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In Dialogue and Interaction with Grumet: Erasing the Line

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EXPRESS SEARCH

"Once I saw the moon
Drift into sky like a bright
Pregnancy pared
From a goddess doomed
To keep slender to be beautiful-
Cut loose, and drifting up there
To happen by itself-
And waning, lost labor" [\[1\]](#)

1. Head bent over an article, highlighter working feverishly across the pages, it was only by accident, glancing distractedly out the library window, that I caught the rising of the moon. She hung heavy in the sky, and for a lost moment, I remembered skiing across an unmarked field of snow, breaking trail, moonlight spilling into the tracks of my passing.
2. Where I come from the winters are long, to be traversed by cross-country skiing along the river or across wood-locked fields. Every day, chasing the hour between dusk and darkness, I would escape the cold grip of winter and return home breathless, triumphant, the moon riding on my shoulder. And always, I would bring with me from the woods, in my mittened hand, a fragment of a story or an idea to be considered, to be reshaped, to be troubled over. Each wintry excursion seemed to bring with it discovery, born in the space between the rhythm of skis against the snow and the sound of the wind entering the firs.
3. I had intended when I first embarked on this paper journey, to

consider the role of drama education as a tool for democratizing the classroom. Drama education is, I had planned to argue, an ideal vehicle in which to explore the concepts of equality, individual responsibility and rights, collective action and opportunity. I would slip into my backpack Brian Watkin's (1983) statement that "drama serves as a truly democratic model, for it is above all else consensual" (p.41). Maxine Greene (1988), would have been invited along as a traveling companion, her definition of freedom -- the opportunity to choose action and the freedom of interaction -- giving strength to our stride. How better to encourage democracy in the classroom than to implement child-centered drama education? It would be, I thought, a safe, if somewhat predictable journey, with plenty of trail signs to direct my route.

4. But, somehow, in my readings, I strayed off the path onto less sure footings.

And so, I find myself, floundering thigh-deep in snow, in the unexpected company of Grumet (1988), Varela and Maturana (1987) and others, wandering into unmapped territory, "laying down a path to understanding."^[2] The questions that quicken my pace are: Can I move towards a definition of curriculum and drama education, within the concept of Grumet's theory of education as reproduction? Where is the placing of drama education in the curriculum? And what is curriculum?

5. Ordinarily, I would oblige the reader by providing a roadmap, so that he or she might anticipate the route along which we will travel together. However, since I myself, am unsure of the compass readings, having only the questions of curriculum and drama education as markers in the snow-covered landscape, I can only invite the reader to strap on his or her cross-country skis and let the moon shoulder-ride with us.

Reproduction: Moving Beyond the Handmaid's Tale^[3]

6. The night I caught the moon reading over my shoulder, I went for a walk in our neighbourhood, creating a snowpath of uncertain footsteps in the surprise of an early November snowfall, and reconsidered my reading of Madeleine Grumet (1988). On first introduction, I was thrilled to discover an academic who wrote with a capital I, who had babies, and made supper and spoke of birthing and conception with a familiarity I recognized. Yes, this is what had been absent: The voice of a woman, speaking about the moon harboured in her belly.

