Letting Go: A Departure from Liberal Moral Education, Embracing Teacher Transformation, & Evolving Pedagogies of Resistance

By

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B.A., Trent University, 2006
B.Ed., Queens' University, 2007

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Abstract

Contemporary, mainstream moral education in North America teaches students to be compliant rather than skilled in moral consciousness. The Myths of Moral Education, illustrated as 'Necessity,' 'Neutrality,' 'Liberal Subjectivity,' 'The Good,' and 'Dissent,' maintain a system of control. Through a Foucaudian lens, I address, within common teaching practices, the presence of productive power and oppression, possibilities for subversive action, and propose an abandonment of liberal moral education. Counter-arguments are explored in a discussion on the control/chaos dichotomy and a dismantling of dissent as a tool of a liberal paradigm. Using a pedagogical framework influenced by bell hooks and Paulo Freire, I argue that what must occur, before taking on pedagogical change, is a teacher transformation through a Praxis of 'Letting Go'. Finally, I present an alternative to education's preoccupation with compliance through Pedagogies of Resistance; a three-part approach that assesses power, promotes compassion, and creates space for empowerment.

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A Note About Pronouns

Throughout this thesis, I will refrain from assuming the gender identity, and therefore the preferred gender pronoun, of the authors referred to in the text. In taking this approach, my intention is to align my academic practices with my personally held values and evolving societal norms related to anti-oppression and trans-inclusion. I will use the non-gendered pronoun 'they' to refer to individuals, and may use authors' names or terms such as 'the author' with greater frequency to avoid confusion.

It is important to note that this effort towards inclusion is not intended to obscure identity nor should it negate the fact that the works could be dominated by one gender identity over others. In my research, I have made an effort to source works in a way that considers gender, and other intersecting issues of oppression, in a way that serves this thesis and the problems it is intended to address.

- Introduction -

Transformations Through Resistance

Over the last 15 years, in the classroom and in the camping industry, I was often acknowledged for getting the best out of my students. Not only were the children in my care learning the curriculum but their behaviour also reflected that they were picking up on my 'value-oriented' approach; the students were learning to be 'good.' I was patted on the back for harnessing the energy of a group of middle school students on Valentines Day and maintaining their productivity even with hormones flying; students were respectful and demonstrated a good work-ethic. Other educators confessed they were dazzled by the way I engaged more than 100 kids in a complicated activity with confidence; each person participating and working towards a common goal. In a busy outdoor centre dining hall, under my management, no one would touch their dessert until their dinner dishes were cleared: what manners! I believed that my goal was to instil a certain attitude, a set of beliefs, and an understanding of what being a 'good' person means so that my students or campers came away as better people than when we first met. I was told that I was teaching self-control and respect, diligence, and responsibility; the children were learning how to be more independent and how to do the 'right' thing.

On any given day, I could be heard saying things such as, *"I like the way Sarah is sitting quietly in their seat"* or, *"Good job, Kyle! You finished your work and now you can go outside to play"* or *"Do you remember our classroom contract? If you do it*

again, there will be consequences." I believed in the power of praise; rewarding people for good behaviour and recognition for good deeds. Even when a kid was struggling with their behaviour, I would often try to catch them in the act of doing something positive so that I could tell them that they were doing a *"good job."* And those kids who did not fall in line? I'd give them a special task, or the occasional 'natural consequence,' and eventually they would be making a beaded bracelet with the others. My theory was that kids needed motivation to be 'good' and that I just needed to encourage them and they would, essentially, learn to be 'moral.'

One day, while searching for more ways to applaud 'good' kids and coax some students to be more praiseworthy, I encountered Alfie Kohn's article "Five Reasons to Stop Saying 'Good Job!'" (2001). One line, in particular, both perplexed and inspired me, it reads,

> What kids do need is unconditional support, love with no strings attached. That's not just different from praise – it's the opposite of praise. "Good job!" is conditional. It means we're offering attention and acknowledgement and approval for jumping through our hoops, for doing things that please us. (Kohn, 2001, para.21)

Then came some realizations, followed by harsh realities: praise, rewards, stickers, and even 'good job' were not contributing to the development of 'good' people but, rather, these efforts were producing obedient, docile people. 'Natural consequences' were not natural but contrived by me, and my lack of care or compassion, and were not teaching 'values' but were modeling my use of power instead of humility. I was suddenly faced with a new understanding of my role as a teacher; I began to regard my practice as oppressive and moral education as a way of maintaining my position.

My goals, which I had once believed were altruistic, and my actions that I had been confident made me a good teacher, turned out to be part of a system that is intended to teach kids to be compliant and unquestioning workers. I was manifesting the goals of a system rather than my own goals or the goals of my students; my intentions and my philosophy were being undermined and overwritten by a liberal ideology bent on teaching control. Within this system, students are objects, and they must be disciplined to remain contained. Next, I did what I now understand to be a rare thing. I began to dismantle my own approach with students and what I believed were my goals and intentions. I decided that I was not practicing what I preached; it was not that my ambition to embolden values in education were under false pretences, but rather that I was going about it the wrong way. What I was doing was incredibly effective at garnering obedience and it was suddenly strange that it was pleasing to me when 200 kids waited patiently for their ice cream. Unfortunately, I was not churning out kids with an increased sense of what is 'good' but rather little "praise-junkies" who were learning that being 'good' meant submitting to my control (Kohn, 2001, para. 7).

The topic to be discussed here stems from the above moment of realization and my subsequent efforts towards both personal and systemic transformation. As much as I may alter my own philosophical approach to, and resulting practice of, moral education, there is a deeper discussion that needs to take place. As a researcher, I have come to understand that we cannot create a new paradigm while still operating inside the old one; bell hooks states, "[t]o educate for freedom, then, we have to challenge and change the

way everyone thinks about pedagogical process" (hooks, 2010, p.22). Moral education[1], the way we define what it means to be a 'good person,' and what reasoning and actions we believe exemplifies that idea of 'good,' is deeply embedded into our mainstream, Western pedagogy. The problem is not the desire to pass on values to our children but rather that our methods, unbeknown to us, are actually accomplishing a separate, more insidious goal. Commonplace comments from teachers, such as the ones considered above, hardly seem problematic and most educators would probably argue that there is nothing political about saying "good job" to a student who completes a task. It is difficult to question something that we as teachers know works to achieve our goal. But, I have found that when the goal is questioned, and when we ask what exactly these methods work to achieve, it becomes clear that the aim is compliance and control and hence with political underpinning.

Previous to encountering the work of Alfie Kohn, as a teacher, I did not really engage philosophically with what I thought I meant by 'moral,' or being 'good,' or even what methods were involved in a practice of 'moral education.' It is not only the role of the researcher to think about philosophical matters, especially when we reflect on the impact of our approach to teaching students how to be 'good.' Part of the intention of this thesis is to invite teachers to redefine themselves and their teaching practices through addressing their understandings of the moral domain and the ways in which it is undertaken in education. The specific sphere of knowledge and activity that I consider the 'moral domain' involves, but is not exclusive of, moral consciousness, moral

[1] It is important to note that not all approaches to 'moral education' are about being a 'good person' but also include inculcating 'good citizens.' This conceptual relationship will be discussed further; see definitions below.

reasoning, and a motivation to participate morally; this includes efforts to do 'right' and act with 'virtue' to further 'The Good.'[2] The way in which these terms are defined often exposes their political origins and their relationships to a system; in the case of 'moral education,' I am referring to a specific type derived from a liberal framework.[3] The application of moral education, in the way in which contemporary, mainstream teachers in Canadian classrooms most commonly use it, is influenced by the work of John Dewey, an American philosopher, psychologist, and educational reformer active in the first half of the 20th century, and could be described as being for the purpose of "educating people to be moral and providing an education that is moral" (DeVitis & Yu, 2011, p.xii). This is not to be confused with what is called 'character education,' which has been defined by some critics and advocates as "virtue-centred moral education informed by particular philosophical, political and educational frameworks (Lickona, 1991; McClellan, 1999; Noddings, 2002)" (DeVitis & Yu, 2011, p.xii). Dwight Boyd speaks to this take on moral education in their article, "Character Education and Citizenship Education: A Case of Cancerous Relationship", in which they argue that this form of indoctrination both conflates the concepts and then presumes to produce good people and good citizens. This melding of moral education with citizenship education, Boyd maintains, leads to an inability to discriminate between the two and "failure to differentiate them adequately as having the potential to foment an insidious cancer of the body politic" (2010, p.384). Boyd argues that, along with a "list of virtues that everybody should be taught, and that should always guide all behavior", there are some dangerous qualifiers; tenets that

[2] Definitions of 'The Right,' 'virtue,' and 'The Good' will be discussed over the next few pages, as well as in Chapter One.
[3] An explanation of what is meant by a 'liberal framework' is discussed in detail at the beginning of chapter one.

describe good behaviour as morally virtuous, or imply that what is considered 'good' or 'moral' is common in *all* cultures as well as that these 'good' human qualities "are affirmed by societies and religions around the world", which leads to an inferred moral wrongness if one were to disagree with the list (Boyd, 2010, p.385; Lickona as cited by Boyd, 2010, p.386). Boyd problematizes Lickona's certainty of what is good and moral, as well as the ethnocentrism behind the development of the list, contending that, in a healthy liberal democracy, one cultural viewpoint being considered to speak for all citizens is an example of a diseased body politic (2010). Within this type of moral education, the notion of the 'good person' is politicised and the ties between political needs and control with the purpose of moral, or 'character,' education has clear political origins; it is born from the goals of a system and the regulations or traditions or beliefs that support the aims of its framework. The political origin of moral education becomes apparent with the consideration of a development of classified norms and acceptable character traits (read: regulations/traditions), from where the motivation for certain interpretations of what is 'good' is derived (read: or who benefits). Boyd's concern, which I share, is that rather than learning about morality, students are learning to be a certain type of 'good' that serves political needs rather than moral ones.

It was concerns and questions such as these that motivated me to open up this issue, to locate its origins, to add texture to its texts, and to further problematize its proponents and critics. My methodology was to endeavour to search out paradigms, goals, and rules, and to ask questions that related to their prevailing foundations. My aim was to query the structures of what is thought of as established or accepted as moral education and to respond from outside of those conventions. At first, I wanted to uncover

the philosophical grounding for the problems that I was identifying; I hoped to track down an author that recognised similar problems to the ones that I had acknowledged. My process was to list my questions and then to read historical, philosophical, and contemporary works until they were all answered or until themes had emerged and more deeply embedded questions had surfaced. Finally, after compiling a medley of philosophical thoughts surrounding these problems, the ways in which these narratives corresponded to my own experiences and ideas came into view. It is from the cumulated efforts of such an undertaking that this thesis emerged.

As this document is written not only for those with an interest in teacher transformation and student liberation, but also for mainstream teachers of today and others invested in education, it is important to note the role of curriculum. I understand curriculum in a way that corresponds to Ted Aoki's elucidation on its elements or make-up in that I acknowledge curriculum-as-plan and curriculum-as-lived, as well as the spaces in between and curriculum yet to be developed (1993). This thesis, and the aspects of curriculum it is meant to problematize, as well as the alternatives it attempts to offer, is meant to inspire change but not a re-writing of planned resources or public expectations. It is my hope that this work will result in a deeper understanding of the systemic nature of moral education and the roles of teacher and student within its structure. I also hope to offer some tools for educators, teachers, and parents in their approach to, and understanding of, curriculum-as-plan, which includes assessments of power, control, and social location, while encouraging space for resistance. At the same time, an acknowledgement of positionality and experiences that inform curriculum-as-lived should bring forward questions surrounding theory and practice while

problematizing aspects of curriculum. Although I do not purport to have the answers to curriculum dilemmas, it is my hope that the deconstructions that are offered in the upcoming chapters, as well as the praxis and take on pedagogy that I put forward, will assist educators and those interested in liberatory frameworks to approach these issues with systemic goals and resistance in mind. Rather than transforming curriculum directly, the purpose of this thesis is to create a transformative framework for teachers.

For the purpose of this work, 'moral education' is meant to encompass a liberal conception; it is the effort to pass on, to the next generation, a specific notion of what it means to act with 'virtue,' and to do the 'right' thing, in an effort towards attaining 'The Good.' Because these concepts can have conflicting interpretations when put into varying contexts, or when used by different people, there is often misinterpretation or a conflation of terms when they are referenced. For example, 'The Good' is used to describe an end, an ideal, or 'truth,' to be reached though a moral life by some philosophers, while Lawrence Kohlberg says 'The Good' while speaking of what is right, or the most moral action (1981). But, what is 'good' can also be understood as behaviour, or acting with virtue, such as when one acts in a caring way for another individual and is considered to be a 'good' person. Dewey explains that the tendency is to understand 'The Good' to be an ideal, ultimate in essence, and what is "beneath all of the special ends striven for is the common idea", but this is problematic because its definition is based on preference while at the same time dependent on an understanding that there is one *true* or real 'Good' (1936, p.26). 'The Good' is also discussed as a desirable ends in itself; Dewey explains that "[s]ome goods are not good *for* anything; they are just goods" in the sense that they are intrinsically beneficial (1916/2001, p.249).

Although there are limitations to delineating or assigning a specific meaning to the terms within liberal moral education, I find it necessary to be clear as to what I mean when they are used. Within this thesis, when referencing 'The Good,' it will refer to a moral ends or goals.

Other important elements of moral education to be examined, such as 'The Right' and 'virtue,' also warrant a brief discussion. Kohlberg, whose work in psychology and philosophy of moral development reflects notions of a liberal framework,[4] describes 'The Right' as what is being sought in a moral dilemma between competing 'goods' (1981). For example, in what is called the "Heinz" dilemma, a person is forced to either steal a life-saving drug for an ill loved one or obey the law and let the loved one die: hence choosing between the 'good' of private property or the 'good' of human life (1981, p.12). The liberal beliefs surrounding 'The Right', as characterised by Dewey, considers morally 'right' as often in conflict with what might be "naturally satisfying" and part of the moral struggle is choosing between what one prefers and "the demands of duty" or navigating among social needs and the desires of the individual (1936, p.27). The concept of 'virtue' is another element related to a liberal moral education and a part of the knowledge of what is 'right.' Dewey argues that virtue, due to its nature of praise and blame, is a regulation of conduct (1936). It is through teaching others what is meant by 'virtue', or "the dispositions which are socially commended and encouraged constituting the excellencies of character which are to be cultivated", that we might acquire the capacities to reason and choose right actions (Dewey, 1936, p.27). Within this definition, moral education includes teaching what is thought to be 'moral reasoning,' or the

[4] The connection between Kohlberg's work and a liberal paradigm will be discussed in the first chapter.

knowledge of how to choose 'The Right,' and certain concepts of virtue for the purpose of encouraging students to become 'good citizens,' or, in other words, moral people who will support a moral society which is believed to be the real 'Good.' However, the production of moral people for a moral society is problematic because it conflates 'The Right' (citizens) with virtue (people) and also for the reason that it is possible to be proficient in moral reasoning but also act without virtue (Straughan, 1994). As will be discussed at length in the following chapters, concepts of 'The Good,' 'The Right,' and what is virtuous have political origins, contributing to, as Dewey described it, the "great problem of morals on this score [being] the attainment of right knowledge" (1936, p.26). Although a liberal moral education is thought to be in service to teaching these concepts, I will argue that the motivation and purpose within the paradigm undermines any intrinsic intention or result.

The reason that I chose to distinguish moral education from virtues education, or character education, despite how related they could be, is due to the 'political' nature of character education when it is juxtaposed with moral education. Lickona's approach to character education, for example, both embraces and denies its politics; in a discussion of "Seven Crucial Issues" in character education, they both express their social conservative and Christian agenda by stating their concern for "societal problems" such as "family disintegration… and disrespect for life born *and preborn*" (read: any variation other than the nuclear family leads to moral denigration and abortion is immoral), but also rejects that their interpretation could be political when they claim that "values transcend religious and cultural differences, and express our common humanity" (read: the interpretations of 'The Right' listed above are *always* right) (2011a, p.24; 2011b, p.31).

While virtues and character education are interested in *the message* that is passed on to students, a liberal moral education is less specific in content and more systemic in its goal; moral education has a rhetoric that denies its political nature yet, as will be discussed later, serves a political purpose. In this work, I will demonstrate that the contemporary approach to moral education, although it is believed to be an effort in educating students to be 'moral,' and often separates itself from the more 'politically driven' aims of character or virtues education, is significantly influenced by a liberal framework *and* that the goals within moral education, as it is understood, are problematic because they aim to be oppressive.

We may see social value in moral education, but we cannot deny its political influences; the way in which we define what is good or right is inevitably political. Moral education, which is an invention of the liberal paradigm used to influence, and even control, the behaviour of the people and citizens is being used to maintain political stasis. If students are indoctrinated by this current mainstream, traditional ideology, and the resulting pedagogies are informed by politics, the lessons learned inevitably rely on compliance, binaries of right/wrong, and how to maintain and perpetuate 'norms;' norms being problematic because they serve power (oriented to those in power, the elite, etc.). The result is an objectification of students; an oppressed group exploited through a learned docility. The problem is exemplified in the way in which praise teaches children to do good, such as sharing their toy, for the resulting pat on the back rather than the intrinsic, warm and fuzzy feeling as its own reward. Does a person share because they feel obligated by duty, as Dewey suggests is learned by knowledge of 'The Right,' or do they pass over the toy because the teacher looks on and being

perceived as virtuous brings with it the possibility of external reward? Does learning obedience teach us how to determine what is right? Even more problematic is relating what we are told to do with what is considered 'good' and our culminating inability to question whether something is always right or even right at all.

The call for moral education is not new; it is debatable whether schooling has ever involved anything less. On the surface, the reason for teaching morality stems from the reaction of one generation that its progeny is immoral; the problem being those darn kids and their seeming lack of respect, or their inability to make decisions that are ethical, or the apparent evidence of depravity seen in the world around us, and thus the call for more innovative or progressive efforts to inculcate the young with a sense of what is 'good' and 'right.' Aristotle notes this ancient sociological problem when they argue the importance of instilling an education in moral reasoning "straight from childhood" (*EN* 2:2). For this ancient Greek, a virtuous person was one who became immersed and ingrained into a social context through their moral education and thus became inclined to practice "a state of character concerned with choice" and displayed a reliable, self-monitored compliance to the "mean" choice as opposed to "a mean of excess and deficiency, nor excess and deficiency of a mean" (*EN* 2:6). In other words, Aristotle believes people, especially the young, require moral education because we are not naturally inclined to be 'good' without this teaching; virtues necessitate teaching because the young lack self-control, are ruled by their passion, and show an inadequacy in life experience, which impacts their capability to reason (*EN* 1:3).

There are contemporary examples of the same problem. In the last century, Dewey, whose work still heavily influences the field of education in North America, asserted that people are not naturally moral, necessitating being schooled in the subject, but they also argued that youth must be taught social values while being habituated to earnestly support them with personal disposition and moral actions (1916/2001). Dewey regarded education as the bridge that "spans the gap" between a society's principles and needs *and* the individual's knowledge of 'The Good' (1916/2001, p.7). In the article "The Politics of Character Education", David Purpel explains that "implicit in such a discourse is the assumption that our social problems are not so much rooted in the failures of our social, economic, and political structures as they are in the personal attributes and behaviours of individuals" (1999, p.83). When the discussion of the necessity for moral education stems from the argument that without these interventions the individual will not know how to be virtuous or morally reason it turns the conversation away from the more difficult topic of what is understood to be political, such as the structures and systems of society, to the less contentious 'problem' of how that kid behaves (Purpel, 1999). This essentially politicises concepts of morality; Purpel explains it as an effort to "convert social and political issues into educational and pedagogical ones, and to focus on stability rather than transformation" (Purpel, 1999, p.83).

Over the last couple millennia or so, the problem of moral education failing to boost the ethical standard of students can be evidenced by the constant slew of 'new' programs, and 'alternative' approaches, as well as the continuous analysis of the ways in which we teach the young to be 'good' in the sense of acting virtuous. The thought

process seems to be that if society does not appear to be benefiting from our efforts to inculcate more principled members then the practice of moral education must be re-invented. But the problem is replicated as each exodus from this failing system returns to the same point of departure; the practice is reborn as subsequent approaches are drawn from the liberal paradigm again and again. It is problematic that something that is supposedly concerned with the betterment of humanity in actuality serves as a tool, with the schools as agents, to achieve a liberal goal of "social stability, political stasis, and cultural preservation" (Purpel, 1999, p.83).

As will be explored in the first chapter, the narrative has not changed over the last hundred generations; the mythology teaches us that it is necessary to give lessons in morality. The problem is that this understanding of morality aims to maintain systems that keep one group in power over another, which limits acting virtuous to being obedient. If acting with virtue is, as Aristotle explains, a compliance to the mean, and if 'choosing' a right action should be in service to the society that designs the mean, then no amount of modification, no generational tweak to the way in which morals are passed on by the forbearing folks of the time, will produce anything different within this paradigm which is in service to the goal of control. It is essential to this ideology that the connection between politics and morality is obscured; we must believe that we are maintaining what we know to be 'good' for the benefit of all, or most, even if in the moment what we are doing may conflict with a value we are attempting to uphold or the morality we desire to protect. We may speak of a world in which we find 'truth,' 'freedom,' 'enlightenment,' or simply, 'happiness' yet our practices in the classroom, and beyond, are not cultivating the skills needed to locate our true selves. We want to believe

that moral education is how we raise good kids (read: virtuous), who grow into good people (who can choose 'The Right'), who in turn serve each other for the benefit of a good society (a moral society that supports 'The Good'). Instead, we embark on an effort to instil a conviction of what is thought to be 'good' (or virtuous, or Right) but remain limited by a liberal paradigm intent on attaining compliance. A moral education that serves the liberal goal of control weakens and subverts any interpretation of morality.

The problem is not the presence of political influence in schools; ideological immersion of some form is inevitable and our social relations are inescapably political. Education today reflects ancient Greek *paideia* as it involves not only the transmitting of knowledge and identified skills but also the regulation of culture and the construction of values (Foltz, 1996). There are many examples of scholars who argue that the schools are tools of the state for the purpose of reproducing the ruling dogma and its systems (Rousseau, 1762/1979; Foucault, 1975; Chomsky, 2000; Giroux, 2005). According to Louis Althusser, the mechanism of hegemony is the perpetuation of its ideology; they contend that schools "use suitable methods of punishment… to 'discipline'" students, teaching the rules of good behaviour or "the attitude that should be observed…[and] rules of morality" (2006, p.92/88). Let me be clear, when Althusser uses the word 'discipline' they are not referring to the use of corporal punishment, or coercive force, or anything else remotely commonly controversial - they are speaking of the more subtle interventions that teach students how to "'speak proper French', to 'handle' the workers correctly, i.e. actually (for the future capitalist and their servants) to 'order them about' properly, i.e. (ideally) to 'speak to them' in the right way, etc." (2006, p.88). As a result of ideology, the classroom is fraught with power relations; yet the

possibility of oppression between teachers and students is denied. There are well-maintained assumptions and beliefs that classrooms require the authority of the teacher to keep students in check. It is based on the premise that students "must be tightly regulated if they are to do anything productive" and that "external *control* is necessary, and without it, students are unlikely to learn or to act decently" (Kohn, 2006, p.2, *emphasis original*). The origins and impacts of this belief system will be more deeply discussed in the next chapter, but my current point is this; ideology exists in the teaching of moral education and is replicated through practices, whether they are draconian or 'progressive' in nature. A failure to recognise the presence, let alone the role of ideology, is problematic; having the tools to recognize a paradigm and its systemic nature, and further, to evaluate, critique, and creatively choose to move beyond or outside of certain doctrines, is key to recognizing our own morality and realizing our human potential.

In Paulo Freire's ground-breaking work, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, they argue that students face practices that are dehumanizing and that the journey to "becoming more fully complete" as human beings is rooted in resistance (2005, p.44). Freire explains that in order for students to overcome "the situation of oppression, people must first critically recognise its causes so that through transforming action they can create a new situation, one which makes possible the pursuit of a fuller humanity" (2005, p.45). In Donella H. Meadows' work, "Leverage Points: Places to Intervene in a System", this sentiment is echoed when they explain that those who have "managed to intervene in systems at the level of paradigm have hit a leverage point that totally transforms systems" (1999: p.18). Moral education in the mainstream, Western world is hinged on a certain paradigm; my hope is that in providing a convincing argument to

disrupt the general attachment to this archetype there might be a shift. For teachers trying to reconceptualise education, simply modifying an established liberal curriculum based on one's interpretation of the inspiring works of theorists and activists, such as bell hooks or Freire, has unfortunately resulted in the misinterpretation of such works; where some elements of proposed pedagogies become un-interpreted because they do not seem applicable to the mainstream elementary or secondary classroom or reinterpreted by depoliticizing their approach to make it more palatable to prevailing expectations of education. Although Freire, hooks, and others have many ideas for pedagogical change, and even though there are schools that have implemented pedagogies similar to the ones they put forward, contemporary Canadian classrooms reflect certain traditional and progressive approaches to teaching moral education. How does one appeal to mainstream, Canadian teachers to challenge the system? Before we can implement Pedagogies of Resistance, or of empowerment, or for liberation, teachers need to recognize their own subjectivity, the oppressive nature of their role as *the* authority, and their dependency on the control of students. I suggest we begin with what I call a Praxis of 'Letting Go' followed by a three-part approach to Pedagogies of Resistance.

As a classroom teacher and outdoor educator, and as someone who formerly identified as confident that my practice was for the benefit of the young people in my care, I am receptive to the way in which some of the word choices that I have made in this thesis, such as 'oppressed' in regards to students, 'oppressor' in regards to teachers, and of course 'resistance,' may be received. It is common for words such as these to be used in the context of cases of discrimination, such as racism, sexism, classism, etc. There is currently a movement, within teacher education in University faculties

across North America, for educators to confront their roles in hidden curricula and work toward altering practice with the goal of dismantling these aspects of oppression. Although I would like to acknowledge the problem of discrimination, and its many manifestations and impacts, this is not what I will be focusing on here. While, undeniably, some students face more barriers than others, I will be using the concept of oppression to apply to elements of pedagogy, and aspects of practice, that are seemingly benign but with further analysis reveal their dependence upon a dialectic that is dehumanising for both teacher and student. When my selected terms are spoken within the context of my critique of the liberal framework, and in regards to teachers and students, they may be interpreted as 'hostile' or a confrontational use of language. Since these terms connote 'violence,' it has been recommended that I select other words with a softer, less threatening nuance. When my word choices are weighed through a Freirian lens, however, the reasoning behind the use of terms such as these becomes apparent and necessary.

Freire explains that "[a]ny situation in which 'A' objectively exploits 'B' or hinders his and her [*sic*] pursuit of self-affirmation as a responsible person is one of oppression" (2005, p.55). Because oppression is inherently violent, Freire is careful to establish that violence begins with a relationship that is oppressive; one in which a single person has power and the other is effectively inhibited from reaching their full human potential (2005). It is within the liberal paradigm that a myth is maintained surrounding a denial of oppression and the 'violence' of resistance. Freire calls this "the problem of the oppressed consciousness and the oppressor consciousness" (2005, p.55). The student and teacher are each playing a role; the student defers to the assumed knowledge of the

teacher and the teacher maintains control due to the presumed ignorance of the student. It is not often that we hear of a person in a position of power acknowledge the oppression inherent in that power. Power is often rationalized or defended as necessary to protect the weak from themselves. The vilification of words, such as resistance, and the refusal to accept that those of us in positions of power could be oppressors, is a feature of the liberal paradigm. These words are distorted and this is why they can be unsettling but it is also why I, in my attempt to move beyond one paradigm and transform systems, find the word choice of fundamental importance.

