Towards socially just pedagogies:
Deleuzoguattarian critical disability studies

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ABSTRACT

Socially just pedagogies call for sensitivity to politics and culture. In this paper I will uncover some key challenges in relation to working pedagogically with disabled people through the exploration of a critical disability studies perspective. Firstly, I will unpack some of the assumptions that underpin educational understandings of 'disability' and 'impairment', suggesting that we need to engage more willingly with politicised and socially constructed ideas in relation to these phenomena. Secondly, I will raise questions about the current aims of pedagogy in relation to the market and the autonomous learner. In light of the market – and the subject it produces - I will argue that 'disability and 'impairment' demand critical researchers to think more creatively about setting the conditions for experimenting with socially just pedagogies. Thirdly, with this experimentation in mind, I will draw upon the work of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari to think of socially just pedagogies in terms of rhizomes (n-1); productive models of desire and planes of immanence. These concepts construct pedagogies as 'becoming' rather than 'being' – opening up resistant spaces and potential territories of social justice – all of them uncertain.

Introduction: a multiplicity of challenges

> Educators … should reject forms of schooling that marginalize students who are poor, black and least advantaged. This points to the necessity for developing school practices that recognize how issues related to gender, class, race and sexual orientation can be used as a resource for learning rather than being contained in schools through a systemic pattern of exclusion, punishment and failure (Giroux, 2003, p10).

There is a conspicuous absence of disabled people in Henry Giroux's recent appeal. This piece – by one of the most influential critical educationalists in North America and a key contributing thinker to the development of 'critical pedagogy' – reminds us of the necessity to put pedagogy in its socio-cultural and political place. Too often, however, disabled learners are excluded from the discourses of critical pedagogy (Gabel, 2002). Instead their participation tends to be conceptualised in relation to 'inclusive education'. Here, debates reign about the relative merits of 'mainstreaming', 'integration' and 'inclusion'. Students are moved around this shifting policy landscape. Schools adapt or resist legislative demands to include learners with impairments. Teachers and other educational professionals complain about inconsistent policies. They express wariness at the 'political correctness' that abounds. Parents and teachers struggle with the 'either / or' options of segregated or mainstreamed educational provision. Whispers from the playground question the inclusion of children whose physical or cognitive impairments seem so (too) profound. These points of debate are clearly important. They address common components of pedagogy: culturally specific ways of organising formal education in institutional settings categorised by curriculum, instruction and evaluation (Ibid.). However, at their worst, they threaten to locate disabled learners in yet another 'special' discourse; one that now functions under the cliché of 'inclusion' (Azzopardi, 2005). Disabled students remain marginalised through their construction as an othered group requiring empowerment (Clough and Barton, 1998). Meanwhile, wider struggles for the meaning of schooling and pedagogy interconnect race, gender, sexuality and class but exclude disability (Shakespeare, 1998). Consequently, I welcome the term 'socially just pedagogies'. It is used in this paper for a number of reasons:

- To seek ever-changing and constantly fluid meanings in relation to what might be termed 'socially just';
- To open up a view of pedagogy that conceives widely of those who are marginalised by normative educational contexts;
- To move debates on and with theories typically associated with critical pedagogy, critical theory and neo-Marxist ideas;
- To recognise the input of social theories of disablement and resistance expressed in the rapidly emerging critical disability studies literature;
- To preconceive disability and impairment as fundamentally social artefacts;
- To consider pedagogy in its broadest social sense – including practices associated with parenting, teaching, professional development and, crucially, political activism;
- To invest pedagogy with some concepts emerging from poststructuralist and postmodernist writing;
- To embrace uncertainty in relation to this phenomenon.

This paper addresses the pressing need to support disabled people in the exercising and promotion of what might be termed socially just pedagogies. In taking on such a challenge, I suggest that disability studies – plus the work of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari – offer particularly exciting opportunities for reconceptualising the concepts, assumptions and practices of pedagogy.