7. Grumet (1988) proposes that "what is most fundamental to our lives as men and women sharing a moment on this planet is the process and experience of reproducing ourselves" (p. 4). This "process and experience" of reproduction is both a remembering of our past and a vision of our future, a mutual act of creation and re-creation. Reproduction is the governance of the moon, moving through its cyclical phases of celestial death and rebirth.
8. Grumet (1988) invites us to consider education as an act of reproduction: biological, ideological and critical (p. 8). She explores this concept through a recounting of the experiences of female teachers and their role in delivering the curriculum. Compliant midwives of the system, women teachers, Grumet laments, have been denied their rightful place at the birthing table, too long in habit and in ignorance following the orders of the doctor (i.e. the state). It is time, Grumet argues, for teachers to "take the stance of an artist" (p. 81), and bring meaning-making into the realm of what she calls "the aesthetic practice" (p. 91).
9. Grumet (1988) presents a feminist reading of schooling and the capitulation of teachers (male and female) to the agenda of the dominant culture. Grumet writes of our collective guilt in reproducing the state in the classroom, of "systematically delivering the children over to the language, rules, and relations of the patriarchy" (p. 56). Reproduction, in this sense, is not to question the biological nor ideological, but to accept and to repeat again and again a graven image of ourselves that is ourselves but not ourselves, an expression of the state as it wills us to be, and, in that reproduction, to deny recognition or responsibility for what we are or a vision of who we might become. Those few who recognize this reproductive enslavement attempt subversive action behind closed doors, their vision contained, confined within a "bunker" (p. 92), their voices, a solitary cry against mediocrity and failure of imagination.
10. Returning to the poem fragment which opens this piece, consider, if you would, the moon as a child, and grieve for the lost potential and being of that unborn child "cut loose, and drifting up there to happen by itself." To undertake reproduction on behalf of the state, to be managed by our own limited and limiting adherence to "what is expected and what must be done," is to set the moon adrift, abandoned. If we are governed by limited visions imposed by our reproductive histories, we will, in our acceptance of our role as the "goddess doomed to

keep slender be beautiful fail realize our work lost labor that is the child. [4]

11. The unmentioned and unmentionable absence in the poem who dictates that a goddess must destroy her pregnant self in order to maintain her beauty in His Eye is a terrible God. A teacher who willingly or unthinkingly abandons her students in their individual journeys to come into being so that she can replicate the expectations and definitions that come from without and within is practicing educational reproduction without the critical to guide her delivering hand. The child is stillborn; released into the human graveyard of unrealized potential.

Critical Reproduction: Taking the Stance of the Artist

12. Grumet (1988) warns that until "teachers and mothers (and fathers) acknowledge the ways in which schools perpetuate the asymmetry in class privilege and gender that is present in both the home and the workplace, they will not interrupt the patterns of their own complicity" (p. 56). As Grumet explains, "the intentions, assumptions, emotions, and achievements of educational practice and theory are infused with motives that come from our own reproductive histories and commitments" (pp. 6-7). Education, in terms of reproduction in this sense, biological and ideological, is an incestuous family affair.
13. The prognosis seems grim. But, to our relief and release, Grumet brings with her an antidote, a witch's offering that will bind the goddess to her pregnant self, and lead her to reject the powers that reward a censorious eye on the bathroom scale.
14. Reproduction, as envisioned by Grumet, can and must include the critical: not a blind acceptance of the status quo; but an awareness of the ideological wrappings of the biological presentation of the curriculum. Our responsibility, as it is defined by critical reproduction, is to know from where we have come and to whom we acknowledge authority and self-identification. A critical reading of curriculum invites teacher (and student) to argue against the "waning - the lost labor," to suggest an alternative.
15. To recognize, to question, to accept or to reject the given, to identify and pursue the absence is to create a space for understanding and exploration. Reproduction as critical opens up the possibilities and opportunities that a "pregnancy pared" can neither realize nor anticipate.

16. Grumet suggests that to be critical is a necessary first step towards an aesthetic practice of teaching. Critical reproduction is to take, as Grumet describes, the stance of the artist, to challenge "the taken-for-granted values and culture that one shares with others" (p. 81), to question and to critique what is assumed and to note the absence of what is not permitted. To be critical, then, in education is to invite renewal in new forms, new approaches, new expressions. To be an artist. To be creative. As Grumet claims, "It is the deviation of our own reproductive histories, mine and yours, from these theoretical formulations that opens the gap for new theory (and practice) to fill" (p. xvii).
17. As a drama educator, my pulse immediately quickens when I see printed on the page the juxtaposition of teaching and aesthetic practice. I have come to understand drama education as a poignant expression of and opportunity for individual creativity and collective imagining. But I stumble over these words:

Curriculum, is after all, artifice, deliberately designed to direct attention, provoke response, and express value; it *reorders experience* so as to make it accessible to perception and reflection." (Grumet, 1988: p. 79, my italics)