The transformation I am proposing begins by recognising and naming oppression in our schools. The common teacher comments above, once deconstructed, say very different things and speak to a moral education that locates the teacher as oppressor and the students as oppressed. Pedagogies of Resistance begin with solidarity; teachers must subvert their own roles because "[s]olidarity requires that one enter into the situation of those with whom one is solidary; it is a radical posture" (Freire, 2005, p.47). Because both students and teachers are "submerged in this situation, and both bear the marks of oppression", teachers rationalize their control and their use of liberal moral education and even efforts to teach resistance often fall victim to the oppressor's "strongly possessive consciousness" (Freire, 2005, p.56). Solidarity is messy and difficult; from the teacher's perspective it is not ideal to share control as we have been taught not to trust students and that we deserve power, not to mention that we experience some benefit from our position (Freire, 2005). It is *not* easy to admit that our position is tyrannical, as Freire explains, "[d]iscovering himself [*sic*] to be an oppressor may cause considerable anguish, but it does not necessarily lead to solidarity with the oppressed" (2005, p.47). However, it *is*

easy to submit to a "false generosity", or occasionally 'letting' students make 'choices' or 'giving' them opportunities to assert themselves (Freire, 2005, p.52). This fallacious offering maintains the teacher's authority and embodies the objectification and oppression of students, rationalising our control over students as necessary because of the false binary of chaos (Freire, 2005). The justification of our role, and our use of control, is supported by the conviction that without our management and direction, our wisdom and our care, students would not make the 'right' choices or act in a way that is virtuous and, rather deprived of our warranted efforts of guidance, the classroom would turn to disorder. Because, according to Freire, "freedom is acquired by conquest and not by gift", teachers cannot liberate students but we can cease to play the role of oppressor (2005, p.45). Teachers can be a part of the transformation but not by forcing change or remaking what it means to be a student. The trick is not to "remain nostalgic towards [our] origins", but rather to resist our roles as moral educators, and the flawed dichotomies and ideologies that uphold them, and become co-intentional educators in solidarity with students because "[t]hose who authentically commit themselves to the people must re-examine themselves constantly" (Freire, 2005, p.58).

In their proposed pedagogy, one that they hoped would liberate the oppressed, Freire explains that their "conviction cannot be packaged and sold; it is reached, rather, by means of a totality of reflection and action" (2005, p.65). The following chapters are an appeal to mainstream, Canadian teachers to scrutinise their own goals and methods, and their relation to a liberal system, which is oppressive and relies on control, and make an effort towards transformation. Pedagogies of Resistance are not for the purpose of liberating students; as I will discuss throughout this thesis, a direct effort to 'give'

freedom or to 'let' students feel empowered undermines these very concepts. Instead, I am writing about a teacher transformation in which teachers come to understand their own subjectivity and the effects of a liberal paradigm on their own philosophy and practice.

I will dedicate the first chapter to an understanding of the liberal paradigm and the ways in which it has constructed moral education to serve its own political purpose; an objective that benefits from, and perhaps even relies upon, the formation of a compliant underclass to serve those in control. Furthering this point, the chapter will discuss the myths and methodologies that lend to the suppression of resistance and the reinforcement of productive power. The Myth of Neutrality, which includes a discussion of how liberal conceptions of the 'good person' are political, and the Myth of Liberal Subjectivity, or the belief that we are autonomous authors of ourselves and of the actions that express our motivations and choices, will lend to the argument that moral education is a tool of political stasis. Exemplifying the problem, I will highlight moral education's focus on binaries (right/wrong, control/chaos) and dependence on absolutes. I will also discuss the use of dissent as a tool of liberal framework; one which gives an illusion of freedom/subjectivity but serves systems of control rather than the oppressed. In this chapter, I hope to show that when moral education is the learned inability to question moral authority it is also a methodology created to serve power and for the perpetuation of liberal systems and its myths.

Following the lead of Meadows, in the second chapter I aim to challenge some of the "great big unstated assumptions - unstated because unnecessary to state -" that are

what constitutes a societal paradigm, "or deepest set of beliefs about how the world works" (Meadows, 1999, p.17). Just how does one challenge a paradigm? Meadows recommends a change to the narrative; firstly, to "keep pointing out the anomalies and failures in the old paradigm" and secondly, "you keep speaking louder and with assurance from the new one" (1999, p.18). I will begin by dismantling 'moral education' as an apparatus of the liberal archetype through a discussion that exposes its focus on control and obedience and in establishing Foucauldian technologies of power and the connections of these aspects to our understanding of morality. I will further problematize the oddities of liberal subjectivity, which will build my argument by illustrating the ways in which students are oppressed, even in 'progressive classrooms.' Finally, because with oppression comes resistance, I will demonstrate how resistance is suppressed, trouble the idea of 'dissent,' and offer some understandings of resistance as positive and creative. By asking why, if resistance is inevitable, it is not taught, I hope to explain why Pedagogies of Resistance can be offered as an alternative to the current ideology and its practices.

If political ideology being taught in schools is unavoidable, and if it is being presented as a moral education of which the philosophical bent is by design denied, what alternative is there? In the final chapter, as a way of shifting minds and concepts of morality away from a liberal framework and towards living as more fully human, I will outline an alternative, a teacher transformation, and explore what shapes Pedagogies of Resistance could take within classroom practice. Freire argues that the road to becoming more 'fully human' is education as liberation (2005); I agree that the world needs 'empowered' people who are subjects, agents of their own conscience, and who carry

with them an awareness that "[s]urely there is no power, no control, no understanding, not even a reason for being, much less acting, in the notion of experience that there is no certainty in any worldview" (Meadows, 1999, p.19). But, to achieve this type of "radical empowerment" for all, teachers must first escape the traps of false dichotomies, such as right or wrong, control or chaos, and explore a new role of solidarity with students (Meadows, 1999, p.19). Rather than continuing to replace each failed attempt at forming morally educated people with a remodelling of prior pedagogy, imagine that a transformation were to take place, one that encompasses a recognition of a paradigmatic structure combined with an effort of resistance. It is my belief that such a shift would lead to an alternative pedagogy taking shape; one in which students are taught about relations of power, their own empowerment as subjects rather than objects, and how to resist. My hope is that this movement would undermine political domination; the idea of being 'good' would be challenged with the idea of upsetting 'The Good' for a moral purpose. My focus in this chapter will be on the revolution and reshaping of the teacher as part of the teaching (Aoki, 1992).

Usually, when I discuss these ideas with other educators, I am met with responses that vary in strength but can lead to an interaction that is defensive and quick to shut out either (or both) the critiques or proposed alternatives. In the final section of their essay, Meadows speaks of a leverage point that they claim is the most imperative when it comes to shifting a paradigm; they write, "to keep oneself unattached in the arena of paradigms, to stay flexible, to realize that *no* paradigm is 'true'... is to 'get' at a gut level the paradigm that there are paradigms, and to see that that itself is a paradigm, and to regard that whole realization as devastatingly funny" (1999, p.19). So, to those readers who

have been thinking that my critique of the liberal paradigm so far is 'obvious,' or that it is already abundantly clear to you that education is a tool of the state created to produce docility in people and so clearly does not impact the greater 'good,' please read on; it is my intention to give a very specific critique that can be used to focus and inform Pedagogies of Resistance.

When I discuss this work, another common response from educators has been this; "I am a progressive teacher, I already *let* my students…." This is followed by a list of ways in which they are giving their students control over certain aspects of the classroom. Most of the time, the list in and of itself is problematic and laced with the pitfalls of the liberal paradigm. The 'progressive' movement, and its seemingly good intentions and somewhat subversive practices, is still a product of the liberal framework. After all, if the progressive tactics listed to me in response to my call for teacher transformation and Pedagogies of Resistance were the answer, an alternative already in action, I would have no reason to propose such changes; there would already be little rebels running around the planet and an oppressive ideology would no longer be a problem. But, as Meadows notes, "[p]eople who cling to paradigms (just about all of us) take one look at the specious possibility that everything they think is guaranteed to be nonsense and pedal rapidly in the opposite direction" (1999, p.19). What would happen if we stopped pedaling, simply opened our minds to "Not Knowing", and welcomed a desire to discover (Meadows, 1999, p.19)? Audre Lorde states that "[t]he master's tools will never dismantle the master's house"; I agree and hope to demonstrate Lorde's point, in the following chapters, in a discussion surrounding dissent as a tool of liberal moral education (1984, p.110). Although I am calling for the relinquishing of these systemic

apparatuses, I maintain that a deep understanding of the oppressive tools of the liberal paradigm, and what I call 'moral education,' is a necessary place to begin, followed by a Praxis of 'Letting Go,' and an effort to model and teach resistance.

If the thought of teaching students to resist brings up concerns of anarchy, chaos, and a lack of morality, please be advised that Pedagogies of Resistance are not just for the empowerment of students, but for all of us. I intend to address these concerns and more; through a deconstruction of a system, many of these objections will become clearly tied to a way of thinking that is distinctly a manifest of the liberal framework. This is also why it is so difficult to imagine an alternative and put it into practice. Freire warns about the teacher "who proclaims devotion to the cause of liberation yet is unable to enter into *communion* with the people [read students], whom he or she [*sic*] continues to regard as totally ignorant"; it is this gap between theory and practice that Freire understands to be "grievously self-deceived" (2005, p.59). In my own practice, as an educator and as a parent, I am often left without any idea of how to proceed outside of what I have known; I was raised on praise and often fall prey to a conventional way of thinking. But, I am teaching myself to resist, and I am learning to be open to self-examination and surrender, I am becoming aware of the dangers of "false generosity" and my aching need to be "the executor of transformation"; sometimes, the best way to learn something is to teach others (Freire, 2005, p.42/58). Or, perhaps my experience can be the teaching? My hope is that this thesis will be learning in action for both researcher and educator.

- Chapter One -

I Will Not Apologise

When a paradigm is questioned, when its ideology is analysed and its goals and rules are exposed, or its 'leverage points' are revealed, a common reaction from those who subscribe to its philosophy and steadily practice in a way that supports its structure is one of upset and often denial. Donella Meadows explains that this common refutation is part of the strength of the system; complex systems are "counterintuitive", which is why "when we do discover the system's leverage points, hardly anybody will believe us" (Meadows, 1999, p.2). In this chapter, to begin the first step in an appeal to Canadian, mainstream educators to abandon moral education, as it is constructed within a liberal paradigm, I will explore its structure through an analysis of its myths and their corresponding methodologies. Some of the information may seem startling, or difficult to believe, but unlike in the Socratic dialogue to be discussed later in the chapter, I will not apologise for the disruption.

Within the context of this thesis, I will refer to the liberal paradigm, framework, or ideology; Meadows says that "[p]aradigms are the sources of systems" and the liberal paradigm is the source of a system that I would like to address in this work (1999, p.18). Liberalism often evokes thoughts of liberal economics, such as capitalism and the "control of property and profit-making [through the] coercive power exercised by states" (Mann, 2013, p.47-48). The liberal framework, or "the shared idea in the mind of society" that represents liberalism here, may influence and support economic rules and

goals, but in this thesis I am speaking specifically to a concept of the individual and how liberalism theorises one's relationship to society through the belief that 'freedom' and autonomy are attainable goals that, when upheld as ideal, will positively impact society, or the group of people to which we belong (Meadows, 1999, p.17). Liberal concepts of freedom, such as the autonomous individual who is concerned with a free and egalitarian 'state,' influences the goals and rules to which people subscribe and expect as well as what is passed on to youth. Again, Meadows explains that the "ancient Egyptians built pyramids because they believed in an afterlife. We build skyscrapers because we believe that space in downtown cities is enormously valuable" and, as I will argue, we teach a certain type of moral education because we believe that it will support freedom, which is essential for what the liberal framework tells us is the common good (Meadows, 1999, p.18). Paradigms rely on systems to make complexity seem clear; among those who are indoctrinated into a liberal ideology, the relationship between the individual, society, and freedom is explicit and uncomplicated. This intuitive understanding of 'freedom,' when considered within a system and examined for its coded goals and unintuitive messages is revealed as control in disguise. Karl Polanyi, a Hungarian-American Economist, speaks to this when they write, regarding the liberal subject,

> He resigns himself, in our time, to the reality of society which means the end of that freedom … Uncomplaining acceptance of the reality of society gives man indomitable courage and strength to remove all removable injustice and unfreedom. As long as he is true to his task of creating more abundant freedom for all, he need not fear that either power or planning will turn against him and destroy the freedom he is building by their instrumentality. This is the meaning of freedom in a complex society; it gives us all the certainty we need. [sic] (Polanyi, 2001, p.268)

Moral education within a liberal paradigm teaches us how to support certain concepts of freedom with the certainty that it is 'right' and with the belief that it is our duty to

maintain that 'freedom.' The paradigmatic narrative is that we are moral when we put freedom for all, or society, before our own preferences. Moral education is the effort to pass on these beliefs as well as the means to achieve them; but through a close examination of the myths of liberal moral education it becomes unsettlingly clear that we are teaching our students compliance through a veiled mandate of control.

The question of whether moral education works to achieve what we believe it sets out to accomplish is debatable. Our efforts to teach the new generation how to be 'good' with the hope that our society will come to reflect their morality, and so that we may all move closer to attaining a paradigmatic goal, are ongoing. Philosophers of education, politicians, teachers, parents, and countless others continue to respond to the failures of moral education with 'new' or modified products and practices that they hope will succeed. In this chapter, I intend to show the ways in which each revision of moral education is based on the same myths and that these myths serve the dominance of the liberal framework. Indoctrination by these myths, which this chapter will outline and illustrate by example, is part of a systemic effort to both justify liberal ends and its means. Moral education becomes the tool that both supports and maintains an oppressive system; one that must even, or especially, control those who question its legitimacy.

Over the next few sections, I will explore more deeply the Myth of Necessity, the Myth of Neutrality, the Myth of Liberal Subjectivity, and the Myth of 'The Good,' and demonstrate the ways in which each is shaped as well as upheld by the Myth of Dissent. Beginning with the Myth of Necessity, which disseminates a belief that moral education is required and not only insists that morality is something that demands to be

taught/learned, but also nurtures a belief that the alternative is dangerous. The Myth of Neutrality exists so that the objectives of moral education remain unquestioned; it touts this brand of morality as non-political and rather 'natural' or 'universal.' The problems that come of denying political influence in ideology, namely the presence of power and oppression, will be examined within this myth. The Myth of Liberal Subjectivity encompasses the belief that we are autonomous authors of our own lives and of the actions that express our motivations and choices. Within this myth there is a maintained impression that because of our supposed autonomy, and our capacity for selecting a possible course of action, 'oppression' cannot really be a problem. Accompanying Liberal Subjectivity are also problems surrounding 'choice' and 'reason'; can we choose and reason without acknowledging paradigms?

What course of action we 'choose' is influenced by the Myth of 'The Good'; for the purpose of this work, I would like to use the term 'The Good' within a liberal context and argue that 'freedom,' the meaning of which is also arguably influenced by subjective understandings, is the ultimate end propagated within the paradigm. As mentioned earlier, freedom is only a subterfuge; control is the actual goal and the Myth of 'The Good' is a means towards this end. As discussed in the introduction, within liberal moral education 'The Good,' 'The Right,' and virtue are all susceptible to being called 'good.' Often, the moral 'good,' as I will often refer to here, includes the means (reasoning and determining what is 'right,' as well as acting 'virtuous') and the ends. Dewey remarks that in an effort to reach 'The Good,' people "strive to attain certain goals because they believe that these ends have an intrinsic value of their own; they are *good*, satisfactory" (1936, p.25). What is understood to be 'good' or 'The Good' is still upheld by systemic

notions and this leads to a discussion of 'universalism' and the possibility of paradigmatic control. Lawrence Kohlberg, an American psychologist best known for their theory of the stages of moral development, will be examined in the deconstruction of the way in which one might determine between two competing 'goods,' or versions of what is 'right,' which necessarily implies that *one* idea of what is 'good' or 'right' is supreme (1981/1984). The false political neutrality of this idea of universalism will be discussed to further discredit the Myth of 'The Good.'

Finally, the myth that supports all other myths, and the buttress supporting the ever-important liberal ideal of justice, is the Myth of Dissent. If something is not believed to be right it may be questioned in an appropriate manner and, essential to this device of the liberal framework, the result will be justice; what is 'right' will be triumphant. In an effort to culminate all of the outlined functional Myths of Moral Education, and demonstrate the way in which they are continually called upon to maintain the liberal system's dominance and preserve its design, I will invoke the ancient words of Socrates. Plato's *Crito* and *The Apology* exhibit a liberal narrative in which a mythology is employed to maintain control, under a guise of preserving a common good, and keep those who may upset the good or dissent within parameters that continue to support the system.

It is important to note that, for the purpose of this thesis, I will be referring to dissent as Graham McDonough, in their paper entitled "Why Dissent is a Vital Concept in Moral Education", defines it (2010). McDonough defends their word choice when they show how terms such as contestation, opposition, and resistance fail to articulate the

idea of "loyal disagreement" or "a kind of non-conformity" or "sitting apart" from prevailing opinion (2010, p.424). The author is careful to place a dissident, or "*immanent* critic", in opposition to what they call a "*rejectionist* critic" (Walzer, 1988, as cited by McDonough, 2010, p.424). The former places their efforts to improve an element of a system "within its existing structure and assumes that the material with which to fashion an improvement is already present, although it may be dormant" (McDonough, 2010, p.424). The latter critic type, that one might associate with my preferred approach of *resistance* and therefore label a rebel, diverges from the modus operandi representative of the system because they regard the goals and the structures upholding the paradigm, as well as the paradigm itself, as problematic and would lean towards abandonment over attempting to improve something they understand as "irrevocably tainted and incapable of improvement" (McDonough, 2010, p.424). The stance of immanent critic requires a sense of belonging; one must be part of the group with which the disagreement is held; in order to express a different opinion one has to participate in the paradigm. This stance necessarily dismisses any alternative and manifests a false binary of dissent/resistance in which only dissent is acceptable. I intend to explore the oppressive aspects of dissent against the aims of the liberal framework and in the conclusion of my analysis of the myth I will assess whether Socrates could be considered a dissident or a rebel, which will further the definitions of both concepts in this thesis.

The Myth of Necessity

The *Myth of Necessity* is the story of our fundamental need for moral education; this myth is used to maintain the belief that humans need to be taught how to be 'moral.' By 'moral,' I am speaking to a type of decision-making, reasoning, judgment,

and action that produces what is thought of as people who act virtuously and, through moral reasoning, choose 'The Right,' for the purpose of attaining 'The Good.' Because, within a liberal paradigm there is a societal need to produce people who perform in a 'moral' way in order to support a moral and free society, which is often considered 'The Good,' those who are educated to morally reason and understand what constitutes as 'virtue' will theoretically behave as 'good people' (Straughan, 1994). In addition, the myth purports that without moral education humans would be immoral because we are naturally flawed, selfish and cruel, and our conscience needs to be trained-up in order to properly function in society. The myth is often accompanied by the idea that there is a tie between a 'good' person and an ideal society; we cannot have one without the other, so we *must* teach moral education so that the next generation will participate in life and society in a virtuous way. Dwight Boyd argues that this narrative, which is inherent to the liberal framework, is problematic because it conflates the qualities of an exemplary *citizen* and the ideal attributes of a moral *person* (2010). Boyd identifies that this approach, combined with a universalization of what characteristics of a citizen/person are considered virtuous, results in a "cancerous relationship for a liberal democracy" (2010, p.386). The role of *Necessity*, and its correspondence to a list approach to teaching morality, such as Aristotle's 'Doctrine of the Mean' or Lickona's list of virtues, is dependent upon the belief that certain moral lessons are necessary and without them humans will be immoral *and* citizens will fail to participate in the creation and maintaining of a moral society (Lickona, 2011a). As Boyd points out, a "failure to exhibit appropriate epistemological humility in conceptualizing character education is tantamount to disenfranchising a significant portion of the body politic by letting some citizens' views of what constitutes the 'correct' interpretation of the 'good person'

override those of others" (2010, p.386). The myth ignores positionality,[5] but also makes the argument that people should be moral for the benefit of society rather than for the sake of morality or any intrinsic benefits that may accompany acting with virtue or reasoning through right actions.

In Plato's *Republic*, Socrates speaks to the need for moral education because it will produce people with better "natures" than the previous generation and that this, in turn, will support a better society (*Plat. Rep.* IV, 424a). For Socrates, the virtue of the people reflects on the city and informs the virtue of the city; they equate morality with citizenship when they remark that "the just man [sic] will not be any different from the just city with respect to the form itself of justice, but will be like it" (*Plat. Rep.* IV, 435a). This suggests that a person must be virtuous *for* the city and not for the sake of their own humanity or intrinsic benefit; because morality is necessary in service to society, morality is defined by the needs of society. The Myth of Necessity is also supported by Aristotle, where in the *Nicomachean Ethics* they explain that the young, and here they understand there to be "no difference whether [one] is young in years or youthful in character", need to be educated to be virtuous and moral (*EN* 1:3). Morality, and its related virtues, necessitate teaching because the young lack self-control, are ruled by their passion, and show an inadequacy in life experience which impacts their capability to reason, or to choose 'The Right' (*EN* 1:3). Because Aristotle believed that morality was not developed

[5] I am using the term 'positionality' in the same spirit as Maher and Tetreault, meaning "the idea of positionality, in which people are defined not in terms of fixed identities, but by their location within shifting networks of relationships, which can be analyzed and changed" (2001, p.164) and in terms of Takacs's analysis of the way in which positionality should be understood in practice, where they explain that "understanding positionality means understanding where you stand with respect to power, an essential skill for social change agents. From this understanding, we have a standpoint from which to challenge power and change ourselves" (2002, p.169).

by nature but through habit, "by doing just actions we come to be just", much like one learns to play a musical instrument by practicing, it was important to inculcate *citizens* with virtues and a moral education "straight from childhood" (*EN* 2:1 & 2:2). Like Socrates, the motive for producing 'good people' in the *Nicomachean Ethics* is for the benefit of society; Aristotle explains that "[t]hough it is worthwhile to attain the end merely for one man [sic], it is finer and more godlike to attain it for a nation or for city-states" (*EN* 1:3). The message is that moral education is necessary for society.

It was not only the Ancient Greeks who argued the young needed moral guidance. Dewey subscribed to the belief that moral education behooves being taught. When assessing the question of why to teach moral education, Dewey asserts that because human beings are "born immature, helpless, without language, beliefs, ideas, or social standards", the newborn does not possess a sense of morality (1916/2001, p.6). This implies that people are not naturally virtuous, which thus necessitates being educated in the subject, but Dewey also argued that youth must be taught social values while being habituated to earnestly support them with personal disposition and moral actions (1916/2001). Dewey regarded education as the bridge that "spans the gap" between a society's principles and needs *and* the individual's knowledge of 'The Good' (1916/2001, p.7). Once again, the line between person and citizen becomes indistinct; is it necessary to teach people to be moral because they lack an understanding of virtue and moral reasoning, and these skills will help them in attaining 'The Good,' *or* is it for the purpose of producing citizens that support an ideal state? If, as Dewey writes, "what is learned and employed in an occupation having an aim and involving cooperation with

others is moral knowledge" then, learning to participate in a democratic society as a citizen *is* learning to act with a moral disposition as a *person* (Dewey, 2001, p.363).

When Socrates, Aristotle, and Dewey contend that moral education is necessary, they are not only arguing that people must be taught to be virtuous, and conform to 'The Right,' or, in the contemporary sense, to be 'good.' An accompanying hidden subtext in this message is a call for social indoctrination. The reason that the Myth of Necessity is, initially, so palatable is because it presents a problem that threatens our potential for attaining 'The Good' while at the same time recommending a solution of moral education. It is uncommon to question what is meant by 'The Good,' what is regarded as a societal betterment, or who benefits from this 'development,' and this is a stark indication of the deep roots of a liberal paradigm. Another problematic element within this myth is its distraction from the real efforts of moral education; the goal is not up for discussion but rather assumed to be collective. There is no proof required for the 'problem' of immorality or for whether or not the solution of teaching a certain brand of morality will accomplish its aim or purpose. The urgent call for moral education's necessity is difficult to critique because it is coded within a paradigm; intuitively, it seems strange to negatively appraise efforts to teach people to be better than they are without intervention. This myth teaches those within the system that moral education is necessary because without it individuals will remain 'immoral,' which in turn will negatively impact society; the people must know the rules, and how to follow them, to promote harmony and the best possible community. The narrative does not leave room for a discussion of the legitimacy of moral education's necessity; within the liberal framework the existence of 'immorality' despite continuous indoctrination into liberal

moral education does not stir up calls for the abandonment of moral education. If the same line of reasoning were to be applied to a headache that when treated with loud noise continued and even worsened, would it be reasonable to continue using the same noise, but perhaps just changing its volume to be softer or even louder, because headaches had always been treated this way and there was no conceivable alternative? Despite generation after generation attempting to pass on moral education to its progeny for a better and more moral society, moral education's efficacy remains unquestioned and instead the response to its failure is a call for an increase or broadening of its teachings.

The lesson liberal moral education hopes to teach is that indoctrination is *always* necessary and that society's principles and rules must be taught in a certain way in order to avoid slipping into chaos. In service to the liberal paradigm, we are beholden to moral education by the purported risk of falling into uncontrolled chaos; within this myth moral education is necessary, and a service to society, because it is what keeps us 'moral,' 'good,' and 'just.' This false dichotomy of control or chaos also aids in the justification of obedience; it is necessary to be 'good' for the benefit of society. Any disobedience of truths we are necessarily indoctrinated to believe and follow must be avoided; any disagreement must be made in an appropriate way so as to avoid upsetting the system.

The Myth of Neutrality

The link between the individual and society is made in the Myth of Necessity, which demonstrates the political nature of teaching morality. Strangely, an important feature in support of a liberal paradigm is the perceived distance between politics and morality; the Myth of Neutrality is in service to this belief. Although the previous myth

acknowledges that humans are not inborn with knowledge of morality, but rather that it must be taught, the story is cut short and consequently the manufacturing of moral standards and questions of who decides what is 'good' or 'moral' is not part of the narrative. The function of the Myth of Neutrality is to distract people from the 'man behind the curtain,' or the liberal paradigm's focus on control, which is hypocrisy when moral education claims to be a means to 'The Good'. The Myth insists that moral education is politically neutral, or when there is an undeniable political leaning that it is part of a universal understanding of what is right or a 'natural' sense of justice. We are told that the truest form of morality is beyond politics so that issues of power, and the question of who benefits, does not arise. The separation of moral education and politics, and the way in which its neutrality functions as a front, places a focus on goodness while working to conceal the paradigm's need for compliance. Neutrality as 'universalism' maintains an interdependence between individual and society, which means that it is difficult to disagree or resist with the principles that are used to make claims that certain views of morality are innate to all (Kohlberg, 1984).

The process of depoliticizing moral education in support of advancing liberal goals of control and compliance is evident in the *Nicomachean Ethics*. Aristotle acknowledges the political nature of morality yet the question of where power lies, and to whose benefit a politically determined morality would be, is not discussed or even acknowledged as possibly problematic. The virtues listed in Aristotle's work, which as stated before are not innate and must be taught, are up for interpretation and require reason; although reason and autonomy are also influenced by a liberal framework, as will be discussed under the Myth of Liberal Subjectivity, Aristotle contends that each

individual is responsible for using their reason. The difficulty with this ideology being that without a discussion of power, and under the guise of neutrality, the cultural reference point from which we reason, and our paradigmatic indoctrination, limits or influences our moral perception and judgement. As the philosopher notes, the right action must conform to reason and one cannot reason without being raised in the right habits; "[i]t makes no small difference, then, whether we form habits of one kind or of another from our very youth; it makes a very great difference, or rather all the difference" (*EN* 2:1). Because the specific attributes in a list approach to teaching virtues in moral education, such as Aristotle's 'Doctrine of the Mean,' are intentionally ambiguous, and the correct translation of the virtues into right actions requires a proper understanding of the cultural and social implications, or consequences of one's decisions, the list itself is political.

