available to us" (p. 11). Folding and flattening describes a methodological process whereby the data and theory are folded into each other as the researcher is flattened into the data. In this way, the data, theory, and researcher are mutually constituted as meanings emerge.

Plugging in: Locating the data chunks.

To explain this process of analysis, Jackson and Mazzei (2012) used data they collected from a qualitative study in which they interviewed first-generation women in academia. They explained that this project was not undertaken to produce a piece of work that would contribute to the academy's knowledge about the essence of first-generation female academics. Instead, their purpose was to view data across theoretical constructs to "engage the implications of those concepts for qualitative methodology, analysis and representation" (p. 7). What they discovered was that the quantity of data gathered was too large to be read across different theoretical frameworks. If they were to attempt to represent all of the data, they felt that they would focus on the macro providing broad generalizations. To prevent this, Jackson and Mazzei narrowed down the data to focus on two of the interviews. They suggest that the data from these two interviews attracted their interest because both women articulated their experiences in a way that allowed the researchers to "work against 'sameness' (or resisting the coding imperative to reach 'data

saturation')" (p. 4). In other words, the data generated from these two interviews made space to think about difference in experiences rather than consistent patterns of sameness in experiences.

Like Jackson and Mazzei (2012), I, too narrowed down the data generated from the artefacts and pedagogical narrations. To assist me in this process of focusing in on specific data chunks, I restricted my selection to those pieces of the data that drew me in as if by force, or what MacLure (2013) describes as data that glows. MacLure writes, "Something—perhaps a comment in an interview, a fragment of a field note, an anecdote, an object, or a strange facial expression—seems to reach out from the inert corpus (corpse) of the data, to grasp us" (p. 1). In this inquiry, three sections or chunks of the data generated from my research study appeared to me to glow.

The first chunk that emanated a glow was the collection of the students' revised images of children and childhood and their accompanying narratives. Each image of children or childhood a student supplied reflected her new understandings and was accompanied by a description of her personal image of the child or childhood and how that image was reflected in her practice with children. For example, Jackie chose a skein of wool to reflect her new understandings of children and childhood (see Figure 3 below).

Images removed for copyright reasons

Figure 3. Jackie's revised image of childhood.

Jackie writes: "My selection for my second image of a child is a skein of wool. The variety of colours in this picture represents different lives of children. Also, some colours of strands of wool in the picture are much visible than other ones, and they are all tangled together." Jackie continues to explain how particular understandings of childhood are more visible than others and have more influence in early years practice. She writes that power plays a role "in every aspect of children's lives and influences to form a set of truths about what is normal and what is not normal in child development."

The second data chunk that glowed were the pedagogical narrations collectively created by the students that explained how their thinking as a collective had been challenged, how their practice with children was changed, and their lingering questions. The students presented their final pedagogical narrations in the form of slide presentations. Within the narrations, they attempted to collectively represent the diversity of images of childhood that were challenged, constructed, and reconstructed over the course of the 13 weeks. They were asked to connect their images to the readings that most frequently were part of each group's discussion and to consider how the image of children or childhood was connected to their practice with children. For example, Figures 4 and 5 below illustrate Group B's evolving image of children and childhood.

NOTION OF A SINGLE STORY

At the beginning of the course, we came with the preconceived notion that our image of a child was summarized into these three aspects...

❖ Innocence

❖ Curiosity

❖ Playfulness

Figure 4. Group B's pedagogical narrations: A notion of a single story.

After critical analysis through our readings, assignments, and practicum, we came to the conclusion that our image of a child is constantly changing.

Although our images are not permanent, at the moment, we perceived children as...

❖ Complex

❖ Contradict

❖ Unexpected

Figure 5. Group B's pedagogical narrations: After a critical analysis.

From each of the revised images that the students brought to the group, they chose a painting by Jackson Pollock as their present image of children and childhood.

Group B
Jackson Pollock's *Autumn Rhythm* (1950)

"Children are not as simple as we believed, they are complex and very imaginative"

"I see children as complicated, active, social beings"

Figure 6. Group B's pedagogical narrations: Jackson Pollock.

The final data chunk that glowed is made up of two artefacts created by me as teacher-participant as part of the class learning activities. The first was a collage of all of the images originally brought to class (see Figure 7 below). I put this collage together by myself, purely as a

way of separating out images of children from images that were figurations of children and childhood originally selected by the students. I brought the collage to the whole class for a discussion in conjunction with a particular reading.

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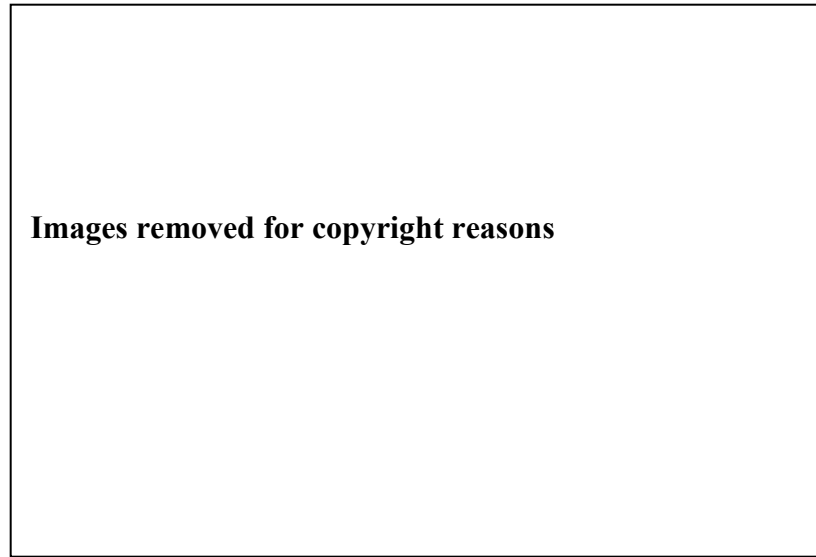
Figure 7. Collage of original images of children.

The second artefact was a set of three photos and question that I presented to the students to accompany a class reading. I presented the photos and question as part of a slide presentation, as seen in Figure 8 below, and provided each of the groups with individual copies of each of the photos on a separate piece of paper.

Images removed for copyright reasons

Figure 8. Class slide: Unnatural childhoods.

Each of these three glowing pieces of data represented hot spots in the data. They pinpointed moments of tension, silences, and contradictions as we worked collectively to disrupt our individual images of children and childhood.

Plugging in: Inviting theory into the threshold.

In Jackson and Mazzei's (2012) study, once the researchers had narrowed their focus to two interview sets, they reread and reviewed the data thinking with the theoretical constructs that had originally framed their research, their experience with the participants, and the theory that was part of them as researchers. Within this process of plugging in, new connectives were made to create new ways of thinking with theory and data.

Following a similar process, I reread and revisited the three data chunks, thinking with the theoretical concepts that had framed my study, my original research questions, and the readings that the students and I engaged with during the study. In this process of thinking about theory with data and data with theory, particular theorists and their constructs emerged as being helpful in opening up, rather than foreclosing, thought (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, p. 5).

Foucault's notion of the disciplinary power of discourse offered me the space to look at how hegemonic discourses acted as regimes of truth to complicate and challenge us as we tried to think with new understandings of children and childhood. That is, to consider how, in our attempt to consider practice with new understandings, hegemonic discourses regulated and disciplined our thinking. Finally, Barad's attention to the relationship between the discursive and material extended my thinking around how the process of pedagogical narrations operated as an apparatus—that is, a tool for change in thinking.

The next act in this analytical process was to continue to think with theory and data within an assemblage to develop questions of analysis to take to the threshold. The following introduces the questions of analysis I used to reread and review the three data chunks.

Entering the threshold: The analytical questions.

Jackson and Mazzei (2012) use the metaphor of a threshold to situate the place where data and theory are put to work to create analytical questions. They explain that a threshold exists simultaneously as both an entrance and an exit, and therefore is not a clearly defined space. In their own work, they explain that in the threshold, they "became aware of how theory and data constitute or make one another" (p. 6). They describe themselves in a threshold encircled by "the data, the theory, our memories of the interview process, our shifty selves as researchers, our current interactions with some of the research participants, our personal and professional knowledge of being women academics and so on" (p. 6). Within this threshold, they paused with the literary assemblage, working theory and data to push their thinking to new limits and creating analytical questions that could be asked of the data. For example, Judith Butler's theory of performativity extended their thinking with the data to explore "the performative acts that (re)produce Cassandra's and Sera's subjectivities as academic women" (pp. 8–9). They

explain that the theoretical construct of performativity provided a framework to engage with the data to think about the subject as being never fully constituted and therefore producing conflicting subjectivities.

I, too, entered the threshold with data, theory, memories of being with the students, personal and professional experiences with children and childhood, and so forth. In this space, my thinking with the data and theory was momentarily paused to work and push the theory and data to their limits. In reading with the data chunks in the threshold, with each of the theorists, specific analytical questions emerged.

Foucault.

Foucault's understanding of power, knowledge, and truth provided me with analytical tools to focus on how particular discourses moved within our thinking as the students and I considered new understandings of children and childhood. In other words, they helped me attend to the messiness of our thinking by looking at those moments when competing discourses pushed and pulled our thinking as we attempted to make space to engage with new understandings. In this process, I recognized that our new understandings were not clean and pure transformations, but rather understandings that were contextual, contradictory, and regulated consciously and unconsciously by discourse. Foucault provoked this analytical question: *How did material-discursive practices discipline and regulate our ability to construct new understandings of children and childhood?*

Barad.

Barad (2007), thinking with the physicist Bohr, posits that "apparatuses are the material conditions of possibility and impossibility of mattering" (p. 148). I entered into this research project thinking of pedagogical narrations as an apparatus. In this way, and inspired by Lenz

Taguchi (2010), I engaged with pedagogical narrations as a tool, an instrument that intraacts to produce disruptions and change in order for new understandings to be constructed. Using pedagogical narrations as a tool and thinking with Barad prompted the following analytical question: *How did the presence of particular artefacts intraact with us, the texts, and the images to make and unmake our shapings and coshapings of children and childhood?*

Ethical Issues

The most significant ethical issue in this research is my dual role as instructor and researcher and the power relations, both real and perceived, inherent in that dual role. As mentioned previously, the pedagogical practices are part of the course activities and assignments. Therefore, the research project and the activities were introduced to the students at the beginning of the semester at the same time they were introduced to the course and to the other course activities and assignments. In this way, the students' participation in the pedagogical practices was not voluntary, because it was not predicated on their role as a research participant. However, it should be noted that the students were free to drop this (or any) course, and they had the option to enrol in another section of the course being offered during the same semester, as stipulated by university policy.

To avoid a perception by students that their grades were tied to their participation in the study, students were informed of the proposed research at the beginning of the course. However, their consent to participate in the project was given only after their grades for the course had been submitted and recorded in accordance with university policies and procedures. Consent was requested to use the artefacts they constructed during the course that emerged as pedagogical narrations. In this way, consent was requested, not for their participation in the process, because that is part of the course requirements, but to use the data that were generated by the process.

Further, the ECCE department administrator collected the consent forms in her office so that the consent procedure was removed from the classroom environment.

To ensure confidentiality, I do not use student names, nor do I present any information that would specifically identify an individual student.

The students were placed in an early years setting one day a week in preparation for their first practicum. These experiences seeped into our class and emerge as artefacts within the pedagogical narrations. Hatch (2007) defines unobtrusive data as data that "would have been collected whether research was happening or not" (p. 238). As unobtrusive data, it supplements the primary data, which in this case were the pedagogical narrations.

While the children attending the early learning settings and the educators working in those settings were not directly participating in the proposed project, they had a presence within the research. Therefore, each student obtained prior written consent from the early learning setting and the guardians of children enrolled in the centre to use observations of the children, educators, and the daily routine activities that occur in the settings to complete assignments that were part of their course work in early childhood care and education. This consent would have been obtained regardless of whether the student consented to have their data used in the research, as it is a requirement of the students' participation in their practicum. However, these data are purely supplemental and did not form the primary data for analysis.

Limitations of the Research

This study is positioned in the qualitative genre of research as a collaborative inquiry; therefore, it is limited in the possibility of generalizing the results from one context to another. The intent and purpose of this study is not to provide the reader with a pedagogical practice that can be applied to students to change or improve their practice in the field. The empirical material

generated from this study will not be quantitative and will not allow for measurement of change that may have occurred as a result of the introduction of pedagogical practices. In this way, the research will not contribute to the discussion of what effective practices are in teacher education with a goal of creating a particular kind of educator.

This study is framed within a participatory paradigm and reflects postfoundational perspectives; knowledge is understood as coconstructed, partial, complete, and provisional. The analyses of the pedagogical narrations undertaken within this assumption were not presented as truths that can be generalized.

Summary

At the beginning of this chapter, the reader was provided with information regarding the concepts, theory, and methods that framed a methodology of disruption. In the second section, a narration of the processes that emerged from the project was provided, followed by a discussion of the method of data analysis.

In the next chapter, the data and I enter into the threshold with Foucault and his understanding of power, knowledge, and truth. Using the analytical method of plugging in proposed by Jackson and Mazzei (2012), I engage with the question that Foucault provoked: *How did material-discursive practices discipline and regulate our ability to construct new understandings of children and childhood?*

Chapter 5. Readings with Foucault: Returnings

Every education system is a political means of maintaining or modifying the appropriateness of discourses with the knowledge and power they bring with them. (Foucault, 1971, p. 46)

This is the first of two analysis chapters in which I use the analytical method of plugging in proposed by Jackson and Mazzei (2012). In this chapter, Foucault's writings on the concepts of power, knowledge, and truth provided space for me to think about moments in the data when the students and I had stuttered and stumbled as we worked to construct new understandings of childhood. These Foucauldian concepts allowed me to attend to those events in the data where the disciplinary power of material-discursive practices entered our conversations as regimes of truth, regulating and challenging our ability to think differently. The analytical question that guided my reading of the data with Foucault, as noted in Chapters 1 and 4, was this: *How did material-discursive practices discipline and regulate our ability to construct new understandings of children and childhood?* Specifically, I have focused on Foucault's understanding of the materiality of power, that is, how power invades every aspect of human life and is enacted in beliefs, practices, discourses, learning, and so forth (Foucault, 1980).

Recalling my initial curiosity around the images of children and childhood held by my students, my focus was on the processes that emerged as the students and I worked with/in pedagogical narrations to disrupt our images of childhood. Foucault's notion of power as flowing through and with us as we were both regulated by and resisted competing discourses provided an opening through which to attend to the tensions and contradictions that occurred as our original images were disturbed. The difficulties that were part of our process of interpreting and revising our thinking began to "glow" as I revisited the data thinking with Foucault. I began to attend to

the complexities and intricacies that were part of a process of change as we adjusted our understandings of children and childhood.

Reading with Foucault, in the first section of this chapter, "Returnings: The Haunting of Developmental Theory," I attend to the contradictions that emerged as the students attempted to construct new understandings haunted by developmental theory. In the second section, "Disciplined Learners," thinking with Foucault provided me with space to consider how hegemonic discourses circulated through and with us, regulating and challenging our thinking.

Returnings: The Haunting of Developmental Theory

As explained in Chapter 3, Foucault (1982) notes that "what defines a relationship of power is that it is a mode of action that does not act directly and immediately on others. Instead, it acts on their actions" (p. 789). Implicit in this statement is the sense that, for Foucault, power can be understood as being exercised whereby "certain actions may structure the field of other possible actions" (p. 791). In this way, discourse exercises power to regulate the possibilities of what can be thought, understood, practiced, and so forth. Yet, this is not an exercise of domination in which the subject can be understood as having no agency in relation to discourse. Rather, power is exercised in a relationship that is characterized by struggle and tension in which the subject may acquiesce and/or resist discourse. As the students and I reread the data chunks, struggles and tensions emerged as hegemonic discourses of the past haunted the construction of new images. As discussed in Chapters 1 and 2, developmental theory has been cited as hegemonic in early childhood education (see for example, Cannella, 1997; Cannella & Viruru, 2004, Dahlberg, Moss, & Pence, 1999, 2007; MacNaughton, 2005, Pacini-Ketchabaw, 2011). Foucault's work allowed me to attend to the contradictions that emerged as the students

attempted to construct new understandings of children and childhood as developmental theory continued to haunt their thinking.