Milieu: Disability politics

Deficit thinking surrounds disabled people. Statementing of children as having special educational needs[1], the close alliance of their educational provision with the input of practitioners associated with the psy-complex (for examples, educational psychologists, speech therapists, childhood counsellors, special educational needs coordinators) and the desire of parents to get a label for their children are just some of the processes that conceptualise children in terms of their associated conditions. Critical disability studies politically (re)invigorate these practices. Disability is politicised. While individual, medical and deficit models continue to dominate

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[1] In Britain, statementing is the phrase used to describe the process where a Local Education Authority (LEA) conducts a statutory assessment of a child's special educational needs (SEN) with the intention of making and maintaining a statement of SEN. Many children statemented with SEN have their needs met in mainstream schools, with specialist interventions, or attend segregated special schools.

thinking *about* disabled people, critical disability studies calls for counter-hegemony *with* disabled people. Alternative discourses. A reassessment of the dialectical split of (impaired) body/mind and society. In Britain, the development of the social model of disability exemplifies a largely materialist reaction to the equation impairment=disability[2]. Disability is an expression of wider socio-economic, political and cultural formations of a very specific though complex form of exclusion: the exclusion of people with impairments. Clearly, then, an engagement with pedagogy involves a deconstruction of disabling pedagogies or pedagogies of disablement (Oliver, 1990). Educational environments, curricula content, teacher identities are all normatively associated with environments, standards and achievements that are at odds with the quirkiness of disabled learners. Schools continue to exclude children by virtue of their inaccessibility. Curricula promote standards that some with (or without) impairments will never reach. Curricula content say nothing of the history of exclusion experienced by disabled people. Teachers are assessed in ways that celebrate high-achievement over the valuing of difference. And at the most ordinary level, disabled students continue to be singled out for specialised attention, are segregated from non-disabled peers through the presence of non-disabled adult supporters and remain unrepresented in images of schooling and educational attainment. Disability and impairment therefore collide in these socially constructed arenas, these ideological battlefields (Apple, 1995).

Phenomena such as 'Down Syndrome', 'Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder', 'Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties', 'learning difficulties', 'Special Educational Needs' invoke a history of complex, overlapping processes of assessment, diagnosis,

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[2] As far back as 1976, the Union of the Physically Impaired Against Segregation proposed the following definitions:

Impairment - lacking part of or all of a limb, or having a defective limb organism or mechanism of the body.
Disability - the disadvantage or restriction of activity caused by a contemporary social organisation which takes no account of people who have physical impairments and thus excludes them from mainstream social activities (UPIAS, 1976 pp3-4).

surveillance and special treatment. Historicising, externalising and politicising disability has much in common with critical race literature. Marvin Lynn's (2004) liberatory pedagogy involves working with 'students of color' about African culture; a dialogical engagement in the classroom; the promotion of daily acts of self-affirmation and resisting what might be termed hegemonic administrators. This approach moves us towards not only inclusive forms of pedagogy but, simultaneously, deeper conversations about theory. Lynn also provides a number of points that (should) guide the work of associated scholars, researchers and educators:

- recognise inequities in the legal system in relation to people of colour;
- reposition the centrality of race in contemporary society (race as a defining factor in the constitution of society);
- reject West-European/modernist claims of neutrality and objectivity (turn to the subjective);
- rely upon the experiential, situated and subjugated knowledges of people of colour;
- embrace interdisciplinarity and 'intersectionality' (bring in other socially constructed categories).

Lynn proposes an epistemology of transformation and liberation; an arena for the development of theoretical constructs that ensure the cultural sensitivity of empirical work. We are encouraged to adopt an 'engaged pedagogy', as bell hooks and Paulo Freire have articulated, in relation to *caring about students whilst encouraging dissent and resistance* (see McLaren and Leanord, 1999). Moreover,

> While critical race theorists agree that race is a socially constructed notion, they do not believe that limiting one's use of the term will increase the likelihood that racism will be eliminated as a social problem. Instead, they advocate a vigorous dialogical and pedagogical engagement with the term and the resultant privileging of certain racial groups over others' (Lynn, 2004, p155)

Similarly, a critical disability studies perspective interrogates how and why certain impairments, for example, are deemed more amenable to education than others. A social constructionist perspective reaffirms the significance of 'impairment' and 'race' and opens them up to analysis. Impairment and disability are, as Tremain

(2002) has argued, sides of the same coin; both rife for sociological analysis, pedagogical engagement and politicisation. In this sense, then, impairment itself can be said to be part of the wider processes of disability (Goodley, 2001; Goodley and Rapley, 2002). This leads us to critique societal discourse. One cannot have a critical conception of the world without being aware of its historicity (Holmes, 2002, p77). We are encouraged as educators to work politically alongside the disabled people's movement as key contributors to rethinking pedagogy:

> One important possibility is for progressive educators and students to join with labor organisations, community people, and others, in forming social movements that resist the corporatization of schools, the roll back in basic services and the exploitation of teachers and student (Giroux, 2003, p11).