The question arises; who decides what is the right habit, or right action, or what virtues are to be included on a list, and how should the rather vague terms be understood? Alasdair MacIntyre explains that this debate is not allowed to occur; with any variant from the mainstream culture, or the group with power, any questioning of what stands as 'right,' virtuous, or moral, is met with backlash (1981/2013). They write, "the conditions of contemporary public debate are such that when the representative voices of those subcultures try to participate in it, they are all too easily interpreted and misinterpreted in terms of the pluralism which threatens to submerge us all" (MacIntyre, 1981/2013, p.226). Giving up the monopoly on moral interpretation and cultural indoctrination, which is encompassed within paradigmatic inculcation, would be a relinquishing of control that is counter to the design of the liberal paradigm. Both "the

concept of narrative unity and the concept of a practice" must be maintained and if moral education was anything but politically neutral there would be an invitation to debate its qualities; because it is mythologized as 'natural' and 'universal' there is no dispute as to its origins or purposes (MacIntyre, 1981/2013, p.226)

The problem remains that a catalogue of character traits, akin to what the *Nicomachean Ethics* elucidates, originates from a cultural viewpoint and is therefore unavoidably political. A list of virtues, or any method being used to politicize moral reasoning and what is defined as 'good,' is made to serve one group over another. On the 'non-political' surface, Aristotle's moral instructions are aimed at an intrinsic purpose; the attainment of happiness for humanity. But, underneath the Myth of Neutrality, moral education seems more concerned with the regulation of behaviours and actions for the purpose of maintaining prevailing power through a 'moral society.'

Kohlberg criticized the use of the "bag of virtues" approach to teaching morality precisely because virtues are subject to being value-laden and defined "in terms of the praise and blame of others", resulting in moral reasoning taking the judgements of others into account rather than the actual ethical dilemma (1981, p.33 & 35). Although they understood the teaching of morality to the young as necessary, the school in particular as "an institution with a basic function of maintaining and transmitting of some, but not all, the consensual values of society", Kohlberg was specific in their discernment of what constituted the moral values of a society (1981, p.37). They explain that the values most paramount to a society, and most necessary to point out to students, are the principles or ideals of justice (Kohlberg, 1981). Moreover, for Kohlberg justice is neutral because it is

not based on "correct opinion or acceptance of conventional beliefs" (1981, p.30). For Kohlberg, "regardless of climate or culture" there is *one* ideal form of justice and a "sense of justice" is the element that most expresses true moral leadership (1981, p.30/38). Kohlberg's empirical evidence showed that on the scale of the six stages of moral development, the higher people reasoned the more subjects agreed on what constituted the most moral judgement and action; for Kohlberg, this was an indication of moral leadership and moral universalism (1984). This means that, "in addition to defining moral action as relative to the subject's own judgement and as a function of consistency between action and judgement, we also explore a more universal approach to defining moral action" (Kohlberg, 1984, p.259). Kohlberg, unlike Aristotle, claimed that as a researcher they were not describing what is or is not moral but rather that the conformity of the subjects to the same kind of reasoning was interpreted as the deciding factor in what is considered universally moral (1984). Further, they explain that the subjects were across cultures and societies, dispelling relativism, or the belief that moral judgements differ from culture to culture, and further supporting the concept of 'moral universalism' (Kohlberg, 1984).

There are three problems that I have identified with the concept of moral universalism; first, according to Kohlberg moral universalism best applies to those in the highest stages of moral reasoning (1984).[6] According to their theory, people in these more advanced stages understand at a post-conventional level, or beyond cultural or political affiliations, that individuals are distinct entities from society; and in the case that

[6] Kohlberg sought to prove the universality of the six stage model, so that the moral principles found in Stage VI and the approximations leading up to it (Stages I through V) would correspond (1981/1984).

a rule is inconsistent with their own moral judgements, they may reason to be disobedient to the law but not to moral principles (1984). Moral education in mainstream, Canadian classrooms, as will be further demonstrated in chapter two, misinterprets and misapplies 'universalism.' We cannot be separated from our socialisation but we can be taught to acknowledge it and to question it. Rather than being taught that political and social understandings are to be avoided in order to reach what is thought to be pure moral standards, which reflects liberal concepts of political neutrality and the maintaining of the status quo, I would like to propose an alternative. Perhaps taking an approach that seeks to understand, recognise, and critique the political and social qualities of what might be considered 'right' judgement, 'virtuous' actions, and goals of 'The Good' would enhance the abilities of students to navigate dilemmas that are often political in nature.

Secondly, if morality must be taught, it is not innate; if morality were inborn it would not be necessary to inculcate the young. Yet Kohlberg, and others noted earlier in this chapter, argue that we must teach moral reasoning (1981). Kohlberg also speaks to the need for those who teach morality to be specially trained and questions the soundness of the age-old assumption that one can be qualified to teach morality simply by virtue of being a respectable adult (1981). How can our understanding of morality be universal if it is not innate and demands the skills of a teacher who is knowledgeable in a way that is beyond mere repute? Also, if morality necessitates teaching it is subject to the risk of being socially influenced and potentially political in quality. Much like Aristotle, Kohlberg acknowledges the political connection to moral education, even saying that "a

genuine concern about the growth of justice[7] in the child implies a similar concern for the growth of justice in the society" (Kohlberg, 1981, p.37). And third, as a liberal paradigm crosses cultural boundaries, there are people belonging to cultures and belief systems, even those who may consider themselves separate from Westernized thinking, that are being conditioned to support its goals and upholds its structure. An example would be the belief in working hard to attain reward or notion that regards the use of punishment as a service to justice. Kohlberg writes, "[t]he distinctive feature of moral education as against ordinary political action is in the relation of means and ends" (1981, p.38). Universalism, or the belief that cross-culturally people will consistently choose the same representations of 'morality,' or conform to the same moral rules, betrays liberal goals. If the ends to be reached are conformity and compliance to the mean, is the means to be understood as moral reasoning or right interpretation of norms and internalization of rules? Kohlberg agrees that - and this is evidenced by their descriptions of the first four levels of moral reasoning - for those functioning at the lower stages, reflecting socialised norms is a measure of one's ability to know what is considered 'right' (1984). I would argue that Kohlberg's 'moral universalism,' and the Myth of Neutrality, insist on liberal ends; a rejection of pluralism and the maintenance of power of one group over another. Kohlberg insists "he [sic]who knows the good chooses the good" [8] and that "concepts of the good are universal", therefore implying absolutes (1981, p.30/40). Power must be considered when there is reliance on absolutes; who decides what is right and whom justice serves?

[7] When Kohlberg says 'justice' they are referring to an ideal form of virtue and knowledge of 'The Right' (moral understanding) (1981).
[8] When Kohlberg speaks of 'the good' in this sense, in connection with what is morally 'right,' they are referring to 'The Right.' When one knows what is right, and just, one will opt for that choice.

A liberal paradigm benefits from the use of absolutes as the impression of one 'right' and one 'wrong' lends to the development of an 'authority' and with it power. Although in the second chapter I will go into depth as to how each Myth of Moral Education interacts with power, before I go any further I would like to insert a note on what I mean by 'power' and related concepts, as well as introduce a Foucauldian framework. For the most part, I will not be using the term 'power' in the mainstream sense of sovereignty, describing control and authority and the way in which it is exercised from a sovereign origin; mostly, I will refer to power with a discernment of 'productive power' or 'bio-power,' which is associated with influential French philosopher, Michel Foucault (1975). These two concepts of power differ because, "on Foucault's account, power, as a relationship between various groups and individuals, produces forms of social life, including the individual subject" (Mann, 2013, p.48, *17*). In their most notable work, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, Foucault details their theories of power and its relations to social control and resistance (1975). For Foucault, sovereign power is in relation to obedience to the law or a central authority figure and on the other side of the coin is productive power (1975). Foucault argues that, when it comes to discussions of control and resistance, productive power is the more applicable of the two; the latter is immaterial, without origin, and cannot be possessed or owned, given or taken (1975). Alternatively, Foucault contends that "power circulates; it exists only when put into action… reaches the very grain of individuals… and inserts itself into their actions and attitudes, their discourse, learning processes, and everyday lives" (1975, p.201). Power influences our understanding of our own

subjectivity, our understandings of 'normal,' our judgements, our sense of morality, and so much more. As Foucault puts it,

> The judges of normality are present everywhere. We are in the society of the teacher-judge, the doctor-judge, the educator-judge, the 'social-worker'-judge; it is on them that the universal reign of the normative is based; and each individual, wherever he may find himself, subjects to it his body, his gestures, his behaviour, his aptitudes, his achievements [sic]. (Foucault, 1975, p.308)

It is here, that I would like to point out Foucault's use of the word 'universal' and draw us back to the current argument that surrounds the Myth of Neutrality. Kohlberg argues that it is the consistency between cultures in moral reasoning that proves moral universalism but rather than universalism being dependent upon 'culture' perhaps it is dependent on the paradigm. For example, 'cannibalism is considered moral within a certain culture, therefore to say cannibalism is moral' is to espouse a relativist point of view, relativism being in conflict with universalism, which is post-conventional or beyond a cultural point of view: But to say that the belief that life is more valuable than property is above convention and not founded on tradition still does not consider its relation to a paradigm. Saying that something is without political influence, and universal in nature, is to ignore the impact of socialisation and the role of productive power; on this view it is to overlook the possibility that these 'universal' concepts exist within a paradigm. The Myth of Neutrality makes it difficult to resist the idea of moral universalism because it depends on absolutes and internalized norms, which serves a liberal agenda. Across cultures, but within a liberal paradigm, there are many judges, including the judges within each of us, and as Kohlberg says moral action is influenced by differences in the way that concepts of duty influence choice and "through judgements

of responsibility"; perhaps it is those who have been best indoctrinated into a system who are able to understand its rules in the most useful way (1984, p.259).

The Myth of Liberal Subjectivity

If we return to Aristotle, and their Doctrine of the Mean, a virtuous person is one who, being immersed and ingrained into a social context through their moral education, becomes naturally inclined to practice "a state of character concerned with choice" and displays a reliable, self-monitored compliance to the "mean" choice as opposed to "a mean of excess and deficiency, nor excess and deficiency of a mean" (*EN* 2:6). Conformity to the mean, or what is considered right and virtuous, aids the individual in leading a moral life and avoiding wrong. Being a moral person is having the disposition to act in a certain way; the individual acts must comply with the code of conduct accepted by the citizen. Liberal Subjectivity is about the autonomy of the individual and each person's ability to choose to participate in society by being a moral citizen. 'Right' actions propel us towards 'The Good' and therefore, as autonomous authors of our lives, we should be motivated to right the wrongs that we face.

Kohlberg finds that deeply embedded in Western philosophic tradition is a "Socratic faith in the power of the rational good", which is balanced and analytical rather than influenced by outside forces (1981, p.29). In other words, an understanding of what is 'right' comes from reason and 'right' is a neutral quality based on a fair-minded rationality (1981). Kohlberg relies on reason as essential and foundational to the ability to enter the higher moral stages (1984). Liberal subjectivity leads us to believe that we have choice, and that we can use reason to choose 'The Right,' but in consideration of

Foucauldian "technologies of power" and "technologies of the self" the role of normalization in our understanding and decision-making must be acknowledged for its impact on liberal concepts of 'reason' and 'subjectivity' (Foucault, 1988). According to Foucault, 'technologies of power' through authority over conduct results in "an objectivising of the subject"; this type of domination assists in developing within objectivised individuals the acquiring of certain skills and attitudes (Foucault, 1988). We, as individuals, are responsible for using our reason, but due to our political and paradigmatic indoctrination our moral perceptions and judgments are limited by internalised norms, discipline, and self-surveillance (Foucault, 1975). When the individual is normalized to be accountable to a set of moral recommendations for conduct, there is an illusion of choice under the guise of reason. This contrived and artificial 'choice' is based on the belief that our moral reasoning is not influenced by outside factors, such as political indoctrination, paradigmatic goals, power or control.

Aristotle argues that the 'Doctrine of the Mean,' and its corresponding list of virtues and vices, does not prescribe explicit ways in which to act, or how to handle specific scenarios, but rather leaves the choice of conduct up to the individual and their ability to reason. Aristotle argues that once virtue has been learned through habitual experiences in society, or socialisation, the honourable person will act with prudence, or reason, to determine what is the correct choice and rule out improper options. This is problematic when one does not acknowledge the political nature of socialization, its impact on reason, and reason's influence on interpretation. For example, if an individual were indoctrinated into a society that supports slavery, as Aristotle was, and learned a list of virtues that included obedience, would it not be difficult to use reason to choose a right

action that contradicts bondage? The contradictory action would be disobedient to the society and therefore not virtuous; on the contrary, the support of slavery and the obedience of those who are enslaved would be virtuous actions when considering the doctrine, the list, and the society. This suggests that, regardless of whether there are prescribed outlines on how to behave, the individual faces a lack of choice because of the inherent expectations of conformity.

The liberal framework's function of teaching youth a sense of morality is to conform their 'reason' to make the right 'choices'; this is motivated by a need for cultural stability and maintaining support of a prevailing authority. The focus appears to be on the betterment of society yet the burden of virtue rests solely on the individual; under the Myth of Liberal Subjectivity the 'vice' of society, or those actions and judgments that are contrary to systemic goals, is due to the choices made by discrete persons as opposed to groups or societies as a whole. This reliance on the neutrality of ideology, and the fabricated 'freedom' and 'autonomy' of the individual, leads to a lack of discussion surrounding the possibility of limitations or failings within the social order, policies, or the authority of ruling groups.

The Myth of Liberal Subjectivity also fails to consider oppression; there appears to be a discernible denial of the constraints on some individuals by the myth's simplification of individual choice such as the assumption that subjugations are to be overcome through just and moral action on one's own behalf. Productive power, and the way in which choice is limited by socialisation and its normative impact, is ignored for the more palatable belief in autonomous resolve; what is 'right,' as well as what is

'choice,' is manufactured by liberal understandings of the 'subject' and therefore moral reasoning within the paradigm supports productive power, even when the impact on an individual has potential to be negative. The Myth of Liberal Subjectivity teaches that the decision making of an individual is autonomous, and we are in control of our own destiny. Therefore, oppression is not a real factor according to this myth because all people, regardless of their social position, can morally reason and choose their way out of oppression. This myth relies on the premise that power is not a factor and that there are not any vulnerable people in existence; or if there are, those with power made individual choices to attain dominance and those who are without influence only have to make the right choices as moral participants in society and they will rise up. This myth is reflected in the tale of the person who made 'poor choices' and ended up collecting a cheque for income assistance; the message being that the welfare recipient has only to blame their own autonomous actions and it will be their own efforts that determines whether or not they escape from poverty. The myth is that the individual, not society, is most responsible for their situation and has the power to make change. The goal of liberal moral education is to take the individual and create a moral person participating in a social, and socially acceptable, way; the choices made in service to maintaining power, and other liberal goals, are promoted as positive moral judgements and actions. Clearly, the message of the Myth of Liberal Subjectivity is that the most moral will reap the most benefits; according to this myth, it has nothing to do whatsoever with productive power.

The Myth of 'The Good'

As discussed earlier, the ideology behind a liberal definition of 'The Good' has to do with means and ends; the means being what is found to be 'virtuous' and 'right' and

the ends being control over the many by the few under the pretence of 'freedom' for all. The Myth of 'The Good' is what is used to maintain systemic goals as it is based on the belief that we should be guided to attain one specific ideal, one end, and that it is achieved by the ability to judge what is 'right' and by acting with virtue, such as being dutiful or just. The way in which 'The Good' is defined, and who defines it, carries with it an accompanying lesson of binaries and absolutes that make questioning moral authority unreasonable. Scholars such as Kohlberg argue that what is believed to be 'right' and 'virtuous' is based on universal moral principles. The liberal narrative that what is 'right' is always right and, consequently, what is wrong is always wrong, is complicated by political neutrality; Kohlberg's appeal for universalism is not politically neutral but complicated by productive power.

In an effort to examine justice as a moral principle that is post-conventional, Kohlberg employs Martin Luther King's *Letter from a Birmingham Jail*, which argues that "[a]n unjust law is a code that a numerical or power majority group compels a minority group to obey but does not make binding on itself" (as cited by Kohlberg, 1981, p.43). Kohlberg agrees with King, and objects to an idea of justice that relies on sovereign power; the liberal framework is aware that unjust laws often support those in power to maintain their authority (1981). When there is a difference in power, and here I am speaking of prevailing sovereign power or the strength of one group over another, what is considered 'right' or 'just,' and what will support 'The Good,' seems to be dependent upon one's position. What is understood to be 'right' or virtuous are rules supporting a system and its goals ('The Good'); if the rules are universally known, and a moral person is expected to conform to them and employ them in their reasoning and

actions, then the goal of attaining 'The Good' must also be ubiquitous. If what is understood to be 'right' or 'just' is universal, as Kohlberg describes; and, in its most advanced forms, the way in which one reasons and choses between two competing 'goods' is universal and in support of 'The Good,' then the concept of 'The Good,' or the goal of morality must also be thought to be universal. If the means are universal, are the ends not also universal? I am arguing that because the premise that what is 'right' is beyond politics and omnipresent is false, then so is the narrative that purports 'The Good' as universal and apolitical.

The issue of positionality in King and Kohlberg's assessment of unjust law and the use of power to compel obedience would, in a Foucauldian analysis,[9] imply the use of discipline. For instance, in a ubiquitous approach to virtue there is a disregard for normalisation, or the internalisation of what is considered normal through discipline and socialisation, which results in the neglect of virtue's role as a rule within the system. The argument that virtue, or an understanding of justice and 'The Right,' are universal must consider power because there is power in creating an argument that results in an inability to question its legitimacy, such as by designing a truth so that any rejection of it makes one immoral. King's questioning of unjust laws and their relationship with power informs Kohlberg's assessment of what makes moral education distinct from "ordinary political action"; 'just' laws, or values that maintain a universal sense of justice, are in support of 'The Good' (1981, p.38). But, when what is considered to be 'right' or 'virtuous' is shown to be part of a politically manifested means in service to a

[9] In chapter two, there will be a much deeper look at Foucault and the ways in which productive power has a presence in the liberal framework and moral education.

paradigmatic goal, rather than of universal origin, the liberal notion of 'The Good' is exposed as an end that is also politically motivated. Moral education and the Myth of 'The Good' produces false neutrality, one called universal by some, to conceal systemic goals of control and compliance.

In order to further analyse this point, I will employ an example that Kohlberg uses to differentiate between examples of a right and just protest, one that engages moral leadership from a high level and utilises 'universal' judgements, and a separate protest they consider to exemplify a poor sense of justice and where one would be "unlikely to find virtue" (1981, p.45). Through an examination of one example of 'universal moral principles' in action, and the accompanying understandings of what is right and just, I hope to expose the political nature embedded within concepts of 'The Good' through the way it is to be attained. If 'The Good' is determined to be political, and concepts of what is 'right' or virtuous are not truly universal but only thought to be so, due to liberal indoctrination, this myth can be considered an effort to teach morality as obedience; to comply to a notion of 'right' because it serves power would be an example of the docility that I consider to be dangerous.

Kohlberg argues that what is 'just' is based on universal understandings over preference; moral universalism is not based in relativism but rather on a neutral knowledge of what is 'right' (1981). Kohlberg found King's acts of civil disobedience to be an example of a high-functioning morality, which "flowed directly from a sense of principles of justice and thus were moral leadership, not just propaganda or protest" (1981, p.38). Kohlberg supports protest, attributing it to the "most mature moral level",

with the caveat that "moral disobedience to the law must spring from the same root as moral obedience to the law, out of respect for justice" (1981, p.45/43). With that proviso, one who protests what they believe to be an unjust law must also willingly accept the punishment that may result from their actions. For Kohlberg, King's efforts were universal because they were moral judgements made for the purpose of raising others from the "dark depth of racism and prejudice" and because they were acting with the "true knowledge of the good"[10] (1981, p.43). According to Kohlberg, one must have this knowledge to act with virtue, or to choose justice, and a protest activity can only be considered 'just' if "the knowledge of the good that lies behind them" is also 'just' (1981, p.45). King was confronting segregation and threats to the principle of "equal political rights", a concept that Kohlberg asserts to fall within moral universal ideas (1981, p.43). King's actions were public; in the letter from jail, it reads that when one stands against an unjust law they must accept the consequences for the purpose of arousing "the conscience of the community over its injustice" (as cited by Kohlberg, 1981, p.43).

Kohlberg contrasts this action with the protestors at Harvard who held a sit-in to challenge Dow Chemicals' on-campus recruitment of graduate chemistry students (1981). In October of 1967, more than 300 people, students, staff, and faculty at Harvard University, staged a demonstration in which they argued that "any corporation guilty of war crimes and partner to genocide – in this case, Dow – had no right to come on the Harvard University campus" (Springer, 1967). Dow was a manufacturer of napalm and Agent Orange, which were used by the United States of America during The Vietnam War and had the effects of causing civilian casualties alongside damaging military targets

[10] Again, when Kohlberg says 'the good' they are referring to what is 'right.'

(Scott, 1988). The Harvard sit-in was an anti-war protest invoking a moral principle of life (those affected by Dow Chemicals' weapons) over property (Harvard's authority over who can conduct business, such as recruitment of students, on their grounds). Also, it should also be noted that the "demonstrators surrendered [their student cards] because they wanted to take the responsibility and accept the punishment for the sit-in collectively" (Springer, 1967).

In Kohlberg's comparison and analysis of these separate events they fail to consider some essential counterarguments, and in doing so their own lack of reflection on the role of social location, or positionality in their judgements of the legitimacy of these protests, are exposed. Kohlberg argues that the non-violent anti-war protest was not an example of the exercise of universal principles of morality because the "rules being disobeyed by the protesters were not unjust rules, and the sit-in was depriving individuals of rights, not trying to protect individual rights" (1981, p.45). The 'rules' to which Kohlberg is referring are Harvard University's policies that the administration holds authority over who is permitted to be on campus, as well as for what purpose; the students were arguing that the exercise of these rules, in this context, were unjust because of the support of a corporation with a demonstrable participation in violence (1981). Kohlberg contends that the protestors were not exemplifying "a stage 6 sense of justice" because "[p]rincipled civil disobedience is not illegitimate propaganda for worthy political causes, it is the just question of injustice" (1981, p.45). In other words, political activism is not necessarily principled or dishonourable but "it is only the knowledge of the good that lies behind them that can give them virtue" (1981, p.45). Kohlberg is assessing the demonstrators to be without this knowledge and this indicates that they, in

their evaluation, have not taken into account the oppositional ideas or theories of the Harvard protestors. The rules supporting a liberal understanding of the individual, and economic systems, were the ones being questioned by the protestors; in disagreeing with the participants in the sit-in, and in not considering the possible objections to their analysis of the protest as "unjust", Kohlberg's social location and political leaning can be assumed to be in support of a liberal framework (1981, p.45). Kohlberg's determination of King's civil disobedience as just, and the demonstrators of the Dow Chemical sit-in to be unjust, is a reflection of their own political viewpoint supporting capitalism. For Kohlberg, the protestors were not principled because they were acting based on an untrue version of 'The Right' and poor conceptions of justice.

Kohlberg does not consider the possibility that the Harvard sit-in demonstrators were attempting to question what they understood to be unjust laws protecting an immoral company in the name of power and elitism. The protestors certainly made an effort to accept consequences, as did King, by passing their personal identification to the Dean (Springer, 1967). The point that I hope has been reached by this deconstruction of Kohlberg's argument, and lack of assessment concerning social location, is this: it is a myth that there is one concept of what is 'right,' or that justice is universal. When the relationship between what is understood to be most in support of a conception of what is 'right' and whom those rules serve is not considered, the Myth of 'The Good', and moral universalism, are deemed secure in their neutrality and beyond politics. Although Kohlberg does not acknowledge their own socialisation and political beliefs as part of what influences their determination that King's civil disobedience was principled, and in support of 'The Good,' while the Dow sit-in was not 'right' or reflective of universal

moral principles, perhaps their favourable assessment of King but not the Harvard students was simply a matter of understanding racism as a problem but, due to personal preference or positionality, not recognizing the protection of such a company through capitalism as unjust. Or maybe, because the demonstrators were interfering in the presence of corporate recruiters on their campus, and one can assume that they had no jurisdiction to do so, and because the prevailing power was in the hands of a well established institution as well as a multi-national chemical corporation, the demonstrators were not questioning injustice but merely thwarting power. There were, most likely, Americans in the 1960s who felt as though their individual rights would be negatively affected by a move towards racial and social equality and they could have employed similar arguments as Kohlberg used against the Harvard students in opposition to King and supporters. Kohlberg's assessment of the Dow sit-in could be considered as socially located, or at least falsely politically neutral, and a rationalisation for universalism inherent in the argument for one certain 'right' or preferable good begins to deteriorate. The knowledge and understanding of what is 'right' is being treated as conditional and qualifiable based on the social or political context in which a subject is situated. Kohlberg claims that one protest exemplifies a high form of moral leadership in a circumstance related to racism, and its systemic relationship to rights to life, but argues that another illustrates an unjust and unreasoned response when it pertains to, in their view, a less acceptable cause, such as anti-capitalism or anti-war, and denies its relationship to rights to life. Clearly, Kohlberg's understanding of justice is contingent upon a social or political context and is based in preference over universalism.

Universalism, as a systemic device, maintains false political neutrality and conceals the way in which power operates within its structure. The approach creates absolutes and dichotomies, the purpose of which is to control the conversation and make the rules and goals of a system difficult to break down or critique. The liberal framework and those in power are ultimately served by this myth while the rest of us remain oppressed by the belief that 'The Good' is within reach as long as the people do their level-headed best to use reason to act morally. The concept of a universal 'good' negatively impacts our capacity for meaningful opposition; thus, the moral quest for justice. Rather than exercising our moral compass we are conditioned to 'do the right thing' and refrain from questioning 'The Right' and upsetting a paradigm. The system remains intact and in control; moral education succeeds in this respect.

The Myth of Dissent

In a lecture on Plato's *The Apology*, Yale University professor of political philosophy, Steven B. Smith, asks, "[h]ow could the world's first, freest, and most open society, sentence to death a man who spoke freely about his own ignorance and professed to care for nothing so much as virtue and human excellence?" (2006a, *Ch*.2, *para*.3). The Socratic dialogues, and many responses to them, have been influential in the formation of the liberal framework, moral education, and its myths and traditions. Understanding the role of disobedience or disagreement within the liberal paradigm, and the ways in which it may or may not be acceptable, is integral to understanding the system itself; its politics, its tools, and the myths that maintain its power. In this chapter's final section, I will use two stories of Socrates to explore the myths in relation to each other and the ways in which their aggregation culminates in their role of supporting a framework that relies on

oppression for its existence. Smith argues that, between *The Apology* and *Crito*, depending upon how it is read, there appears to be two very different heroes; the Socrates of *The Apology* can be a cherished dissenter, a martyr for loyal disagreement; alternatively, as they are represented in the latter dialogue, they can be seen as an example of justice being served, the one who crossed the line from immanent critic to rebel, and got what they deserved (2006). In both cases, important elements of a liberal paradigm are outlined like the rules of a game. The myths that support moral education are in play and dissent, as a tool, wins out.

In their defense in an Athenian court of law, the Socrates of *The Apology* is calling for a new type of education; they are making an argument for philosophy. The poets had been teaching the sons [not daughters] of Athens for centuries and Socrates argued that the lessons they were learning were keeping them from becoming fully human. They explain that their fellow citizens, and indeed the members of the jury they were faced with, were more concerned with wealth and status, power and politics, than they were with their souls. To Socrates, this was not truly living; after all, "[a]n unexamined life is no life for a human being to live" (*Plat*, *Apol.*, 38d) and, as Sarat expanded, "[t]houghtless conformity to convention was, for Socrates, the gravest danger of citizenship and the greatest temptation of belonging in a political community" (Sarat, 2005, as cited by McDonough, 2010, p.427). But the beliefs of Socrates, and their teachings, conflicted with doctrine and because of their disagreement with ruling opinion, or their lack of piety and their desire to replace opinion with knowledge, they had made many enemies and were being forced to defend their actions while making the case for dissent itself.