"But generally children are all the same."

In rereading the data chunks with Foucault, it appeared that the discourse of universality, an assumed component of developmental theory, became intertwined into new constructions, producing contradictions in our thinking. For example, student Group E used an image that was a collage of photos of plants found on the Internet to illustrate their evolving understanding of the plurality of children and childhoods (see Figure 9 below).

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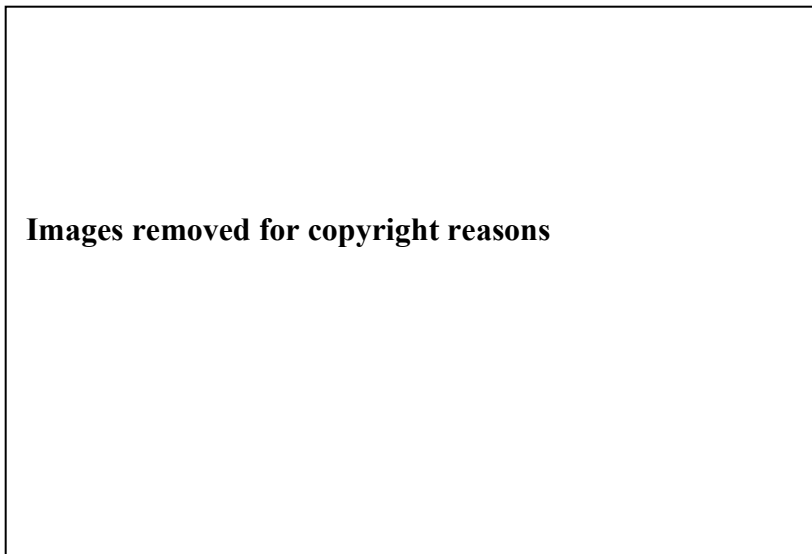
Figure 9. Group E's revised image of childhood.

The group provided a narrative that explained how the readings, ideas, experiences, and so forth acted to disrupt and contest their previously held assumptions and beliefs around children and "good" childhoods. In putting together their thoughts into their final pedagogical narrations, they wrote, "We came into the program with various assumptions and expectations about children and ECCE. As the term progressed, our pre-set ideas evolved through the

engagement of our discussions and theories presented in class" (Group E). They cited MacNaughton's (2003, 2005) work to support their assertion that notions of "good" childhoods are problematic in that they create a universal standard that can be used to classify children, families, and parents. When I revisited their work, thinking with Foucault's understanding of the disciplinary power of discourse, I was drawn to their final statement, in which they wrote that children are like diverse plants: "They look and grow differently but they are all generally the same" (Group E). In this case, it would seem that the discourse of universality acted as an instrument of discipline to pull the students' thinking back into asserting that an essential, universal quality can be used to identify children, thus contradicting their previous statements problematizing the notion of universality. In this way, the new images created of children were not outside of power relations, as seen in the contradictions, tensions, and questions in our thinking as lingering discourses became entangled with new discourses that regulated our thinking.

"The innocent eyes of a child."

As the students and I continued in our attempts to disrupt our existing images of children, the essential child maintained by developmental theory nagged at our thinking, returning us to previous understandings that challenged new understandings. For example, Charlotte originally chose a photo of a child playing because she saw childhood as a time of play and innocence (see Figure 10 below).

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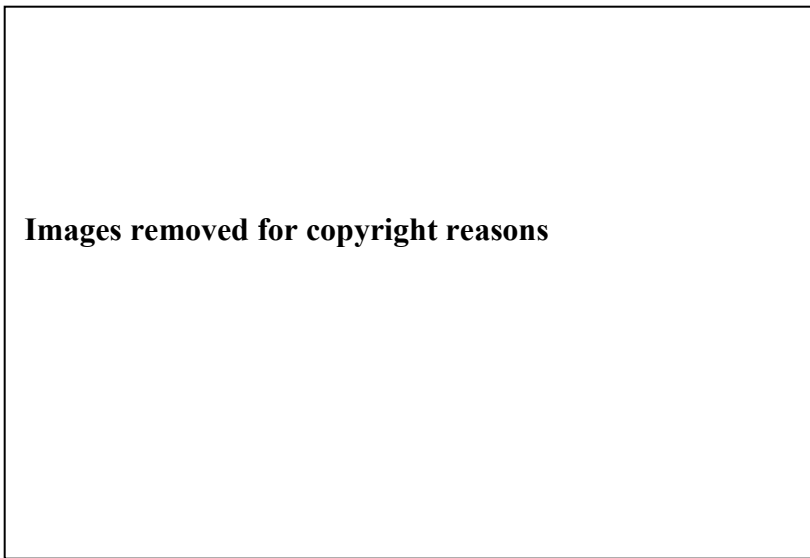
Figure 10. Charlotte's original image of childhood.

In explaining her revised image of childhood, Charlotte asserted that "real children" do not all live lives filled only with play, love, and happiness.

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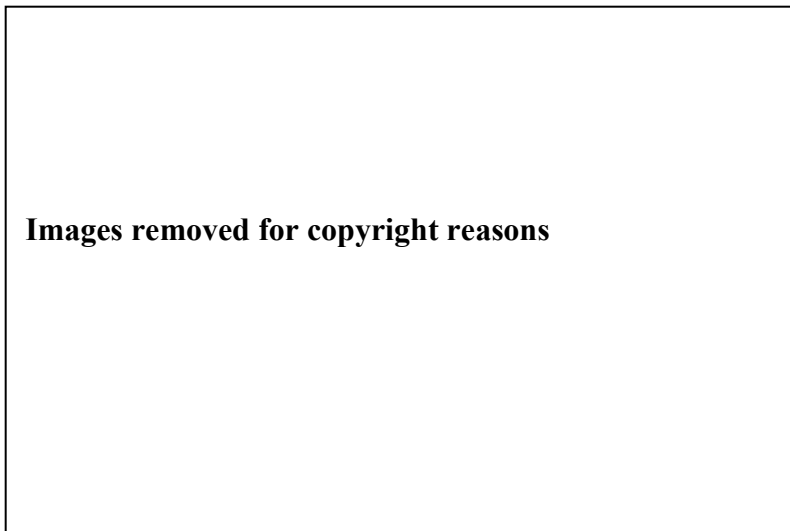
Figure 11. Charlotte's revised image of childhood.

In recognition of her revised way of considering childhood, Charlotte selected a photo of a child working in a mine (Figure 11), which she explained captured the "complexity, contradictions, and multiplicity of lives lived by real children." She closed her explanation by sharing that when she first saw the picture, "it brought me sadness. . . . I could sense the softness

and innocence of a child." Thinking with the notion of disciplinary power, it would appear that Charlotte was wrestling to resist the discourse of innocence, but capitulated to its hegemonic rule by suggesting that innocence remained with the child despite his circumstances. This is not to imply that this was a conscious, intentional cognitive exercise on Charlotte's part. For Foucault (1972), discourse is most powerful when it is invisible—appearing as if it were normal and natural. Similar examples emerged in the data in which it appeared that students and discourse would engage in a metaphoric duel. For example, Leila's narrative strongly defended the need for educators to recognize the diversity of children's lives. She went on to chastise herself for past moments when she had pitied children whose state of innocence had been shattered by life. Yet, like Charlotte, Leila closed her narrative by calling for educators to "always provide a safe environment" for children to compensate for what they might "experience outside of daycare." Other students also strenuously asserted that while they once held innocence as a right of children or an essential part of childhood, they now recognized that it was a single story (Adichie, 2009) of childhood. And, like Charlotte and Leila, they also concluded their narratives with statements that alluded to the notion that, despite even the most difficult of circumstances, a glimmer of innocence was still possible for all children.

The point of sharing these examples is not to critique the students or to suggest that my interpretation represents a true knowing of the students' intent or meaning. Rather, my point is to bring attention to the way in which discourse operates so as to complicate and challenge our thinking and ways of knowing. In thinking with Foucault, these examples illustrate that the students were not cleansed of prior images as a result of being in an early childhood education course. They were not changed so that they would now and forever engage in pedagogical

practices that reflect and respect the complexity of children's lives. As Foucault (1972) reminds us, we are always operating in and with discursive power relations.

The work of an artist.

Consider Manju, who selected a child's drawing as her revised image to reflect the complexity of children (see Figure 12 below). Manju explained her metaphor by stating that children are like "art" and are "wondrous and varied."
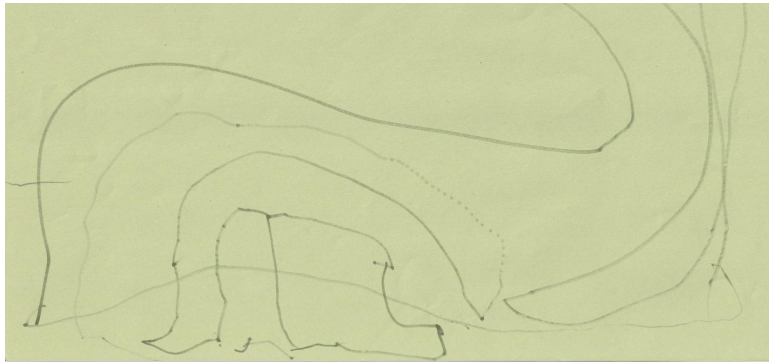
Figure 12. Manju's revised image of childhood.

She wrote: "I chose this picture because children are unpredictable. Just when I think I have them figured out they change. They are complex, just like the lines in this picture, weaving in and out, back and forth." Manju concluded by referring to a piece of art as a "finished product" that is "an extension of the artist."

Rereading the narrative with Foucault does not provide an avenue to the true meaning of Manju's narrative or her exact understanding of children and childhood. Rather, Foucault's notion of the disciplinary power of discourse provides a way to think about the apparent contradictions that appeared in Manju's narrative. When I reread the narrative, I can see that Manju starts off with language that reflects a discourse of diversity and unpredictability. She is able to clearly articulate this diversity in her statement "they are complex, just like the lines in

this picture, weaving in and out, back and forth." Her narrative echoes the work of many reconceptualist scholars who have challenged the hegemonic role of developmental theory in early childhood education (see, for example, Cannella, 1997; Cannella & Viruru, 2004; Dahlberg & Moss, 2005; Dahlberg et al., 1999, 2007; Hultqvist & Dahlberg, 2001; MacNaughton, 2003, 2005; Pacini-Ketchabaw & Pence, 2005).

As the narrative turns to describe the outcome of childhood, the language becomes reflective of developmental theory. Here Manju talks of a "finished product," perhaps implying developmental outcomes that are an "extension of the artist" and suggesting an agentic actor acting on the art, determining the outcome. While this developmental turn may not have been her intent, her use of developmental metaphors is important because it contradicts her initial statements of childhood as complex and unpredictable. Thinking of children as finished works of art that are extensions of the artist invites conversations that return to developmental outcomes that are determined by adults and environmental interventions. The child's role is reduced from that of an active participant in a relationship to that of a passive receptor needing particular interventions to reach optimal developmental outcomes. Yet, Manju begins by describing the child as moving in unpredictable ways through complex and diverse lines. Following Foucault's thinking, we can see how developmental theory as a regime of truth easily slips back into our understanding of children. The words and metaphors available to describe childhood and children are so steeped in developmental theory that it is difficult to select words to produce different meanings. Foucault explains that discourse makes it possible for us to think and talk about a concept, and as St. Pierre (2000) reminds us, "once a discourse becomes 'normal' and 'natural,' it is difficult to think outside of it" (p. 485). It would seem Manju's unpredictable

trajectory was challenged by developmental theory that presumed a known trajectory reflecting the artist.

Playing in a discursive field: Changing teams.

Foucault (1972) writes that a discourse can be understood as a set of statements that belong to a discursive formation. Within a discursive formation, discursive relationships are maintained by what is excluded from the discourse, and complementing discourses, practices, values, knowledges, and so forth reinforce and strengthen each other. Recall in Chapter 3 the "rules of exclusion" proposed by Foucault (1990), which operate to regulate what can be said and practiced by making explicit the limits or boundaries contained within discursive relationships.

Foucault (1980) also offered the term *discursive fields* to denote bodies of knowledge such as psychology and education. Within a discursive field there exists competing and often contradictory discourses that give meaning and organization to the social institutions produced by the body of knowledge. For example, within early childhood education, developmental theory and developmentally appropriate practice exist in a competing relationship with reconceptualized understandings of developmental theory and the reconceptualizing movement in early childhood education (Pacini-Ketchabaw, 2011). The discursive formation of developmental theory and developmentally appropriate practice create a particular subjectivity for children and educators that contrasts with the subjectivity created with a reconceptualized formation. For example, Fendler (2001) notes that as developmental psychology shifts its focus from cognition to the whole child, educational practices follow to produce the life-long learner. She asserts that educating the whole child requires "educating not only the cognitive, affective, and behavioural

aspects but also the child's innermost desires. . . . success for whole child education means not only that the child learns but desires to learn and is happy to learn' (p. 121)

In my rereading of the data chunks with Foucault, discursive formations worked to challenge the entry of competing ideas as the students and I disrupted one aspect of the formation. For example, when a new understanding of childhood was introduced, complementary understandings of related understandings, such as the role of the educator, were now problematic. In rereading all 32 of the narratives that accompanied the students' revised images of children and/or childhood, I noted that many of the narratives began with assertions that the student's new understanding of children challenged the known child defined by universal standards of child development. However, when they began to describe this new image of children and childhood in the context of early childhood education, tensions and contradictions emerged. This was particularly evident when the images of children and childhood were put into a relationship with educators whereby discourses of pedagogy, learning, and education defended both children's position as learners and childhood as a time for learning.

Calie selected the photo below (Figure 13), displaying of a variety of plant images found on the Internet by using Google Images, to reflect the diversity of children, challenging the notion of a known child. In her explanation of this revised image, she explains that she understands that as a teacher she will encounter many different children with diverse stories. Calie concludes her narrative by explaining that, as an educator, she will need to employ multiple teaching strategies to support the uniqueness of each learner. It would seem that the hegemonic understanding of childhood as a time of learning is accompanied by particular discourses of education with a specific teacher subjectivity.

Figure 13. Calie's revised image of childhood.

Images removed for copyright reasons

Consider how engagement with discursive formations from other disciplines might regulate our thinking in very different ways. For example, what if Calie's image represented diverse fauna and was presented to a group of botany students. Viewing the photo from the discipline of botany, it becomes possible to see each plant as an agentic entity where that plant, as a growing thing, both requires and is required by the ecosystem. For example, the spores from ferns, seen in Figure 14 below, are often rich in lipids, proteins, and calories and therefore are nutritionally appealing to some vertebrates.

Images removed for copyright reasons

Figure 14. Fern with spores.

Theories of botany, specifically knowledge of biotic pollination, allow us to see plants in a different relationship with/in the environment. Related disciplines, such as entomology and ornithology, bring their "truths" into the image as it expands to consider how flowering plants offer nectar to biotic pollen vectors, which in turn transport pollen, allowing for plant reproduction. In this reviewing of the image of diverse plants within another discipline, a knowledgeable, caring adult in the form of a gardener/teacher is not necessarily present. Juxtaposing botany with the image highlights the power relations of discourse. By looking at the image within a different discipline, it is possible to see how with new discourses and different entities (human and nonhuman) and practices emerge though power relations, producing new understandings. In the same way, the facts claimed by developmental theory "lead us to construct certain views about children, and we use these views to interpret observations of the children and youth we encounter in practice" (Pacini-Ketchabaw, 2012, p. 19).