18. Curriculum as artifice? A warning bell sounds. I flip back a page and find:

"The things of art stand away from the world that surround them. The text is, literally, bound; the painting framed. The play ends to applause. The dance ceases...somewhere in space and time the line is drawn." (p. 78)

and these words:

"The point is that to be an artist is perpetually to negotiate the boundary that separates aesthetic from mundane experience." (p. 79)

19. I have encountered unexpected territory. Grumet's argument draws a firm if fluid line between aesthetic experience and mundane. This mapping of boundaries between mundane and aesthetic experience disturbs me. There is a gap in understanding, a contradiction that I can't quite put my finger on. I can only trust in the sudden loss of breath, the unexpected stomach drop as I neatly stem-christie over a

mogul and discover myself on the edge of an abyss.

20. I am compelled to ask Grumet, can one truly say that "the dance ceases"? That an aesthetic experience has a beginning and an end? Or that aesthetic form exists in a separate place? Is the text truly bound and separate from the world? A book, even one sitting abandoned on a shelf, does not cease to exist *in this world*; it does not "stand away *from the world*."
21. How to argue against Grumet's assertion that "to be an artist is perpetually to negotiate the boundary that separates aesthetic from mundane experience"? I would like to suggest that the aesthetic experience of dance, writing, painting, theatre, spills across boundaries, defeats boundaries, does not permit boundaries to exist. To pigeon hole aesthetic experience, to distinguish between the aesthetic and mundane, is to accept the "pared pregnancy" of our goddess.
22. And what am I to think about Grumet's view of curriculum as artifice which "...*reorders* experience so as to make it accessible to perception and reflection" (p. 79, my italics)? Or her suggestion that "the function of art is to *reorganize* experience" (p. 81, my italics)? I wonder about her use of the verbs "reorganize" and "reorder" in connection to experience, "curricular, aesthetic or mundane." We may reflect on experience or reinterpret our experience, coming to new experience through previous experience, but to "reorganize" it as if experience was a concrete object suggests that experience can be replaced or manipulated or dismissed.
23. Experiences are like individual moments of a dance; moments of action weaving patterns of love or pain, fear or hate, sorrow or celebration into life's choreography; each movement or action taken by the artist in response to the preceding moments and in anticipation (but never in certainty) of the proceeding moment. A dancer or choreographer may change the dance, accenting a hand movement, or eliminating an awkward pirouette but in doing so, the "original" choreography of the dance remains firmly in the experience (i.e. knowledge) of the artist, present in its absence. In the experience of doing, the artist does not "reorder" the experience, but interacts with it in order to create anew. The dance (noun) evolves into dancing (verb); never static, never solidified, never finalized.
24. Am I in error to question Grumet's labeling of experiences? Why do I feel compelled to challenge her definition of aesthetic experience and forms as separate from the mundane? I am

A.A. Milne's (1982) Pooh Bear tracking down a Hostile Animal in the fresh fallen snow, walking around and around in a circle:

"Hallo!" said Piglet, "what are you doing?"
"Hunting," said Pooh.
"Hunting what?"
"Tracking something," said Winnie-the-Pooh very mysteriously.
"Tracking what?" said Piglet, coming closer.
"That's just what I ask myself. I ask myself, What?"
"What do you think you'll answer?"
"I shall have to wait until I catch up with it," said Winnie-the-Pooh.
"Now look there." He pointed to the ground in front of him.
"What do you see there?"
"Tracks," said Piglet.
"Paw-marks." He gave a little squeak of excitement.
"Oh, Pooh! Do you think it's a-a-a-Woozle?"(p. 37, 38)

25. I feel I am on the edge of discovery but with each circling, I find yet another pair of tracks, questions leading to questions. Where do I go from here? If I am unhappy with Grumet's labeling and reorganizing of experiences, perhaps I should seek farther afield? With an apprehensive poke of my ski poles against the snow, I head down the treacherous slope towards understanding.