From the beginning, Socrates insists on being a proud Athenian who obeys the laws of the state and the gods. Their participation in the court is, on its own, an indication of their loyalty; they say of the court's deliberation, "[b]ut let that turn out as God wills: I have to obey the law and present my defense" (*Plat*, *Apol.*, 19a). They speak of Athens as a city that is "the most important and renowned for its wisdom and power" and they remind the court that they defended the city, with great risk to their own life, as a soldier. Socrates' philosophical nature, a behaviour that the court views as negative, is attributed by the hero to be a result of their obedience to the gods and the oracle. They are trying to live justly because they agree that "acting unjustly in disobedience to one's betters, whether god or human being, is something I know to be evil and shameful" (*Plat*, *Apol*., 29b). In their work on dissent, McDonough explains that a dissident must be a part of the group with whom the disagreement occurs (2010). For example, in a judicial panel the "dissenting opinions disagree with majority *opinions*, but they do not disagree with the *court*" (McDonough, 2010, p.424, *emphasis original*). Socrates agrees with the laws and willingly participates in the court; they speak of Athens fondly and remind the court of their own citizenship and belonging in the city-state. They exclaim that they will not relent and if they were to be released they would continue to philosophize and, as Smith expressed, "philosophy is, necessarily, at odds with belied or civic faith" (2006a, *Ch*.5, *para*.5). Essentially, they were rejecting tradition and custom as authority and upholding rational thinking and personal power. Socrates' only way out of the predicament was to show the court that they were only acting as a dissident and that dissent was not only good but also essential for Athens.

In their trial, Socrates teetered on the edge of dissonance and, as politics were a way of life in the city-state, their case for "abstinence" from political life could be read as disloyalty to Athenians. They made an effort to show their dissonance as a private act, which they argue was less threatening than taking up their personal qualms publicly; they argue that their acts were not political but rather, informed by justice. They attest to an example of a previous act of dissent in which they had voted for law and justice even when it was not the popular opinion; and another time when they refused to follow unjust orders, remarking that their "one and only care was to avoid doing anything sinful or unjust" (*Plat*, *Apol*., 32d). These examples also happen to demonstrate how Socrates' disobedience for the sake of justice had at one time served Athens; they assert that their more recent acts of dissent were only to uphold the goodness of Athens as well as to make efforts towards its improvement. Socrates was loyal to Athens; they were arguing that they were not more than a dissident and that dissidence was an example of the citizen's most loyal act. As McDonough argues, Socrates "manages to depolarise the meaning of dissent and resituate it as a particular brand of responsible citizenship" (2010, p. 425). Their goal was not to take down the state, but rather to question the justness of laws and to promote justice. Socrates agreed that their antics made some people uncomfortable; they compare themself, and dissent, to a beneficial "gadfly" who startles a sleeping beast (*Plat*, *Apol*. 30e). An act of loyal disagreement is not an effort to reject Athens, or to completely change the Athenian way of life; rather, dissent was to function as an awakening of critical awareness so that something that may be problematic does not remain simply because of its traditional statute. The city, which may be "a bit sluggish because of its size", needs the gadfly or the dissident to be "arousing, cajoling, and reproaching", even at the risk of getting a swat, in an effort to keep it awake and aware of

the needs of its citizens (*Plat*, *Apol*. 31a). Dissonance, much like a gadfly, could make others "angry, like people who are awakened from their doze" (*Plat*, *Apol*., 31a).

The argument being made by Socrates was that dissent should be understood as a most patriotic effort because it is a denial of personal needs for the good of others. Socrates lived in poverty because of their concern for the way others cared about power and possessions over goodness. But, the question of whether we read Socrates as a dissenter or a rebel is inconsequential. If "Plato is asking us to view Socrates as a man [sic] of high principle, standing up for what he [sic] believed even in the face of death", then they are a loyal citizen who exemplifies the precious tool of dissent (Smith, 2006a, *Ch*.4, *para*.1). But if they are determined to be a "revolutionary agitator", one who picks and chooses which laws to follow, then the problem of whether they should be tolerated must be solved (Smith, 2006a, *Ch*.4, *para*.1). Either way, the message of the liberal framework is clear; crossing the line and moving from a place of loyal disagreement, into rejectionist critique, is punishable because it threatens 'The Good' or the control of one group over another.

Where *The Apology* makes a case for dissent as a most loyal act for a citizen, *Crito* supports the liberal framework's Myth of 'The Good,' Liberal Subjectivity, Neutrality, and Necessity through a dialogue framed with dissent. After their conviction and sentencing, Socrates engages in a discussion with their friend, Crito, concerning the ethics of whether to face their impending execution or escape. In this dialogue, with their own death only hours away, Socrates argues that wrongdoing is always wrong, but also hopes that their dialogue with Crito will determine if perhaps their dichotomous

understanding of right and wrong will hold true or "whether our former argument seems different to me under our present conditions… whether we shall give it up or be guided by it" (*Plat*, *Crito*, 46b). They determine that, not only should we avoid wrongdoing always, but also that "we ought not even to requite wrong with wrong… no matter what he [sic] may have done to us" (*Plat*, *Crito*, 49d).

At this point, there appears to be a shifting conception of 'The Right'; wherein *The Apology*, Socrates embraces dissent as an example of loyalty and a moral act, in *Crito* the thought of disobedience or disagreeing with the city-state is a "wrongdoing" that must be avoided at all costs (*Plat*, *Crito*, 49d). It is clear that for Socrates there was no middle ground; they were guided by 'reason' and, being that they understood it to be virtuous for 'The Right' to be consistently applied, their choice had been made for them. Much like Kohlberg, and their argument that knowing 'The Right' is essential to moral universalism, Socrates' view that principles and truths are static and unchanging, and their action of abiding by those doctrines, supports both the Myth of 'The Good' and Liberal Subjectivity. Also, like Kohlberg's inconsistent and socially located application of 'The Right' in their assessment of MLK's rally against racism versus the Harvard sit-in's 'unprincipled' movement, the argument that Socrates makes in *The Apology* seems questionable when compared to the altered standards found in *Crito*.

In *Crito*, Socrates is an autonomous being who is choosing 'The Right' through reason and knowledge of what is considered right through natural law and the just laws of Athens (1981). Their argument extends to the dilemma of whether their leaving Athens, and their punishment by the city-state's laws, would be right or wrong. Continuing to

work in absolutes, Socrates believes their leaving Athens unscrupulously would destroy the entire state; echoing the Myth of Necessity, and the threat of chaos without control, every citizen must follow the rules for the state to be maintained. The dialogue between Crito and Socrates is focused on *not* compromising their conception of universalism of 'The Right' but, because of the shifting standards of what was 'right' in *The Apology*, this reveals a problem with the legitimacy of the idea of 'standard' principles. The liberal framework, armed with the Myth of Neutrality, does not open up a discussion of the validity of the state or the way in which power operates within the relationship between people within the state and between the state and its people. Instead, as Plato remarks in *Republic*, the virtue of the people is mirrored by the state; within the liberal framework people are raised to become moral citizens with an ethical bond between person and state, maintaining this relationship and loyalty for 'The Good.' Therefore a reaction to the state must be in support of its legitimacy because to disagree with or resist the court itself would be outside of the well-marked lines; Socrates is a dissident but far from a rebel.

When the role of the liberal paradigm, and the way in which it influences Socrates' sense of morality, is considered within both *The Apology* and *Crito*, the complaint of these two dialogues seemingly being the product of two different people seems less valid. Both dialogues are about a person who wants to know 'The Right' and act with virtue to support 'The Good;' Socrates spent much of their life searching for a universal 'good' or 'truth,' which they likened to the Pythagorean theorem, because they believed that there was, somewhere deep inside us, a singular and common understanding of what it could be. In *The Apology*, they promote a philosophical education as a path to being more fully human and understanding 'The Good,' while in *Crito*, they use their

knowledge of what is 'Right' to make a moral choice. Moral education is suddenly the star player in each of these scripts; its necessity made apparent through the court's lack of understanding and the hero's ability to articulate so well their beliefs. In the end, there are no politics, only the discussion of the pure neutrality of what is right; Socrates is even fair-minded and even-handed in a debate that will lead to their own death. The city, the laws, and the will of the people must be upheld; it is not the fault of Athens that a philosopher must die! Their unique and challenging circumstance does not entitle them to a bend in the rules because they were given a choice, "either to convince us of error or to do our bidding", to live in harmony with the laws of the city or to accept their freedom to leave for another city with other laws (Plato, *Crito*, 52a). A sentiment that still holds true, as seen in Kohlberg when they write,

> Johnny's lack of virtue is not that he doesn't want to associate with blacks [black people], it is that he is not capable of being a participating citizen of our society because he does not understand the principles on which our society is based [sic]. (Kohlberg, 1981, p.42)

In order to demonstrate their understanding of the laws, their knowledge of what is 'right,' and because Socrates was beyond what Kohlberg defined as a "Stage 5 social contract interpretation of justice", they had to remain and dissent (1981, p.45). As a participating citizen, who is presented by Plato as one who understands 'the principles on which society is based' better than most, they also understand how to dissent and that being 'good' *is* playing by the rules.

Because Socrates was, under the Myth of Liberal Subjectivity, an autonomous person who could make their own choices, they must accept responsibility for the results of their decisions as well as any negative effects they may have had on Athens or its

citizens. To abandon the city would be an act of resistance; an abandonment of the system denies its power and is apt to destroy it. *Crito* furthers the defense of Socrates; it is clear from their loyalty to the Myths of Moral Education that they are a dissident and a product of a liberal paradigm, or at least its Ancient beginnings. The choice was always clear; the good of the state over self would mean never crossing the line into resistance; resistance being a question of the validity and authority of the state itself. Resistance is an effort to deconstruct and locate higher leverage points, or places within and elements of a paradigm that maintain its power, and apply pressure to produce change but without a concern for maintaining the framework from which the problematic rules and goals originate. Alternatively, dissent works within a system, challenging concepts that might validate knowledge or ethics, for the purpose of upsetting conventional understandings, and perhaps with the hope of social growth and change, but the higher leverage points cannot be damaged when the structure itself is protected by a loyalty to the system.

The Socratic dialogues discussed above have been integral to many considerations of morality and justice. One does not have to have read the source to come into contact with many of the ideas presented there; this type of morality has informed the development of our collective consciousness in the liberal world. Rather than teaching people how to use moral reasoning to promote justice, and choose right actions and a virtuous life, we are indoctrinated into a system in which the goal is obedience to power. The more loyal and trusting we are in what we are told qualifies as 'good' the less we will question its impacts and who is really profiting. It is often argued that Socrates used reason to determine that they would comply and it is their actions in *The Apology* that are often read as bold and they are praised as a moral warrior who fought

for justice. In reality, we are still living by the Socrates of *Crito*, normalised and self-surveilled, and prone to condemn subversive acts. This recurring story, the purpose of which is to promote an examined life, and encourage reasoned argument, is a narrative of the liberal framework. Although the title, *The Apology*, does not translate to atonement but rather defence, and the defence of Socrates does not include an apology in our modern conventional sense, in the end they did compensate for their wrongdoing and their compliance and loyalty to the state was evidence of their penance.

Messages of binaries, such as right/wrong, control/chaos, with us or against us, as well as the glorified role of the individual combined with the neutrality of power, and neglecting to acknowledge the role of control, is rhetorical smoke and mirrors. If we cannot see the system, and understand our own oppression, then we cannot resist if we get a glimpse of injustice. In the next chapter, I will explain how the Myths of Moral Education promulgate the goals of better people for a better world when in reality our actual practice serves the interim goal of obedience and a preoccupation with control. I will also further explore the ways in which these myths serve power and oppress students. Of course, those of us who work with students, and feel that we are the teachers who care and support those with whom we work, will find the idea that we are participants in the subjugation of those in our care difficult to swallow. Even in 'progressive' settings, students are oppressed and the ways in which power and control operate through moral education in schools is the evidence.

- Chapter Two -

Abandon Ship

> *"It seems to me that the real political task in a society such as ours is to criticize the working of institutions which appear to be both neutral and independent; to criticize them in such a manner that the political violence which has always exercised itself obscurely through them will be unmasked, so that one can fight them." - Michel Foucault, 1974, p.171*

The complexities of a system, including the surreptitious way in which it shapes a mindset to support and perpetuate its dominance, are complicated and clandestine for a reason; if systemic nature were simple and obvious, or transparent, it would lose its power over us. According to Meadows, there are two types of goals within a system; the first type is a goal that seems to be only in relation to itself, such as having students move from point A to B. For example, the goal would appear to be getting students from the classroom to the gymnasium; there may be subsidiary goals believed to be in service to the main goal, such as keeping everyone together, being the least disruptive to others as possible, with the use of a silent line as the means to achieve those goals. Meadows explains that these seemingly independent goals, such as the example above, are actually pieces of the system, making little corrections to maintain the course, and although they may seem insignificant or even unrelated to its structure, "their presence is critical to the long-term welfare of the system" (Meadows, 1999, p.9). The effort to maintain a straight and quiet line as the mode of transportation could be argued to be in relation to the systemic goal of control over students.[11] The other type of goal is the "larger, less

[11] The goal of control, and the ways in which it is maintained in relation to education, will be discussed throughout this chapter.

obvious, higher-leverage goals, those of the entire system" (Meadows, 1999, p.16). System-level goals, or whole-system goals, are difficult to detect, to pin-point, and that is what makes them so powerful; if we cannot recognize what system-level goal is operating, we cannot assess the ways in which our own behaviour may be supporting or upholding that goal in service to the system. The belief that students require control would be an example of a higher-leverage goal.

Moral education is purported to be working towards the goal of making the world a better place; by teaching morality, people will learn to be 'good' people and to participate in the goal of the 'greater good' or an 'ideal society.' As discussed in the previous chapter, that which is deemed 'good,' or 'right,' or virtuous, is determined by the system and the definition is in service to that power, and only certain people will benefit from these concepts or 'The Good.' This chapter is for those readers who may be at this point saying to themselves that some teachers or schools may be working with an out-dated version of moral curriculum or teaching practices that, being teacher-centred, are obviously problematic and possibly serving this 'system' I speak of but… "I'm not one of *those* teachers." When I speak of systems that control students, a very familiar reply from fellow educators is that they agree with me, but that the problem is being addressed by teachers who are, more and more, practicing a student-centred approach. They explain to me that they are not one of *those* teachers because they believe that children should have a say in how the school is run, they seek out materials that deal with racism, they find ways to reach the "troubled kid" and get them to "participate." I understand the place from which these returns originate; as I have mentioned before, I

was one of the 'outstanding' teachers known to connect with children and get them *all* involved. I was 'progressive' and 'student-centred.' I was making a difference…

The Myths of Moral Education tell us that our goal as teachers is to help make better people for a better world. We may enact certain practices to further these objectives, we may make choices with these long-term goals in mind, but whether our actions actually bring us closer to our aims is dubious. Was the silent line of students travelling through the hallway an example of students being 'good' and learning the value of respect? Was there evidence of their improved understanding of the impact of their actions on the other students and teachers in the classrooms that they pass by, therefore making the goal of the silent line more than reaching the gymnasium, resulting in a 'passing on' of a vital moral lesson?

In this chapter, through a discussion of power and oppression, I hope to lift the veil on paradigmatic goals and the ways in which moral education, and its related impact on teaching practices, perpetuates and upholds them. I will begin by examining Michel Foucault's work on productive power and docility and the ways in which power operates through the Myths of Moral Education for the purpose of controlling students and creating an obedient population (1975). Moral education is not just overt efforts to pass on virtues, such as lists of virtues or religious laws, but an effort to enact whole-system goals of the liberal framework. From compelling students to fall in line to praising a child by saying "good job", I aim to exemplify the ways in which even in 'progressive' classrooms students are being taught covert lessons in compliance. Finally, I will discuss

the binary of control/chaos and the role of dissent as arguments against the proposed abandonment of liberal moral education. My hope is that, when tangible examples of how teachers maintain course, in both traditional and progressive settings, are related to whole-system goals, the direction this ship is taking will become clear, and further argument for a desertion of moral education will be unnecessary.

The Power of Goals

An understanding of power, and the ways in which power operates within a liberal framework, is essential to developing the ability to assess which whole-system goals are at work. The work of Michel Foucault offers insight into how productive power can be hidden and unassuming, for both oppressed and oppressor, as well as its significant impacts on the behaviour of people (1975). Building on the assertion that moral education uses a few myths to maintain a system, this section will clarify what is meant by a Foucauldian understanding of power, and its apparatuses, as well as how a system-level goal of maintaining authority and teaching docility affects the practice of moral education.

In the previous chapter, the way in which Foucault conceptualises power, and its mechanisms, were briefly touched upon. For the French philosopher, power is not a thing that can be possessed, it is not only contained within government or the state but rather it is a relation that is ubiquitous throughout the social body (1975). Traditional conceptions of power often involve a central authority figure and obedience to that dominant power along with the rules or laws that they have authorised. Although 'sovereign power' is still present and relevant today, Foucault has argued that

'disciplinary,' or 'productive power,' has become the more significant element that maintains the systemic hold of contemporary societies (1975). Unlike sovereign power, productive power is not simply repressive but strategic in its dissemination and its presence (Foucault, 1975). Our existence within the liberal framework, of which contemporary mainstream pedagogy and moral education are a part, is made up of rules (from overt requirements such as raising a hand to speak, to more covert or unspoken regulations, such as a student's general obedience to their teacher). It also consists of the normalization of specific behaviours (such as sitting quietly and working on the task assigned) and judgment (above example behaviour is 'good'). With rules and normalisation, which rely on the use of surveillance and the fear of punishment (or alternatively, a dependence upon praise), there emerges a goal of controlling students and an accompanying preoccupation with maintaining the authority of the teacher. What is taught to, or expected of, the student is left up to the authority and what they, through their role in the system, have judged to be normal or acceptable or moral.

One cannot write about Foucault and power and not refer to their analysis of Bentham's Panopticon; they argue that "[w]henever one is dealing with a multiplicity of individuals on whom a task or a particular form of behaviour must be imposed, the panoptic schema may be used" (Foucault, 1975, p.205). The Panopticon serves as an example of a system and its goals as well as the ways in which the whole-system goal of control elicits practices of surveillance, the internalization of rules and regulations, and discipline of 'good' and 'bad' behaviour, which creates a deference to punishment with reverence for reward (Foucault, 1975). But above all, the Panopticon exists to "maintain order" with the use of an efficient system of methods and practices; "among school-

children, it makes it possible to observe performances (without there being any imitation or copying), to map aptitudes, to assess characters, to draw up rigorous classifications and, in relation to normal development, to distinguish 'laziness and stubbornness' from 'incurable imbecility'" (Bentham as cited by Foucault, 1975, p.203). Foucault explains that, when used for order and control, the institution or system will "disindividualize" power and that this conveys the impression that power exists in or is expressed by the prison, the school, or another institution (1975, p.202). Authority is maintained by this impression that power is within the institution; discipline is its "modality for its exercise, comprising a whole set of instruments, techniques, procedures, levels of application, targets", and its apparatus of control (Foucault, 1975, p.215).

Moral education is not immune to system goals and does not operate outside of the paradigm nor avoid Panopticism. The practice of moral education, which is reliant on the Myths of Necessity, Neutrality, Liberal Subjectivity, 'The Good,' and Dissent, is ironically unable to manage without the use of methods that thwart any purported goals of "educating people to be moral and providing an education that is moral", or preparing better people for a better world, and instead must deploy practices that support whole-system goals of control, authority, and compliance (DeVitis & Yu, 2011, p.xii). First, the Myth of Necessity is a normalisation of productive power and has the particular feature of obscuring its presence. Because it is deemed essential to pass on moral standards, such as virtues, and skills in exercising these standards, such as 'choice' and 'reason,' and due to these standards and skills being determined by an authority, they are coded in power. The narrative of liberal moral education is that the presence of authority and control within moral education is required to maintain equilibrium; a teacher must wield

power and manage the passing on of moral standards and skills or face the inevitable chaos of non-compliance, just as students must learn the prescribed morality lest society be confronted by a generation of depraved individuals who commit unconscionable acts which gravely impact society.

The presumed political neutrality of moral education, which is found within the second myth, dismisses a discussion as to which group(s) power may serve, as well as questions of why and how and for what/whose benefit; it also denies domination, and normalisation, which "contributes to the production of docile bodies" (Ford, 2003, p.9). If there is no named political influence in moral education, whomever tacitly benefits from its doctrine could determine that their dominance is 'natural,' or due to one's autonomous 'good' choices. While at the same time, those over whom control is exercised come to believe that their suppression is due to their own inabilities, such as their ineptitude at determining or following rules or making the 'right' choices. Whether benefiting from power or not, the only way to make gains seems to be participation in the system by trying to harness power; for example, in the 'classic' Panopticon, "perhaps in the desire to be seen as compliant, a 'good' prisoner, he [sic] moves further into the light" (Ford, 2003, p.10). The supposed neutrality of moral education further shrouds the goal of control and the outcome of submissive, deferential behaviour. As Maureen Ford, author of a paper utilising the work of Foucault, "Unveiling Technologies of Power in Classroom Organization Practice", writes, "[t]he most insidious dangers of systems of practice are those that hide significant effects in innocuous activity and unacknowledged decision-making" (2003, p.6). This analysis, of course, also serves the Myth of Liberal Subjectivity; Foucault explaind that the term 'subject' means both 'under the authority

of,' being *subject* to someone or something else, but also the descriptor tackled the important concept of identity and a consciousness of one's self (Lemke, 2001, p.191). The latter interpretation of 'subject' is a rejection of the Enlightenment archetype, which saw the individual as autonomous, self-reflective, and free. Foucault understood the subject's consciousness, specifically in the realm of moral identity, to be a result of power and an internalisation of social control; the 'subject' is not free and autonomous but rather a product of a paradigm and its related 'norms' (Lemke, 2001). It is a false notion that the prisoner steps into the light because they are making an autonomous decision to be seen; rather, they have internalised the system so that control comes from within (Ford, 2003). A classroom example of this systemic indication would be when a teacher walks past a student's desk and the student, noticing the teacher's proximity and the possibility of surveillance, makes an effort to help their desk-mate. Conceivably, the identity of the student who 'helps' has felt the impact of internalised control and their actions are incentivised by the hope that their teacher might notice their virtuous act and offer praise or, alternatively, that the authority may simply catalogue the information that this student is 'good' (read: compliant to the standard of 'helpful'). The motivation to be helpful, much like the prisoner's move into the light, is to interact with power by acknowledging its presence (the inherent authority), and in taking on the role of 'helpful' or 'good' student/prisoner (concepts that have been normalised) they serve power.

The Myth of 'The Good' is what has been normalized; what each surveilled body should be attempting, and motivated, to achieve. Its methodology is represented in overt rewards of gold stars or corrective measures such as red pen, as well as the covert praise

or subtle critique that is felt by a student after a teacher says to the entire class, "I like it when students read a book when they are finished their work." But beyond this more obvious interpretation of its methods, and examples of its practice, is the role of power in the conception of 'The Good.' The concept and the conduct associated with it must benefit the system, and this is achieved through 'governmentality,' or "the reciprocal constitution of power techniques and forms of knowledge", where certain concepts, understandings of objects, justifications, strategies for solving problems, etc., are passed on in order to maintain the system (Lemke, 2001, p.191). Some elements or variations are determined to be 'good,' and what makes the grade is determined by those benefiting from power and using control to manage behaviour and, according to Thomas Lemke, this is why "Foucault defines government as conduct, or, more precisely, as 'the conduct of conduct' and thus as a term which ranges from 'governing the self ' to 'governing others'" (2001, p.191). 'The Good' is often described as 'natural' or 'innate,' but this might be partially because it is so internalised that we do not remember learning it; our moral education is often so subtle that its origins, and the presence of power accompanying them, do not always cross our minds. The teacher is not in the habit of questioning their own rules or demands; when they elicit a somewhat arbitrary guideline, such as the location of a students' name and the date on a journal assignment, the matter of whom the stipulation benefits is not up for discussion. Such ubiquitous practices, and the power they serve, are normalised and remain virtually central to mainstream teaching. As Yasemine Oral explained this occurrence, "it seems to be that in these mundane realities of classrooms, which are so commonplace that they are almost natural and invisible, is where power relations are played out" (Oral, 2013, p.114).

Dissent is held up as an important and integral element of a many-faceted system. The problematic aspects of moral education, and the Myths that explain some ways in which control manifests and power operates, are easily dismissed with the presentation of dissent as what will, in situations of error, right the ship. Due to the other myths, it is difficult to see the system itself, let alone to break down its leverage points, its rules and goals, and assess the ways in which members of the group, as well as others outside of the group, might be affected. It is difficult to disagree, loyally or otherwise, with prevailing opinion or the legitimacy of a framework that supports productive power; when one has been indoctrinated with internalised norms, and a preference for praise because of a fear of punishment, when one has been engrossed in a narrative of liberal subjectivity and the belief that oppression is a manifestation of our own making, it is difficult to locate a paradigm, let alone to think outside of one. How can we expect a student to disagree with a teacher, or the narrative that they must remain obedient to the teacher, in a way that does not upset the system? Dissent and resistance in an institution such as education, within a liberal framework, is currently being used to control students *and* teachers through their discourses surrounding belonging and morality. The role of these myths, and their connections to productive power will face further analysis throughout this chapter; it is to the reality of our everyday classrooms to which this discussion will now turn.

Sinking Ship

Many have argued, drawing support from Foucault's work on Panopticism, that indoctrination into a system such as the liberal framework prepares students for future citizenship and for the workforce within a hegemonic context; the system is "schooling

for docility-utility" and raising 'good' students into 'good' adults who will become unquestioning, obedient, pliable workers who will defer to authority (Kirk as cited by Jess *et al.*, 2011, p.181). According to Noam Chomsky, one of the initial functions of public schooling "was to prepare independent farmers for life as wage labourers who would tolerate what they regarded as virtual slavery" (2012, p.1). Chomsky argues that the current coercive pedagogy behind the school curriculum, both formal and informal, reflects a neoliberal agenda; to educate students is to "[l]imit their perspectives and understanding, discourage free and independent thought, and train them for obedience" (Chomsky, 2012, p.2). Moral education, due to its authoritative legitimacy, and its covert and coded goals, is an ideal place from which these lessons can be situated.

Regardless of whether or not the philosophical theories of Foucault are part of the argument, there is no denying that the classroom is fraught with power relations. There are well-maintained assumptions that classrooms require the authority of the teacher to keep students in check; these are based on the premise that students "must be tightly regulated if they are to do anything productive" and that "external *control* is necessary, and without it, students are unlikely to learn or to act decently" (Kohn, 2006, p.2, *emphasis original*). In the traditional classroom, the teacher acts as an authority on what is correct, what is worth knowing or understanding, while deciding the mode of delivery and expression in respect to that 'knowledge' and then evaluating the degree of the students' grasp of concepts or development of skills. Moral reasoning skills and behaviour face the same controlled path into student understanding and actions. When 'good' students raise their hands and wait for the teacher's acknowledgement before they speak, fall in line and line-up for the walk from classroom to gymnasium, and ask for

clarification rather than question the teacher, what do these behaviours indicate they have learned? If teachers describe their vocation as assisting students to learn, "and yet much of a teacher's typical day is spent in enacting disciplines that emphasize solving the 'problem' of undeveloped and disruptive children", then what is being taught (Leafgren, 2009, p.68)? As David Purpel explains, "[t]here is an ideology here that puts very strong emphasis on control - adult control of children is mandated and legitimated and children's self-control of their bodies and minds is demanded" (Purpel, 2001, p.89 as cited by Leafgren, 2009, p.72). The prevalence of the term 'classroom management' in and of itself shows that there is a belief that the teacher's role is to 'manage' (Kohn, 2006). Although the term 'classroom management' does not have as extensive a history as the ideology that supports and calls for its employment, public schooling, and the overseeing of the conduct of children, was a Puritan response to the fear that the family was unable or unwilling to pass on the values and expectations of the community (Purpel, 1999). In the article entitled "The Politics of Character Education", David Purpel discusses the ways in which the motives for the 'guidance' of students has changed very little over the last 300 years when they write,

> Historically, the emphasis on the maintenance of the status quo, order, hard work, sexual restraint, and hierarchy represent the continuation of Puritan tradition, minus the explicit affirmation of Christianity. Its rhetoric of fear and of rapid moral and social deterioration, and its insistence on a return to an ethic of communal responsibility, sobriety, delay of gratification, respect for authority, industriousness, and conventional morality can hardly be differentiated from the pietistic language of nineteenth century advocates of the common school. (Purpel, 1999, p.91)

These 'values' and fears are evident in both the Myths and the methodologies in place in contemporary, mainstream Canadian classrooms today. Foucault would call these efforts

to maintain control, or manage the classroom, 'discipline.' Some contemporary educators call their methods 'Positive Discipline' or even 'Progressive Discipline' but, as Alfie Kohn argues, "the formal programs just refine and systematize the application of these same interventions" (2006, p.22).