Again, the reader should note that thinking with Foucault did not allow me to have a better understanding or knowledge of Calie's narrative. Rather, Foucault's work provided me with a way to consider how the disciplinary power of discourse regulates and guides thinking and action. Discourses of education and learning would seem to call for the plant/child to exist in a relationship with a gardener/teacher whose task it is to ensure that appropriate environmental conditions exist for individual plants/children to develop. It would seem that new understandings present in the use of a new metaphor were silenced as competing hegemonic discourses captured the student's gaze, drawing her away from the complexity of her metaphor to remain entangled by the singular identity of a developing being. Foucault (1977) asserts that officially sanctioned truths function as regimes of truth and enact a "violence" by marginalizing and silencing competing understandings or knowledges (p. 167). In this way, developmental theory privileges

a singular view of children and childhood, banishing diverse understandings. It would seem that developmental theory was able to slip back into the students' thinking, along with related hegemonic understandings, such as those of educational practices and learning. Looking at the data, it appeared that we were stumbling over new images while simultaneously struggling with the disciplinary power of old ones.

Foucault's notion of discourse is understood as "always multiple and thus sometimes ambiguous and contradictory" (Schaafsma, 1998, p. 257). As the students and I continued to construct new understandings of children and childhood, competing discourses were ever present, each one simultaneously attempting to push our thinking in diverse trajectories. Group E presented water as a metaphor for their collective revised image of childhood and selected the image seen in Figure 15 below:

Images removed for copyright reasons

Figure 15. Group E's revised image of childhood.

Group E wrote, "water is fragile and yet powerful," comparing children to the fragility of a drop of water, which, at the same time, has such force as to surprise or flood. It would seem that the students were considering the child as a contradictory subject existing simultaneously with the potential to be both vulnerable and powerful. Yet, as Group E's explanation of the

metaphor continued, the water/child shifted, losing some of its strength and becoming a more passive agent that could be shaped by the restraints of the environment. They wrote, "Water is easy to change into any shapes by pouring into different kinds of containers. However, water can also flow by itself depending on the environment" (Group E). In rereading Group E's narrative with Foucault's notion of disciplinary power, questions emerge when discourse is viewed as a multiple, ambiguous, and contradictory concept. Was the environment accorded an increase in agency in response to linguistic challenges and constraints of competing discourses? As their narrative moved to represent how their image would be materialized in practice, did discourses of developmental theory create the conditions whereby the nature/nurture discourse required a commitment to either the child or the environment as the primary agentic force in development? This analysis will not attempt to answer these questions; rather, the questions serve to draw attention to the complexity of power relations. Disrupting an existing image is not a simple process of "now knowing" the true knowledge. New images invite new discourses, which become entangled in competing discourses as they are materialized in action and practice.

Foucault's work allowed me to attend to how the students wrestled with how to materialize in practice a philosophical understanding of the child as a contradictory being, both agentic and the receiver of agency, and invited new tensions and questions. Is practice child centred, whereby the child, like the force of moving water, carves out the curriculum and directs its flow and course? Is practice teacher centred, with the teacher selecting the environment that will shape the child? Or both? How do you talk about a pedagogical practice if the subject is not stable and predictable?

It would seem that in our practice of disturbance, power and power relationships operated so that in moments of resisting a particular discourse, complementary discourses, practices,

values, knowledges, and so forth challenged our resistance and problematized our thinking. The disciplinary power of discourse had tentacles that challenged our thinking in ways that extended beyond our conversations of children, childhood, educators, and early childhood education.

In the following section, thinking with Foucault, I consider how discourses of the good student and teacher in a postsecondary setting acted on and with the students and me to regulate our thinking.

Disciplined Learners

During the course, the students and I read work by MacNaughton (2003, 2005) that introduced us to how child development functions as a regime of truth in early childhood education. As a group, we spent time engaged with two questions posed by MacNaughton (2005): "How much do your understandings of children rely on developmental truths?" and "To what extent do your understandings of the child reinforce a developmental regime of truth in early childhood studies" (p. 41)? In creating the artefacts that documented their engagement with the images, the readings, and each other, the students clearly acknowledged that developmental theory had been instrumental in regulating their initial images of children and childhood. For example, Kelly chose sunflowers for her initial image of children. She explained, "Sunflowers start out as seeds in the ground, grow and prosper with the correct care, and become fully grown and beautiful flowers. With the correct nurturing and care, a child will bloom and reach their full potential." In revisiting the image with MacNaughton's questions, Kelly wrote that correct nurturing and care could be understood as a metaphor for developmentally appropriate practice. She explained that she originally believed that "if I learned the correct way to teach using the right developmental practices, children would reach their potential." She continued by explaining

that her original image reflected the belief that child development is a universal concept that could be applied to all children.

Another student, Jackie, chose a skein of wool to reflect her new understandings of children and childhood (Figure 16).

Images removed for copyright reasons

Figure 16. Jackie's revised image of childhood.

Jackie wrote: "My selection for my second image of a child is a skein of wool. The variety of colours in this picture represents different lives of children. Also, some colours of strands of wool in the picture are much more visible than other ones, and they are all tangled together." Jackie explained that the skein of wool reflects the entanglement of power in children's lives where some children, like pieces of the wool, are invisible or marginalized.

Other revised images provided similar narratives in which the students were able to articulate how the readings, class discussions, and other events disrupted their original images of children and acknowledge that childhood developmental theory had been pervasive in shaping their original images of children. As with the two examples above, other revised images contained adjectives found in the course readings, reflecting a reconceptualizing perspective of early childhood, to describe children. Words such as "complex," "contradictory," "unique," "citizen," and "diverse" were commonplace in the students' narratives. Thinking with Foucault's

notion of disciplinary power, I was drawn to the traces of our thinking that occurred as we both resisted and submitted to the novel discourses we were encountering in our attempts to create new meanings.

Peering into the soul of the modern educator.

As an example of how the students resisted and submitted to the discourses they encountered, Kelly, in rejecting the notion of universality, recognized that she must now "learn to see children differently." She posed questions to herself to guide her learning, such as how could she "avoid practices that marginalize children" and "teach so as to disrupt social inequities." In rereading her narratives, new discourses were emerging as hegemonic to regulate her practices as "learner/educator."

Simola, Heikkinen, and Silvonen (1998), employing Foucault's notion of disciplinary power, analyzed the production of the modern teacher in Finland. Presenting the "truths of the modern teacher," they traced the discursive changes through educational reform that have reproduced altered versions of the "good teacher" since World War II. They asserted that new truths gave way to a model teacher who had internalized the "right attitude, and the deep belief in schooling" as compared to previous teachers who were seen as modelled on the basis of external attributes (pp. 74–75). Kelly, every inch the modern teacher, critically reflects on her internal attitudes, values, and beliefs to access her ability to be a good educator. Fendler (1998) contends that present pedagogy works so "that no aspect of the [learner] must be left undedicated; education touches the spirit, soul, motivation, wishes, desires, dispositions, and attitudes of the [learner] to be educated" (p. 121). Kelly, having spent over 12 years in educational institutions, is familiar with the discourse of the lifelong learner who continually needs to "see things differently." Her narratives echo those of an educated soul desiring to engage in practices that

"value diversity and social justice." My point here is not to dismiss or critique Kelly's desires, but to make visible how the effects of power, knowledge, and truth are always present.

As "disciplined learners," the students' responses to the questions were not simply "thoughtful, reflective, and true" answers revealing only the learner's newly acquired knowledge. It would seem that the act of responding was in itself a discursive practice governed by Foucault's concept of the technique of surveillance. As noted in Chapter 3, Foucault (1977) proposed the notion of governmentality to refer to the techniques and procedures used to govern the behaviour of individuals and populations at various levels of society. Also in Chapter 3, I mentioned that Gore (1998) explored how teachers' behaviour was regulated by techniques of power, such as surveillance. Using Foucault's notion of governmentality, Gore proposed that teachers and students regulated their behaviour to conform with standards of normalcy in situations where they expected to be, or were, watched by others. Foucault (1977) asserts, "A relation of surveillance, defined and regulated, is inscribed at the head of the practice of teaching … as a mechanism that is inherent to it and which increases its efficiency" (p. 176). The students' act of writing their response and making it public allowed the technology of surveillance to operate in our classroom and to produce particular understandings of what constitutes a desired response. It is important to note that the technique of surveillance operates to discipline not only the learner but also the teacher.

In the next section, as I revisit the data chunks, I consider how surveillance as a technique produced my subjectivity as teacher in this project.

The hidden curriculum: Making the grade.

As previously noted, the students asserted that their original images of children and childhood had been disrupted through their engagement with the images, the readings, and each

other. Zoe, using a question mark to reflect her revised image of children and childhood, articulated, like many of the students, a change in her thinking. She wrote, "Over the past few months, there have been many questions posed in the courses that I have been trying to find answers to and seek meaning for. . . . This has caused a disturbance in my original thinking of children as plants." Similarly, Taylor wrote, "Throughout this course, my thinking has been challenged, multiple times. . . . I can assure you that the image that I would have picked to describe my current image of a child would not be the same image I chose before" (Taylor). My initial response was to applaud Taylor's and the other students' work, thinking that my choice of readings and our collective conversations had supported the students in disrupting their previous beliefs and assumptions. Yet, as I returned to their narratives, thinking with Foucault's notion of disciplinary power, I was prompted to consider how the discourse of the good student (e.g., the process through which students' ideas are reined in to comply with the approved curriculum content) infiltrated the students' narratives.

Foucault (1980) writes that in thinking of the mechanisms of power, he considers how power "touches [people's] bodies and inserts itself into their actions and attitudes, their discourses, learning processes and everyday lives" (p. 39). As a group, these students had all successfully attained the academic requirements to enter the first year of university studies. They were successful students and they knew what actions, values, attitudes, and so forth were required to be successful students. Lortie (2002) writes that the time spent in the classroom allows the student to know how to be a good student and to gain competency in both the content curriculum and the hidden curriculum (e.g., cultural norms and behavioural expectations of the classroom). While the students' conscious or unconscious intentions can never be known, relying on Foucault's understanding of discourse as "both an instrument and effect of power" (p. 101)

challenges an image of the students' work as being purely a representation of self-learning. This is not to suggest that the students wrote narratives with the sole intent of receiving a passing grade, but as successful students, they knew how to regulate their behaviour and thinking to meet academic standards. The students' awareness that good students provide the right answer was evident in their own words as they explained the errors in their original images. For example, Hannah explained that, while her original image was a flower, reflecting the beauty and potential of all children, the readings challenged her thinking and she now realized that her "idea was terribly wrong." Similar confessions of mistaken thought were found in many of the students' narratives. Yasmin expressed concern that her previous beliefs may have resulted in "marginalizing the lives of children who did not reflect [her] initial image." Recall that Taylor assured her reader/confessor that "the image [she] would have picked to describe [her] current image of a child would not be the same image" she chose before. The act of confession, for Foucault, is central in understanding the workings of power. While many of Foucault's comments on confession were positioned in his analysis of the ways in which sexuality emerges as an object of knowledge, the concept of confession in relation to power can be extended to a broader context. Foucault (1998a) writes that confession "has become one of the West's most highly valued techniques for producing truth. . . . We have since become a singularly confessing society" (p. 59). For Foucault, the urge to confess past transgressions, in this case holding "erroneous" images of children and childhood, acts as a technology for self-monitoring and reflection. Through confession, discursive practices are made visible and therefore can be examined. In discussing technologies of the self, Foucault (1998b) explains that the social sciences have adopted the belief that in verbally disclosing one's transgressions, one can "constitute a new self" (p. 49).

The disciplinary power of the good student is everywhere, exacting on the students a prescribed set of actions, knowledge, and language to be adhered to in order to maintain their subjectivity as good students. Through the process of confession, the students were not only remaking their understanding of children, they were becoming educators of this new child. Recall Hannah, who confessed that her thinking was "terribly wrong" because she had only a single story of childhood. She now believes that her new understanding of childhood as multiple and complex will help her to become a "better teacher" because she "now understands" the importance of engaging in practice that honours diversity. The desire to be a good student requires not only a self-cleansing of previous beliefs and assumptions but a willingness to be ready to adopt new, more desirable understandings of childhood. As with the life-long learner described by Fendler (2001), the good student must not only learn to recognize "dangerous" self-held values and beliefs, but desire to change those values and beliefs.

Becoming the powerful teacher of the powerful child discourse.

As mentioned in Chapter 3, Foucault's notion of the subject allows us to ask: "How is one kind of subjecthood or another made possible" (Davies, 2010, p. 55)? For Foucault, scripts, languages, knowledge, rules, practices, and values that construct a specific subject can coerce that subject into a particular way of being (Jones & Osgood, 2007). It would follow, then, that in becoming an early childhood educator, the subject does not choose to teach in any way. Rather, the subject chooses to teach "from the conditions of possibility—the discourses which prescribe not only what is desirable but what is recognizable as an acceptable form" (Davies et al., 2006, p. 22). Further, how a subject is identifiable within a particular context reduces the option to entertain other standards of classification (Fendler, 2001).

This understanding of the subject is important to my analysis given that current researchers and scholars within the reconceptualizing movement in early childhood education are advocating for educators to actively disrupt traditional understandings of children and childhood (see, for example, Cannella, 1997; Cannella & Viruru, 2004; Dahlberg & Moss, 2005; Dahlberg, Moss, and Pence, 2007; Hultqvist & Dahlberg, 2001; MacNaughton, 2003, 2005; Pacini-Ketchabaw & Pence, 2005). For example, the students and I read work referring to the image put forth by Malaguzzi (1993, cited in Rinaldi, 2006) of the child who "right from the moment of birth is so engaged in developing a relationship with the world and intent on experiencing the world that he develops a complex system of abilities, learning strategies and ways of organizing relationships" (p. 83). This reading was followed by readings that asked us to construct an image of an educator "who is a 'powerful' teacher, the only kind of teacher suitable for our equally 'powerful' child" (Rinaldi, 2006, p. 125). This powerful educator, Rinaldi explains, is open to the unexpected, one who engages in learning with the child as a researcher in order to be open to possibilities in the project of education. Yet, the image of a powerful and competent child can be as problematic as that of the innocent and needy child when that image becomes hegemonic in early childhood education.

I return now to the students' revised images and group narrations, where the language, knowledge, and beliefs being presented by the students echoed Malaguzzi's image of the child as a competent learner. Equally present were assertions that educators needed to engage in particular practices of a "powerful child" discourse. Thinking with Foucault's understanding of subjectivity within a discursive field, it would appear that the reconceptualizing perspective, while challenging traditional hegemonic discourse in ECE, offers up another discourse with another set of technologies that regulate practice. For example, in her narrative accompanying

her revised image, Farah assures the reader that she now "understands and values diversity" and that the teacher "must engage in practices" that honour this belief. Hannah writes that she now knows "how terribly wrong" she was and that she knows she "must learn more" so that her teaching practices will reflect a more diverse image of childhood. Tamara, on the hand, shares with the reader her confusion as she considers what it means as an educator to consider new understandings of children and childhood. In explaining her response to meeting real children during her practicum, Tamara wrote that "this situation has created this crisis for me and left my mind with so many questions. . . . Am I doing something wrong?" As "good students" who wanted to be "good educators," the students were attentive to the requirements to practice within a reconceptualized early childhood setting. This analysis offers a reminder of Foucault's (1983) caution when he wrote:

> My point is not that everything is bad, but that everything is dangerous, which is
>
> not exactly the same as bad. If everything is dangerous, then we always have
>
> something to do. So my position leads not to apathy but to a hyper- and
>
> pessimistic activism. I think that the ethico-political choice we have to make
>
> every day is to determine which is the main danger. (pp. 231–232)

While wanting to be a "good instructor," I am excited by the students' narratives that take up the ideas I presented through the course readings, class activities, and so forth. Yet, I am also left with a sense of unease (perhaps not a crisis) in thinking of how the students (and I) will always be a material-discursive field in which disciplinary power exists. Will we recognize the "main danger" in our daily practice and acknowledge that every discourse is "dangerous"? Will we, in the face of competing discourses, take up multiple identities, like Annie in Jackson's

(2001) study? Will our desire to be good educators push us into a practice of self-critique that leaves us paralyzed to act in fear of making the wrong choice?