Beyond Reproduction? An Enactivist Joins the Conversation

26. How do we learn? As I search for a theory which reflects my experiences in drama, I am concerned that recognition be given to the creative expression and interchange of ideas, feeling and action which I believe are drama education's *raison d'être* as a vehicle for learning. It is therefore with enthusiasm and a sudden shock of recognition that I stumble upon enactivism, a theory of knowledge which sees cognition as embodied in the knower and in action.[\[5\]](#)
27. What is of fascination for enactivists are the inter-relations and interactions between individuals and their environment. "Far from merely existing relatively autonomously in the same location, individual and environment continually specify one another. Just as I am shaped by my location, so is my location shaped by my presence" (Davis, Kieren, & Sumara,

forthcoming, p. 4). We do not develop in isolation, but through co-emergence: that which is created or co-evolves in the interactional space between an individual, the environment and others.

28. Enactivists define "cognition not as a representation of the world 'out there,' but rather as an ongoing bringing forth of a world through the process of living itself" (Maturana & Varela, 1992: 11). Learning is a process in which "the students and teacher are seen as *bringing forth a world together*; the teacher's actions are determined by his or her own dynamic structure, but are also occasioned by the interactional dynamics with students as they bring forth (i.e. quite literally, help to shape) the world" (p 4, my italics)[6]. Knowledge is fluid, changing and personally and situationally interdependent. "What we do," Varela says, "is what we know, and ours is but one of many possible worlds. It is not a mirroring of the world, but the laying down of a world..." (p 62).
29. Enactivism resonates with my own understanding of drama education based on my experience working with students. Drama, through creative expression and interaction with others involves-invites creating "new possible worlds": How often have I brought a script to class, or a lesson plan, or an idea for a drama activity, only to have the students change it, rework it, take ownership of it, journey with it far beyond what I had imagined; students with teacher collectively and individually "bringing forth a new world," a world of understanding through and within dramatic action. Drama is the praxis of an enactivist's theory of knowledge; co-emergence the operative word-world in a drama class.
30. Hmm...this idea of bringing "forth a world" rings familiar. I return to Grumet (1988) and thumb through her chapter on "bodyreading" [7]; a discussion on the interaction or meaning-making which occurs between the reader and the text. She ignores me, intent on waxing her skis.

Meaning-making: Enactment of Possible Worlds

31. Grumet (1988) informs us that "meaning is something we *make out of* what we find when we look at texts. It is not *in* the text" (p. 143, my italics). "Body-reading" takes the task and authority of "meaning-making" out of the hands of the literary critic and teacher and places it into the hands (i.e. experience) of the individual student. The student does not arrive at meaning by finding it in "between the lines of the text" but

within the *interaction* of text and reader through the *action* of reading.

32. As I interpret Grumet, the space negotiated between the reader and the text becomes the meaning of the text and conversely that of the reader who, in conspiracy with the text, is undertaking the *action* of meaning-making. The space becomes the "*enactment of possible worlds...performed in a middle space owned by neither author nor reader*" (p.149, my italics). It is the interaction or co-emergence between reader and text and the resulting "possible worlds" that intrigues.
33. Is Grumet an enactivist? She sounds suspiciously like one when she writes, "The coherence of the text, like that of the world, is the possible and actual ground of our action...And action is knowledge" (p. 143, 149). It is in action and through interaction that we come to knowledge. Knowledge, then, in my reading of Grumet, is organic: A "happening" between the players (e.g. text and reader) within the context of the environment -- meaning-making as action and interaction. Or in the words of our enactivists: "Knowing is doing is being." (Davis, et. al., forthcoming, p. 3) Knowledge not as a noun but a verb.
34. "Knowing is doing is being" sounds like an ideal mantra for drama education. I stop mid-stride to pat myself on the back, an awkward maneuver with ski-poles in hand. But at that very moment, Grumet (1988) cries: "if we can just wrest meaning from the grip of knowledge and return it to art..." (p. 148), and I am thrown off balance. Grumet's line between Art and Knowledge snags my ankle and tugs me face first into a snowbank.
35. It is a momentary upset. I failed-- at first reading-- to understand that, within the context of her statement, Grumet's definition of "knowledge" is to be understood as "something out there", a noun, a concrete object authorized by the State to be hand-delivered by teachers. Within this context, I find myself nodding in agreement, vigorously shaking the snow off my mittens. Yes, of course! Let us take "meaning-making" out of the static hands of Knowledge and place it within the creative action of Art.
36. But I find myself still seated in the snowbank, puzzled as to how to regain my feet. One ski-pole has disappeared under a layer of snow. Grumet's placing of "meaning-making" into one of two camps -- Knowledge or Art -- leads us to two difficulties. The first invites the interpretation that art is separate, "away