For example, the Ontario Ministry of Education requires that all schools have a "Positive Discipline" policy (OME, 2015a). The program is intended to "promote positive behaviour" by "promoting a positive school climate" and "by addressing inappropriate behaviour with appropriate consequences" (OME, 2015a). Although the literature continues to be vague about its motives and implementation, it claims that a 'school climate' is to be enhanced by the role-modelling of "respect" and "kindness" (OME, 2015b), the definitions of which are insinuated as 'universal' in understanding. This behaviour-focused approach is rooted in control; using punishment (consequences) and reward (praise) to achieve compliance (appropriate behaviour). The 'consequences' are chosen by the teacher or, in some cases, by the principal (OME, 2015b). Teachers are mandated to implement classroom management strategies that include "character and citizenship development" that will encourage suitable student conduct (OME, 2015a). In a study that looks at "effective classroom management strategies," and their use by pre-service teachers, Reupert and Woodcock recommended 'improved' teacher programming (2010, p.1261). In the article, the authors promote teacher programming that focuses on "preventative strategies" such as establishing rules, seating arrangements, and the creation of routines (Reupert & Woodcock, 2010, p.1263). The study also notes that the most commonly used and acceptably practiced classroom management techniques included praise, rewards such as "tokens" towards privileges, "scanning" the room

(surveillance), "feedback" (judgement), "close proximity to students" (more surveillance), "threats, warnings" (discipline), "ignoring inappropriate behaviour" (withdrawal of care/punishment), and punishments such as "removing privileges" (Reupert & Woodcock, 2010, p.1262). Even if the instituted rules are written in bright colours and full of positive language, such as 'Respect and be kind to others,' regulations are still meant to regulate behaviour and so must be enforced in some way or another. It is arguable that a seating arrangement in table-groups, rather than rows, is still a lay-out contrived by a teacher and elicits control through surveillance (Ford, 2003) and, whether a 'reasonable' consequence is being sent to the principal's office or being slapped on the hands with a ruler, both are punishment.[12] The latter sections of this chapter will be dismantling these concepts, but my current point is this; much like was stated earlier, moral education is also in constant flux in an effort to reach students with its message, resulting in 'new' programs and methods being brought into the classroom to replace 'out-dated' practices, but each successor is only reproducing another reflection of the same Myths.

Many teachers would argue that they are not always in possession of power and would scoff at the proclamation that their practices are oppressive. Oral's study explores power relations, and the ways in which they might impact students and teachers, but also how this microethnography could reflect the greater educational discourse and the teaching profession (Oral, 2013). Challenging the traditional focus of the "structure and

[12] I recognise that the use of corporal punishment is considered inhumane, and therefore not qualitatively comparable to the punishment of speaking with the principal in contemporary understanding, but the intent of my example is that punishment, regardless of its social acceptance, is an effort to control the behaviour of others.

general characteristics of classroom discourse", Oral offers a Foucauldian framework and critique of the prevalence of teacher authority as well as power relations between teachers and students (2013, p.97). The results indicate that the teacher used *surveillance* to maintain a role of authority and to keep the students "under control" (Oral, 2013, p.102). Student *seating arrangements* were a matter of discipline, often implemented as "a form of punishment or rewarding", and maintained the authority of the teacher while also isolating students to maximize the impacts of supervision (Oral, 2013, p.104). Results indicated that "norm-related directives" outnumbered "instruction-related directives", and that most required the students to work silently in their seats; these directives, according to the researcher, indicated classroom and social norms while enforcing conformity and threatening punishment for behaviour that may vary from the established norm (Oral, 2013, p.105). Lastly, the examination of the teacher's perspective found that the teacher assumed a right to authority and that this belief informed their use of power (Oral, 2013).

Oral deconstructs and opens the texts within a common classroom; they detect cultural nuances that create and maintain privilege and relations of power. The results section of the article displayed the collected data in themes and dispersed Foucauldian analysis to put the interviews and observations into context. When Oral presents the teacher's monitoring of the students, one could argue that they were simply doing their job, yet against the backdrop of a Foucauldian understanding of power, the commentary narrows the focus of the reader; power relations, authority and control, as well as the subtle nuances of an education for compliance, quickly become evident (2013). Consequently, "the whole indefinite domain of the nonconforming becomes

punishable" and the teacher's continuing demands for students to stay in their seats is seen as "a call for students to conform to the norm" while variations from the norm, "unauthorized student talk or movement" for instance, is "indicative of disruptive and 'problematic' behavior" (Oral, 2013, p.106). How moral reasoning, critical thinking, or compassion, can be practiced or thrive in an environment that values obedience, while relying on normalisation so heavily, seems impossible.

In the final concluding notes, Oral expands on the premise that power relations occuring in the classroom include learner-centred practices as a correlating source of teacher control citing other research that indicates progressive pedagogies as a "far more subtle manifestation of Foucault's concept of biopower than that which exists in more traditional classrooms" (2013, p.112). This inference can be further supported by Ford's work, which reflects Foucault's theory in both traditional and progressive "open concept" classroom organization (2003, p.13). Ford argues that an understanding and consideration of the ways in which power operates in the classroom can offer teachers an opportunity to recognise "the dangers of discipline and docility" and "the possibility of reconstituting schools and classroom as locations of performances that are not restricted to success or failure" (2003, p.7). What is significant about Ford's article is its analysis of the same Foucauldian dangers as Oral identified - surveillance, normalisation, and discipline ("technologies of the self") - inside the progressive classroom setting (2003, p.14).

Ford explains that "open concept classrooms can be seen to exchange an obvious disciplinary gaze for more subtle strategies of purpose: Function replaces authority as the

overt marker of power in this space" (Ford, 2003, p.15). Biopower, which Ford explains as a deep form of self-regulation, based on disciplinary controls of normalisation, is a powerful way in which students and their bodies/behaviour can be controlled; because "[t]he orderly society is self-sustaining. Members surveill themselves in line with principles that maintain the boundaries" (Ford, 2003, p.11). Moral education, and the concept of 'The Good,' combined with the belief in liberal subjectivity, exercises this method of control in the 'open concept' classroom. Ford explains that "progressive practices", like those of self-reporting, the construction of 'normal children,' documentation, praise, and the illusion of choice, all contribute to the control of students, because "[s]omething has to be doing the work of those straight rows, the teacher's gaze, and the work of inducing self-surveillance" that the student-centred pedagogy replaces (Ford, 2003, p.14). Journaling, or self-assessment, is used as a form of surveillance and is judged by the teacher; this form of confession, "a central technology in bio-power", is dangerous because it "obscures the organizing power/knowledge located within the deep recesses of individual identity as interpreted to us by experts" (Ford, 2003, pp.11/12). The work of students is grouped into categories of what is produced by 'normal' children, or the students who are 'good' and who make the 'right' choices; in the progressive classroom, the use of 'options,' such as offering students the opportunity to read a book quietly or work on yesterday's mathematics homework, are disguised as opportunities for self-determination but, in reality, are a reflection of the control of the teacher. Those students whom by "failure or non-compliance (are) separated, 'marked' as different" become categorized as the off-task, 'bad,' or 'problem-child;' for the 'well-behaved' students, the non-compliant conduct is interpreted as "evidence of (their) incompetence or pathology" (Ford, 2003, p.15).

Foucault would argue, and so must I, that discipline applies both to behaviours that conform to the norm and actions considered problematic, as the system of control functions on the behaviourist premise that 'good' behaviour is reinforced with reward and 'bad' behaviour is deterred with punishment. An example of one such program is New Zealand's Ministry of Education's Positive Behaviour for Learning (PB4L) initiative (Parsonson, 2012). Parsonson's paper, "Evidence-based Classroom Behaviour Management Strategies," reviews a spectrum of 'evidence-based' methods "for application by teachers to reduce disruptive and challenging behaviours in their classrooms" (2012, p.16). The 'strategies' are "intended to help minimise the emergence of problematic behaviours and a range of those which provide positive consequences for appropriate student behaviours" (Parsonson, 2012, p.16). The 'evidence' used to support these interventions stem from Applied Behaviour Analysis "which involves the application of the principles of operant conditioning", previously known as *behaviour modification*; a term with Skinnerian roots (Parsonson, 2012, p.17). Parsonson's examples of disruptive behaviour are somewhat vague and apply to "talking out-of-turn," "low-level disruptions," "excessive noise," not following classroom rules, "disruption, non-compliance, aggression," and "task avoidance" while desired or appropriate behaviours would be "compliance," "engagement," "[a]cademic or social behaviour that complies with posted criteria," "complete silence," "respect others," "solve problems responsibly," and "remaining on-task" (2012, p.16-21). When analysing this resource for comparison to Foucault's Panopticism, one cannot help but note that the above list of 'disruptive'/'bad' or 'desired'/'good' behaviours, are vague in action but narrow in tenet. For example, it is unclear what is meant by "low-level disruption", what action

(talking without the approval of the teacher or standing to stretch during seat-work) might be deemed disruptive, and for whom it would be disrupting. What is apparent in this instance is the principle of control: one set of behaviours reflects compliance with authority while other conduct is considered non-compliance.

The aim of the Parsonson paper, and the PB4L's strategies, is not to elicit value-based decision making or critical thinking from the students but simply to achieve control of students through compliance to the norm. The norm is established by the teacher instituting "[c]lear, simple rules and expectations which are consistently and fairly applied… [p]redictability of events and activities through established routines, cues and signals about forthcoming transitions and changes" (Parsonson, 2012, p.17). The norm is maintained by the "approaches," or disciplinary methods, covered in the paper that focus on "natural consequences" (punishment) and various forms of positive reinforcement (reward) (Parsonson, 2012, p.16). One example 'approach' is "The Good Behaviour Game" which "has been used effectively to manage classroom behaviour by reducing disruptive behaviour" (Parsonson, 2012, p.19). In the game, rules are listed and posted where students can access them and the class teams (students are grouped) can compete for points that they can earn by complying with the rules (Parsonson, 2012). The team awarded a point "is praised each time" one is allocated and the score is kept public and contributes to a reward such as "extra time on the playground" or a "pizza party" (Parsonson, 2012, p.19). The research that Parsonson uses presents favourable evidence to the game's ability to lower levels of classroom non-compliance and showed "that pupils applied peer pressure to the more disruptive members of their teams to reduce their disruptive behaviour in order for the team to have a chance to win" (Parsonson, 2012,

p.19). "The Good Behaviour Game," and other elements of PB4L, is promoted as a positive way in which to manage classroom behaviour and although it appears to follow a program based on rewards, which implies being more progressive than one that advocates punishment, both tactics are more similar than different as they both further the whole-system goal of compliance, the maintenance of teacher authority, and learned docility.

Kohn articulates that "one of many things that punishments and rewards share… [is that] both require surveillance" (2006, p.32). Parsonson recommends "Peer Support" and explores the merits of the "peer control of reinforcement, use of peers as aides, and pupil self-evaluation strategies for on-task behaviour" which can be understood through the Panoptic lens as surveillance, the internalization of rules, confession, and the deference to discipline (2012, p.20). Students are instructed and praised for monitoring other students, bio-power encourages them to inform on their peers and appraise their own behaviour; the structures of productive power remain intact because, despite the appearance of student latitude, their 'choices' and 'reasoning' leads them to act as surveillance for the authority.

When students are 'given' control in the form of outlined choices, power is still in the possession of the teacher-authority. This is clear in the control-laden act of 'letting' students make decisions, as well as in the limited choices bestowed. An example of this lack of choice would be giving students the option to complete the work in the form of an essay or a poster, which is a limited choice that is subordinated to the requirement to complete the project. This method of false choice is more obvious when students are given the choice to comply or face the consequence; for example, the student can

complete the project or receive a failing grade, "it's *your* choice!" When students 'abuse a privilege,' or are not making the correct use of their 'freedom,' and the teacher must enact their authority by reminding them of consequences, and the failing grade or the gold star are examples of the use of threats; if the student does not comply, they will be on the receiving end of a punishment or a lack of reward. But beyond direct lessons in obedience are other 'teachable moments' in moral education. Moral dilemmas are often solved for students through these practices that elicit control. For example, two kindergarteners are playing when one child lays claim to the toy truck. This behaviour often prompts one of two responses from the teacher, the first being the threat of punishment ("If you can't share the truck, I will take it away.") or the bribe of reward ("If you can share the truck, you will receive a sticker.").

When students display moral behaviour, or when their actions are supporting the concept of 'The Good' (read: compliance), they are rewarded with the label of the 'good kid' or they hear the words, or variations of the phrase, "good job!" Kohn notes that the draw among parents and educators towards praise is very common precisely because it alleviates many of the uncomfortable feelings surrounding the use of punishing words of chastisement; the teacher who says 'good job' to a student who correctly filled in the worksheet does not feel like they are being controlling, but rather motivational (2006). After all, as the system trains us, if we want students to be 'good' we need to tell students what we mean by 'good' and encourage them to see the benefit in being 'good.' The problem is, when we want to tell the kindergartener who shared the truck with their classmate that we are pleased by this behaviour, we say 'good sharing,' which is a reward; the student learns that sharing is a morally preferable activity because it

results in the feeling one has when praised and not that it is beneficial because the classmate feels included or that there is a warm feeling that comes with sharing. Kohn explains that, with rewards such as praise, the intrinsic motivation is lost, and the remaining extrinsic motivation is, as Foucault would describe, a lesson in internalised norms (2006/1975). In Kohn's article, "Five Reasons to Stop Saying 'Good Job!'", they explain that "[t]he more we say, 'I like the way you….' or 'Good _____ing,' the more kids come to rely on *our* evaluations, *our* decisions about what's good and bad, rather than learning to form their own judgments" and this hardly leads to a growth in moral reasoning skills, and instead encourages an ability in understanding what the authority deems 'good' and complying with that ideal (2001). And what about the higher-levelled stages of moral development that, according to Kohlberg, are independent of conventions and move beyond a reliance on outside intervention (1981)? These concepts of moral autonomy are not taught using our contemporary practices of moral education! Although some scholars have recognised that even young students can, on their own, philosophise (Leighton, 2006), and that they have "many ways of making judgements that are not 'internalized' from the outside", Kohlberg acknowledges that "[a]dults seldom listen to children's moralizing" (1981, p.16). The way in which power operates, and liberal moral education is structured, the systemic goal of control effectively works to snuff out these independent musings or introspections and replace them with a regurgitation of certain acceptable answers that support the status quo. Praise maintains the existing belief system; it is based in judgement and reinforces an explicit authority that in turn undermines student autonomy.

Alternatively, teachers rely on another seemingly less malicious form of discipline; punishment via 'natural consequences.' There are whisperings of liberal subjectivity within this practice of "refusing to help" (Kohn, 2006, p.66). An example would be when a student forgets their library book in the classroom and, rather than encouraging them to retrieve it for return to the librarian, the teacher declines the student's request to remedy the problem so that they might take out a new book. The idea is that, because of the 'natural consequence,' which somehow causes the forgetful student to be enlightened with the value of responsibility, the next time the class goes to the library the student will have learned their lesson and will remember their book. Perhaps the goal in that action is to teach a moral lesson, but it is arguable what exactly the message will be. Foucault would, once again, identify punishment and therefore connect the teacher's efforts to an exercise in control. A whole-system goal is being supported when there is an effort to maintain teacher authority by putting the student in the position of oppressed. The confusing 'moral' message is that the student must always be prepared to help the teacher, because 'good' students are helpful, but the person in power can choose when to be helpful, when to be caring, when to offer understanding, and when to exercise their power over others. This does not exactly sound like the sort of values we think of when ruminating on how to make students into better people for a better world. If moral education is teaching students how to endure an oppressive state; how to sustain oneself in a system that relies on one's own discipline, coercion, and manipulation; and how to support a framework in which students who succeed are the ones who stop asking "why?", then *why* do so many continue to call for its preservation and employment?

Control/Chaos and Dissent: Arguments Against Abandonment

The assumption is that without organized management, discipline, and authority from the teacher, the classroom would turn to chaos. If moral education was discarded, control relinquished, and the preoccupation with compliance put to an end, it would be an invitation to disorder, confusion, and anarchy. To echo Foucault, the assumption that students need to be controlled, that a teacher must maintain order, is a statement about one's view of students (or workers, or patients, or humans) (1975). The expectation that chaos is the opposite of control conveys the belief that students are without foresight, irresponsible, uncompassionate, untrustworthy, and uninterested and not committed to learning (Kohn, 2006). Further, it implies that if students are not given direct instructions, or indoctrinated into a prepared and meticulous routine, they will not act appropriately. In the article, "The Magnificence of Getting into Trouble: Finding Hope in Classroom Disobedience and Resistance", Sherri Leafgren states that it is "common practice to hold such structures in high regard, as a kind of *system to believe in* out of fear of chaos" (2009, p.67, *emphasis original*). An example of the fear of any alternative to control is found in the story of "Julian", a kindergartener who had difficulty complying with the rules of the classroom and, as a result, often ended up sent into the hall, or against the wall at recess, as punishment (Leafgren, 2009). The story, which has been pulled from Leafgren's experience as a teacher, is told as follows;

> I could hear Mrs. Buttercup's class pass our room on their way to the restroom. The line was quiet and orderly. The children finished at the restroom and the line began moving past my door on their return to their classroom. Suddenly, Phwaaat!!! Ooooooffff! It was Reuben, a classmate of Julian's, falling and hitting the hard tile floor. As I reached the door of my classroom to check what had occurred, I could see Julian move from his place at the end of the line to help Reuben up; I heard his voice, 'Are you OK, Reuben?' and then, Mrs. Buttercup's, 'That's two, Julian: you're

> talking and you are out of line. You're on the wall at recess.' And the class moved on and away from our door. (Leafgren, 2009, p.66)

In this example, Leafgren recognises the 'goodness' in Julian's act of non-compliance. But their co-workers, when asked to weigh in on what had happened, thought that the acting teacher was right in exercising their control; the child who stepped out of line and spoke had to be punished (Leafgren, 2009). One teacher exclaimed, "'What if all the children had gotten out of line to help him? It would be chaos!' and that Julian needed to know the limits, 'Give him an inch and he'll take a mile' [sic]" (Leafgren, 2009, p.68). Once again, the Myth of Necessity rears its ugly head and, as Kohn notes, "[c]ounterposing control to chaos… has the effect of ruling out any other possibility" (2006, p.2).

The arguments that children want boundaries, thrive with direction, and require limits to be set, could be fair and possibly even true. I am not arguing that we abandon liberal moral education and leave the spaces it occupied vacant. What I am trying to show is that within the current approach, when students fail to learn their 'moral' lessons, there is a call for more discipline, stricter guidelines, and closer monitoring. Kohn expresses that this strategy creates a "vicious circle for all concerned" because, "[n]o matter how many times we've watched as the child being punished lashes out… no matter how many times a punitive intervention fails to bring about any improvement (and, more likely, actually makes things worse), we may assume that the only possible response is to punish again" (2006, p.66). Discipline[13] appears to be a self-reinforcing

[13] 'Discipline' is being used in the sense of behaviour management, although it should still be read with Foucauldian applications in mind. Although some may argue that 'discipline' is meant to be guidance or teaching, I am arguing that it is used more often to correct and control. In the next chapter I will speak to the ways in which discipline dehumanises both the person who is being disciplined and the person who is

aspect of the system; if the system's goal is to maintain control, the idea is that the more punishments and rewards doled out the more the "positive feedback loop"[14] gains its power (Meadows, 1999, p.11). If discipline worked, if it taught students a lesson in responsibility or respect, there would be no 'loop' because the message would have reached home and there would be no need for teaching it all over again. In order to intervene in this system, the rules will have to be not just broken, but re-written; Meadows calls it "self-organizing" and a belief in a diversity of possibilities (1999, p.15). When there is only one way of doing things, such as the "[i]nsistence on a single culture", the system will face collapse; if the rule is always control, to be in control at all times, it only takes an organised effort to relinquish control to upset the whole-system goal. If we are open to other possibilities, besides simply control, we may be able to overcome this fear of chaos. Ford explains that a withdrawal from the liberal framework must be in part an effort to "observe the extent to which effects of power narrow the possibilities of discourse and/or obscure its boundaries" (2003, p.18). We cannot further "progress-ify" our classrooms and eliminate productive power but, "we can, however, actively cultivate an awareness of the dangers" of our entrenched need for control (Ford, 2003, p.21).

There is one type of control that many agree benefits a society, but as I have previously argued it is only another method used to control the chaos we have learned to fear; as Foucault explains, resistance is an inevitable response to control (1975). Leafgren contends that children subjected to the current system are "burdened

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dispensing the discipline, but at this point I am using the word 'discipline' in an effort to highlight its problematic nature.

[14] This type of loop promotes growth sometimes to the point of possibly negative effects.

with the fear of retaliation for what *must* seem to them as unreasonable and capricious standards of behaviour" and it is "the deeply oppressive nature of schools" that elicits defiance (Leafgren, 2009, p.71/63). Oral also acknowledges this struggle in the conclusion of their paper when they write that "[d]espite the constraints on students' behaviours established by the organized classroom space, and maintained by the teacher's exercise of power, they seem to resist these constraints within a field of available, though sparse, possibilities" (Oral, 2013, p.107). Foucault, and others, acknowledge that people within the system that aims to control them, that seeks only compliance, will resist (1975).

When I speak with teachers, and mention that I write about resistance, most often they will respond with something like, "Resistance? If you want to know about resistance, come see my class after I have assigned math!" They are speaking of resistance as a negative; they are referring to behaviour that is non-compliant, such as students groaning or expressing their disdain for the work. When the word 'resistance' is used, as Graham McDonough explains in their article, it is usually received negatively and associated with "those who would use force or non-compliance to withstand or oppose something that is disliked" (2010, p.423). Joyce Bellous suggests that this common approach to resistance is located in what they call a "dominator paradigm for power relations; within this view an essential antagonism structures the pedagogical relationship" (1996, p.134). That is to say that we often view student resistance as "something usually negative or undesirable… (and) to be avoided whenever possible" (Leighteizer, 2006, p.27). The conduct of the students being assigned mathematics work is not exhibiting *resistance* in the sense that I would like to understand it, nor are they

exhibiting *dissent* in the way that McDonough writes about the concept. If students are likely to resist, and resistance is an undermining or subversion of a system and its tools, such as whole-system goals, rules, or other "leverage points", it would be to the benefit of the system to have structures in place that limit or compromise resistance (Meadows, 1999, p.1). Dissent, in the way that McDonough frames the notion, is that tool. The term 'dissent', as well as its purpose, is described as "[a] state of loyal disagreement *for the good of that to which one belongs*" (McDonough, 2010, p.422, *emphasis original*). The first and possibly most problematic aspect of dissent is that it requires belonging; for McDonough, 'enfranchisement' is the first criterion for dissent and is "based upon at least a working knowledge of the historical narratives and philosophical assumptions that constitute the prevailing and subordinated views in the institution that houses the dissent" (2010, p.425).

In the context of dissent, 'belonging' means that one is a subjective part of a group that operates within a system; a piece within a structure that has the autonomy to create and to change its make-up but one that also must balance a sort of 'inbetweenness' because they are both loyal to the system and the group (McDonough, 2010). With a desire to "maintain membership" in a group, a dissident who disagrees enough with the existing opinions to which they cannot simply acquiesce must find a way to challenge the prevailing view without jettisoning the rules and goals of the system; a dissident maintains loyalty to the group by operating within its structure (McDonough, 2010). A dissident's loyalty to the system is demonstrated by their desire to remain behind the line that, when crossed, one becomes a rebel; an 'imminent critic' may desire change or to "reform an institution from within its existing structure and assumes that the material

with which to fashion an improvement is already present, although it may be dormant" (McDonough, 2010, p.424). A dissident's allegiance is demonstrated by "sitting apart" from the group, perhaps in an attempt to improve an institution for the sake of the amelioration of one's group, but not for the purpose of challenging or dismantling the framework that houses the group (McDonough, 2010, p.424). McDonough examines this loyalty to both group and system in the example of a judicial panel, "when decisions are not unanimous, majority and dissenting opinions are expressed. The dissenting opinions disagree with the majority *opinions*, but they do not disagree with the *court*, ostensibly because the judges who wrote them *are part of the court* and so constitute part of the adjudicative authority upon which the panel's verdict rests" (2010, p.424, *emphasis original*). I am arguing that, because the system serves only some people - those who benefit from the system or 'the elite' - I find there to be a different sense of belonging; one cannot 'sit apart' from a group of which one was never a fully enfranchised member. The baseline of membership, as Socrates argued in *The Apology*, is 'loyalty'; as a loyal Athenian, they argue that they are only disagreeing with the prevailing view that finds philosophy to be an action against the state and *not* disputing the legitimacy of the court itself. Socrates saw great value in the city-state and did not want to dismantle its structures but only awaken its minds so that its greatness could be built upon.

The Myth of Dissent is powerful because it is upheld by a narrative buttressed by aspects of the other myths of liberal moral education. For example, the system is *necessary* and without it there would be chaos; of course, the system may be desirable for the benefits it could deliver but this also produces a belief that even if the rules or goals of a paradigm are problematic, or oppressive, it is still preferable to any alternative. This

frame of reference limits disagreement to dissent because it creates the illusion that questioning the prevailing schema is unfounded and risky. Another illustration would be the belief that dissent is *neutral* to politics because it is an effort to find an avenue that will not upset the ideology and work within *universal* understandings of what is 'right,' 'virtuous,' and ultimately in support of 'The Good.' The illusion of belonging to a group, in the sense that one may have control over their own autonomous path in life, or a say in how society will manifest, is an element of the Myth of Liberal Subjectivity. This myth supports the belief that if one disagrees with a prevailing opinion, then one can dissent, which elicits a false sense of belonging, personal control, and freedom, because if one disagrees with the system that manifests the 'opinion' they are crossing the carefully drawn line. Although both oppressed and oppressor are dehumanised by their respective roles, where the oppressed are exploited and the oppressors are also enslaved by their dependence on oppression, there is still variance in power and enfranchisement. [15] The oppressed are *not one of* the oppressors; they cannot dissent legitimately unless they remain oppressed. This is the aim of this system-supporting tool in that the disclaimer pronounces that only certain types of dissent are 'legitimate' or 'responsible.' Thomas Platt argued that, when dissent is limited, or labelled as 'responsible' or 'irresponsible,' it is done so by those whose exercise of power is threatened (1971). The line between

[15] McDonough argues that 'enfranchisement' "has a descriptive relevance which holds that dissent originates from a share in or belonging to the group or association" (2010, p.424), citing Sarat who writes that the "dissenter is neither a conformist nor revolutionary, for she [sic] is at once within, but outside of, the community and its conventions" (Sarat, 2005, p.2). I am suggesting that there are times when one is not 'enfranchised' because I understand the term to also mean that a person who belongs in a group would also have the same rights and be subject to the same terms as other members of a group. For example, poor Canadians are still Canadians but it has been argued that, once a Canadian becomes impoverished, the laws of the state affect them in a way that limits their rights (Swanson, 2001). A well dressed, clearly middle-class person may sit on the sidewalk for a rest without being harassed by police but a person who is suspected to be dealing with homelessness will likely not be afforded that same consideration (Swanson, 2001). If one does not have the same rights, or is excluded or oppressed, they are not enfranchised in a way so that they *can* dissent; due to choice or circumstance they do not belong because they are too far outside of "the community and its conventions" (Sarat, 2005, p.2).

dissent and resistance is sometimes thought to be precarious; it is as though dissent, if not kept in check, could be a slippery slope. As Platt explains, dissent tends to reduce the power of the person with authority; this is precisely why 'responsible' or 'acceptable' dissent needs to be taught in a way such that the system remains unchallenged (1971). Platt found that limiting dissent, pushing out the irresponsible kind that may be likened to resistance, could have negative impacts on democracy (1971).