Summary

In this chapter, using the analytical method of plugging in proposed by Jackson and Mazzei (2012), I engaged with the analytical question that Foucault's work provoked: How did hegemonic discourses discipline and regulate our efforts to construct new understandings of children and childhood? I was particularly drawn to Foucault's (1980) understanding of the materiality of power, that is, how power invades every aspect of human life and is enacted in beliefs, practices, discourses, learning, and so forth. Thinking with Foucault allowed me to recognize that learning is not a smooth, linear process in which the learner takes up some new understanding or way of being. Learning to be an early childhood educator is challenging, messy work that occurs within multiple and often competing discourses fraught with tensions and anxiety. This analysis illustrates Jackson's (2001) assertion that

> we can give up the idea of expecting a predetermined teacher "self" to emerge
>
> from a linear path of the student teaching experience and instead open up new
>
> possibilities of multiple and contingent knowledges, experiences, and
>
> subjectivities that are productive in the making of a teacher. (p. 396)

In Chapter 6, I once again employ Jackson and Mazzei's analytical method of plugging in to engage with the analytical question that Barad's work prompted: *How did the presence of the particular artefacts produced in the practice of pedagogical narrations intraact with us, the texts, and the images to make and unmake our shapings and coshapings of children and childhood?*

Chapter 6. Readings with Barad: Matter in the Classroom Matters

[S]ince each intra-acting matters, since the possibilities for what the world may become call out in the pause that precedes each breath before a moment comes into being and the world is re-made again, because the becoming of the work is a deeply ethical matter. (Barad, 2007, p. 185)

This chapter explores how mattering and meaning are mutually constituted in the production of knowledge (Barad, 2007). Alaimo and Hekman (2008) use the term *material feminism* to describe the work of feminist scholars who "explore the question of nonhuman and post-human nature and its relationship to the human" (p. 7). They cite the work of Karen Barad as theoretically fundamental to a material feminist perspective and the argument that matter does, in fact, matter. Material feminism, as understood through the work of Barad (2007, 2008, 2011), offers a lens through which pedagogical practices, such as pedagogical narrations, can be reconceptualized as *more than* anthropocentric endeavours. Material feminism asks us to understand learning as more than internal cognitive processes of the individual learner or cognitive processes arising from encounters with other humans. We are called to also consider the agentic force of *the matter of learning*, such as texts, images, space, time, and so forth. When the matter of learning matters, humans (e.g., children, educators, families) are decentred and relationalities are emphasized (Lenz Taguchi, 2010).

Material feminism offers ways of looking at how students and teachers are constituted by focusing on the materialities of bodies, things, and spaces within education (C. Taylor, 2013, p. 688). Revisiting the data with material feminism makes "available new analytical tools to help to re-think the co-constitutive entanglements of and between knowledge domains, practices, subjects, objects and things of all kinds" (Taylor & Ivinson, 2013 , p. 665). In this study,

engaging with pedagogical narrations as a material-discursive practice and thinking with Barad

prompted the following analytical question: *How did the presence of the particular artefacts*

produced in the practice of pedagogical narrations intraact with us, the texts, and the images to

make and unmake our shapings and coshapings of children and childhood?

Pedagogical Narrations: A Material-Discursive Apparatus

As I explained in Chapter 4, while I use the term *pedagogical narrations* to describe the

practice the students and I engaged with, central to my understanding of pedagogical narrations

is Lenz Taguchi's work with the concept of *pedagogical documentation*. Drawing on the work of

Karen Barad (2007), Lenz Taguchi (2010) posits that pedagogical documentation is a material-

discursive apparatus. In Chapter 4 I cited Barad (2007), who, thinking with the physicist Bohr,

writes that apparatuses are "the material conditions of possibility and impossibility of mattering"

(p. 148). In extending Bohr's understanding of the term *apparatus* to reflect material feminism,

Barad writes that apparatuses are more than laboratory tools that enable measurements and

represent ideas; they are material-discursive practices that "produce differences that matter" (p.

146).

Barad, extending Foucault's concept of material-discursive practices, explains that an

apparatus is itself a material-discursive practice that produces rather than simply represents

meaning and knowledge and the objects and subjects of those meanings and knowledge. In this

way, Barad understands an apparatus as a material-discursive practice whereby it is not merely

an object, but is part of the process of intraactive performativity. An apparatus as a material-

discursive practice "is not a thing but a doing" (Barad, 2007, p. 183).

Lenz Taguchi (2010), thinking with Barad's understanding of an apparatus as a material-

discursive practice, asserts that pedagogical documentation is not about representing practice, but

instead "becomes what it actively does and performs in relation to the pedagogical practice where it is produced" (p. 64). In this way, the images and/or texts that are the artefacts of pedagogical documentation are themselves performative agents that produce new possibilities in their intraaction with other matter and beings (Lenz Taguchi, 2010). Following this understanding, in the doing of pedagogical narrations within this study, artefacts were produced not simply as representations of our collaborative thinking. Rather, the artefacts that emerged in-between the material, the discursive, and the participants were themselves agentic. They invited us to shift our gaze and our conversation, and new meanings and realities were thereby produced in the entanglements.

Reconfiguring/Repositioning Artefacts

In a pedagogical context, when teachers and students are seen as the agentic force in the classroom, matter such as materials, books, images, and so forth are rendered as tools of humans (Lenz Taguchi, 2010, 2011). Removing the anthropocentric lens shifts the gaze to how the matter of learning matters: how matter in an intraactive pedagogy produces new possibilities for learning and meaning making. When we see matter as mattering, the materials, books, and images that are included or excluded from the activity of learning matter. The learning conversations are entangled with the matter, and in their entangled relationship with humans, realities are created. In this way, agency is not simply understood as humans choosing to act or not act in a particular fashion. Rather, humans and nonhumans are entangled in a relationship that is not divisible, but that relationship entails responsibility and therefore is political. As Barad (2011) explains,

> entanglements are not intertwinings of separate entities but rather irreducible
>
> relations of responsibility. There is no fixed dividing line between 'self' and

'other,' 'past' and 'present' and 'future,' 'here' and 'now,' 'cause' and 'effect.'

(pp. 149–150)

Barad (2007) writes that "the attribution and exclusion of agency—like the attributions and exclusions involved in the construction of the human—are a political issue" (p. 216). Different viewpoints, questions of rights, and priorities are mobilized depending on where agency is seen to be located. Barad argues that prior assumptions of what is and is not agentic have political consequences. Consider current debates on the state of the world's environment. An anthropocentric view that looks at how humans can make change to better care for the environment for the sake of all humankind champions different rights and perspectives than an ecocentric (Leopold, 1949/1986) view that focuses on a biotic as a whole in which human existence is not seen as distinct from the rest of the world. For example, the anthropocentric position would seek to protect water, not for the sake of water in a relationship with/in the world, but for its utility to humans. This example of the political consequences of the assignment of agency is no less relevant in the classroom. Thinking with Barad as I revisited the data allowed me to attend to how the matter in the classroom mattered—in particular, how race would have been almost excluded from the classroom had it not been for some matter.

The concept of race is controversial and contested, reflecting an entangled history of colonization, politics, evolutionary theory, white supremacy, economics, and so forth (Ahmed, 2007). Davis and MacNaughton's (2009) overview of race highlights the impact of categorization within this entanglement and how the use and meaning of race have been constructed to benefit particular groups of people at different times in history. In their synopsis, Davis and MacNaughton remind readers that the concept of race was developed just over 500 years ago as a means of classifying people during the time of European expansion and

colonization. Further, they point out that Charles Darwin's work supported a notion of racial

hierarchy whereby weak races were replaced by superior races. This idea that particular groups

or races of people were superior became the justification for events such as the oppression and,

in many cases, genocide of Aboriginal people during colonization. Davis and MacNaughton

assert that racial terms that label skin colour, such as black and white, "connect identities to

historical and social constructions of whiteness and blackness in 'race' classificatory systems

over time" (p. 4). This notion of racial labels is exemplified in *Making Whiteness: The Culture of

Segregation in the South, 1890–1940*, in which Hale (1999) delivers a powerful example of what

she terms *racial making* whereby whiteness was constructed as synonymous with being

American. Hale explores how segregation is the enactment of a culture difference and "is the

product of human choice and decision, of power and fear, of longing, even love and hate" (p. x).

In my analysis of the data in this study, I have chosen to work with the term *race,* as Hale

suggests, as something that is constructed and used to "classify, name, oppress, repress, and

silence specific groups of people" (Davis & MacNaughton, p. 5). I acknowledge that race is

entangled in this present-day inquiry and that it shapes and reshapes our understanding of issues

of whiteness, diversity, and so forth.

In revisiting the data with Barad, I am able to attend to how the artefacts produced within

the practice of pedagogical narrations reconfigured my teaching agenda in a way that pushed the

students and me into unforeseen conversations which, in turn, generated new understandings and

meanings. In this way, pedagogical narrations enacted agentic cuts producing different

phenomena as differential patterns of mattering (Barad, 2007, p. 140). That is, the intraaction

that occurred with/in the texts, images, and humans with/in the practice of pedagogical narrations

coshaped different realities that emerged as classroom curriculum. Barad's (2007) concept of

agentic cuts was made evident by the construction of a collage that evolved out of my desire to present to the whole class all the original images of children and childhood that the students brought to class early on. For reasons of efficiency, I decided to put all of the images of human children (both photos and drawings) into one collage and all the nonhuman images into another collage. What resulted was the collage of human children seen in Figure 17 below and a collage of nonhuman images of childhood seen in Figure 18.

Figure 17. Collage of original images of children.

Images removed for copyright reasons

Images removed for copyright reasons
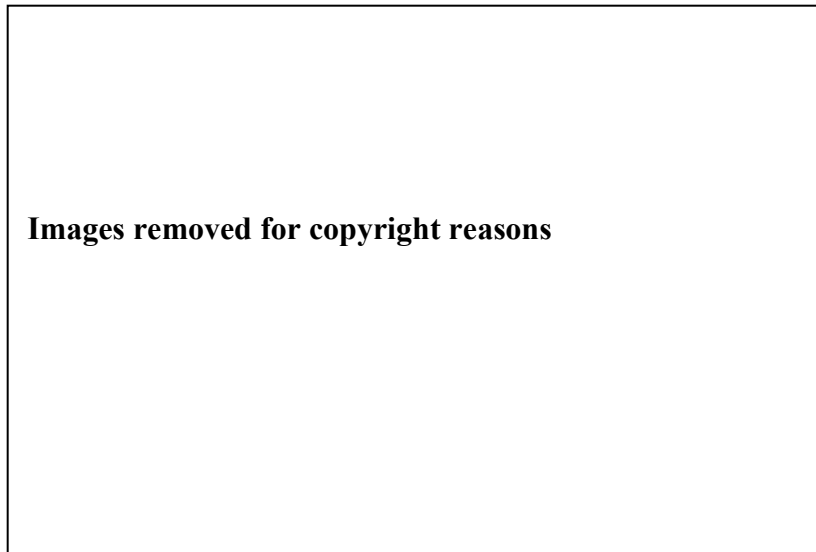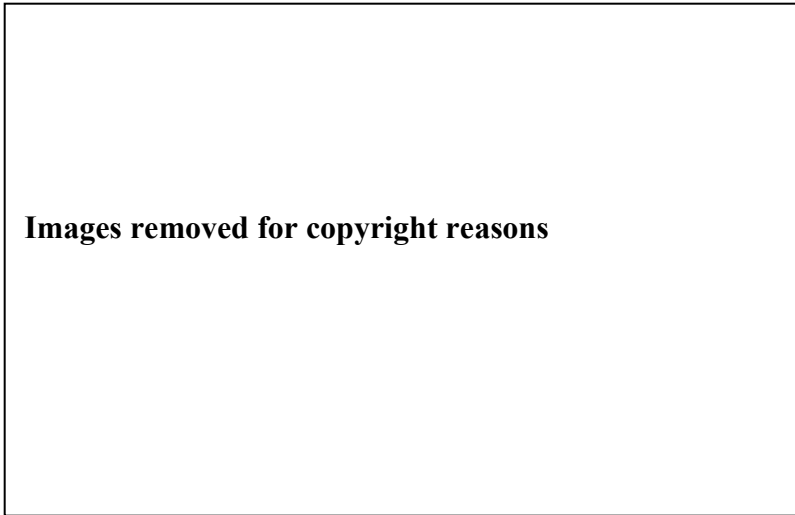
Figure 18. Collage of original nonhuman images of childhood.

I sat with the collage for some time, gazing at the children's faces and bodies. I was somewhat disturbed by the collage, and yet I could not articulate the source of the disturbance. As I looked at the collage, in my mind I could see the view from the front of our classroom. From that position, I looked out at a classroom filled with 20 students who self-identified as students of colour and 12 who self-identified as white. As I juxtaposed the image of our class in my mind with the images in the collage, the overwhelming "whiteness" in the collage of children became evident. As I closely examined each photo, there were children who appeared to be non-white, yet there was an overwhelming "whiteness" that was visible. There were 23 images of children, and I could only discern three children who, from my perspective, were children of colour. (In rereading this statement, and thinking with the work of Pacini-Ketchabaw and Nxumalo [2010] and Nxumalo [2012], perhaps the overwhelming whiteness reflected a default position on my part due to my own whiteness.)

At about this time, I was travelling with a colleague to a conference in another country. Wanting to prepare for the next few classes, I took the collage and some course materials on the trip. Sitting on the plane, I showed the collage to my colleague. She too gazed at the bodies and

faces of the children presented in the collage. We sat together on a plane filled with people like those people in the city we had just flown from, whose skin tones were a multitude of shades. As my colleague sat in a plane that reflected racial diversity, the collage spoke to her, reminding her as it did me of the relationship between childhood, whiteness, and normality. Our observation that images of "typical" children and childhoods exclude race is far from being scientifically relevant. Certainly the work of critical race scholars in education (see, for example, Ahmed, 2006, 2009; Applebaum, 2006, 2012; Picower, 2009) provides ample indication that racism is normalized in education so that white privilege/supremacy is dominant. The work of these scholars contains copious assertions that white is the standard of normality from which all people are judged. Yet, as I sit here rereading the data with Barad, what appears important to me is that race became visible through the practice of pedagogical narrations. Barad (2012, in an interview in Juelskær & Schwennesen, 2012) speaks of "performing the labour of tracing the entanglements, of making connections visible, you're making our obligations and debts visible, as part of what it might mean to reconfigure relations of spacetimemattering" (p. 20).

As an apparatus of meaning making (Barad, 2007), pedagogical narrations became entangled with/in me, the students, and spacetimematterings to produce a collage—an artefact. This artefact itself then had an effect: Its presence unexpectedly invited a conversation about race where, without its presence, race had been silenced. The class focus was to consider how poststructural theory could help us reconceptualize our understandings of children, childhood, and early childhood education. With Foucault haunting me and with Guba and Lincoln (2005) reminding me of the issues of trustworthiness and authenticity in qualitative research, I have to confess to the reader that race, racialization, and whiteness were not concepts I had planned to focus on in my 13 weeks of instruction as I raced against the time constraints to meet the

learning outcomes of the course. Yet, the collage entered into the classroom and its power to

disturb me disrupted my agenda. I reassigned the readings for the next few weeks, asking the

students to read a chapter by Glenda MacNaughton (2005) looking at her notion of seeking "the

otherwise." I was curious as to how the students would respond when they revisited the images

after they had read and thought about MacNaughton's question, "What is your relation with

whiteness?" (p. 187). Would we/they invite race and colour into the discussion? Would the

whiteness of the images call out to them?