from the world" -- hence Grumet's "drawing of a line" between mundane and aesthetic experience. Being separate-from bears with it the inherent dangers of marginalization. The second is that the term "knowledge" as used in this instance by Grumet as "something out there," is contrary to the enactivist's use and conception of the term "knowledge" as "knowing, doing, being." This confusion of terminology makes dialogue difficult.

I am forced to resort to the tactics of a mathematician.

If:

Knowledge = Meaning-making (grumet) = Knowing = Doing = Being (enactivists)

and:

Art = Creating = (Knowing = Doing = Being) = Meaning-making

then:

Art = Knowledge

37. And I discover a pool of moonlight - *Knowledge is Creating*.

Eureka! I have erased the line.

38. This equation allows me to do three things: the first is to recognize that I can locate drama education within Grumet's concept of education as reproduction: biological, ideological and critical, if it is understood, as Grumet argues, that to be critical is to be creative. Drama education, if it is to be successful, must embrace both the critical and the creative in the making of "new possible worlds." If one criticizes, yet fails to introduce creative action, then reproduction as *status quo* continues.

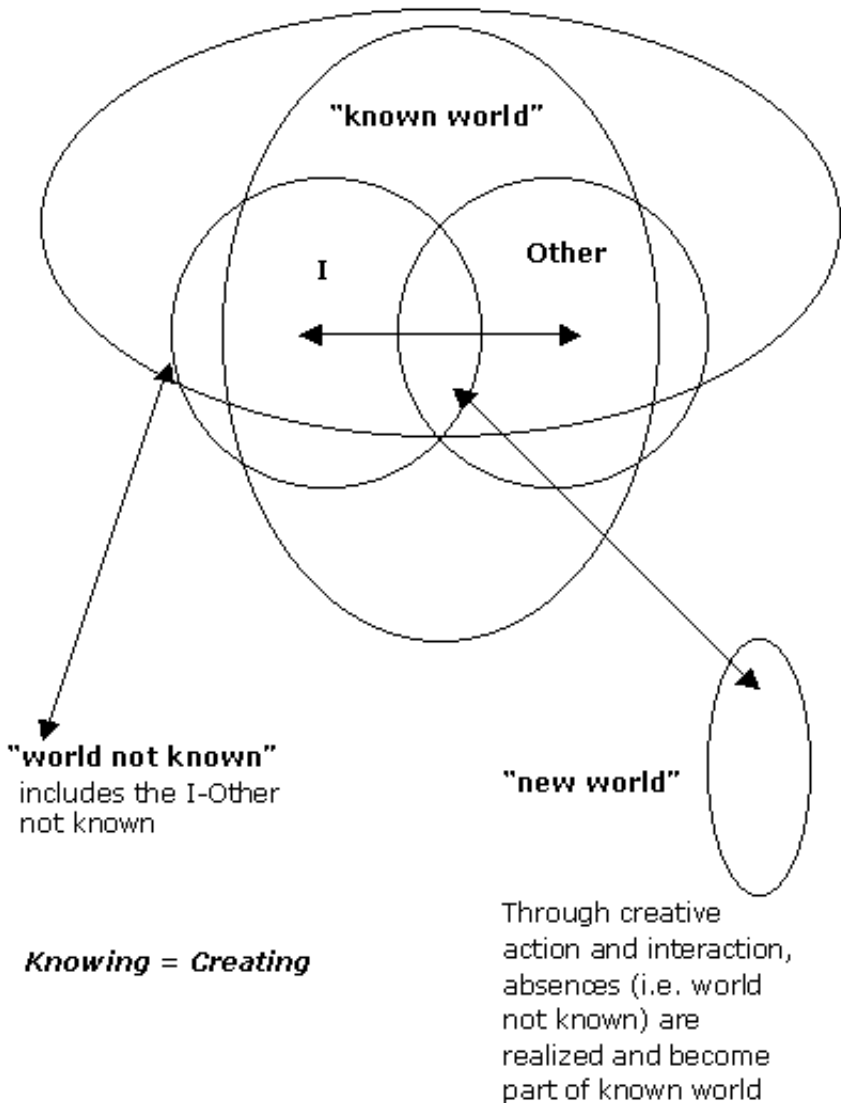
39. Second, it brings me to an understanding that enactivism, as a theory and realization of knowledge, must, if it is to move forward with the momentum of exploration and excitement that is critical to learning, embrace a notion of "creating" as an essential component of Davis et. al.'s definition "Knowing is Doing is Being." Otherwise, knowledge as organism is of an "incestuous" nature.