An analysis of disability requires us to expand the scope of democratic institutions: not only in public and higher education but also in the wider community. In making sense of the challenges facing the disabled learner we need, therefore, to acknowledge the market.

Trees: Markets, agents and pedagogy

Disability/impairment shed light on the relationships between education, society and dominant forms of pedagogy that threaten to exclude learners identified as disabled. Clearly, agents and institutions are marketised and configured accordingly. For Giroux (2003, p3) the marketisation of education risks creating schools as simple adjuncts of the workplace. 'Technocratic rationality' is embraced and leads to the testing and sorting models of assessment that reproduce wider inequities of society, pliant workers, capitalist subjects. Education is education for accommodation and as a consequence:

> pedagogy [is] either reduced to a sterile set of techniques or dressed up within the discourse of humanistic methods that simply soften[s] the attempts by the schools to produce insidious form of moral and political regulation' (Giroux, 2003, p6).

At best markets seem to give learners – or consumers – rights to the kinds of educational experiences that they should receive. Accordingly, schools aim to raise their standards to compete for consumers while parents have more power in supporting their children to make educational choices (Khong and Ng, 2005). These processes do not reside in education but are closely tied to marketisation and globalisation[3]. Interesting questions are therefore raised about how the institutions of society – such as education – respond to global demands and agendas (see for example Saravanan, 2005). Hence, each nation involves itself in contemplating educational policy and practice in light of global factors and national responsibilities. In conceptualising the place of disabled learners, then, it is important not to simplistically import ideas from one nation to another. Potts (1998) suggests that too often the inclusion of disabled learners is viewed as a phenomenon that has emerged in developed minority world economies – dominated by North America and the UK – which is then applied in other nation states of the majority world. In contrast, global educators are asked to think critically about how such ideas can be best practised in the national context (Lim and Tan, 1999). Here, then, global ideas associated with inclusion, the market and their alternatives are considered from the position of the local: inclusion is a 'glocal' phenomenon.

Markets also create competitive subjects. Resultant forms of pedagogy rely upon subjects – e.g. teachers and learners – to be constituted in particular ways, dependent on specific foundations:

> If the pedagogical subject is discursive, at least in a metaphoric sense, then it is a subject in the process of writing itself and of being interpreted by others (Gabel, 2002, p184).

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[3] Whilst beyond the scope of this paper, a critique of the global market and its relationship with disabled learners is clearly important. Mok (2003) notes that some observers view the global economy as being dominated by uncontrollable global forces in which nation states are structurally constrained and therefore the capacity of modern states eventually declines. Alternatively, other scholars have drawn attention to the ways in which modern states tactically make use of the globalisation discourse to justify their own political agendas or legitimise their inaction (Mok, 2003, p201). The recent expansion of the Indian private healthcare system to British 'health tourists' clearly reflects one such response (BBC News 24, 8th May, 2006)

Pedagogies of the market construct subjects with a sovereignty of self: as self-actualising, self-directive and autonomous beings (Rose, 1989). Too often, when we think of involving students in educational practices, we assume students to be able, productive, skilled, accountable individuals who are ready and willing to lead developments within the classroom. They fit the quintessential construction of the modernist, unitary, humanistic subject (Chinn, 2006). In short, our students are 'able'. Such a construction of the learner is hugely problematic for students with disabilities and or special educational needs who require the support of others. Indeed, Masschelein and Simons (2005) argue that moves towards inclusive schooling in the UK continue to fail students because they maintain a particular vision of the individual student and their relationship with (and responsibilities to) society:

> Inclusion … is linked up with entrepreneurship … the willingness to live an entrepreneurial life and to put one's capital to work. An inclusive society, therefore, is not a society of equals in a principled way, but a society in which everyone has the qualities to meet her needs in an entrepreneurial way (p127)

Such a conception of the learner mimics the kind of individualistic personhood valued by the neoliberal marketised society[4]. These human subjects not only populate moribund forms of pedagogy; they are ever-present in the critical pedagogy literature. Susan Gabel's (2002) deconstruction of this literature reveals:

- A lack of recognition of diverse 'abilities' at the outset of critical work;
- An absence of the disabled subject/learner;
- An assumption that any (non-disabled) learner can – with the proper conditions – transform themselves;

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[4] Similar visions of personhood have been articulated in recent British educational and social policy. As Billington (2006) notes, the present government's 'Every Child Matters: Change for Children' programme is a new approach to the well-being of children and young people from birth to age 19. The Government's aim is for every child, whatever their background or their circumstances, to have the support they need to: Be healthy; Stay safe; Enjoy and achieve; Make a positive contribution and Achieve economic well-being. The latter aim illuminates, again, the child as entrepreneur.