As for my colleague, I cannot help but wonder if or how the presence of diversity (the

people with us on the plane) spoke in unity with the exclusion of diversity (in the collage) in that

moment. Was she as startled as I was by the contrast of the physical presence of a diverse world

and the seeming homogeneity resonating from the collage? Did her own research, readings, and

history become entangled with the collage, causing race to call out to her? When I revisited these

images, how did my history with skin colour and my unquestioned use of the term *race* become

entangled with the images? Was I fixated on phenotypes, categorizing and classifying people on

the basis of skin tone? Did I assume that diversity was merely the presence of non-white faces

(Ahmed, 2009)? A curious assumption on my part, given that my sister's skin tone identifies her

to many people as Aboriginal, while my skin tone identifies me as European. These questions

will never be answered, nor is this an attempt to represent that moment in order to name the truth

of it. What matters is that the artefact produced in the material-discursive practice of pedagogical

narrations *mattered*. Lenz Taguchi (2010) refers to this as *intra-pedagogy* whereby the

interaction and relationships between students and teachers is "inclusive of the performative

agency of the material in the intra-actions of learning events" (p. 65). She asserts that, most

often, pedagogy is assumed to be an individual cognitive process or something that happens in a

relationship where at least one person has something to teach the other(s). This view of learning

does not account for the entanglements that learning and teaching humans have with things,

materials, furnishings, artefacts, and environments within an entanglement of spaces and time

(Barad, 2007; Lenz Taguchi, 2010). Thinking with this notion of material as having an agentic

force allows attention to be drawn to the collage in its intraaction with me, my colleague, and, of

course, the students.

The refiguring/repositioning continued.

The following week the collage (Figure 19) entered the classroom with me as a

PowerPoint slide that was projected onto the wall at the front of the classroom.

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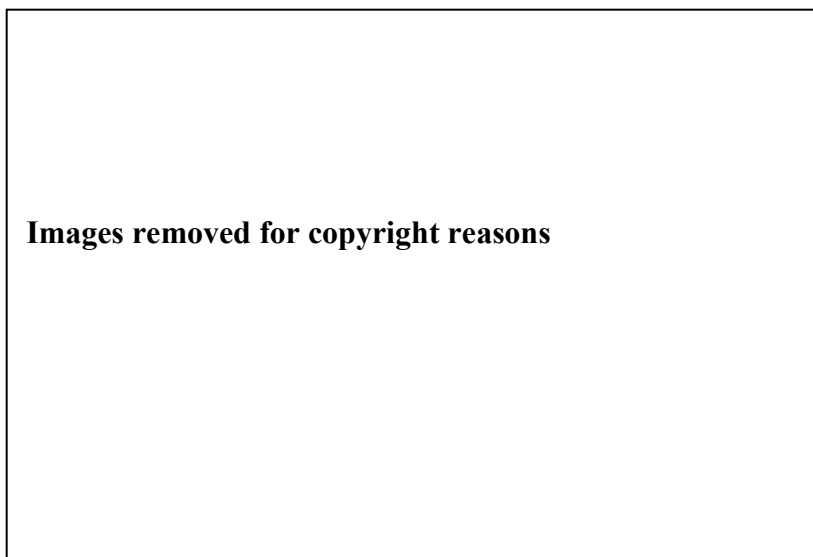
Figure 19. Collage of original images of children.

As I mentioned previously, I had switched the assigned readings and the students were

now reading a chapter by Glenda MacNaughton (2005) looking at her notion of seeking "the

otherwise." At the beginning of the class, I asked the students to reflect on the collage, thinking

with the ideas they had read in the chapter. My field notes reveal that the whiteness of the images

remained silent. The students commented that the images reflected childhoods void of disability,

illness, poverty, and unhappiness. Yet, the work of Ahmed (2006, 2007, 2009) and other critical

race theorists reminds us that the silence of whiteness indicates the collective discrimination of

those who are identified as non-white others. Or perhaps, as Picower (2009) suggests, the

students had been schooled to know that to bring up race was taboo. I then read to them excerpts

from MacNaughton's chapter in which a young girl of Vietnamese heritage chooses a white doll

as the doll that most looked like her from a group of dolls that were racially diverse. I concluded

by reading with the various interpretations of this scenario by early childhood professionals who

identified as white and those who did not identify as white. The room became quiet, and the

large-group discussion that usually ensued after the lecture part of the class stalled.

MacNaughton's text became entangled in our thinking, joining in with the images, the previous

readings, our own histories, and so forth. Another agential cut was made, repositioning our gaze

and our thinking, and therefore reconfiguring our world. The addition of MacNaughton's text

repositioned the entanglement; human speech was stalled. To support further conversation, I

asked the students to get into their small working groups to consider MacNaughton's (2005)

question, "What is your relation with whiteness?" (p. 187).

My field notes reflect my wandering around between the groups as they shared their

responses to the collage. Some of the students wondered if the reason that so many of the images

were white could be attributed to the Google search engine privileging images of white children.

Others contemplated whether race was really important when considering childhood as a

concept. Perhaps the prevalence of white children in the images was not as important as issues

such as disability and social class. The text and images were pushing us to attempt to rework race

in our classroom, and we resisted by pushing back with our use of / being with race. Our words

reenacted the text we had read about the child and the doll. The students also wondered if there

were reasons other than race for the child to choose that particular doll. I moved through the groups, listening and joining in to their conversations. In each of the groups, I asked them to look at the collage and consider whether this was the only image of children in our classroom? What message would the poster relay to people entering our classroom? What would the collage tell people about our relationship with whiteness?

As I later revisited the students' narratives as artefacts that were part of the practice of pedagogical narrations, I could feel the disturbance of the collage as it reverberated in our thinking, feelings, and being. Sitting on colonized land, with students whose ancestors were the colonized and the colonizer, with students whose families had been subject to head taxes and internment camps within our province, the artefacts created turmoil in our thinking. Group F confessed to a past omission of race as they wrote: "As we look back at the majority of our images we now understand that there are specific equity issues. With the majority of images being Caucasian white middle class children, is this what we believe is our 'perfect childhood'?" Following the collage and the reading, the recorder for Group A shared the following childhood memory:

> As an Asian Canadian, I understand that race plays a big part in life. I grew up in Canada and all my beliefs and values are similar to a white Canadian's. Even at home my mom would always joke around saying how I am just like a banana, yellow on the outside and white on the inside. When I was younger I did not understand why people like to group different racial groups by colours. Until that one time in elementary school, I was practicing my writing on the chalkboard during break, a girl classmate came up to me and said, "You don't know how to write in English, you don't belong here, go back to China!" I was really upset

about her comment but I didn't know why. At that very moment I wanted to be like her, a white Canadian. Now looking back at that situation my story is very similar to Kim's story. I wanted to change myself to fit in, and no child should want to change itself to fit in. (Yi-Min, Group B, 2011)

These texts and the other narratives then joined the collage as artefacts to revisit, coming out at other times to haunt us, to challenge us to reimage notions of race. Race continued to be present in our classroom through the new images and new narratives that entered, and through the students' re-remembering of childhood experiences that spoke of new understandings and meanings. The notions of diversity and inclusion moved beyond issues of developmental differences to include issues of race, colonization, and white privilege.

(Re)Encounters with race: New complexities and tensions.

The collage became part of each group's artefacts, coming out for small-group discussions and occasionally being displayed on the wall as part of the lectures. As mentioned, Group A's narrative also became a tangible piece of matter in our classroom. We had begun to consider race as something that mattered as thoughts and realties were being reconfigured and repositioned. Barad (2007) writes that "it is through specific agential intra-actions that the boundaries and properties of the components of phenomena become determinate and that particular concepts (that is, particular material articulations of the world) become meaningful" (p. 139). In this way, race did not enter into the curriculum as a result of human agency alone; it entered through a complex set of intraactions that rearticulated race as something that mattered. Stewart (2010) eloquently expresses this notion of agency in the following:

Everything depends on the dense entanglement of affect, attention, the sense, and matter. This is not exactly intended or unintended, not the kind of pure agency we

imagine marching forward . . . but a balling up and unraveling of states of attending to what might be happening. It's an attunement to possibilities opening up and not necessarily good ones. But, maybe. (p. 6)

For example, Group E wrote, "We are more and more talking about race." Petra and Misty echoed this observation as they explained that the collage, the readings, and their discussions had provoked them to attend to race and to celebrate difference as they went into the childcare centres. Misty recalled how race lived in the centre she was observing as she shared a moment with a child that confirmed her "new understanding that children attended to race." She wrote, "In my centre, there is a girl Lynn who has Chinese parents. When I met her at the first time, she asked me "Are you a Chinese girl?" I replied that I'm a Japanese girl" (Misty, 2011). I do not mean to suggest that such conversations had not occurred previously, but rather that they were now significant enough to be documented. They mattered. In their mattering, these conversations invited new thoughts, ideas, images, and matter—race—into the entanglement that was pushing and shaping the classroom curriculum into unforeseen places.

With our excitement about welcoming race into the conversation came new anxieties and unforeseen challenges. Now that we were talking about race, the racial assumptions, values, and beliefs we brought to our work with children and families began to emerge. Group E captured this new fear. "How do we work with race?" they asked of the class and themselves. "How do we avoid assumptions when they are everywhere? Can we think about children without thinking 'race'? Can we look at children without thinking of their colour? Can we interact with children without thinking about their background?" Their words came to class as artefacts for all of us to read and think with. We turned to MacNaughton's work with the ideas of Foucault to consider how truth, power, and knowledge are connected. MacNaughton's words, text, and stories became

part of the larger material arrangement with/in our classroom. Her work became intertwined in the ongoing material-discursive practice of pedagogical narrations in our classroom, enacting an agential cut to produce the space for questions of politics, inequity, and racism. It would seem that in the doing of the pedagogical narrations as a material-discursive practice, we began to engage in micropolitical acts that created an opening for different ways of being in the world with race and education.

As mentioned previously, Barad (2007) elaborated on Bohr's notion of apparatus by asserting that "*apparatuses are the material conditions of possibility and impossibility of mattering*: they enact what matters and what is excluded from mattering" (p. 148). The pedagogical narrations were an apparatus in our classroom, enacting agential cuts and materializing different phenomena. New images of children entered the classroom through the students' revised images in the pedagogical narrations. These images now contained children of colour. Looking at the data and thinking with Barad, I was drawn now to nine of the revised images of children (four shown in Figure 20, A Celebration of Diversity, and five shown in Figure 21, A Single Story of Tragedy).

Images removed for copyright reasons

Figure 20. A celebration of diversity.

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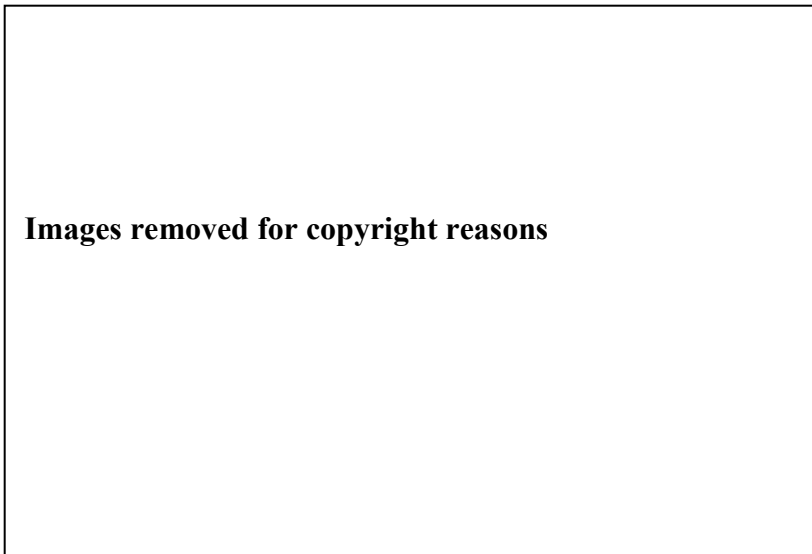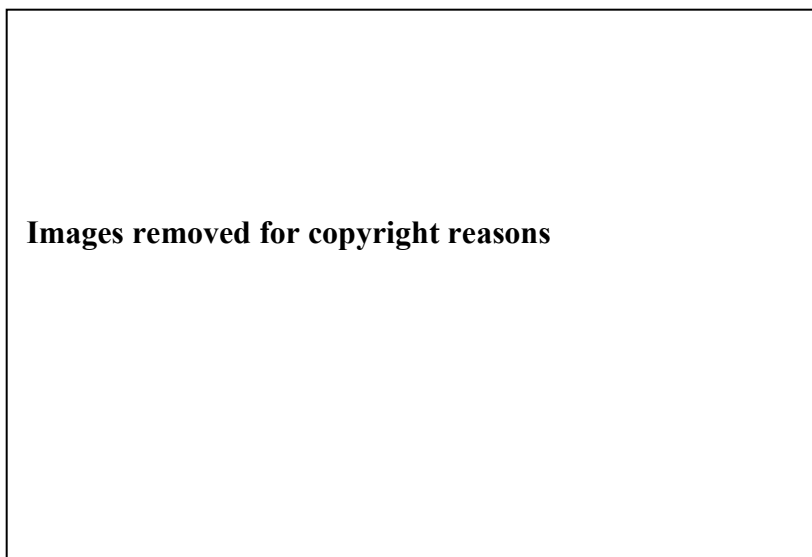
Figure 21. A single story of tragedy.

Five images (Figure 21) showed young children of colour in places far removed from our classroom: city streets, working in mines, hauling bricks, and carrying semi-automatic rifles. Four of the photos (Figure 20) showed the smiling faces of a group of children reflective of many races and cultures. Thinking with the text we had been reading in class that focused on

"othering" and race, I placed a poster for Disney's *It's A Small World* that was part of one

student's revised image beside the face of child carrying a semi-automatic rifle from another

student's revised image (see Figure 22).

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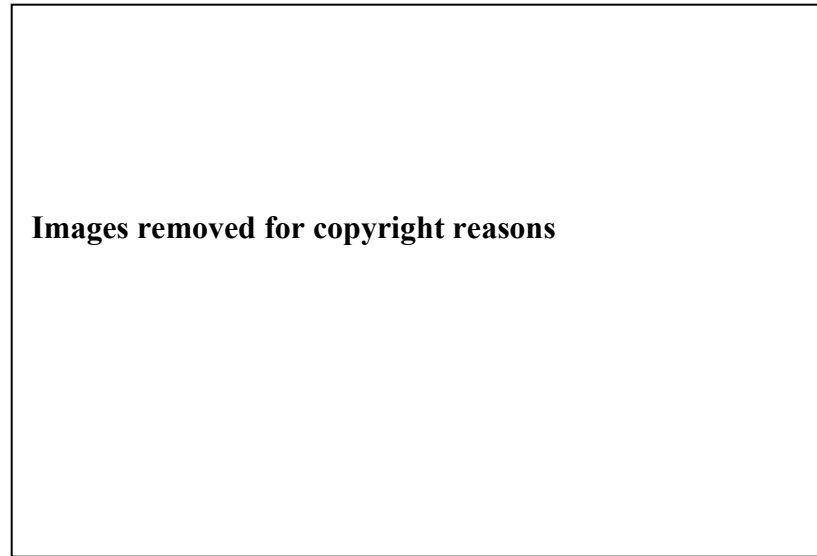
Figure 22. Colliding worlds.

Revisiting the data in this way and following Barad's understanding of agency, I was able

to appreciate how another unexpected repositioning and reshaping occurred as the artefacts of

our pedagogical narrations engaged with us and we engaged with them.