40. And third, to accept the concept of "Knowledge is Creating to understand that be creative one must also critical [8]. Not to be critical, as Grumet (1988) warns, is to encourage endless reproduction: biological and ideological, "created" by practiced but uninspired and "unknowing" so-called artists.

41. In the "bringing forth of possible worlds", the key action word is Creating: Taking the stance of an artist. To be creative. If we look to child-centered drama as a means of coming to

knowledge through creative action and interaction, then understanding "Knowledge as Creating" is both necessary and emancipatory.

42. The Venn diagram illustrates the "creating" that is "the bringing forth of a new possible world" or co-emergence as described by enactivism. Imagine that the spheres are multi-dimensional, co-evolving through time and space. Note that "I" and "Other" are not located solely in the "known world"; there is much that is "unknown" within the "known".
43. The "known world" is the socially constructed world: the "unknown world" is that Knowing/Doing/Being that has not yet been realized (i.e. socially constructed). The intersection between the "I" and the "Other" is the formation of the "new world" through co-emergence: the act of creating "a new possible world" through the interactions between the "I" and "Other" in concert with separate and shared experiences of the "known world." The choreography of knowledge is realized through co-emergence: the interactional space between "I and Other" and the "known world" -- where new possible worlds are enacted. Creating is making known the absences that are the "unknown world".



44. Although I do not normally link Venn diagrams with birthing, the example I have offered recalls to mind our goddess from the opening poem fragment. If we superimpose the enactivist understanding of knowledge onto the poem, then the moonchild is no longer a "pared pregnancy" but bound once again to its goddess mother in union with its god father. In the shared creating, doing, knowing of her conception and pregnancy, their "found labor" brings forth a new celestial being: the moonchild known/unknown in this world becomes known, and in becoming known creates its "own possible world(s)."

Geometry of Education: Erasing the Line

45. And so it is, that I arrive breathless, my cheeks frost-painted red, at the bottom of the hill. It is not simply a matter of

deciding, as Grumet suggests, of "where and when to draw the line" (p. 94) but to challenge the existence of the line. As Davis et. al. explain, "There are no real boundaries here: each is enfolded in and unfolds from the other" (p. 10).

46. Learning is "an ongoing structural dance - a complex choreography" (Davis et. al., forthcoming: 2). It is not "line-drawing" that we want to attempt but an embracing of creative enaction. Creative enaction is to ask questions, to look for the Hostile Animal, to create a path of exploration and discovery in walking (or, in our present situation, skiing). And so we circle around and around like Piglet and Pooh seeking elusive Woozles and meeting ourselves in knowledge (albeit sometimes with a little help from a friend).
47. "Silly old Bear," said Christopher Robin, "what were you doing? First you went round the spinney twice by yourself, and then Piglet ran after you and you went round again together, and then you were just going round a fourth time----"
48. "Wait a moment," said Winnie-the-Pooh, holding up his paw.
49. He sat down and thought, in the most thoughtful way he could think. Then he fitted his paw into one of the Tracks...and then he scratched his nose twice, and stood up.

"Yes," said Winnie-the-Pooh.

"I see now," said Winnie-the-Pooh.

"I have been Foolish and Deluded," said he, "and I am a Bear of No Brain at All."