There are limits to dissent and this, the liberal framework argues, makes it better than resistance. According to the myths, resistance has a dangerous lack of limits; dissent is controlled (good) and resistance is chaos (bad). The problem of *who* decides when the line is crossed from 'immanent' to 'rejectionist' critic must be addressed (Walzer, 1988). McDonough contends that dissent is "a contra-hegemonic act" and that "contra-hegemony is not always directed at the extension of increased social-political franchise or even necessarily good or right in itself" (2010, p.428). Platt claims that it is not always viewed as good or right, and a question of who determines this is precisely why dissent is inadequate; it can be determined to be appropriate or inappropriate and this is a feature regulated by power (1971). This point is best put down to this quotation: "A concern for justice thus regulates dissent" (McDonough, 2010, p.430). Because what is determined to be just, as was evidenced in the previous chapter in a discussion of Kohlberg and the Myth of 'The Good,' is determined by a system, dissent is a tool of the system due to its regulation. Dissent, like justice, is structurally political. By insisting on 'enfranchisement', and the way in which dissent "aims to reform an institution from within its existing structure", it cannot address its politicised nature or the role of systemic oppression (McDonough, 2010, p.424).

Because resistance is an address to systemic nature, it is inherently rejectionist; Ford writes that "[w]e can neither return to an earlier system of teaching practice nor select a definitive system of classroom organization that will liberate us from the previous effects of power" (2003, p.19). In order to move away from a system based on control, one in which the Master-Slave Dialectic[16] is essential because of the presence of productive power, the system and its structure must be abandoned; as Audre Lorde exclaimed, "for the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house" (Lorde, 1984). It is not enough to teach students, and it is here that I could not agree with McDonough more, that dissent is a "vital concept in moral education" (2010). Learning how to dissent, along with the other Myths of Moral Education, is comparable to learning to play by the rules or within structures, accept the game or system, and to work within the confines of oppression; it is learning to serve the system. If the system itself is designed to oppress, and dissent is an effort to disagree within limits so that a structure is maintained, it is difficult to believe that contra-hegemony is possible. Students deserve more, as Boutte notes, "[w]hile we are waiting for young children to be developmentally ready to consider these issues, they are already developing values and beliefs about them" (as cited by Leafgren, 2009, p.67). Students must learn to recognise the system and be empowered to challenge it, even reject it, and create something new.

[16] There will be a discussion surrounding Hegel's Master-Slave Dialectic in chapter three. It will be explained in depth and related to theoretical implication for education and moral education.

Beyond Our Jettison

The "daily oppression of children" through the practice of moral education is dire and requires immediate and critical attention (Leafgren, 2009, p.62). It could be that we are motivated by the broader problems argued above and want to thwart a neoliberal agenda. Perhaps we are drawn to end student oppression because, as Leafgren puts it, children's "lives are not being lost as they were (and are) in war, but most assuredly, in schools day after day, there are lives being wasted" (2009, p.64). It is my hope that I have convinced you that something must change. Maybe we can be motivated by the original purported goal of making better people for a better world along with an intention of locating an intrinsic sense of morality that originates prior to politics. The abandonment of a liberal moral education is about realising the way in which power operates within its practices; teaching kids to be their best selves may not be all that problematic but teaching kids to be compliant and docile, as the equivalent to 'good,' is extremely so.

Through the above text, we can determine that the role of the student is to be 'good' and "[it] does not take long for five-year-olds to be indoctrinated into believing that goodness equals compliance" (Leafgren, 2009, p.67). But, if we are to abandon moral education, what alternative awaits beyond our jettison? In the next, and final chapter, I will introduce a praxis that is meant to support Pedagogies of Resistance. I propose that only through teacher transformation, and resolution of a dialectic that requires allegiance to liberal systemic goals, can resistance truly become part of a classroom. The aim is that through a fundamental change in what it means to be a 'teacher' as well as a new perspective of 'students,' student skills of moral reasoning, and

their motivation to be morally conscious participants, will be accessed in a way that considers productive power and exposes systems while moving towards both teacher and student empowerment. If you are open to possibilities beyond chaos, read on.

- Chapter Three -

Beyond Leverage Points

> *"In the end, it seems that power has less to do with pushing leverage points than it does with strategically, profoundly, madly letting go." - Meadows, 1999, p.19*

When I was in the first grade, I knew that I wanted to be a teacher. My teacher at the time, or even the other teachers I would encounter, did not inspire this sudden goal; rather, the teacher I imagined myself to become, and the difference I would make in the lives of my students, was what kindled my motivation. Although my future teacher-self, the one that I visualised at that young age, was modified over the years, the general picture remained the same; I would be a 'good teacher' and, for me, that meant caring for students, being compassionate to their needs, and empowering them to be who they wanted to be. I spent much of my school career assessing my own teachers, those who I admired and others whom I found wanting, and thinking of which of their traits, skills, and ideas I would manifest. What did I hope these aspects - the ones that I understood as crucial to the role - would help me to achieve: the formation of students who would be fulfilled by their education and who would enter the world outside of the classroom as morally conscious. I believed that the features of my philosophy and practice that made me a 'good teacher' were also central to an emergence of moral participation among my students and would contribute to making the world a better place.

The details of my story may or may not be unique, but I would argue that many who teach have a vision of what their role in a classroom will be as well as what goals

they hope their practice will achieve. Perhaps some model themselves after that one, incredible teacher, while others take their negative experiences to decide who they will not become. The problem is not that we conceptualize ourselves as educators, but rather, it is our ongoing focus in maintaining the dream and consequently our opposition to critiquing, or moving beyond, that particular performance. It is troublesome, to say the least, that the role that we manifest may not be in service to our goals, but instead undermining them, and that we allow this conflict to go unchecked mostly because any alternative seems far-fetched.

Moral education holds a place in our envisagement; although we may resist using these exact words, it is a foundational belief among contemporary, mainstream Canadian educators that a 'good teacher' is in control of their classroom. In our collective imagining, even among a new generation of 'progressive' teachers, an ideal classroom is filled with students who are happily on-task, the teacher is relaxed because they have set up a classroom system that is based on student internalisation of norms; they understand the 'guidelines' written on the wall, and there are routines and a 'classroom culture' that have been established so that each student knows what to do. When a teacher is successful, students learn their moral lessons; the calm and happy room of participating students is evidence of their education. A 'good student' is compliant and a 'good teacher' is effective in their students' inculcation into this social expectation. A teacher is particularly impressive when they accomplish the above through a means almost undetectable. After a move away from liberal conceptions of moral education and its myths, the question of what is possible, in terms of new pedagogy, relies on teacher transformation and redefining what it means to be a 'teacher.' This shift is complicated

because the system has teachers stuck in a place from which we cannot see another way of doing things. We are so entrenched in this need for control, so committed to our response of discipline and our role in surveillance, and so convinced in our belief that students will revert to chaos without our management. Because of elements inherent to our role, we are assured in our belief that to try something else would be uncomfortable, difficult, and not only inevitably more work but also we rather doubt that anything unconventional, or radical, could work at all.

Despite the various ongoing efforts of the 'progressive education' movement, and calls by activists and scholars such as bell hooks, Paulo Freire, and others, to enact liberatory frameworks in education, teachers remain preoccupied with compliance as well as both reluctant and uncomfortable with student empowerment. In this final chapter, I begin by assessing some of the barriers to pedagogical change and propose that what needs to occur is a teacher transformation through what I call a Praxis of 'Letting Go'. By examining barriers that keep teachers working within the current paradigm, such as the belief that without the control of students chaos would ensue, as well as the need to perform a specific ideal of the role of 'teacher', I aim to speak to the simple yet seemingly insurmountable act of 'letting go,' and reveal its empowering qualities. My hope is that a Praxis of Letting Go will help redefine the role of the teacher in a way that will allow for resistance in the classroom. Following this discussion, I will detail what I call 'Pedagogies of Resistance': a three-part approach that is in response to the vacancy of which an abandonment of a liberal moral education would result. This section will address separately the three components that take the form of the following questions: (1)

What is the danger here? (2) How can I be compassionate? (3) How can I further systemic empowerment?

The Praxis of 'Letting Go'

After establishing moral education as a tool of the liberal paradigm, and working though a deeper discussion of the ways in which it operates (its mythology, as well as the problematic impacts of its presence in mainstream, Canadian education, including both traditional and 'progressive' approaches), the first question is how to appeal to teachers to challenge this repressive system? It can be a rude awakening to discover that the very features that make one a 'good teacher' are, both in a philosophical and practical sense, also a manifestation of the goals of a system bent on teaching compliance. But, even after we have become privy to the system, and recognize the paradigm, we hold on to the many lessons and beliefs and the system's goals that we have internalised. For many, renouncing our role as the teacher we know and understand not only seems impossible but also irresponsible. Many efforts to reshape education in an effort to reflect renditions on the pedagogical approaches of liberatory educators fail; attempts to take on some of these critical theories, while still operating within the liberal framework, often face barriers to being translated into the practices of mainstream, Canadian teachers. There are resulting misunderstandings; with certain aspects of pedagogy being left out of an approach because of its seeming irrelevance to common elementary or secondary classrooms, while other elements, due to their 'political' nature, face alteration in an effort to make them more acceptable and familiar to the prevalent educational narratives of neutrality.

Although the influential and empowering scholarship of hooks and Freire, as well as their theoretical and philosophical frameworks of which many have deeply explored, have inspired what will be offered here, I would like to address what I understand to be stopping mainstream, Canadian teachers from taking on Pedagogies of Resistance and help them in recovering or reinterpreting their desire to pass on a sense of morality that is something other than liberal goals centred on compliance. Before Pedagogies of Resistance, or of empowerment, or for liberation, can be put into effect, we must begin with a Praxis of 'Letting Go.'

In my search for alternatives to the contemporary liberal approach to moral education, I encountered an article surrounding Buddhism and teaching virtue by Daniel Vokey (2011). From a lay Buddhist perspective, Vokey explains that virtues education is important because of the role it can play in healing and reviving the disintegrating and failing ecological, economic, political, and social frameworks throughout the world (Vokey, 2011). In the article, I could see similarities between Buddhism's interpretation of what was wrong with the way in which we understand morality and Freire's interpretation of Hegel's Master-Slave-Dialectic (MSD).[17] Vokey contends that Buddhism "understands our existential uncertainty, and the feelings of uneasiness and dissatisfaction that result, to be the root cause of the 'three poisons' of greed, aggression, and ignorance" (2011, p.404). Further, they explain the way in which our need for control or power causes further self-doubt, isolation, and unhappiness because, although we might accumulate power, it is "to no avail, because whatever we imagine we gain quickly becomes something that we fear to lose" (Vokey, 2011, p.404); this is just as the

[17] Hegel's Master-Slave-Dialectic, and Freire's analysis of it, will be discussed later in this chapter.

Master is dehumanised by their fear of losing their authority over the Slave. But despite our deeply ingrained pre-occupation with maintaining our role, and its resulting effect of causing us to be "chronically indifferent to the well-being of others", Buddhist philosophy offers hope (Vokey, 2011, p.404). In a quotation from Sogyal Rinpoché, a Tibetan Dzogchen lama of the Nyingma tradition, we learn that the answer is found in a "complete absence of grasping. The diminishing of your grasping is a sign that you are becoming freer of yourself" (Sogyal, 1995, as cited by Vokey, 2011, 404). It is the "complete absence of grasping", or 'letting go,' that speaks to me as a possible reaction to the problems that I have been describing.

In this section, I will explore three questions: the first being, what are we 'letting go'? Secondly, what are the barriers to 'letting go'? And, finally, why? What happens when we 'let go'? But before engaging with those questions, I will introduce the theory surrounding Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel's Master-Slave Dialectic, which will serve my approach to answering the problems of power throughout this chapter. Following this Hegelian primer, I will take some time to address what is meant by 'praxis' within a hooks-Freirian framework.

A Hegelian Primer

In the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hegel explores human consciousness, self-consciousness, and a struggle for recognition (1807/1977). For Hegel, a consciousness of objects, or anything outside of one's self, is evidence of some awareness of self as a subject and as separate from the object one interprets (1807/1997). Hegel presents a situation in which they bring together two beings, each aware of themselves, to provoke

"two possibilities of consciousness: to be in itself or for another" (Torres, 1994, p.432). Hegel explains that when two beings meet, they can recognise each other's own self-awareness, or rather they can acknowledge that they are each self-conscious forms; in doing so, they can accept each other as equivalent subjects or simply as living objects (Torres, 1994). But, for the beings to become fully human, they must recognize the self-consciousness of the other; "self-consciousness exists in and for itself when, and by the fact that, it so exists for another; that is, it exists only in being acknowledged" (Hegel, 1807/1997, p.111, sec.178). This is interesting because, as will be discussed later in regards to Foucault, and their interpretation of *subjectivity*, this implies that self-consciousness is not the quintessence of a human being but that it is inculcated from an external source, that is to say from the *other*.

The journey to becoming fully self-conscious diverges down a path where the beings might enter into an action of opposing social forces. MSD is described in stages: first, "The Recognition of Self-Consciousness" (Torres, 1994, p.433) is when the two beings "*recognize* themselves as *mutually recognizing* one another" (Hegel, 1807/1977, p.112, sec.184). Following this, there is "The Struggle of Opposed Self-Consciousnesses" (Torres, 1994, p.434). Because, according to Hegel, "it is only through staking one's life that freedom is won" and so they must enter into an historical battle to control the other (Hegel, 1807/1977, p.114). Hegel argues that the struggle is necessary; they write, "[t]hey must engage in this struggle for they must engage in this certainty of being *for themselves* to truth, both in the case of the other and in their own case" (Hegel, 1807/1977, p.114, sec.187). But, although they fight for control, or to dominate each other, the problem of where the fight is leading is revealed; it is a double-edged sword

because if one person is made victor their "desire at the same time would be frustrated because nobody would remain alive to recognize him [sic]" (Torres, 1994, p.434). The next stage in the journey of opposing forces is "Dominion" and "Fear" because, according to C. A. Torres, "it is necessary that both adversaries remain alive after the struggle; still, this can only be accomplished if both have different behaviors in the struggle" (1994, p.434). This situation is helpful for neither party; the self-consciousness of the Master is dependent upon the Slave for recognition, while the Slave is not fully self-conscious because they are forced to produce for the Master; each only exists in relation to the other (Torres, 1994). The Master is seen through the eyes of the Slave who is not recognized as fully human because they lost the battle, so consequently the Master's victory is false because there is no other fully self-conscious being to acknowledge their existence (Torres, 1994). Because "the Master consumes without working", the Master is dependent upon the Slave who works to produces things and therefore, from the point of view of the Master, they must constantly maintain their dominance; while the Slave fears death and the Master, the Master fears the loss of their position (Torres, 1994, p.436). Both the Master and the slave are dehumanised and enslaved by their roles. In the final stage of "Cultural Formation" it is argued that because the Slave experiences "fear (fear of dying), service as a general way of being a universal sentiment - through obedience; and work as forming agency - as something educative", they can be liberated and free themselves from the Master (Torres, 1994, p.436).[18] Moving forward, it is important to note the belief that the Master cannot free the Slave; it is also essential to draw attention to my design to work towards a liberation of the Master (or teacher).

[18] This dialectic will be taken up, in this chapter, in relation to Freire and a Praxis of 'Letting Go.'

The Subversive Nature of Praxis

It is a common reaction among those in the field of education to view theory as "an abstract idea or phenomenon", while practice is understood to involve "an action component that goes beyond the abstraction of theory" (Breunig, 2005, p.109). Because of these typical constructions of theory and practice as separate and different, calls for a change in practice are accepted by many educators as more approachable and, at the same time, arguments for revisions to theory, or critiques of premises and assumptions that inform practice, are considered more complex, perplexing, confrontational, and subversive (Breunig, 2005). Mary Breunig suggests that one way to approach theory is to view it as a representation of knowledge, "while practice is the application of that knowledge"; yet, they admit one of the remaining "key issues still facing … critical pedagogy is its implementation" (Breunig, 2005, p.109). The central difficulty in the execution of an alternative pedagogy is argued to be a deficiency in congruence, or cooperation, between the undertaking of pedagogical theories *and* relevant practice (Breunig, 2005). Freire's call for *praxis* is an effort towards bringing theory and practice together, as well as understanding their interconnected relationship (2005). It is a summons to recognise and appreciate that "theory informs practice, while experiential and practical knowledge can be employed as a means to understanding and interpreting that theory" (Breunig, 2005, p.109).

Both hooks and Freire understand that there is a danger in separating their theories from the corresponding possibilities of practice. In their ground-breaking book, *Teaching to Transgress*, bell hooks explains that "[b]y reinforcing the idea that there is a

split between theory and practice, or by creating such a split, both groups [those who construct theories and those who react to theories] deny the power of liberatory education for critical consciousness, therefore perpetuating conditions that reinforce our collective exploitation and repression" (1994, p.69). The marrying of theory and practice, or a 'praxis,' which Freire defines as a "reflection and action directed at the structures to be transformed", would encourage teachers in a movement towards teaching resistance because teaching how to theorize supports subversive practice (2005, p.124). hooks clarifies this point by writing that,

> When our lived experience of theorizing is fundamentally linked to processes of self-recovery, of collective liberation, no gap exists between theory and practice. Indeed, what such experience makes more evident is the bond between the two – that ultimately reciprocal process wherein one enables the other. (hooks, 1994, p.61)

The message is clear: for the effective education of students with skills that encourage them to lead in their own struggle for emancipation, or their own concept of 'The Good,' or in Freire's words, "becoming more fully complete" as humans, there must be an understanding of praxis (2005, p.44). Without praxis, an approach that involves teaching students to resist could quite easily maintain the "banking model" of education Freire so carefully argues against (2005, p.55). For example, when a teacher adopts a practice of including students in discussions of how a classroom will operate, but without a theoretical or philosophical understanding of why this change is an important feature of their education model, it is possible that the practice could be misapplied. Perhaps the teacher, lacking knowledge surrounding power in a classroom, involves students in a discussion that is inauthentic and managed, in a covert way, by the expectations and norms already established. Perhaps the teacher in this example praises the students who

make suggestions that the teacher already has in mind. This type of interaction with students maintains the dominant role for the teacher by employing tactics typical of a liberal paradigm and a system of control. If teachers are to avoid depositing information into the empty vessels that the students represent within the banking concept of education, a significant shift in the perceptions and expectations of the roles being performed by both teachers and students must take place. It is difficult to change our pedagogical processes, just as it can be challenging to acknowledge our social location, because sometimes the "person who is most powerful has the privilege of denying their body[19]" (hooks, 1994, p.137). Within our 'teacher identity' there exists our conception of our role as 'teacher' and what we understand the performance of this capacity to resemble. The above call for a paradigm shift, and a realization of goals beyond those of a liberal framework, is simultaneously calling for teacher transformation; and I know from my own personal experience that this revolution can be frightening and uncomfortable. Throughout the sections discussing this praxis, I will address some of these challenges and also some of the empowering aspects of change.

Letting Go of Our 'Role'

Freire explains that "[t]o surmount the situation of oppression, people must first critically recognize its causes, so that through transforming action they can create a new situation, one which makes possible the pursuit of a fuller humanity" (2005, p.42). They also acknowledge a duality within the oppressed; much like an internalization of norms, which Foucault designated in their analysis of power and control (1975); wherein there is an element within a person that desires freedom but there is an equally formidable

[19] By "body" hooks is referring to a person's position or privilege in a social and/or political context.

component that wants to maintain safety in the acceptance of, or denial of, their own subjectification (Freire, 2005). It is easier to maintain the status quo, especially when the Myth of Liberal Subjectivity feeds us a narrative that conceals or contradicts our oppression and our dehumanisation through productive power.

Teachers are also impacted by this duality; the way in which a liberal framework seeks compliance and rewards docility in students seems to benefit teachers through their placement in positions that appear to hold 'power', at least in the sense of Foucauldian discipline. It is in maintaining the role of 'good teacher' within the expectations of the paradigm that we find the contrast; teachers must compromise their own goals and fulfil those of a system. In recognizing our true role within a liberal paradigm, and the way in which the prescribed functions of the Myths of Moral Education undermine any altruistic intentions with students that we, as educators, may have, it is thought that perhaps the specific identity of 'teacher-as-subject' can be overcome. But it is not enough to identify oppression or to establish the ways in which teachers and students are affected by dehumanization; letting go of our 'role' is about promoting a transformation in which both can be reborn as agents. Recognising our own lack of agency begins with unpacking our subjectivity. Rather than simply being a subject, or a self-aware entity and one who chooses how to think and act, we are engulfed in subjectivity. We are products of a process of socialisation and subjectivity is not only a way in which we experience our self but also the way in which we are told, through productive power, how we *should* view our self (Kelly, 2013). Foucault explains that the individual defines their own subjectivity through binaries of truth (socially manifested 'truth,' an example would be gender roles); subjectivity is "historically constituted" and Foucault "insists that the

subject constitutes itself…using the techniques available to it historically, and doubtless under the influence of myriad factors outside its control" (Kelly, 2013, p.513). When considering choosing the path towards agency, and by 'agency' I mean becoming a 'conscious subject' and one who employs "thematic investigation [which] thus becomes a common striving towards awareness of reality", the question arises: how could one encourage students towards agency when also facing one's own subjectivity (Freire, 2005, p.105)?

In the Praxis of 'Letting Go,' and voluntarily giving up our 'role,' we are letting go of being *the* authority, or Master, while recognizing our own subjectivity. Teachers, their role intertwined in productive power, must relinquish their tendency to objectify power and instead work to identify relations of power and, although they appear to be firmly established, make efforts to upset them. We must be able to step outside of our paradigm and see its objective reality, understand its problems and perceive its impacts, and "in order to transform it" we need to make an effort to end our dependency on it (Freire, 2005, p.53). For Freire, in order to "resolve the teacher-student contradiction, to exchange the role of depositor, prescriber, domesticator, for the role of student among students would be to undermine the power of oppression and serve the cause of liberation" (Freire, 2005, p.73). Students cannot be *given* their liberation, but rather they must struggle for it; simultaneously, we as teachers cannot paternalistically supply our students with freedom but we can let go of our role as the oppressor (Freire, 2005).

Freire was not the first, nor the last, to compare the roles of teacher and student to Hegel's Master-Slave Dialectic and the movement from dependency on an oppressive

structure to a shared, intersubjective, interindependence (2005). In order to overcome the problem of a subject-object binary, and to become self-conscious, there must be an organised and collective activity because transformation cannot occur with an act of individual achievement or simply with natural evolution; rather, "this transforming process can only come about when the subjective *and* the objective begin to converge, opposing and uniting with one another, mutually constituting each other, in a single process and project of societal transformation" (Torres, 1994, p.440). Freire begins from a standpoint of union and solidarity in which "consciousness and world cannot be dichotomized" and therefore there is always unity between "theory and praxis, between content and method, between thought and being, and between objectivity and subjectivity" (Torres, 1994, p.437). The teacher, who is in the role of Master, can let go of the dominating and oppressive features of their position and, rather than adopting the contrasting attributes of the Slave, they can enter into a role of solidarity and recognise the self-consciousness of the student. In relinquishing their need to dominate, "which restores at once the humanity of both the oppressed and the oppressor", they become emancipated (Torres, 1994, p.441). To clarify the movement to which I am referring, please see the figure below:

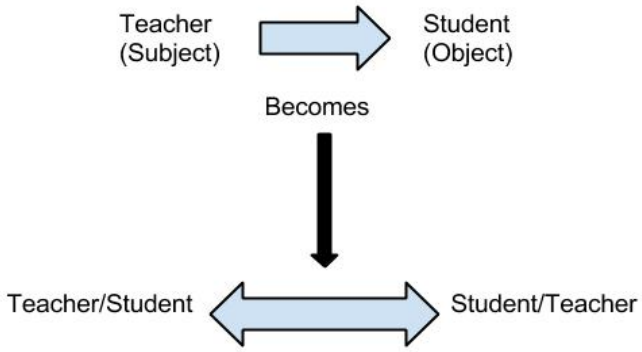

Figure 1

Without teacher transformation, and without a change in the perception of the teacher-role and the student-role, there cannot be points of intervention; the system is maintained within these roles. Letting go of our role, and recognising the student-as-agent, is integral to our own liberation, as well as that of the students. As hooks explains, "empowerment cannot happen if we refuse to be vulnerable while encouraging students to take risks"; our teaching practice must also be a site of resistance and our reflection put into action (1994, p.21).

Of course, there are barriers to letting go of our 'role'; because we are so conditioned to be in a position of orchestration, there is a risk that we may tend to attempt to arrange or manage the realisation of the self-consciousness or resistance of others. It is the habit of the teacher, in the role of Master, to control the conversation. The teacher has the answers and leads the class in a discussion, they can design and enforce rules, and so it is the teacher's concept of 'the good' to which students measure themselves. Both

Freire and hooks encourage the use of 'dialogue' as an element of their critical framework. hooks attributes the presence of personal narratives essential to breaking down barriers and impacting the teacher's role as "all-knowing, silent interrogators" (1994, p.21). In order for dialogue to take place, Freire's pedagogy calls for a sense of humility, the presence of trust, and an acknowledgement of oppression but also a renouncing of one's role as 'teacher/subject' (2005). Without letting go of this capacity, the teacher runs the risk of "false generosity" and "[r]ationalizing his [sic] guilt through paternalistic treatment of the oppressed, all the while holding them fast in a position of dependence" (Freire, 2005, p.42/47). Dialogue can be used as a means of avoiding leaders bringing 'salvation' to peasants, or as we understand the problem in mainstream, North American classrooms, the *teacher giving their* students power (also known as 'choices,' 'options,' 'opportunities,' or 'motivation'), which maintains the above teacher-as-subject, student-as-object, education model (Freire, 2005). As Freire wrote, "[p]edagogy which begins with the egoistic interest of the oppressors (an egoism cloaked in the false generosity of paternalism) and makes of the oppressed the objects of its humanitarianism, itself maintains and embodies oppression"; teacher transformation involves a change in the way in which we understand our own role but, at the same time, a re-vision in the way we understand students as well (2005, p.52). Teachers must see students as capable of their own liberation and students must be trusted to become "critical co-investigators in dialogue with the teacher" (Freire, 2005, p.79). As noted earlier, current progressive approaches continue to maintain the systemic goal of control under the guise of 'letting students have control.' Intervening in a system involves more than leverage points, such as recognising the paradigm or understanding its goals, but also "strategically, profoundly, madly letting go" (Meadows, 1999, p.19).

Letting Go of 'Chaos'

One of the most common reactions surrounding my opposition to the liberal goal of 'control' and teaching for compliance, which is also a barrier to a Praxis of 'Letting Go,' is the fear of chaos. The problem is due in part to a false dichotomy of control and chaos that invokes a fear of possibilities outside of the standard rule, creating the element of teacher reluctance. If the rule is always control, to be in control at all times, it may only take an organised effort to relinquish control to upset the whole-system goal; if teachers, in community, decided to move towards a pedagogy that did not rely on productive power and a concentrated concern with student compliance, but rather explored options outside of control and away from these dehumanising roles, the liberal framework would be subverted. If we are open to other possibilities, besides simply control, we may be able to overcome this fear of chaos. The individualistic approach to education, such as a teacher being solely responsible for the management of their classroom, must be overcome in this approach to critical pedagogy. There is no space to teach resistance to students if we still harbour beliefs that make the concept incomprehensible; a fear of chaos leads to the conviction that anything outside of control will lead to failure and this will close us off from the possibility of transformation. If our faith in the prevailing ideology means that we interpret our current approach to practice as motivating students rather manipulating them, or if we question the critique of saying 'good job' and awarding gold stars because we confuse control with empowerment, we cannot possibly be prepared for revolution.