Returning to the data, these nine images of children drew my attention back to the ideas,

tensions, and questions that emerged as we engaged with them and other artefacts that were part

of our practice with pedagogical narrations. In revisiting the images, it would appear that we

struggled with how to represent the notion of race in childhood. In particular, four of the nine

photos (see Figure 23) presented one of the dichotomies we faced as race entered our thinking of

childhood.

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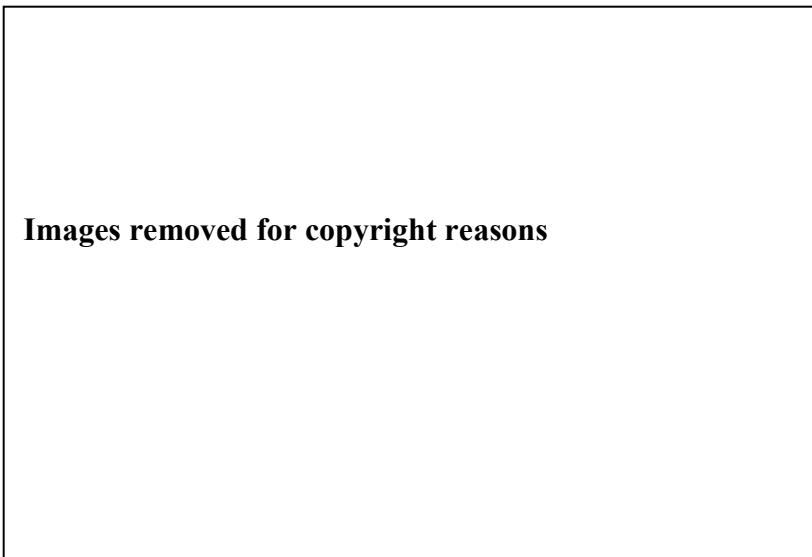
Figure 23. A celebration of multiculturalism.

The four photos shown in Figure 23 reflected a celebration of multiculturalism in the

form of Disney's *It's a Small World*, whereby the similarities of all children erased any

differences caused by culture and race, while the other five photos in the group of nine (see

Figure 24) seemed to resonate a "single story of tragedy" (Adichie, 2009).

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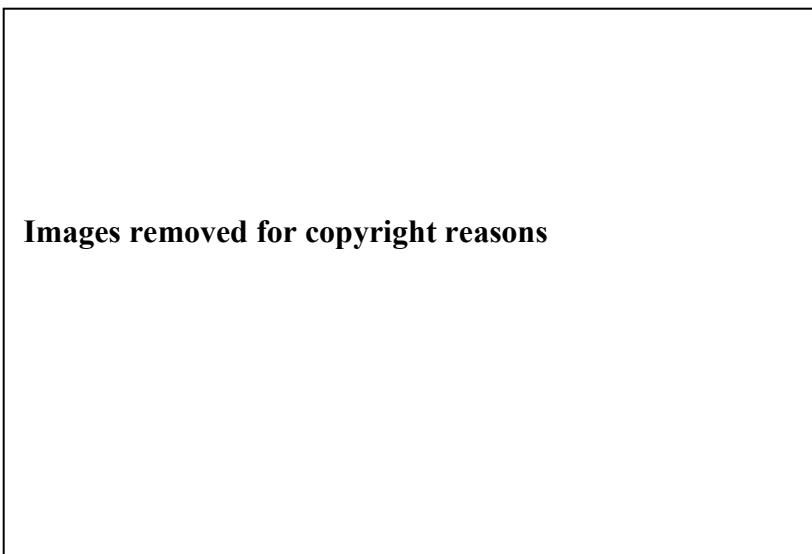
Figure 24. A single story of tragedy.

Barad's notion of agency helped me to attend to the conflict that these images created in

our thinking. On one hand, we talked about the importance of classrooms that promote issues of

equity and celebrate differences. My course notes reflect our conversations as we considered

how writers such as Derman-Sparks (1989) warned that multiculturalism, as an event, can

maintain other cultures as exotic. We considered with Burman (2008a) our position in the world,

and with MacNaughton (2005) we struggled with our relationship with whiteness, yet we were

drawn back to single stories of tragedy as being somehow embedded in race.

Images removed for copyright reasons

Figure 25. Kevin Carter's photograph of a vulture stalking a child.

Figures 24 and 25 above required us to think more with Burman as we considered issues

of disaster and pornography and how those photographs reflected relationships among race,

Africa, and disaster. Our thoughts and ideas were recorded and became artefacts to be revisited

in our classroom and on Moodle. Further agential cuts were made, shifting and repositioning us

in the world with race, children, and education so that the multiple (and perhaps even new)

realities that were being enacted in the event were made visible.

Encountering Real Bodies

Barad (2008) writes that "all bodies, not merely 'human' bodies, come to matter through

the world's iterative intra-activity—its performativity" (p. 141). She clarifies that bodies are not

distinct and separate entities that exist, but rather they come to matter through the intraactivity of

the world. Barad writes, "The differential constitution of the 'human' ('non-human') is always

accompanied by particular exclusions and always open to contestation" (p. 142). In this way, bodies of children and educators do not possess fixed identities, but are always being constituted and reconstituted through intraactivity. Barad (2007) explains:

> Existence is not an individual affair. Individuals do not preexist their interactions; rather, individuals emerge through and as part of their entangled intra-action … making it impossible to differentiate in any absolute sense between creation and renewal, beginning and returning, continuity and discontinuity, here and there, past and future. (p. ix).

Our encounters with real child bodies during this study illustrate Barad's assertion that individuals are made and remade through intraactivity. Jackson and Mazzei (2012) write that "the body 'says' something, and those who encounter [the body] 'say' something about the body they encounter" (p. 121). When we encounter the body of a child, we respond to the discursive constructions surrounding children's bodies, such as gender, race, health, development, and so forth, enmeshed in and inseparable from the material constructions of the body. I wrote that my initial curiosity was provoked when students encountered the real bodies of children who shattered their image of childhood. During this study, the bodies of children who disrupted our previously held images of children said something to us, as individuals and as a group. Consider Tamara's encounter, while on practicum, with a child who slapped her on the face while she was reading the child a book. Tamara writes of the moment that the child's hand hit her face, "I was like a hopeless creature and I did not know what to do." Her initial response to the physical act of being slapped by a small child occurred as an entanglement of discursive understandings of children and the material conditions of a child's body. This event was quickly followed by another discursive-material encounter in which the child chased after other children, who

screamed in response to being chased. The ensuing material and discursive chaos resulting from children running in the classroom, mixed with the noise of their screams and the feeling of being slapped entangled with/in the disruption of discursive understandings of classrooms, children, and teachers, produced what Tamara described as a "crisis." She explains to her reader: "Then I realized she was running after other children. Children were running fast and screaming. This situation created a crisis for me and left my mind with so many questions.… Am I doing something wrong?"

An intraactive rereading of this event is not an attempt to get at the "truth" of what happened, that is, to know what Tamara really felt and what agent triggered those feelings. Rather, it is an attempt to consider what we may become aware of when we attend concurrently to what is materially and discursively produced. In this case, attention to the material/discursive works to draw our attention away from focusing only on a child who slapped the student teacher or a student teacher who did not know how to respond to the slapping child. Instead we have the opportunity to understand how the material conditions of early childhood spaces (e.g., the presence of multiple bodies in an enclosed space with particular equipment and material) intraact with discursive understandings of early childhood spaces (e.g., discourses of competent teachers and of appropriate child behaviour) that regulate how bodies are to act in that space. Blaise (2013b) revisits a piece of data that contains an extract that (re)presents an encounter between her researcher's body and three child bodies. Thinking with Deleuze and Guattari and inspired by posthumanist researchers such as Lenz Taguchi and Hultman, she rereads her data, shifting her gaze so as to attend to the material and discursive forces. Blaise explains how a pair of red earrings that she was wearing invited the child whom she, as the researcher, was observing, to become the researcher and investigate Blaise's body, which held the red earrings. In attending to

the anxiety she felt as the children draped their bodies over hers in their exploration of her earrings, she became more aware of how reactions, "whatever they are, are part of the micropolitics of that space" (p. 197).

An Embodied Response

Lenz Taguchi (2010) reminds us that learning often "involves emotions, affection, lust, desire and imagination that we do not usually acknowledge" (p. 59). In this chapter's last section, I would like to continue, inspired by Blaise (2013a, 2013b), to attend to the reactions that occurred within our work with the practice of pedagogical narrations. I would like to stress that this attention to embodied responses is not an attempt to suggest that the images, artefacts, or actual bodies of children were agentic in that they caused particular responses. Rather, my intent is to exemplify how Barad's theory of agential realism, framed in an onto-epistemological position, invites us to attend to the complexity of the material-discursive intraactions. This complexity is not just in the intraactivity occurring with/in the texts, stories, images, and bodies, but also in the embodied responses that occur in the process. Within an onto-epistemological framework in which the material and discursive are entangled whereby one does not exist without the other, there can be no dividing lines between object/subject, past/present/future, and so forth. This impossibility of separating out what happened, however, should remind us of the need to pay attention to the complexity so as to be able to "transform our research and teaching practice, and the moral and molecular politics that accompany them" (Blaise, 2013b, p. 199).

As the students and I engaged with readings that invited us to conceptualize our practice and to reconceptualize our notion of childhood (e.g., Rinaldi's powerful child), the narratives we created were filled with commitments to engage in ethical practices. Multiple students called for educators to be aware of the "danger of a single story" (Adichie, 2009), to recognize assumptions

embedded in concepts of normal and natural, and to engage in practices that support social

equity. I then handed out three images to help us continue to conceptualize early years practice

as we disrupted preconceived notions of children and childhood. One image was a photo taken

by Sally Mann, a second by Kevin Carter, and a third was a Google image retrieved with the

search words "children working" (see Figure 26).

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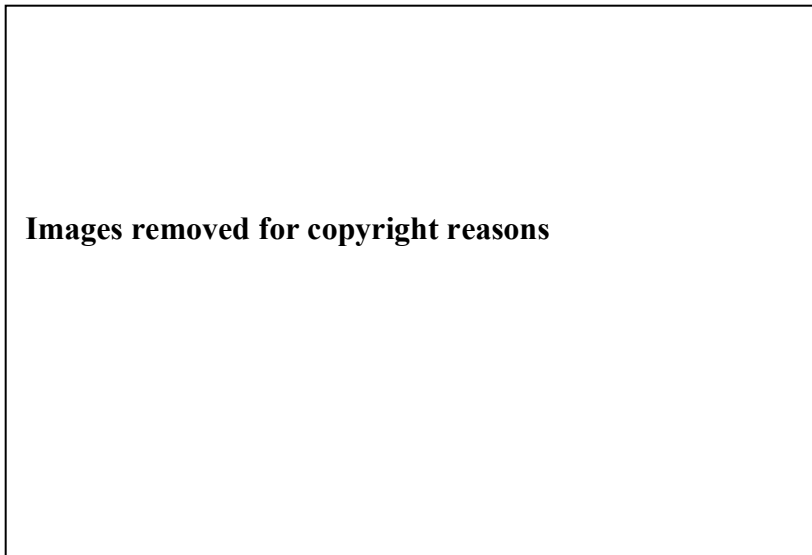
Figure 26. Class slide: Unnatural childhoods.

Trying to merge our previous images of childhood with the images that resonated from

the photos evoked a diverse range of emotions. Group E was struck with pity as they gazed on

"the child of bones and stretched skin." They wrote: "We see the picture and automatically think

he's starving, in a third world country. And we pity him." Carter's and Mann's photos

challenged the group; they wondered how they could "classify" these childhoods. They

wondered, as they looked at these children, if childhood was still a possibility for them. Group B

also felt that these children were so unlike any children they had encountered that all they could

feel was pity. They sensed that these children were in "dire need of guidance." The narrator for

Group B confessed that she knew she was making assumptions when she saw the child posing in

Mann's photo (Figure 27). The child's pose made her feel uncomfortable; she wondered if

perhaps "she was not trying to pose like that and was just dressing up."

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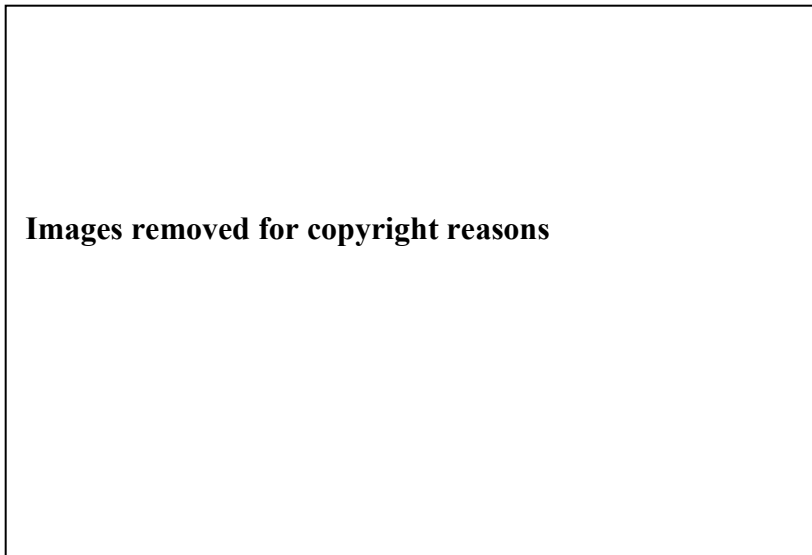
Figure 27. Sally Mann's photograph of a young girl.

She concluded that most likely the child "was trying to be innocent and be a child" (Group B).

While recognizing that work and childhood can coexist for children, Group F struggled with the

notion of a child who was "barefoot and pushing a cart." They ended their response to the photos

by asking of the larger group, "how much responsibility can a child bear and when do you draw

the line?"

An intraactive rereading of these narratives draws attention from an analysis of the

emotions to the material-discursive conditions that provoked the emotions. As I reread the

narratives, body parts such as bare feet and protruding ribs were agentic in that they moved us to

respond, and our response pushed our thinking in ways we did not anticipate. The bodies of the

children in the photos were unimaginable to the students, and it was the fact that they were

unimaginable that mattered. As artefacts, the children's bodies provoked us to consider why the

photos were unimaginable. We now felt an ethical obligation to look at our position in the world

in relation to our emotional responses. The process of pedagogical narrations had again prompted us to engage in unexpected micropolitical acts.

The children in the images spoke to us through their physical bodies and our responses reverberated through the classroom. That reverberation was present in the artefacts we encountered in our classroom and it pushed the curriculum in ways we did not plan. As we attended to the reconceptualizing discourses of childhood in attempting to disrupt our understandings, the material world spoke to us and our bodies responded. Bodies of colour, bodies performing physical labour, bodies that exhibited signs of life-threatening illness, bodies surrounded by poverty and filth all matter. As we sought out images that reflected children's real lives, the bodies in the images changed and so did our embodied responses. For example, a child of colour wearing ripped clothes and carrying material out of a mine (Figure 28) evoked feelings of sadness in Charlotte as she selected a photo that honoured the diversity of children's lives.

Images removed for copyright reasons

Figure 28. Charlotte's revised image of childhood.

Charlotte confessed that her single story of childhood as a time of innocence is still with her and she searches for a "sense of softness and the innocence of a child" in the photo. These embodied responses and confessions of contradiction emerge in our entanglement with the

artefacts and the practice of pedagogical narrations. This analysis, however, should not be read as simply a representation of embodied responses or an attempt to consider how matter evokes particular embodied responses. Rather, it should be read as an attempt to attend to how the responses we felt are part of the macro and micropolitical spaces we inhabit. Consider the "awe and amazement" felt by Delilah as she remembered the "real" bodies of children working, begging, and living in African countries she had visited when she compared those bodies to the "imagined" bodies of Canadian children playing and laughing in her first image. Recall Tamara, in explaining her revised images of children, finding herself "scared" when she encountered a child's body that was screaming and hitting. She wrote, "Suddenly, she slapped me on the face. I was like a hopeless creature and I did not know what to do." In our classroom, our readings suggested that "real" children were competent and were living diverse and often contradictory lives. Further, the readings suggested that "real" children were to be met by educators who engaged in practices that honoured diversity and promoted equity. These texts, however, were void of words that alluded to an emotional response that might leave us feeling uncertain, confused, and anxious. It was only when the images challenged our previous beliefs about children that space opened up in our classroom for us to consider how we might feel in an encounter with a "real" child. The images were an agentic force that provoked memories of, for example, "being a banana" in a white classroom or "being helpless" when a hit by a child.