"You're the Best Bear in All the World," said Christopher Robin soothingly.

"Am I? said Pooh hopefully. And then he brightened up suddenly.

"Anyhow," he said, "it is nearly Luncheon Time."

So he went home for it. (Milne, 1957: 43, 44)

50. Enactivism without critical and creative action is nothing but reproduction without hope. It is to join Piglet and Pooh in an mindless rather than inquiring circling, thinking we are going somewhere and going nowhere at all. It is Pooh's creative response to consider an alternative world (from the one that he and Piglet had been imagining) that invites him to place his paw in his pawprint and recognize the path he has created in walking.
51. I do not think that we are in disagreement, Grumet and I. We

share our belief, trust, and hope in the power and potential of education as reproduction: biological, ideological, critical and creative. The difference perhaps is in the "drawing of lines" --

lines to be crossed
between "aesthetic experience" and the
mundane
between "aesthetic practice" and other
between Knowledge and Art.

52. My impulse is to erase lines. My geometry of education is an unmarked field of snow, my compass the interrelations and interactions between multi-dimensional circles or spheres of experiences in which new spheres ("knowing, doing, being, creating") unfold. And, for me, this geometry speaks to the democratic opportunity for learning: No one person holds the key to knowledge. "There are no real boundaries here....Even the traditional boundary separating teacher and learner is blurred, for in the play of knowledge-in curriculum- all are fully implicated" (Davis et. al., forthcoming: p. 10). We are learners all; the teacher in a constant co-evolving dance with her students.
53. To come then to an understanding of the "aesthetic experience" that Grumet desires for education is for each of us, individually and collectively to create and to be creative. To discover Knowledge in Creating and to embrace Creating as Knowledge. What is necessary in education is the courage and creativity of the individual in action and in interaction. The "taking the stance of the artist" is the bloodline between stillbirth and the birthing of our moonchild.

Curriculum as Laying Down a Path in Knowing

54. I stride forward, confident in the path I am laying. But the weight of Grumet's curriculum as "artifice, deliberately designed...(which) reorders experiences" (1988: p. 79) digs into my shoulders. I stop mid-stride to adjust my backpack. Does Grumet see curriculum as separate *from* the world? Is there yet another line?
55. What is curriculum? Grumet warns us that curriculum should not be seen as a fixed entity in existence and separate from students ... "curriculum, considered apart from its *appropriation and transformation by students*, curriculum defined as design, a structure of knowledge, an intended learning outcome, or a learning environment, is merely a static form" (1988, p. 172,

my italics). States Grumet:

"...curriculum, like language, is a moving form; conceived as an aspiration, the object and hope of our intentionality, it comes to form and slips, at the moment of its actualization, into the ground of our action. It becomes part of our situation" (op.cit., p. 131).

56. Students, Grumet argues, are integral participants in the actualization of curriculum. "A curriculum designed for my child is a conversation that leaves space for her responses, that is transformed by her questions" (1988, p. 173). Grumet's description of curriculum as "a moving form" is pushed further by Pinar, Lattery & Taubman (1994):

"Curriculum ceases to be a thing, and it is more than a process. It becomes a verb, an action, a social practice, a private meaning, and a public hope. Curriculum is not just the site of our labor, it becomes the product of our labor, changing as we are changed by it" (p. 3).

57. What is curriculum? Curriculum is a catalyst for exploration which begins with a question, a thought, a laugh, a search for the Hostile Animal. Curriculum is the action-interaction of creating: co-emergence that takes place in the interactional space between student, teacher, text and classroom -- the "known" world in search of, in anticipation of, but never in certainty of the "unknown" world. Curriculum is laying down a path in understanding.
58. Grumet and Pinar et. al. touch the essence of curriculum -- not a line or a boundary or a roadmap -- but a transformation, a realizing and coming to knowledge by children through creative and critical interaction with each other, their teacher and their environment. The bringing forth of a new possible world(s).
59. Grumet's statement curriculum as "artifice...(which) reorganizes experiences" therefore begs the rewrite:

curriculum embodies and invites experiences.