Power is everywhere, it is not held but applied, yet "power never achieves what it sets out to do because there are so many competing ideas, institutions, and discourses; power is never able to completely control things because it always produces resistance in some form", or in other words, control necessitates the need for further efforts to control (Danaher et al., 2000 as cited by Oral, 2013, p.98). It takes a lot of effort to continually say 'no,' and to list and revise rules throughout a day, and to determine ways in which to discipline students only to find that each of the above efforts only provides a temporary outcome; compliance. It is exhausting to monitor every interaction and take on the role of authority, and sole decision maker, for each problem. This is not to say that without control there should be an absence of organization; 'letting go' does not mean letting *everything* or *just anything* go. Rather, this praxis proposes the teacher lets go of their role as *the* authority. It means that students are realized as capable contributors to the learning community and that they are included in meaningful dialogue. Adopting the role of teacher-student means that one must consider students as student-teachers! Letting go of our 'role,' and simultaneously, the belief that without our control there will be chaos, creates space for dialogue and subverts power; the teacher-student dichotomy, becomes a teacher-student community; a shared role in both agency and creativity.

Letting Go of 'Loss'

If we let go of our role, and the need to have control over our students and classrooms, we lose our position of authority. We can find this frightening, and take a perspective of loss, or we can embrace this freedom and seek empowerment. hooks speaks to their own experience of what they call an 'Engaged Pedagogy'; an approach that "does not seek simply to empower students" but also to promote the growth of

teachers (1994, p.21). hooks is responding to prevailing power, and the structures that maintain systemic racism, colonialism, sexism, and classism, by examining education, both the one they received and the one they were offering their students, as a political force (1994). Within a liberal system, which promulgates social domination while at the same time denying oppression, the 'politically neutral' problem of subordination is placed on the shoulders of the individual to overcome. hooks understands this depoliticizing of education to significantly impact a teacher's capacity to respond to power, and to intervene in a system, and instead, when teachers are confronted with oppression in their practice, they are reluctant to make changes because "they had to confront the limitations of their training and knowledge, as well as a possible loss of 'authority'" (1994, p.30). When the role of teacher is redefined as teacher-student, there is a sense of loss because, under the current system, with the teacher as the essential opposite of student, the teacher's existence is justified (Freire, 2005). In other words, without being able to define ourselves in relation to 'the other,' or our students, we have to redefine our objective. In a Master-Slave Dialectic, the effort to control could be rationalised to serve a purpose, in this case it may be said that a teacher retains their authority for the sake of learning, which is in relation to the belief being that, without teacher dominance, there would be too much chaos for learning. My response is to question what exactly we believe, in the role of teacher-as-subject, we are teaching. I would argue that, in an effort to reorganise for the sake of an education for human growth and moral consciousness, our new role is one of solidarity; we are united in our goal of realising our own humanity. As Freire writes,

> The solution cannot be achieved in idealistic terms. In order for the oppressed to be able to wage the struggle for their liberation, they must perceive the reality of oppression not as a closed world from which there

> is no exit, but as a limiting situation which they can transform. (Freire, 2005, p.47).

When we consider what it is that we are losing - our dehumanising role of domination, and what we are gaining - the potential for compassion and community in our classrooms and in our world, it seems strange that we would hold back. I came to understand that it was not that I was no longer the teacher that I dreamed I would be; it was clear that, once I let go, I would be so much more.

A Praxis of 'Letting Go' creates space for dialogue as well as teacher and student agency. Both hooks and Freire call for education as the practice of freedom, one in which students and teachers, together, "become jointly responsible for a process in which all grow" (Freire, 2005, p.78). Important to this 'growth' is that it is not individualised, isolated, or independent from others within a community, or abstract from or unattached to the world; rather, education becomes an engagement with one another *and* with the world (Freire, 2005). Dialogue with students, *and* with other educators and parents, is also essential to building a critical pedagogy that can intervene in a system. Critical pedagogy is engaged in politics, encouraging subversive theory and practice, or praxis, but it also must include teachers as elements also affected by the system. The system has created significant roadblocks that inform the way in which a teacher can be critical (or not) of theory and practice (their own or another's). Critical pedagogy, and Pedagogies of Resistance, must take these barriers into consideration. If teachers are to critically explore their role, and the way in which power circulates in their classrooms, the most essential element of this movement will be the Praxis of 'Letting Go.' Teacher transformation begins with letting go of 'the teacher' that one had aspired to be; letting

go of being a paternalistic orchestrator in front of a class of compliant students; letting go of our need for authority and our belief in the necessity of control; but most of all, letting go of what does not work.

Of course, the student response to teachers 'letting go' must also be considered; within the current paradigm, it can be assumed that students-as-objects will encounter a problem of learned dependence or a reaction that includes an uncertain amount of resistance to a change in their roles and the system. I will discuss this, and the importance of empowerment in order to avoid 'helplessness,' later in this chapter, as well as in the conclusion of this thesis. But at this point I would like once again to relate the matter in question to productive power; although students may have internalised norms that influence their response to control, or lack of it, it is possible that when a teacher is 'letting go' that a new space will be created in which students can rise up.

If what is holding teachers back is our own personal loss of power, a forfeiture of something that was never rightfully ours, I would like to propose a new paradigmatic goal; take the void left by the efforts to maintain control and turn our focus to the empowerment of teachers and students. We can begin by choosing to be empowered by a Praxis of 'Letting Go.' Envision a classroom where the teacher is not expected to have all of the answers; one in which the students are encouraged to question the beliefs of the teacher and can freely present their alternative ideas for discussion. What if, instead of being reliant on the use of threats and coercion, teachers just let go of the need for everything to go according to *their* plan? Imagine if, rather than playing the role of the teacher who is constantly trying to maintain power, manage the classroom, and do so

while passing on a type of 'morality' that is being rejected, or resisted, at every turn, the charade just ended. *Fin*.

re.bel [n., adj. reb-uh l; v. ri-bel]: Sounding Out Pedagogies of Resistance

A Praxis of 'Letting Go' is meant to support and be in synchrony with Pedagogies of Resistance. There seems to be a large body of research and theorizing on resistance; but not the kind I am interested in. When searching for the literature among journals in the field of education, there emerge two types of discussions. The first conflates the word 'resistance' with 'misbehaviour' and aims to understand *why* students behave the way they do, resisting the teacher's efforts, and *how* teachers can modify their practice, classrooms, and curriculum to regain control and compliance for the purpose of 'education'. The second discussion that becomes apparent is a call for resistance to the school imposed compliance, its maintenance, and the consequences of its current practices in today's mainstream classrooms. This consideration of resistance is concerned with *why* students should resist the hegemonic context within current pedagogy and theorizes a paradigm shift in education but there is little focus on *how* this theory has been implemented successfully into practice among mainstream Canadian classrooms.

When looking for evidence of Pedagogies of Resistance in action, I tried to locate examples of teacher and classroom transformation, teacher/student empowerment and equalization, and the use of hope and love in place of control and compliance. My search also sought to uncover instances of power relations being discussed with students, as well as resistance being role-modeled, brought into classroom discussion, and/or encouraged

in student behaviour. These efforts turned up a couple of studies that faced challenges with teacher transformation and in my analysis mostly preserved moral education and other similar systems, which resulted in maintaining liberal approaches to theory and practice.

In a large multi-sited evaluative study out of California's Developmental Studies Center, entitled "A six-district study of educational change: direct and mediated effects of the child development project", a program called the "Child Development Project" (CDP) was measured to assess what effects it had on social, ethical, and intellectual development in a diversity of students (Solomon et al., 2000). The study hypothesised that the CDP's positive effects on student moral behaviours would be dependant upon the success of establishing "a caring community in the school" (Solomon et al., 2000, p.9). In another study, "Toward a critical pedagogy of engagement for alienated youth: insights from Freire and school-based research", Peter McInerney begins by demonstrating that student alienation, which is often understood within the prevailing liberal framework as the result of an individual's deficiencies, is directly related to the problematic social structures that oppress students (2009). And in Kate Ronald and Hephzibah Roskelly's work, entitled "Untested Feasibility: Imagining the Pragmatic Possibility of Paulo Freire", they discuss the ways in which "teachers might re-create, rather than import, Freire into our own North American contexts - and so not lose the power of his [sic] ideas" (2001, p.612).

These articles varied in scope, as well as research methodology, and each lends to the literature on Pedagogies of Resistance. Solomon *et al.*'s article was a useful example

of the vast and deep-reaching benefits to practicing pedagogy that supports and teaches resistance. At the same time, the theoretical framework and the philosophical underpinnings of why such a program as the CDP should be implemented was not adequately discussed. Although the results showed an improvement in the lives of teachers and the social, emotional, and academic development of students, teacher reluctance to commit to the program was widespread but remained unaddressed (Solomon et al., 2000). The six-district study also failed to engage in a discussion that could explain why the hypothesis was realised and avoided any discourse surrounding power. On the other hand, McInerney's article provided an ample and theoretically rooted outline prior to and following their presentation of a research design and results (2009). If only their ethnography detailed a project, like the CDP, that actually implemented the pedagogy they hoped to assess; instead, they documented teachers who practiced in a way that did not reflect Freirian praxis and, even though there were clear efforts towards being 'progressive,' there seemed to be a misinterpretation of Freire as simply a 'student-centred' approach, rather than realising the radical transformative properties of Freirian theory and pedagogy, and the ways in which they are rooted in the MSD (McInerney, 2009). Finally, Ronald and Roskelly's attempt to be cataclysmic in their marrying of pragmatism and a Freirean world-view almost works; their argument for an 'untested feasibility' between the two, perhaps complementary, philosophical schemas has potential. Resting on hope, both theories aim for an acknowledgement and understanding of oppression, teacher transformation and paradigm shift, empowerment (both for teacher and student), mediation, and a call for resistance. Although this type of research does not offer examples of actual populations, the discussion surrounding the accessibility of pragmatism for a North American, contemporary teacher, as opposed to

discussions of 'oppression' and illiterate peasants, proved to be more approachable than reading Freire alone; the research showed that, through pragmatism, Freire's philosophy has been alive and well in this part of the world and within this culture for more than a century (Ronald & Roskelly, 2001).

The implications of the above research have yet to be realized. The literature urges an overthrowing of the current use of power and domination; but how teachers would overcome their own indoctrination and participation in the system warrants more exploration, research, and design. The theories presented seemed to support the arena of pedagogies that I had hoped to explore, but absent was anything close to resembling a Praxis of 'Letting Go' or any tactics to assess power in education or the world outside of the school. Although there is research and proposed practical changes, there is still the problem of approachability; it is well to remember that, just as it is difficult for students "to see alternatives to 'the way things are and have to be'", it is equally challenging, if not more so, for adults (Shor, 1987, as cited by Bellous, 1996, p.134). In culmination with a Praxis of 'Letting Go,' what teachers in mainstream, contemporary classrooms need are some alternatives.

Once again, possibilities outside of 'the way things are' carry with them their own challenges. Joyce Bellous, author of the article "Should We Teach Students to Resist?", contends that a praxis that supports resistance begins with teachers taking "what we value in the teaching/learning relation" and making our work reflect it (1996, p.132). Bellous exemplifies the 'walk our talk' approach with student participation; many teachers believe that they encourage classroom participation but, under scrutiny, it appears that

common tactics, such as creating guidelines of what participation should or should not be, denies truly democratic participation of students all together (Bellous, 1996, p.132). Efforts to grant students a place to contribute, teaching dissent, or other ways in which we 'give' control or choice to students, are reminiscent of Freire's "false generosity"; it is easy to get lost in theory and fall back into practices that are more concerned with control and compliance (2005, p.42). Activist and scholar, Andrea Smith, speaks to this struggle and the diversity of solutions, contending that most efforts will fail to achieve emancipation, but that there will be moments in which we find the approach that works (2014).

The plurality of 'pedagogies' is important, because I do not pretend to be in possession of 'the answer,' nor do I believe that there is one solution to this problem, and I am also acknowledging the many interpretations of what is problematic. What I aim to present is a theory that accepts that there is not a precise recipe for change, such as how to set-up a classroom or a play-by-play of possible teacher-student interactions, but rather a set of questions that one can use to continually assess their practice for resistance. Pedagogies of Resistance are beyond the control/chaos binary; I am striving to further any teacher in a mainstream Canadian classroom in their efforts to re-politicise practice and student/teacher experiences. I am not suggesting an overhaul of curriculum; rather, as Henry Giroux and Peter McLaren suggest in their introduction of their book, *Between Borders: Pedagogy and the Politics of Cultural Studies*, I intend to put forward an approach "engaged in creating a new language, rupturing disciplinary boundaries, decentering authority, and rewriting the institutional and discursive borderlands in which politics becomes a condition for reasserting the relationship between agency, power, and

struggle" (as cited by hooks, 1994, p.129). As many theorists before me have said, teaching resistance will help us achieve the goal of intervening in a system, developing a sense of empowerment that will encourage our goal of becoming more 'fully human', and, perhaps most exciting, it will foster a community within which we can experience change. The next section discusses each of the three approaches I recommend to include in Pedagogies of Resistance. My hope is that, combined with a Praxis of 'Letting Go,' teachers can resist while cultivating rebels.

What is the danger here?

Although it would make teacher transformation easier if it were true, it would be unrealistic to act as though, once a paradigm had been revealed, the struggle would be over. Undermining and intervening in a system takes effort; but, as discussed earlier, it is a relief to know that the liberal framework also takes work to maintain. Teaching while utilizing Pedagogies of Resistance means that our beliefs and actions are open to revisions and reinterpretations. Also, the importance of role modeling cannot be overstated; the impacts of teachers, and other adults, have been relied upon to benefit a liberal archetype for generations. Because resistance implies that there is something to resist, the element in question has to be named; there is a sense of precariousness and uncertainty when attempting something unfamiliar. There is also the possibility of slipping back into old patterns and, especially when we are not feeling empowered, to capitulate to our dependence upon control. When we feel the urge to revive our power and authority, and to exercise control over others, we can ask: What is the danger here? This question means a few things, among them: How does power function in this circumstance? Who is benefitting from power in this situation? Is there a danger of

someone being silenced by the way in which power is being used? How can I/we intervene in a way that interrupts or subverts power?

When reflecting on the question of 'danger', it is important to note that there is an effort of preventative action, thoughtful avoidance, and creative subversive measures, rather than reactionary undertakings. The purpose of asking questions surrounding 'danger' is to highlight the instability and risk that accompanies the presence of power, and its potential movement and impacts, as well as encouraging ongoing acknowledgment of the existence of paradigms, and the political nature of the liberal framework, as an act of rebellion. This re-politicizing of the classroom, as well as the questioning of power and its presence in interactions within a learning community, should not be hidden acts, carried out alone by a teacher. This question of danger is for public benefit and should be open to others and discussed by all. Bringing this question, and both a teacher's own assessment of the situation or the assessment reached in dialogue with students/other teachers, is subversive. Through role modeling this struggle teachers are, in effect, passing on lessons in subverting power to students with the hope that students will learn efficacious methods in practicing resistance. It is also important to remember that within Pedagogies of Resistance is the presence of contrasting goals; as opposed to goals that support control and the use of power to maintain authority for some and docility for others, there is a goal of empowerment for all and to reverse the effects of dehumanization on both oppressed and oppressors, while moving towards a fuller human experience. Although within the liberal paradigm a teacher may see danger in a loss of control, or understand it to be problematic when a student fights for power, and then responds by taking action to maintain their 'role,' within Pedagogies of Resistance,

because the goal is different the reaction is also altered (Ford, 2003). If we have let go of our need to dominate, and we embrace student agency, what we find to be dangerous will be significantly altered from our previous perceptions. Asking, "What is the danger is here?" can be used to identify a problem within our own practice, curriculum, social relationships or identities, classroom dynamics, or other elements that may impact our goals.

In an effort to identify what 'danger' is present, and the way(s) in which it may operate, I have discerned three secondary questions connected to the first. These three further areas of inquiry are not meant to be the *only* ancillary queries, but rather, a gateway into more discussion. The first extension of the question is to contemplate 'the danger of rule;' the question examines what it means 'to rule,' the role of authority, and the presence of power. A teacher may question, even aloud and in conference with students, whether they are assuming rule and whether, in the situation, this is resulting in any dehumanizing reactions. For example, one day, as I was assigning tasks to a leadership group, I stopped myself and questioned what danger might be present in my actions; I found that I was taking the role of authority partially because I wanted the tasks done in a particular way, but also because I did not seem to think my students could function without my intervention. I realised that the message my 'rule' was sending to the students was that I did not trust them to figure out how to complete the project, I did not think they saw value in participating, or that they were responsible enough to take on the task of planning together its realization. The message of my 'ruling over' was that I was more capable than they at making a plan and assigning tasks; read in terms of power, and from a Freirian standpoint, I was not recognizing the students as agents. How could I

expect them to learn about responsibility and trust without being trusted and without experiencing responsibility?

In taking a moment to assess the 'danger of rule,' I could identify places in which it made sense to invoke a Praxis of 'Letting Go.' At the same time, when I discussed this somewhat painful realisation with the students, and we turned the activity into a more collective experience, the effort of working with each other became an exercise in Pedagogies of Resistance. The students had just been walked through my analysis of my own need for control as well as the potential impacts of my assumed role of authority, and once in a group in which we were all a little more aware of power, a little more conscious of the danger in 'rule,' we were able to start a practice that had potential to build up our humanity through agency. Through this act of addressing my 'rule,' and the way in which my practice was not reflecting my beliefs, I was letting go of my 'role' and my belief in chaos while embracing student agency. Bellous would call this "pedagogical integrity" and explains that student resistance would also have students point out how teaching practice can be contradictory to this so-called welcomed student involvement (1996, p.132). Resistance is the exercise of power by students who, in voicing inconsistencies or duplicities, remind teachers to walk their talk (Bellous, 1996). Bellous argues that educational aims are better served when teachers work with students to develop resistance (1996). The classroom control of student voices implements a "culture of silence" that does not support the skills required to authentically and actively participate in civic amelioration (Freire & Shor, 1987 as cited by Bellous, 1996, p.132). Asking questions surrounding 'danger,' and opening up to students, is one way to develop, both on an individual level as well as collectively, our "art of voice" and our

abilities to identify a paradigm, as well as the goals and tactics it may employ, and then to consider ways in which to resist while asserting our own agency (Bellous, 1996, p.138).

In the example above, the resistance in which we engaged supported both student agency and teacher transformation while challenging the status quo by encouraging all involved towards the common goal of becoming more fully human. This resistance is not to be confused with reactions that conflict with oppression, which are in reaction to productive power, but further dehumanize us. Resistance that dehumanizes deserves attention within the context of the question of danger and 'rule,' as the response to this type of opposition by those exercising authority is often to read the behaviour as 'childish' or 'out of control,' combined with an effort to further 'discipline' what is thought of as antipathy. In "Resistance Reconceptualised", Valda K. Leighteizer explains their own reaction to this type of student resistance when they write, "I treated resistance as a challenge to either my authority or my knowledge and my task was to shut it down" (2006, p.27). The way in which we view student resistance is connected to the/our self-conception of the teacher's role and its goals as well as what we believe about our students; whether we see a student's actions as wilful (as a negative) or curious depends on whether or not we are trying to control them. Leighteizer contends that because our understandings of the purpose of schooling, and I would add moral education, are developed within a certain framework, our "definitions of student engagement in turn [are] informed [by our] perception of resistance as being defiance or a challenge directed to or at me/the teacher" (2006, p.27). There is also a need for sensitivity to the power struggle, the push and pull for 'rule,' when a student is resisting in a way that is dehumanizing because there is danger in practicing a resistance that does not promote

change and that does not aid either party in the achievement of empowerment. When this occurs, the question of 'rule' arises; is the student, in a reaction to 'danger,' or power, trying to 'rule'? And, how can I guide them in their effort to locate their voice? Again, leaning on both a Praxis of 'Letting Go' and Pedagogies of Resistance can help teachers and students reach a deeper understanding of what is taking place, why, and how to work towards agency and empowerment for all.

A common catalyst for engaging in resistance that is dehumanizing is regulation. In reaction to rules that are unfair, or are created to benefit those in power, we react with a Foucauldian sense of hostile, yet disorganised, noncompliance. Assessing the *danger of a rule*, which is separate from the first consideration of 'the danger of rule,' can help to change rules from a decree of authority to an altruistic effort to promote the wellbeing of people (the state of being happy, comfortable and healthy for all). Allow me to clarify that I am not saying that there should be a moratorium on rules; I am suggesting that reassessing the reasons behind rules, and modifying them from maintaining control, by making something *always* a certain way, to rules that are born with both connections among people and the well-being of all considered in mind *and* which are malleable and open-ended. This is not only in consideration of regulations governing moral conduct, or what is 'right,' but even (and especially) the simple and everyday things, such as jumping on a bed, or climbing up a slide, or shouting in the classroom. In the presence of a rule, or the word 'no,' asking whether the effort to control the situation is dehumanising or,

alternatively, an effort in maintaining the well-being of all (not just ourselves) may be all that is needed to start a dialogue[20].

The danger of a rule is its lack of consideration of people, their needs, and the changeability of scenarios. Another danger of rules is from where they come and what purpose they may be serving. This point becomes clear when we think about the way in which we might react when a student comes to class unprepared, such as being without the materials needed for an activity. We might express our disappointment; we might reluctantly supply the materials today but explain that, from now on, the rule will be that they come prepared for class or face the consequence of not being able to participate. But please consider an alternate scenario, such as a friend arriving unprepared for your planned day out to lunch and the gym, and in what ways would your reaction differ? Would you create a rule and spell out the consequences? Would you chastise them for their lack of responsibility as you gathered extra clothes, water bottle, and snack? Or would you smile, perhaps even acknowledge their busy life, and reassure them that it would not at all be an inconvenience to help them out? Why is it that in the case of the interaction with a friend the response is caring while in the case of the student the reaction is to assert authority and to control? The answer is rules; when created for the purpose of serving or maintaining authority, rules can be dehumanising. Alfie Kohn recommends that when a rule surfaces we must assess "what we're asking students to do—and why. The Latin question 'Cui bono?'—Who benefits?—should never be far from our minds: In whose interest is it to require students to do this or prohibit them from doing that?" (2006, p.15).

[20] What is meant by 'Dialogue' will be discussed, in depth, later in this chapter.

Unfortunately, the frequent response to the suggestion that we might reconsider rules, or forego our current knee-jerk reaction of relying on 'natural consequences,' is laden with a fear of permissiveness on the behalf of the teacher. If one were to react to the student similarly to the way in which one might towards an unprepared friend, the concern surrounds the possibility that such a response will result in a student who abuses the radical approach of dialogue or manipulates one's goodwill. The problem of 'permissiveness,' or as it is "understood by the general public as well as by developmental psychologists to refer to an approach in which demands and limits are rarely imposed and children are pretty much free to do what they like", corresponds to the belief that without proper discipline children will be ungrateful, rude, and disingenuous (Kohn, 2014, p.19). Kohn writes extensively on the way in which this way of thinking relates to how we view the nature of children in the first place, but also the social narrative (which I have argued is a part of a liberal paradigm) that regards children as in need of control (2006, 2014). The belief in the old adage, 'Give them an inch and they'll take a mile' is usually associated with the call for "tighter control, tougher discipline, more coercion – and, above all, less trust" (Kohn, 2006, p.7). Kohn's research suggests, "teachers who assume that children are capable of acting virtuously can likewise set into motion a self-fulfilling prophecy… Thus, if a teacher trusts her [sic] students to make decisions, they will act very differently from those in her [sic] colleague's classroom if left on their own; typically, they will act responsible and go right on learning" (2006, pp.7-8). The cynic may claim that a teacher who believes that, in the case of the student who forgot their school supplies, a response that employs dialogue and shows care and trust in student integrity as well as in their ability to become responsible is one of

permissiveness and ultimately naïve. It is clear that "[i]f we can keep up the pretence that adults are too permissive with children, then we're more likely to accept the recommendation that what children really need is… more control" (Kohn, 2014, p.48 …emphasis original). If we are looking for a likely cause for immoral behaviour, such as manipulative or coercive responses to consideration or cooperation, we might do well to consider a teaching approach that lacks compassion and is preoccupied with compliance (Kohn, 2014). Although, just as Meadows argues, this "counterintuitive" suggestion is one that subverts convention and will most likely be challenged (1999, p.2).

Our relationships with students need not be the same as those we have with friends, but our students are people and our actions of control harbour the *danger of disconnection*. A disconnection is when we are distanced by our roles and our actions; it results in or is because of dehumanization, and negatively affects our ability to see each other's personhood or humanity. A reaction, such as the one noted above, surrounding a student who has forgotten their materials, is an opportunity for compassion and relationship-building, but the opportunity is lost when the teacher rules, and implements a rule, in a way that benefits their authority. One might say that in this case the teacher's efforts were to give the student a lesson in responsibility by applying a 'natural consequence.' The belief is that the student will learn that being irresponsible leads to a deserved punishment; in this instance being scolded and threatened with not being able to participate in the future. I am arguing that the above approach is passing on an entirely contrasting message; there is a disconnection between teacher and student, one that dehumanizes all involved, and this is an indication that rule/a rule is present for the benefit of the authority and in an effort to control rather than to teach a virtue or moral

value. Another response may be that without 'natural consequences' students will not learn these important lessons surrounding responsibility, and other life skills, but rather, they will acquire an unhealthy dependence upon others. If I believed these concerns to be true, they would be problematic in that the goal is for the student to gain agency and not learned helplessness. It is also the goal for the teacher to cease their oppressive tactics and to join students in solidarity. In the example above, the teacher is disciplining the student, passing on a lesson in compliance and exerting dominance, all whilst being dehumanising to self and other. Alternatively, when the teacher shares school supplies with the student, and connects with them over the time they forgot their gym clothes and a friend helped them out, and starts a conversation with the students about the tactics they each employ so that they can be more prepared, etc., disconnection has been avoided, and helpfulness, rather than helplessness, is the lesson.

Just as there is a difference between a regulation that dehumanises, and one that in its design and implementation can be humanising, there is a difference between a contrived 'natural consequence,' one in which the orchestrator is controlling an outcome based on the conviction that discipline is necessary (which is essentially *dehumanising*), and a *humanising* 'natural consequence' that is in support of connection, empowerment, and a dismantling the MSD. Rule and rules are part of the constant effort required to maintain the MSD, or the teacher-as-subject and student-as-object manifestation of power, and this creates further disconnect in our relationships with students. It is important to acknowledge, as does hooks, that "most of us learned to teach emulating this model" (1994, p.35). Also, Freire explains that it is an inherent feature of the liberal

system for the oppressed to pursue power and to act out the domination they themselves have experienced (2005). hooks expounds that those in authority, in positions of power,

> …teach us to believe that domination is 'natural,' that it is right for the strong to rule over the weak, the powerful over the powerless. What amazes me is that so many people claim not to embrace these values and yet our collective rejection of them cannot be complete since they prevail in our daily lives. (hooks, 1994, p.28)

Relinquishing our role, and our dependence upon rule and rules, begins with an acknowledgement "that our styles of teaching may need to change" (hooks, 1994, p.35). Transformation relies on the way in which we join in solidarity with students; hooks points to the Freirian concept of 'authentic help' which means "that all who are involved help each other mutually, growing together in the common effort to understand the reality which they seek to transform" (Friere as cited by hooks, 1994, p.54). Freire argues that only then "can the act of helping become free from distortion in which the helper dominates the helped" (Friere as cited by hooks, 1994, p.54). After all, is the student, who has just been chastised and threatened with punishment, thinking, "Gee, I will try to be more responsible next time. The teacher can trust me to remember my materials from now on!" or, is it more likely that they are thinking that the teacher does not like them, or that they do not like the teacher, or worse, is the student thinking negative thoughts about their self and their own self-worth or abilities? In this example, there is a certain amount of inauthenticity in the messaging surrounding caring for others and helping those in need; awareness along with a discussion of power, and the ways in which it can isolate us, can return us to authenticity.