In rereading the data, I noted that "feeling" words used to describe the students' emotional responses were conspicuous in their absence in the narratives that accompanied the original images of children and childhood. But, as encounters with real children were conceptualized, feeling words that ranged from "awe" to "pity" popped up throughout the narratives. This is not to say that our "thinking" without the images was without emotions. Barad

(2012) reminds us that "thinking has never been disembodied" (p. 208). My point here is that, as the images became entangled in our thinking, agentic forces shifted and emotions were acknowledged. Real "bodies of children acted on us, and we, in turn, responded to those bodies" (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, p. 121).

Summary

This chapter has explored how mattering and meaning are mutually constituted in the production of knowledge (Barad 2007). Thinking with the work of Barad and engaging with pedagogical narrations as a material-discursive practice, I attempted to answer the following question: *How did the material presence of the artefacts intraact with us, the texts, and the images to make and unmake our shapings and coshapings of children and childhood?*

In the next and final chapter, I synthesize the analysis chapters to connect back to my original research questions presented in Chapter 1. This is followed by a discussion of the implications that emerged from this study.

Chapter 7: A Final Narration

We need to ask ourselves what kind of knowledge we produce with the tools or ‘apparatuses’ we use in our learning activities with children and students. (Lenz Taguchi, 2010, p. 63)

A Synthesis of the Study

This last chapter stands as a final narration of an inquiry that emerged from my curiosity as a teacher of early childhood education (ECE) students. My curiosity was provoked when students shared with me their anxiety and tensions that they experienced in their encounters with young children during their practica. It was further provoked by reading the work of reconceptualizing early childhood education (RECE) scholars (e.g., Cannella, 1997; Cannella & Viruru, 2004; Dahlberg, Moss, & Pence, 1999, 2007; Lenz Taguchi, 2010; MacNaughton, 2003, 2005; Pacini-Ketchabaw, 2010; Pacini-Ketchabaw & Pence, 2005) who asserted that hegemonic discourses of children and childhood regulate ECE practice so that other—and perhaps more just—ways of living with young children are silenced. As an instructor/researcher, I became interested in engaging with students with the practice of pedagogical narrations as an apparatus that would make visible and disrupt the taken-for-granted assumptions the students and I held around children and childhood.

Pedagogical narrations, like pedagogical documentation as defined by Lenz Taguchi (2010), function as a material-discursive apparatus. Lenz Taguchi argues that pedagogical documentation "is *in itself* an active agent in generating discourse knowledge" (p. 63, emphasis in original). Inspired by her work, I developed a research project to explore pedagogical narrations' potential to act as an apparatus for/in/with the generation of new knowledge and the transformation of practices among a group of first-year students in an ECE course. The project

spanned one academic term. To provoke our thinking as the students and I engaged with the

practice of pedagogical narrations, I developed three working questions to guide our disruption

process:

1. How will the students and I come to understand disturbances to our images of

   children and childhood as we collectively engage in pedagogical practices that

   may displace the discourses of children and childhood we hold?

2. How will the students and I interpret and revise our thinking as we deconstruct the

   discourses that become visible in our collective learning?

3. How will the students and I construct and adjust our practices with children as we

   participate in these pedagogical practices in a collective learning process?

One of the course's main learning objectives was to consider how societal values and

beliefs (e.g., gender, race, and culture) affect educational practice; this objective provided me

with space to engage with/in my research questions as part of the regular course delivery. The

students and I collaboratively engaged with theoretical readings and multiple images (e.g.,

metaphors, stories, photographs, drawings) of children and childhood to displace or unhinge our

taken-for-granted notions of children and childhood. New questions and provocations emerged in

response to the ideas, images, readings, and so forth that were part of our collective learning. As

noted in Chapters 5 and 6, these questions were often unexpected, and they disrupted our

thinking in unanticipated ways.

This inquiry reflected my intent to "explore the continuous process of un-packing and re-

packing, un-coding and recoding, un-folding and refolding, and perhaps most importantly

reinventing" (Lenz Taguchi, 2010, p. 23) our understandings of children and childhood and how

those understandings are connected to practice. We particularly focused on those moments when

competing material-discursive practices created tensions, anxiety, and contradictions in our thinking. These moments, together with my readings of Foucault's notion of power, prompted my first research question: *How did hegemonic discourses discipline and regulate our efforts to construct new understandings of children and childhood*? I was also interested in how pedagogical narrations functioned as an apparatus, that is, as an instrument that intraacts to produce disruptions and change in order for new meanings to be produced. My interest entangled with Barad's theory of agential realism to provoke the second research question: *How did the presence of the particular artefacts produced in the practice of pedagogical narrations intraact with us, the texts, and the images to make and unmake our shapings and coshapings of children and childhood?*

I engaged in this inquiry in what St. Pierre and Jackson (2014), thinking with Deleuze and Guattari (1980/1987), refer to as *post-coding analysis*, a "non-technique and non-method that is always in a process of becoming as theories interlink, intensify, and increase territory" (p. 717). Employing a process articulated by Jackson and Mazzei (2012) as *thinking with the theory*, I read and revisited three chunks of "glowing" data alongside theories of Foucault and Barad. Foucault's (1972) notion of the disciplinary power of discourse offered me space to look at how competing and often contradictory discourses challenged the students and me as we thought about new understandings of children and childhood. Thinking with Foucault helped me to attend to the messiness of our thinking by focusing on those times when competing discourses pushed and pulled our thinking as we attempted to construct new understandings. This process of analysis illustrated how the new understandings being created were not clean or pure transformations of thought, but were contextual and contradictory, and were regulated— consciously and unconsciously—by discursive practices.

Barad's (2007) attention to the relationship between the discursive and the material extended my thinking about the agentic force of the matter of learning, such as text, images, space, time, and so forth. In particular, it extended my thinking about how the process of pedagogical narrations operated as an apparatus or tool for change. Further, agential realism allowed me to attend to learning as a collaborative process that involves encounters with other humans and the more than human.

In the next section of this chapter, I respond to my research questions by presenting the implications and recommendations that emerged from this inquiry.

Inviting Foucault and Barad into the Postsecondary Classroom: Emergent Implications

The data used in this study were collaboratively constructed by the students through the process of pedagogical narrations (see Appendices B, C, D, E, and F). Three specific data chunks were analyzed: a collection of revised images of children and childhood and their accompanying narratives provided by the students; the final piece of the pedagogical narrations created by the students explaining how their collective thinking had been challenged and how their practice with children subsequently shifted; and two slides that I created to use in the class to provoke thinking and dialogue. The first slide was a collage of the images of children brought to class and the second was three photos of children and accompanying questions. Using the analytical method of "plugging in" proposed by Jackson and Mazzei (2012), I was able to reread and revisit the data with the ideas of Foucault and Barad. In the process, both Foucault's and Barad's ideas became entangled in my thinking and analysis. Below I speak to the research questions as they emerged within the entanglement and messiness of this analysis.

Reconceptualizing early childhood education.

In an overview of the RECE movement, Bloch (2014) notes that at the first Reconceptualizing Early Childhood Education conference in 1991, scholars and researchers from various disciplines and backgrounds came together to share their concerns about the hegemonic role of developmental psychology and positivist research in early education and child care. Over twenty years later, RECE has "moved toward a new approach (rupture) in thinking pedagogy" (Bloch, 2014, p. 24). My research project, framed as it is within a poststructural and material feminist perspective, reflects this new approach within RECE. Its significance is that it extends the focus beyond the early childhood classroom into the education of early childhood educators.

In our doing of pedagogical narrations, we produced artefacts that were not merely representations of our collaborative thinking. Rather, the artefacts that emerged in-between and among the material, the discursive, and the participants were themselves agentic; they invited us to shift our gaze and our conversation, and in that process, new meanings and realities of children and childhood were produced. For example, Chapter 6 discusses how the artefacts produced in the pedagogical narrations invited race into the entanglement (that is, the matter and the discourse of race became entangled).

A new discourse of disciplinary expertise.

Foucault (1983) notes that "everything is dangerous" (p. 231), and indeed this research project illustrates the potential of any discourse to become a discourse of disciplinary expertise. As Foucault (1972) explains, discourses emerge "under the positive conditions of a complex group of relations" (p. 45) that include, but are not limited to, epistemology, economics, politics, and institutions. Further, discourse within a knowledge/power relationship creates the conditions that determine what is understood as truth, what is possible to speak, who is qualified to speak as

an expert, which institution legitimizes the discourse, and so forth (Foucault, 1972). As the

RECE movement developed goals, values, and purposes (see Block, 2014), Foucault's ideas

allowed reconceptualist thinkers to consider how RECE itself became a discourse of disciplinary

power. Foucault's work invites careful attention to questions such as "who is and is not a

reconceptualist?" or "which papers will be presented at a RECE conference?" The ability to ask

and respond to these questions demonstrates that the discourse of RECE regulates and constrains

what can be said, researched, practiced and so forth. Thinking with Foucault myself, I would

argue that this inquiry did more than make developmental psychology's hegemonic role in

education visible to the students—it introduced them to an alternative discourse that also has the

potential to regulate their thinking and practice. This potential was illustrated by the students'

confessions to having been at one time regulated by developmental theory. They argued that, as a

result of their (mainly RECE) readings, they knew they had been *wrong* in the past and now had

a *new and better way* of knowing. It would be dangerous to assume that in taking up the

discourses of the RECE movement these students were somehow cleansed and are now working

within innocent discourses that will not reproduce inequities. As St. Pierre and Pillow (2000)

remind us, while revolution may be possible and desirable, "often, one regime of truth simply

replaces another" (p. 4). Therefore, as educators, instructors, and researchers, we are never safe

from the danger of disciplinary power, and we need to heed Foucault's (1983) call to remain

"vigilant and in a state of hyper- and pessimistic activism [where] the ethico-political choice we

have to make every day is to determine which is the main danger" (pp. 231–232).

Working within "**the posts**.**"**

Despite the above proviso, this research project is important within the RECE movement

because it reiterates the difficulty of working within "the posts" (e.g., poststructural, postmodern,

and postcolonial theories; see, for example, the work of Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, 2013; Lather, 2007, 2013; McClure, 2010, 2013; St. Pierre, 2006, 2009, 2011; St. Pierre & Jackson, 2014). In this inquiry, as I engaged with the ideas of poststructuralism and postqualitative research, I was challenged to use language to make meanings without sinking into a pit of dogma, binaries, dichotomies, and truths. Even thinking with Foucault and Barad, I could not escape the "emancipatory impulses of humanism that presumes we can get it right' once and for all. We have never 'gotten it right'" (St. Pierre & Pillow, 2000, p. 4). Rather, my task was to examine "the functions and effects of any structure or grid of regularity that we put into place, including those poststructuralism itself might create" (St. Pierre & Pillow, p. 6). This was evident, for example, in Chapter 5, where I share with the reader my desire to celebrate the students' newfound understandings of childhood as if they were now cleansed of their past. Thinking with Foucault, I then considered how new discourses within the RECE movement emerged to regulate our thinking and practice.

The Education of Early Childhood Educators: An Intraactive Pedagogy

Barad's (2007) notion of an onto-epistemology, that is "the study of practices of knowing in being" (p. 185), offers a lens through which pedagogical practices can be reconceptualized as more than an anthropocentric endeavour. Her argument is that we cannot separate knowing from being because one is always implicated in the other. She asserts that "practices of knowing and being are not isolable; they are mutually implicated. We don't obtain knowledge by standing outside the world; we know because we are of the world" (p. 185). Informed by Barad and inspired by the early childhood education research conducted by scholars such Lenz Taguchi (2010, 2011) and her colleagues (e.g., Hultman & Lenz Taguchi, 2010; Palmer, 2009), this study extends the current research in early childhood education in that it challenges learning and

education from an anthropocentric and logocentric understanding whereby the knower and known are considered distinct entities in a pedagogical context. This study helps to draw "new attention to how objects, bodies and spaces do crucial but often unnoticed performative work as vital materialities within the classroom" (C. Taylor, 2013, p. 688).

I am drawn to Lenz Taguchi's (2010) assertion that, in accepting Barad's position, "we cannot clearly separate the learner from what is learned" (p. 42), and that we then have to consider the implications for pedagogical practice. Lenz Taguchi argues for an onto-epistemological understanding of learning, which she refers to as an intraactive pedagogy that includes materials as "strong performative agents in learning" (p. 10). In *Going Beyond the Theory/Practice Divide in Early Childhood Education: Introducing an Intra-active Pedagogy,* Lenz Taguchi uses examples not only from pedagogical work in Swedish preschools but from work she engaged in with Palmer (2009) in a one-year reconceptualist teacher education program in Stockholm. My study extends this work and responds to Lenz Taguchi's assertion that student teachers should be engaging with/in, not learning about, intraactive pedagogy in teacher training programs.

As mentioned in Chapter 1, this research also speaks to many of the values, beliefs, and practices being presented in early learning frameworks across Canada. The *British Columbia Early Learning Framework* (ELF; Government of British Columbia, 2008), for example, provides learning principles and key areas of learning for children from birth to five years of age. The goals and values reflected within this document support many of those in the RECE movement. However, I would argue that the ELF mainly lives passively on classroom shelves rather than actively provoking possibilities for pedagogical practice. As an instructor and a member of the early childhood articulation committee for postsecondary institutions in British

Columbia, I offer this study as a small step, but a step nevertheless, to consider how the education of early childhood educators can be reconceptualized through the introduction of an intraactive pedagogy in one classroom. Pacini-Ketchabaw and Pence (2011) strongly argue for early childhood education that can "become an opportunity for resisting, for making meaning, and furthermore for searching for other (invisible, out-of-sight) meanings" (p. 8). I contend that to do so requires a shift in pedagogical practices, and that shift needs to begin with/in the education of early childhood educators.

Pedagogical Narrations: More Than Making Children's Learning Visible

This inquiry is also significant in that it presents pedagogical narrations as more than a pedagogical practice that can be used to make children's learning visible. Lenz Taguchi (2010) writes that pedagogical documentation "is 'methodological' in the sense of an active will of complicating what we know about our practices, to put ourselves in motion to be in a process of change and invention, not knowing the end state" (p. 91). Within this inquiry, through the practice of pedagogical narrations, the students and I engaged in a collaborative learning process filled with uncertainties, complications, and tensions. Within it, previously unthought possibilities and opportunities were imagined, previously marginalized and silenced voices and stories were heard, and unforeseen images and realities emerged in-between and among the material, the discursive, and the participants.

This study contributes to the work of researchers such as Berger (2013), Hodgins (2012, in process), Lenz Taguchi (2010), and Palmer (2009), who are using pedagogical narrations as a methodology with educators and early childhood education students. Further research in the area of pedagogical narrations as a methodology for teacher/researchers to engage in collaborative inquiries is recommended to open up spaces for new possibilities in understanding education,

children, and educators. There is also a significant need, as noted in the literature review in Chapter 2, for research in the area of pedagogical narrations that goes beyond the technical aspects of introducing this tool to education students—an undertaking which, from my perspective, is highly problematic in that is does not think of pedagogical narrations as "a creative actualizing of [an] event" (Lenz Taguchi, p. 93) but as a technical teaching tool that represents an event.