60. Curriculum not as artifice, separate from the "real world" but part of the world.

There is no line drawn.

"...understand that curriculum does not and cannot exist apart from the world. It cannot be thought of as something intended to reflect or reveal the universe, for it is an inextricable part of the universe. Curriculum action, like any action, becomes part of the continuous structural coupling of curriculum actors and their world" (Davis et. al, forthcoming: p. 8).

61. And it is the curricular catalysts of creative and critical action-interaction -- the springboards, the questions, the hunt for Woozles -- that invite and challenge student and teacher, learners both, into new "knowing, being, doing, creating."
62. Which brings us, under the pale glow of a full moon, to an understanding and celebration of the potential of drama education. Drama education which is critical and creative in the interplay of meaning-making is the drama of reproduction as encouraged by Grumet, and as anticipated by enactivists. The co-emergence that happens in the interactional space between students and teacher and their environment through drama is the creation and realization of knowledge: the birthing of the moonchild who in the "time that is but the changing of light"[\[9\]](#) creates new possible worlds -- a "laying down a path" in understanding.

Postscript: Breaking Trail

I am back in the woods cross-country skiing,
in the company of Pooh and Piglet
hunting for Woozles
laying down tracks on the freshly fallen snow
in an unmarked field of moonlight

End Notes

1. A poem fragment from "Freedom, New Hampshire," by Galway Kinnell as quoted in *Bitter Milk: Women and Teaching* by Madeleine Grumet (1988). Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press. [\[back\]](#)
2. The phrase "laying down a path" is from an article by F. Varela (1992) titled Laying down a path in walking. In W. I. Thompson (ed.). *Gaia, A Way Of Knowing: Political Implications of the New Biology* (Hudson, NY: Lindisfarne Press). Originally from a poem

by A Machado in *Proverbios y Cantares*, 1930 which Varela translated into English. [\[back\]](#)

3. The Handmaid's Tale, by Margaret Atwood, a futuristic novel in which women are stratified by their child-bearing capabilities and obliged to service men for the purpose of reproduction as determined by the state. For a theoretical examination of biological reproduction as experienced by men and women and the resulting impact of the male reproduction experience on the theory and practice of politics see *The Politics of Reproduction* (1981) by Mary O'Brien. See References. [\[back\]](#)
4. A practical realization of this abandonment was enacted at a parent teacher meeting I attended in which the new format for report cards were introduced. Several parents protested the return of lettered grades for the intermediate level, arguing that low grades would have a negative impact on their children's self-esteem. This concern was echoed by the two teachers present. However, when one parent proposed that the school not use grading, the principal interjected, "We have to. It's been mandated by the Ministry. We have no choice." Handmaidens of the Ministry of Education of British Columbia, the principal and teachers comply with state direction no matter how destructive it may be to some children. [\[back\]](#)
5. The truth of Varela's (1987) "the laying down of a path" to understanding followed me up the stairs of the Scarfe Education Building as I sought out a math education professor noted on campus as an expert on enactivism. What, I asked myself wonderingly, was I, a drama educator, doing in the math department? And why not?! [\[back\]](#)
6. Varela's (1987) imagery of wind chimes to illustrate the interactions between objects and medium may be helpful. Wind chimes sound a tune when moved by the wind. It is not however the wind that determines the sound made but the structural configurations of the the wind chimes and resulting actions and reactions which occur. The wind is also changed by its encounter with the wind chimes, altering direction, being reduced in strength, ricocheting from one chime to another. And so a new world of sound is created in the co-emergence of the wind and the wind chimes in a continuing fluidity of action-response-action. [\[back\]](#)
7. Grumet, M., See Chapter 7 in *Bitter Milk*, (1988). [\[back\]](#)
8. See *Drama as a Site for Critical Pedagogy* (1993) by Clar Doyle

for an argument for drama in education as a tool for critical thinking. [\[back\]](#)

9. a line from a Joyce Carol Oates novel (the reference of which I've long since forgotten) which I memorized many years ago because it freed me from seeing time as mechanical time. Tick tock. Tick tock. [\[back\]](#)

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