The danger of 'rule,' as well as 'a rule' and 'disconnection,' are intertwined; we disconnect with students through our role as oppressor, we design and implement some

rules for our own benefit as the authority, rules separate teachers from students in a way that further indicates our opposition, isolating and dehumanizing us to one another. It is clear that the Praxis of 'Letting Go' is needed for a teacher to integrate the approach of asking, especially in dialogue with students and other teachers, "What is the danger here?" Letting go of our focus on compliance and our need for control may also include relinquishing the need for a certain sense of approval from other teachers, caregivers of students, school administration, and other people in general. There is a danger in teaching to fulfil the expectations of those in authority or attempting to maintain the appearance of a controlled classroom when it may not serve students or teachers. Letting go, and questioning the role of power, can extend beyond classroom scenarios and into other elements of teaching. When working toward this praxis and approach to Pedagogies of Resistance, it is well to remember that neither the transformation nor the movement are completely on the shoulders of a teacher; a community of learners means that students as agents are a part of what occurs in a classroom and these pedagogies should empower their participation. In the following discussion of the second and third questions, I hope to articulate how to work with an effort towards building connection and empowerment through resistance.

How can I be compassionate?

The second approach, and associated question, is "How can I be compassionate?" Used concurrently with the previous question of danger, and a Praxis of 'Letting Go,' it can have an effect not unlike symbiosis, supporting goals of connection between student and teacher (as well as teachers with teachers and students with students), letting go of the liberal paradigm's goal of compliance, and an awareness of the ways in which power

is operating. This question presents itself when teachers are faced with challenging situations, when there is a potential for a lack of understanding and a retreat back to the comfort of discipline, which, as indicated in previous discussions here, is only an exercise in gaining temporary compliance. For example, when a student is acting in a way that has negative impacts on fellow classmates and/or the teacher, such as when they employ a form of resistance that is dehumanizing, we can consider that resistance is being used not only as a response to regulation, but also in an effort to have one's needs met. Asking ourselves about compassion, we can first *consider the barriers*; rather than simply reacting to behaviour, or assuming the worst when pronouncing possible reasons behind the student's actions, we can reflect on personhood. What likely roadblocks, such as social location (triggering issues of gender, race, class, etc.), ability (perhaps they do not understand what is being asked, or cannot do what is expected), age (consider age-appropriateness), or unmet basic needs (are they tired, hungry, growing) are impacting this student? Do our expectations consider the barriers and are we compassionate enough to reconsider our present undertaking? Finding an opportunity to be compassionate means that, instead of responding with discipline, a teacher can discipline their self; rather than attempting (and failing) to train our students through what we understand to be discipline, we can learn to model care, connection, and collaboration. Finding compassion in the challenging moments is not easy and, because of this, compassion should be extended to those trying to access it. Teachers can consider their *own* barriers as well, leaving space to make their own mistakes along with the courage to admit their faults while addressing possibilities for change. Much like in the previous discussion surrounding power, we can build on this approach by admitting a lack of compassion, starting a dialogue with others surrounding what might have been holding us back, and

asking of others, "What can I do to be more compassionate?" Role modeling the process, displaying self-struggle and self-compassion, and calling on others in a way that incites their own agency, in and of itself is compassionate and supports efforts to resist in a way that humanizes.

This pedagogical approach to acts of resistance that are dehumanizing, although it is not limited to this example, also assists in the goal of teaching students to resist. If the liberal paradigm works to educate students to be obedient and docile, even at the expense of their own agency and the humanity of others (recall the story, in the previous chapter, of Leafgren's 'Julian'), then it is subversive to both model and encourage a sense of moral consciousness. When our students, the future generation, acquire moral consciousness; or the desire to act morally, an ability to reason through moral issues, and a capacity to make moral decisions despite, rather than because of, outside influences; they are learning to resist. Our Pedagogies of Resistance benefit from including an *invitation to morally participate*; when we ask ourselves how we, the teacher, can be compassionate, we can extend the invitation to exercise compassion to our students. When we treat a student with compassion they learn the value of it, they better understand its benefits, and they may eventually be inspired to be compassionate too. Within the liberal paradigm, many virtues, such as trust and respect, must be earned by students rather than cultivated by teachers. But, under the prevailing liberal assumption that students are not trustworthy until they have demonstrated, in some fashion, that they can be trusted, in what way do students learn virtues that contribute to moral participation? Would it not be more beneficial, and more effective, if we, the adults who already know of trust, modelled it and invited children to participate in situations that call

for trust? In other words, if we want students to be trustworthy, we must trust them; if we want students to be compassionate, we must show them compassion. When students come to understand the value in acts of compassion, and the feeling one has when they experience a virtue or act with a virtue, they can also learn that there is a need to resist a system that does not allow for moral participation. Within Pedagogies of Resistance, teachers question their own motives, their common reactions and directives, and find space for compassion; students witness and experience their teachers resisting in order to make room for love. And as Paulo Freire wrote, "[t]rue solidarity is found only in the plenitude of this act of love, in its existentiality, in its praxis" (2005, p.50).

How can I further systemic empowerment?

The final approach in supporting Pedagogies of Resistance requires attention to, and the employment of, the above two elements as well as a Praxis of 'Letting Go.' Within a liberal framework, oppression is systemic and goals of compliance, as well as accompanying tactics of control, such as punishment and reward, are in support of the system. What Donella Meadows makes clear is that, beyond leverage points, intervening in a system involves simply the capacity "to 'get' at a gut level the paradigm that there are paradigms, and to see that that itself is a paradigm, and to regard that whole realization as devastatingly funny", but also to understand that there is not a paradigm that is "true" and to let go of the need to be living the 'right way' (1999, p.19). It is through letting ourselves go "into Not Knowing" that we can find "the basis for radical empowerment… [because]… [i]f no paradigm is right, you can choose whatever one will help to achieve your purpose" (Meadows, 1999, p.19). If the purpose of Pedagogies of Resistance is to subvert the liberal paradigm and encourage an outcome that includes

becoming more fully human and self-actualization for all, then the goal is empowerment. The third approach is meant to further this goal and is posed in the form of the question, "How can I further systemic empowerment?"

Resistance involves the search for ways in which systems can support empowerment. There are lyrics from the musical *RENT!* that add clarity to this response to oppression. At the end of the song entitled "La Vie Boheme", the character 'Roger' exclaims, "The opposite of war isn't peace... It's creation" (Larson, 1996, disc 1, track 25). Empowerment is not peace, at least not in the conventional sense; prevailing notions demarcate 'peace' for the benefit of those with privilege; 'peace' is freedom from disturbance and a sustaining of an equilibrium that serves an elite. Rather, intend to convey 'peace' in the Freirian sense; it emerges from a place of subversion, as it is a creative reaction to oppression, and through encouraging and sustaining empowerment it takes on imaginative, innovative, and experimental capacities (2005).

The liberal paradigm, because of its oppressive nature, is one that thrives on silence: the absence of voice when it comes to the oppressed or those who want to resist (Bellous, 1996). Creating a system that overrides this effort, by including *dialogue* as an integral element of systemic change, supports these pedagogies. Elizabeth Ellsworth argues that there is a danger to dialogue becoming simply one of the "repressive myths that perpetuate relations of domination" (1992, p.91). Often, these concepts are not situated, but abstract, much like 'virtue,' and assumed to be interpreted within some 'universal' standard (Ellsworth, 1992, p.92). Because the school, within a liberal paradigm, works to produce "'self-regulating' individuals by developing in students the

capacity for engaging in rational argument", the role of 'dialogue' is relegated to discussing conventionally accepted mediums (Ellsworth, 1992, p.93). As Ellsworth explains, "[r]ational argument has operated in ways that set up as its opposite an irrational Other, which has been understood historically as the province of women and other exotic Others" (Ellsworth, 1992, p.94). In a classroom in which there is authority, in the sense of a Master-Slave dialectic, dialogue cannot include the voices of all involved, nor can it consider each voice with comparable significance or authenticity (Ellsworth, 1992). I am arguing that within Pedagogies of Resistance 'voice' and dialogue must consider the first question of "What is the danger here?" as well as the second question of "How can I be compassionate?" Opening up to a discussion surrounding power or compassion can lend to overcoming our dependency on controlling the legitimacy of perspectives and relying on rationality. Students, when empowered through dialogue, may challenge our personal understandings and beliefs about the world. Perhaps what we view as 'mistaken' may lead us all past other interesting learning opportunities, including experimenting with agency and resistance. Dialogue and our experiences are "partial", as in incomplete, "in the sense that they are unfinished, imperfect, limited", *and* "partial", as in biased, "in the sense that they project the interests of 'one side' over others" (Ellsworth, 1992, p.97). It is important to distinguish why, and from where, the experiences or understandings of the oppressed are critiqued; are they being questioned because they conflict with conventional wisdom or belief systems or, alternatively, are they considered with legitimacy because of the agency from which they emerge (Ellsworth, 1992)? Empowerment is not about a redistribution of power to students but rather about creating space for agency. Rather than simply making "the teacher more like the student by redefining the teacher as a learner of the student's reality

and knowledge", the idea of furthering systemic empowerment is through asking students to "grant the authority" and allow for "emancipatory authority" (Ellsworth, 1992, p.98/99). Dialogue must be considered in conjunction with that authority; helpful in our transformation is "the question of 'empowerment for what' [which] becomes the final arbiter of a teacher's use or misuse of authority" (Ellsworth, 1992, p.99).

Within the liberal framework, the oppressed are often understood to be incapable of dialogue and therefore the dominance of an oppressor over conversation is easily justified (Freire, 2005). Dialogue is a form of resistance: Freire explains this when they write, "[d]ialogue further requires an intense faith in humankind, faith in their power to make and remake, to create and re-create, faith in their vocation to be more fully human (which is not the privilege of an elite but the birthright of all)" (Freire, 2005, p.88). Because of the historical barriers to dialogue, students face hurdles in engaging with the act. Teachers can help by making space for dialogue within the structures of a classroom, but also by calling on students to participate in dialogue and to practice it in resistance. If one uncomplicated and effortless sentence may find its way into the vernacular of a teacher trying to employ Pedagogies of Resistance, I would hope it would be "Let's talk about it." I would also qualify this proposed approach with a caution: "Let's talk about it" could quickly turn into a teacher doing the talking, rationalising their 'side,' and inevitably assuming authority. I propose that this phrase includes a consideration of the previous two questions drawn from this approach to Pedagogies of Resistance, as well as the current query as to how systemic empowerment can be supported. This locution should be in consideration of goals; is the dialogue demonstrating compassion and encouraging agency? Dialogue requires those with historic power, or those within a

liberal framework who traditionally hold positions of authority, to check themselves and focus on actively listening, not taking on the role of teacher-judge but rather reaching for a colleague-like collective nature to the conversation. As Freire asserts, having 'faith' in the capacities of others for dialogue is essential to its use as truly empowering (2005).

When students enter into acts of resistance that are dehumanizing, dialogue is often missing, as is their sense of empowerment. When students are being oppressed, or when a teacher is not supporting student agency and systemic empowerment, a student will likely resist in a way that actually challenges the system by making use of the same phrase. Rather than inciting a teacher and student to struggle for power, a fight that dehumanizes both parties while maintaining the teacher-as-subject/student-as-object teaching model, they can choose to opt for dialogue. It almost sounds too easy, but the difficulty that in many cases will be immediately encountered, is that we are not practiced in dialogue that is authentic and not a tool of sovereign power. Freire gave examples of the barriers to productive and liberatory dialogue: "How can I dialogue if I always project ignorance onto others and never perceive my own?" (2005, p.88). And, continuing along those lines, they ask, "[h]ow can I dialogue if I start from the premise that naming the world is the task of an elite?" (Freire, 2005, p.88). The potential for power, and its inherent dangers, as well as the possibility for compassion, and all of its benefits, must be considered and engaged in for dialogue to have a chance at being supportive to resistance. There is also a risk of slipping into paternalism; a teacher must 'let go' before entering into dialogue as a teacher-student. Dialogue is more than the idea that both students and teachers are entitled to be heard and compelled to listen, but it is also about resisting the liberal goal of control and compliance.

Seeking opportunities to further systemic empowerment, and to create structures that support efforts to become more fully human, to self-actualise, to exercise our own agency, would also benefit from *reconciliation*. The Oxford English Dictionary defines 'reconciliation' as "[t]he action of restoring estranged people or parties to friendship; the result of this; the fact of being reconciled" (OED, 2015). Under the liberal paradigm, rather than *acting with* students, many actions of the teacher, because they are expected to be taking measures to maintain authority, are *done to the students*. This oppressive nature of teaching, within a system that seeks compliance over connection, leads to divided parts; there is an 'us' versus 'them' mentality. Reconciliation is about two sides coming together; it is an acknowledgment of the hurt caused by each other, the actions influenced by a framework that desires to maintain teacher and student separateness, and the power of one group over another, as well as the resulting dehumanizing of both. A resolution to the MSD is essential; a teacher's self-consciousness relies on their liberation from the role of *the* authority. To further systemic empowerment, we must reconcile with the reality that, defined by what we are not, we are 'teacher' only because others are 'students.' Reconciliation is about closing the gap, and introducing a continuum where there was dichotomy; Freire maintains that in order "to bridge this distance, an effort toward mutual reconciliation must be made" (Torres, 1994, p.437). A rapprochement cannot manifest through the acts of an individual, but rather through collective efforts; "one accepts that this transforming process can only come about when the subjective and the objective begin to converge, opposing and uniting with one another, mutually constituting each other, in a single process and project of societal transformation" (Torres, 1994, p.440).

There is resistance in reconciliation; admitting or recognising wrongdoing, and then seeking to rectify what was most likely an action done to someone for the purpose of control or gaining compliance or preserving a sense of authority, can be empowering. Freire contends that this transformation can be achieved through a restructuring of objective reality, reflecting and taking account of our self-consciousness in relation to that reality and praxis (Torres, 1994). Torres explains Freire's approach to this reconciliation when they write,

> A transformation that can only be carried out through its humanization - that is to say, the identity of human beings in the world by means of a compromise, through their praxis with that world, and an outcome, which would be the creation of new knowledge, but at the same time a new social practice. (Torres, 1994, p.437)

By encouraging a new belief system in which the teacher can be wrong, can admit error, and is not an infallible authority, one subverts liberal doctrine. If we are to resist a mindset with the purpose of changing it, we need to "keep pointing at the anomalies and failures in the old paradigm", accepting our errors, and being open to our own fallibility and our flawed systems of belief (Meadows, 1999, p.18). Because Pedagogies of Resistance "takes you outside the system and forces you to see it whole", there is a possibility of education becoming, as Freire hopes it to be, *an act of knowing* (Meadows, 1999, p.18; Torres, 1994).

Reconciliation is subversive because it accepts that there are failures, or problematic aspects of a system, and it is empowering because it is also about restoring connection. Compassion cannot be forced, and neither can reconciliation, but when a mindset shifts, there are opportunities for an "emergence of *consciousness* and *critical*

intervention in reality", making space for creativity (Freire, 2005, p.141, *emphasis original*). Through coming together, students and teachers reject the framework that divides them, acknowledging one another's capacity for humanness, as well as worthiness for compassion. For example, when a teacher returns to a group of students to admit their error, to say to them, "Just a moment ago, I was not being compassionate. I was thinking about the way I wanted you to do things, rather than considering your needs or interests. Can we try this again, and this time I will listen to you and we can come together on this project? Is there anything else I could do to make things better?" It is important to remember that the effort to reconcile must be authentic, simply attempting to win people over is another example of "false generosity" because it seeks to "encourage passivity in the oppressed" (Freire, 2005, p.42/93). Changing the system so that it may include reconciliation breaks down the barriers between students and teachers. An authentic effort toward resolution can be empowering to students and aid in the development of a sense of agency, which supports Pedagogies of Resistance, but also significant is the way in which reconciliation illuminates the importance of coming together, which also subverts the teacher-as-subject/student-as-object binary.

Resistance is not as simple as adapting some sort of revolutionary leadership; "nor can leadership merely 'implant' in the oppressed a belief in freedom" (Freire, 2005, p.65). In the end, within Pedagogies of Resistance, a teacher has to welcome the wilfulness, the insatiable curiosity, and the acts of opposition from students. If we are successful in our efforts to set up structures within our classroom that enhance agency and increase empowerment, we cannot be surprised when students revolt; we should not be dismayed, but encouraged! As a part of this approach, we want to welcome

revolutionary curiosity. By revolutionary curiosity, I mean the type of inquisitiveness, and spirit of inquiry, which includes questions surrounding the topics students (and also teachers) have been taught not to question. For example, if a teacher asked their students to form a line, and a student asked 'why?', the query could be met with an answer that shuts down the question, such as "Because that is how we get from the classroom to the gymnasium", or it could be met with encouragement, such as "That's an interesting question. Why do we line up? Is there another way to get to the gymnasium?"

Revolutionary curiosity may not even need to be taught, many would argue that this is something students do anyway, but I would respond that this type of questioning is not often viewed positively and, through contemporary pedagogy fuelled by a liberal belief system, this characteristic is actively shut down. Because of the current "dominator paradigm", the teacher who is questioned by a student challenging conventional approaches or established thought often considers the query as a threat to their authority or an unwelcome argument (Leighteizer, 1996, p.134). Once again, teachers can demonstrate their own sense of revolutionary curiosity, when we encounter our own questions, especially elements of a system, which seem to be surrounded by silence. When teachers display their open-mindedness, or when their reactions to such questions are authentically supportive and enthusiastic, student empowerment can grow because an environment that cultivates resistance is present. Authenticity and follow-through are integral. Perhaps it will mean the class is late to the gym because of being caught up in a discussion about whether to get there by hopping like frogs or by sending students from their seats to the destination, circumventing a line, in order of their birthdays. Empowerment through the process of following the curiosity and subsequent

inventiveness of students will have more merit to its pedagogy than the lesson of a forced line and punctuality. Besides, was there ever a revolution that was orderly and on time?

- Conclusions -

"This Doesn't Apply to Me" and other negations

There are many ways to respond to the ideas that have been presented here. My own response was at first slow. As a teacher who had found success in using conventional practices to pass on what I understood to be 'moral education,' the thought of a change such as this was distressing. As an educator, I relied on a system that allowed me to be *the* authority to my students. My liberal understanding of my role as a teacher meant that I believed I had important and valuable work to achieve in *my classroom* and that I sincerely believed my approach and my goals were a benefit to *my* students. Therefore, to even think of rejecting what had been so useful and beneficial in my work was challenging. It was difficult for me to believe that I was being oppressive; I was positive that when *I* said "Good Job!" or "I like the way Sarah is sitting quietly in their seat!" *I* was not focused on exercising control. There was no way this analysis applied to me! I thought that because my intentions had always been to be a fun, helpful, caring teacher, the way in which I was using the methods critically analysed in the previous chapters were different; clearly, I was being motivational! I was not thinking, "I must get those students to comply at all times!" I thought that my efforts to praise were outside of the norm and made me the kind of teacher I wanted to be. I resisted, in a dehumanizing way, any effort to evaluate these elements of my practice. I was not aware of my own subjectivity or the need or the possibility of reconciliation. But, as Meadows points out in their essay, once my eyes were open to systems, and the ways in which they

manifest, I could not close them; I could not un-see what I now understood to be there (1999).

Aside from our role as a teacher, and the arduous task of letting it go, I believe that there are other barriers that stand in the way of teacher transformation. If a teacher were to begin this journey, and work towards removing liberal moral education and replacing it with Pedagogies of Resistance on their own, there would be many obstacles and very little support in overcoming them. If for example, one person in a school of thirty teachers encountered ideas such as these, and tried to evaluate their own practice and make changes to their classroom, there would be the issue of how their colleagues may view them. Without community, which has the benefits of dialogue, a practice of sharing challenges, and group problem-solving, a teacher who takes on an unconventional and subversive approach to education would possibly face a lack of acceptance or perhaps even open criticism. Also, due to a conceivable lack of professional or emotional encouragement, a professional transformation and teaching resistance would be an increased effort. Less comradely relationships between teachers would be an antithesis to this thesis, or any ideas that come from it. Besides the reactions from other teachers, there would also be the possibility of challenging responses from parents. Parents, like teachers, are indoctrinated into a role that is meant to pass on moral lessons, which, consequently, relies on the compliance of children and the parents' 'natural authority.'

Another barrier to teacher transformation, one that hooks acknowledges in their work, is that students may be made uncomfortable by education for liberation "because

they've already been trained to view themselves as not the ones in authority, not the ones with legitimacy" (1994, p.144). Teacher transformation is important to establishing Pedagogies of Resistance, but students need convincing as well; after all, "[t]o educate for freedom, then, we have to challenge and change the way everyone thinks about pedagogical process" (hooks, 1994, p.144). The Praxis of 'Letting Go' can lend to this reshaping of pedagogy, and to the subversion of systemic goals of authority that place students in the position of 'object;' engaging with students as self-conscious beings, and encouraging their involvement in a collective response to reconciliation can further the transformation for all. The question of whether or not students are capable of participating in a classroom that is without 'control,' or lacks traditional (or even progressive ideas of) management, from my perspective, is suspect. Within the question itself lies the Myth of Necessity, and the belief in the dichotomy of control/chaos; the chaos might not be pictured as below (Figure 2), but rather in the form of 'helpless' or 'dependent' students who have not learned important lessons in responsibility or work ethic because we failed to teach them these concepts.

Figure 2 (© Adrianhillman | Dreamstime.com, *used with permission)*

The question fails to consider whether the methods used to 'teach' these lessons are humanising or dehumanising; they also neglect to consider that there could be any other option outside of control or chaos. Pedagogies of Resistance are not without instruction in moral reasoning; the difference is that these pedagogies bring a humanising element to it. Would students who are empowered to make decisions be more dependent than those who are not recognised as capable of doing so? Would teachers who welcome resistance be encouraging helplessness?

A further criticism may be the question of whether students want to be liberated; is it presumptuous to assume that there is a desire to change existing structures? I would argue that many teachers, parents, and students may not be in favour of these proposed changes, or most alternatives, to the conventionally accepted model of education in

Canada. I would also contend that most of them would insist, in some sense, the current system and its theories and practices are working. Unfortunately, the problem lies in both *what* they are achieving and *how* they are accomplishing it. Teaching for compliance, and raising people to be docile and unquestioning workers, is certainly a well-established pedagogy; one that many teachers do very well and with which the liberal systemic goals are met with gusto. But, an unresolved Master-Slave Dialectic, and the current approach to teacher and student roles in many North American classrooms as a reflection of it, is an example of unhealthy dependence. As discussed early in chapter three, both Master and Slave cannot reach their full potential, or become fully human, while maintaining their roles (Freire, 2005). A teacher-as-subject is dependent upon their students-as-objects; the teacher's role is justified by their position in relation to students, and, as I have argued, the teacher's tactics to control students are also vindicated through this dialectic. In Freire's assessment, the oppressed may not recognise their own oppression; Kohn notes that contemporary pedagogy produces "praise-junkies" that thrive on the productive discipline model (Kohn, 2001, para. 7). The liberal system creates willing participants; this is one of its leverage points. Does this mean that the system is serving students or teachers?

Responses to a call for change, recognition of paradigmatic problems, and proposals for pedagogy that upset conventional wisdom and associated practices often revolve around beliefs such as "it just wouldn't work" or "the current school system is not set up so that we can do this" or "the administration would never allow it." These reactions are not the least bit surprising, considering that the paradigm indoctrinates us to constantly maintain its rules and continually pursue its goals. My response is to concur;

not every effort to promote change and to resist systems will always work; understanding leverage points and being prepared to let go takes time, plenty of careful thought, and practice. Locating our 'self,' and our self-consciousness, is challenging; allowing space for revaluating, room for growth, and the welcoming of mistakes is uncomfortable. Coming together to subvert liberal moral education will not happen overnight. There has to be a change in systemic goals by all involved, for any transformation to be accepted or attempted. But, should we avoid any attempt to change because it will be difficult?

The most common question that I have encountered in reaction to 'letting go' and teaching students to resist can be reduced to this: "Won't this look like *Lord of the Flies*?" (in reference to the 1954 dystopian novel by William Golding). Once again, a liberal paradigm and its Myths of Moral Education seem to manifest and the reliance on the belief that control is necessary, and that there must be someone in the role of authority if there is to be anything other than chaos, manifests so that the MSD can remain in place. The narrative that a collective approach to education, or peace in the sense of creativity and compassion, is not only impossible but also dangerous is a reflection of the argument that the Slave needs to be maintained and that someone must fill the role of the Master. This comparison is also based on the belief that students, or people in general, are without virtue and will always fight for authority or revert to being dominated. Also, because I think this question is coming from a place in which the teacher, in their revised role as teacher-student is difficult to imagine, what I believe is really being asked is: "What will the roles of the teacher and student become?" This is answered in the way in which we seek to resolve the MSD; the role of the teacher is a teacher-student. The teacher-student is aware of their own subjectivity and recognises

the self-consciousness of the student-teachers. The teacher-student is one who in solidarity with student-teachers, and through their efforts to question a liberal paradigm and its impacts on connection, compassion, and curiosity, works toward its subversion through reconciliation, resistance, and love. I cannot give an exact description of what the role of the teacher who has undergone such a transformation will be, precisely because this thesis is *not* an effort to outline or prescribe a specific way in which to enact resistance. I can, however, generally offer this consideration; the role of a teacher who is working with a Praxis of Letting Go, and Pedagogies of Resistance, will be one that is a challenging moral endeavour. I can also speak from my own experience and say that in taking on this transformative approach to education the teacher will be empowered.

There will still be problems both moral and otherwise in the classroom, but the way in which they are approached and solved, as well as the content of the message in those efforts will be different. The concern is that without control and management, under the guise of 'moral education,' how do we deal with disturbances and how do we respond when conflicts arise, or if safety or comfort is impacted? Hopefully, the previous chapters have addressed a change in the way in which we view students, which conceivably transforms how we come to understand problems. Seeing beyond our conventional approach of punishment, manipulation, a withdrawal of care/love, and maintaining our dominance, is essential to truly *seeing* our students as people; people make mistakes, are impacted by their environment, and struggle sometimes. In the role of teacher-student, the initial assumptions change; rather than approaching a problem, such as when one student hurts another, with the automatic and unthinking response that they must be 'taught a lesson,' meaning punishment, the restored and humanised practice

is to love. The teacher, as a helpful and caring adult, and one whose goal is no longer control but solidarity and liberation, will encounter conflict armed with considerations of power, compassion, reconciliation, and systemic empowerment. The teacher-student will assess whether their practice, or praxis, reflects their goal while subverting a liberal paradigm. The way in which to view the role of a teacher-student can be expressed simply; rather than dragging someone behind you, or actively pushing someone towards a specific direction, you are walking beside them.

In an effort to increase teacher transformation and to support these efforts, I would recommend a few areas for further research and development. The first area of interest would be in developing teacher training that would make the reasons to abandon moral education, as well as the implementation of Pedagogies of Resistance, more accessible and approachable. A training program that modeled these pedagogies, and included the creation of a teacher-support model, could increase participation and both professional and emotional encouragement in teacher transformation and empowerment. Because as previously mentioned most parents are within the same mindset, and subscribe to similar beliefs and practices as teachers, I propose there should be concurrent community outreach in association with teacher training; as Kohn remarks, a "teacher can do only so much when her [sic] students come from homes where power is valued more than reason or love – or when the culture as a whole reflects similar priorities" (2006, p.120). In an effort to further support teachers, as well as students within an emerging learning community, there needs to be research and development surrounding the needs and perspectives of parents/care-givers and the ways in which, through avenues such as approachable and applicable literature, information sessions, community feedback

opportunities, or parenting seminars, among other possible manifestations, could be assessed as possibilities in supporting these changes in schools and communities.

Individual efforts to overcome a dialectic of which we are so accustomed are important, but also isolated and isolating and not very effective. I know from experience that walking this road alone is empowering but sometimes alienating. It is liberating because my practice is shared *with* my students and it is alienating because when I see evidence of paradigmatic objectives in other educative settings, including outside of the classroom, and the ways in which resistance is shut down and people are further embedded into their dehumanising roles, it can be demoralising as I am pulled back into their reality. My hope is that more and more educators will have conversations much like this; the theories written here, and in the writing of hooks and Freire, are not unattainable or unapproachable. When the simple and timeworn phrase "Good Job!" is considered and problematized, a seed is planted. Acceptance of the problems located within our role, and the generosity and courage in letting it go, offers further growth. Making a move from rewards and punishments, dehumanisation, judgements and control, to a practice of compassion, reconciliation, solidarity, empowerment and love, is possible.

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