It is important to note that this research project highlights pedagogical narrations as a collaborative practice and not as a process of individual self-reflection or assessment of an event. Lenz Taguchi (2010) notes that pedagogical narrations are often "mistakenly understood [as] something retrospective—documenting what happened so we can judge and evaluate what 'was' and treating documentation as a representation of practice" (p. 93). Berger (2013), in a study that engaged with pedagogical narrations in the context of leadership in early childhood education, reminds readers of the "unintended dangers" (p. 240) that are possible within pedagogical narrations. Hodgins, Kummen, Thompson, and Rose (2013) share their concerns about the possible dangers in the use of pedagogical narrations by reminding us of MacLure (2010), who argues that critical pedagogy is not only a methodological project but an ethical and political one as well. Sharing their questions around pedagogical narrations, Hodgins et al. (2013) write:

> How do we resist claims about pedagogical narrations getting naturalized to rules
> and procedures that govern children, families, educators, and researchers? How
> do we mitigate the risks of narrations maintaining hegemonic ways of
> constructing and being with children, reiterating practices of developmentalism,
> individualism, and school-readiness discourses? How do we embrace the
> complexity of multiple interpretations, confusions, and disorders that challenge

our desire for clarity, our singular ways of listening, single ways of acting? In a

collective dialogue how do we restrict our desire to answer, creating space to live

in questions' capacity to provoke or call forth a range of possibilities? How do we

question and question again while living in pedagogic actions? (p. 7)

These questions may not have answers, but they call for further research and dialogue within the

field.

Pedagogical narrations, as previously noted by Lenz Taguchi, have been mistaken for a

noun—a tool for reflecting on practice—rather than a verb—a doing of a practice. Pacini-

Ketchabaw and Pence (2011) also caution us that "reflective practice can become risky business

if the historically, socially, and politically implicated discourses are not deconstructed. Critical

reflection cannot be about making the self visible, but about re-imagining new subjectivities in

relation to different contexts" (p. 7). Further research is necessary to support the introduction of

pedagogical narrations to students as a collaborative practice that invites them to sit with their

interpretations and assumptions, to listen to their thinking and what it produces so that they may

reshape their questions and thoughts in ways that will transform pedagogy (Lenz Taguchi, 2007).

Pedagogical narrations should invite children, students, educators, researchers, and other people

to "tell a story that is just that: a story, a situated, partial version; not the whole story. Or even to

tell lots of stories" (Burman, 2009, p. 148).

An Ethical Obligation: Attending to the Matter that Matters in Postsecondary Classrooms

Material feminism asks us to understand learning as more than a cognitive process that

occurs within an individual; Lenz Taguchi (2010) explains that it is instead

the phenomena that are produced in the intra-activity taking place in between the

[learner], its body, its discursive inscriptions, the discursive conditions in the

space of learning, the material available, the time-space-relations in a specific

room of situation organisms, where people are only one such material organism

among others. (p. 35)

With our attention thus drawn to learning as more than an anthropocentric phenomenon,

Lenz Taguchi asserts that we then have an ethical obligation to consider what knowledges and

realities are produced in the encounters that occur among humans, matter, and discourses in our

practices with children.

This research project begins to examine the implications of attending to the matter of

intraactive learning in the education of early childhood educators. As noted in Chapter 6,

artefacts emerged in-between and among the material, the discursive, and the participants, and

were themselves agentic. They called out to us, drawing our gaze and our discussions, so that

new meanings and realities were produced. The collage described in Chapter 6 was a material

document and, as Prior (2003) reminds us, *documents do something*. Within this study, tangible

objects spoke to the students and me and invited us into political action with their presence,

thereby creating a political space for discussions (Berger, 2010), in this case to attend to the

material aspects of race.

This study invites educators of ECE student teachers to attend to the matter that is in

classrooms in which the students are engaged in learning how to be early childhood educators.

As Haraway (2011) contends, "it matters what matter we use to think other matters with; it

matters what stories we tell to tell other stories with; it matters what knots knot knots, what

thoughts think thoughts, what ties tie ties" (p. 4). Further studies are needed to examine what

matter matters in the education of early childhood educators. What is included and excluded in

the storying of early childhood education? For example, in the history of ECE in Canada, are

stories of residential schools as visible as stories of Froebel's first kindergartens? Do stories of school readiness include stories of colonization? Whose faces grace the covers of textbooks? As Barad (2007) writes, "the attribution and exclusion of agency—like the attributions and exclusions in the construction of the human—are political issues" (p. 216).

Returning to Britzman: A Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to disrupt the students' and my thinking, though I would argue that this disruption was not a process of capturing or representing our thinking so that we could engage in the act of self-critique. I am indebted to Karen Barad's assertion that critique alone is not helpful in beginning conversations that might welcome collaborative engagement with new possibilities and opportunities. Barad's declaration (in a 2012 interview with Juelskær & Schwennesen) that she is interested in building relationships with "scientists of good will, scientists who care deeply about using science for the purpose of mutual flourishing" (p. 14) strongly resonates with my intention in building relationships with students in early childhood education. In speaking about her work with students learning to engage in the sciences, Barad (2012, cited in Juelskær & Schwennesen, 2012, p. 15) notes that the students have an interest in issues of social justice within science and that what is needed in their education "is a deep appreciation of the entanglements of facts and values." In my work with students in early childhood education, I have found that they too are deeply committed to issues of social equity and justice. Thinking with Barad throughout this journey, I believe that what is needed in the education of future early childhood educators is a curriculum that attends to "how values matter and get materialized, and the interconnectedness of ethics, ontology, and epistemology" (Barad, 2012, cited in Juelskær & Schwennesen, 2012, p. 15).

I believe this study extends the educational goal of engaging in practices of social justice, as articulated by the RECE movement (Barad, 2012, cited in Juelskær & Schwennesen, 2012; Bloch, 2014). It calls for attention to how matter matters in education. However, by focusing on pedagogical practice, this work also responds to Pacini-Ketchabaw's (2010) argument that "social justice needs to be conceptualized as a practice rather than as a transcendent solution" (p. 133). It is my hope that this work invites other instructors/researchers working with early childhood education students to engage in what Lenz Taguchi (2010) refers to as *ethics of immanence and potentialities* to "transform educational practices so that they can be about challenging children's, students' and teachers' potentialities and capacities to act and be inventive in the process of collaborative experimentation and production of concepts and knowing" (p. 177).

I would like to conclude by returning to the beginning of this narration, to the mythical children who have haunted my practice, the students whom I have learned with and worked with, and to Deborah Britzman, whose writing inspired me to begin this journey and to meet more deeply the work of scholars such as Foucault and Barad. As I began my research, thinking with Britzman, I posed this question: How is change possible within the field of early childhood education when students already know what a child looks like and what a child should be doing? My initial intent was to engage with pedagogical narrations as a tool to disrupt students' thinking to make visible the assumptions, values, and beliefs they held concerning children and childhood. Feeling somewhat smug in positioning myself within a poststructural and material-feminist position, I was confident that, unlike Toll, Nierstheimer, Lenski, and Kolloff (2004), I held no desire to purge the students of undesirable beliefs in an "urge to 'wash them clean' from the ideas they have learned" (p. 164). I recognized that such a goal would be troubling because it

assumes that knowledge is a truth rather than a social construct and that a universal consensus can be reached on the role of the teacher, for example, or the nature of childhood. My intent instead was to make space for ECE students and myself to make visible and disrupt the discourses that regulate our work with young children.

When I began my data analysis, my smugness soon left me as I realized that, in posing the question of how change can occur if the students entering early childhood education already hold problematic discourses, I was being lured back into a humanist position. Foucault's understandings of power, truth, knowledge and Butler's notion of subjectivity, as presented in Chapter 3, challenged my ability to even pose a question in which the problem was located in the subject. Was I seeing the subject as a rational, conscious, stable, and knowing individual? Further, in thinking with Foucault, I realized that my initial questions did not take into account that competing discourses of children and childhood were always circulating with/in the students (even in my RECE classroom). Initially, I did not think with Bové (1990), who explains that poststructuralists need to ask different questions, such as "How does [discourse] function? Where is it to be found? How does it get produced and regulated? What are its social effects? How does it exist" (p. 54)? This is not to say I did not attend to these questions; they were at the forefront of my analysis in Chapter 5, as I thought with Foucault. However, what I want (or need) to confess is that I asked the questions in relation to *change*, more specifically, *change in the subject.*

I realized through my analysis that my initial focus on supporting the students in recognizing that we are regulated by hegemonic discourses reflected, perhaps, a too-simplistic understanding of Foucault's ideas. As I read the data with Foucault, I realized that the issue *is precisely that competing and contradictory discourses are always circulating with and through*

us in our daily lives with children. As Foucault (1980) himself stated, "the problem is not changing people's consciousness—or what's in their heads—but the political, economic, institutional regime of the production of truth" (p. 131). The issue of concern in the education of early childhood educators is not simply drawing students' attention to how hegemonic discourses regulate practice. For, as Lenz Taguchi writes, engaging in pedagogical practices with ethics of immanence and potentialities "does not treat pedagogical work as being exclusively about trying to get children, students, and teachers to reach pre-set goals or pre-set learning contents" (p. 177). Rather, the issue of concern in the education of early childhood educators is how to live/teach/research in a world of competing and contradictory discourses. How can we invite students to expect teaching (and perhaps life) to be what Jackson (2001) describes as a "wrenching, uneven experience" (p. 388)? We, as teachers of early childhood educators, need to create learning spaces that explore what it means to teach, live, and practice in an unstable, unpredictable, always emerging world.

Appendix A: Course Readings

Week 1	Government of British Columbia. (2008b). Theory. In *Understanding the British Columbia early learning framework: From theory to practice* (pp. 1–10). Victoria, BC: Crown Publications. MacNaughton, G. (2005). Introduction: Beyond quality, towards activism. In *Doing Foucault in early childhood studies: Applying poststructural ideas* (pp. 1–18). London, UK: Routledge.
Weeks 2 & 3	MacNaughton, G. (2005). Journeys to activism: Becoming poststructually reflective about the truth. In *Doing Foucault in early childhood studies: Applying poststructural ideas* (pp. 19-41). London, UK: Routledge. MacNaughton, G. (2005). Confronting a 'will to truth': Troubling truths of the child poststructally. In *Doing Foucault in early childhood studies: Applying poststructural ideas* (pp. 42–74). London, UK: Routledge.
Week 4	Government of British Columbia. (2008b). Practice. In *Understanding the early learning framework: From theory to practice* (pp. 11–22). Victoria, BC: Crown Publications.
Weeks 5 & 6	MacNaughton, G. (2005). Seeking the 'Otherwise': Re-meeting relations of 'race' in early childhood classroom histories. In *Doing Foucault in early childhood studies: Applying poststructural ideas* (pp. 146–187). London, UK: Routledge.
Weeks 7 & 8	Cook, D. T. (2009). When a child is not a child, and other conceptual hazards of childhood studies [Editorial]. *Childhood, 16*(1), 5–10. doi: 10.1177/0907568208101687 MacNaughton, G. (2003). Introduction: Critical reflection in early childhood teaching and learning. In *Shaping early childhood: Learner, curriculum and contexts* (pp. 1–6). Berkshire, UK: Open University Press. MacNaughton, G. (2003). Models of the learner. In *Shaping early childhood: Learner, curriculum and contexts* (pp. 7–69). Berkshire, UK: Open University Press.
Week 9	MacNaughton, G. (2003). Models of the learner. In *Shaping early childhood: Learner, curriculum and contexts* (pp. 70–110). Berkshire, UK: Open University Press.
Weeks 10 & 11	MacNaughton, G. (2003). Postions on the early childhood curriculum. In *Shaping early childhood: Learner, curriculum and contexts* (pp. 111–154). Berkshire, UK: Open University Press.
Week 12	MacNaughton, G. (2003). Postions on the early childhood curriculum. In *Shaping early childhood: Learner, curriculum and contexts* (pp. 155–234). Berkshire, UK: Open University Press.
Week 13	MacNaughton, G. (2005). Imagining professional learning for change: becoming again in critically knowing communities. In *Doing Foucault in early childhood studies: Applying poststructural ideas* (pp. 188–213). London, UK: Routledge.

Appendix B: Students' Initial Images of Children

Group A	Group B
Images removed for copyright reasons	Images removed for copyright reasons
Group C	Group D
Images removed for copyright reasons	Images removed for copyright reasons
Group E	Group F
Images removed for copyright reasons	Images removed for copyright reasons

Appendix C: Students' Revised Images of Children

Group A	Group B
Images removed for copyright reasons	Images removed for copyright reasons
Group C	Group D
Images removed for copyright reasons	Images removed for copyright reasons
Group E	Group F
Images removed for copyright reasons	Images removed for copyright reasons

Appendix D: Three Images of Childhood

Image removed fro copyright reasons

Questions to consider?

◆ How do each of these photos speak to your understanding of the concept of childhood?

◆ What are the origins of those understandings?

◆ How is the concept of childhood connected to issues of equity and social justice?

MacNaughton, 2005

Appendix E: Fifteen Images and Provocations

Image removed fro copyright reasons

Revisit the Images

- What do you notice about the images?
- As you look you critically reflect upon these images, what equity issues arise for you.
- Do the photos of the programs privilege a particular understanding of childhood?
- If we consider these images typical, is it then possible that the some children might not see their experiences as valued within the typical early childhood environment?
- Revisit Chapter 5 – refer to the questions on page 187

Appendix F: Group Revised Images of Children and Childhood

Children as Water
Group A

- Water is fragile and yet powerful. Water is easy to change into any shape by putting it in different types of containers. However, water can also flow by itself depending on the environment.

Image removed for copyright reasons

Group B
Jackson Pollock's *Autumn Rhythm* (1950)

"Children are not as simple as we believed, they are complex and very imaginative"

"I see children as complicated, active, social beings"

Children as Contradictions
Group C

Image removed for copyright reasons

- This image is a contradiction and complex picture of youth and an older woman, remind us that children are contradictory and complex.

Where have we ended up!
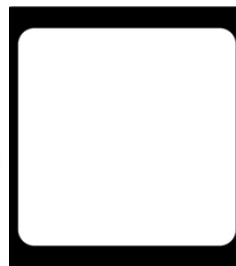# Group D

Image removed for copyright reasons

- We started with an idea that there was a segregation between what a child is like and what an adult is like. BUT now we have realized that is is all intertwined.

Group E

There is not one image that can represent a child. Children cannot be categorized or labeled. We must celebrate differences and acknowledge their individuality.

Question mark is full of possibilities and surprises and wonders, as our children. It is often used in place of missing or unknown information. In asking information we are continually learning.

A child is like a plant because there are many different kinds and yet they are all generally the same.

Image removed for copyright reasons

Which child is normal?
Group F

Images removed for copyright reasons

- Our vision of normal is clouded by our individual paradigm and the discourses we have made.

- "The child is multiple, with many stories to tell of herselves. For Walkerdine (1989) there is not a single developmental story of the universal child to be told." (Mac Naughton, (2008), p.49)

Appendix G: Photo Credits for Figures

Baby and flower (Figures 7, 17, 19; Appendix B [Group F], Appendix E). Reprinted from

HDesktop.com, n.d. Retrieved from: http://www.hdesktops.com/474-baby-boy-and-

beautiful-orange-color-flower-hd-wallpaper-cute-little.html

Baby's feet resting in adult hands (Figures 7, 17, 19; Appendix B [Group C], Appendix E).

Reprinted from Traditional Catholic Priest, n.d. Retrieved from:

http://www.traditionalcatholicpriest.com

Balloons (Figure 18; Appendix B [Group A]). Reprinted from The Party Bazaar, n.d. Retrieved

from: http://blog.thepartybazaar.com/facts-about-latex-balloons/

Balls of play dough (Figure 18; Appendix B [Group C]). Reprinted from Homemade by Jill, June

3, 2010. Retrieved from http://homemadebyjill.blogspot.ca/2010/06/homemade-

playdough.html

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