- Orthodox understandings of the concept of 'voice' – thus ignoring diverse forms of expression (and excluding those who are differently articulate)

Students with disabilities or labels of Special Educational Needs do not fit this required subject construction. Learners who draw upon consistent and perhaps long term support of carers and educational professionals disrupt the view of the autonomous learner. Academic excellence is troubled by those who might never be capable of (nor interested in) such achievements[5]. It seems, therefore, that socially just pedagogies demand a major (re)think: contesting constructed subjects ready and able (bodied) for the marketplace:

> Educators and others require a politics of resistance that extends beyond the classroom as part of a broader struggle to challenge those forces of neo-liberalism that currently wage war against all collective structures capable of defending vital social institutions as a public good (Giroux, 2003, p14)

Not only does the market firmly fix its subjects, it also threatens to view them as eternally lacking (desiring subjects consuming the things they lack) and places onus on hierarchical forms of organisational structure in relation to inclusion (schools and institutions 'do' the including of these subjects, or not, as the case may be). This leads to an emphasis on valuing inherent diversity and difference rather than viewing humanity – and critical pedagogy – as emergent activities. Gabel (2002) argues that pedagogy must not conceptualise the subject (it will often do so in disempowering ways) but allow it to emerge in the pedagogical community. In order to conceptualise socially just pedagogies *with* disabled learners, I want to take up Gabel's challenge and encourage a conceptualisation of pedagogy that moves from the certain timbers of modernity, market and bounded subject to the uncertain burrows of postmodernity, lines of flight and constant becomings.

Weeds: Socially just pedagogies

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[5] Disabled students create conditions for rethinking socially just pedagogies, though this should not be a surprise; 'Theory seldom springs forth from nothing but is more often produced in response to problems of everyday living' (St Pierre, 2004, p293)

> As committee educators … we can work *against a politics of certainty*, a pedagogy of terrorism and institutional formation that closes down rather than opens up democratic relations (Giroux, 2003, p14, my italics)

Gilles Deluze and Félix Guattari, offer a number of ex/citing possibilities for experimenting with pedagogy[6]. Their work has been adopted in education (e.g. Morss, 2000; St Pierre, 2001, 2004; Carmody Hagood, 2004; Allan, 2004; Gough, 2004; Gregoriou, 2004; Semetsky, 2004) and feminism (e.g. Braidotti, 1994; Grosz, 1999), though its application in the field of critical disability studies is embryonic (Kaul, 2003; Bayliss, 2004; Fisher and Goodley, 2005; Goodley, 2006, forthcoming; Roets, 2006; Shildrick and Price, 2005/2006, Shildrick and Mykitjuk, 2005). In this paper, I want to focus in on three key concepts – or lines of flight – that are expanded on, in depth, in their 1987 text *A Thousand Plateaus*:

(i)   the rhizome (n-1);
(ii)   desire as productive (the Body without Organs);
(iii)   planes of immanence.

I will experiment with these ideas because I think they allow possibilities for conceptualising critical and socially just pedagogies[7]. They ask us to be wary of certainty. They emphasise productivity. They liquidate the subject and identity (Rajchman, 1999). They think of pedagogies as 'becoming' rather than 'being': opening up spaces of resistance, conditions for social justice, so reinvigorating some of the proposals already apparent in critical pedagogy (Morss, 2000; Grosz, 1999b). They ask 'learners' and 'teachers' of all kinds to experience and experiment: to become lines of flight. They also engage in 'the pedagogy of the concept' (Peters, 2004), but, more of that later.

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[6] In a devastating attack on North American educational research, Elizabeth St Pierre has argued, "We are in desparate need of new concepts, Deleuzian or otherwise, in this new educational environment that priviledges a single positivist research model with its transcendent rationality and objectivity … we seem to be in a time warp, when the overcoding machine of state science … once again controls education" (St Pierre, 2004, p286)

[7] Deleuze and Guattari's emphasis on experimentation and metaphor has led Brian Massumi – the translator of *A Thousand Plateaus* – to ask; 'Does it work? What new thoughts does it make possible to think? What new emotions does it make possible to feel? What new sensations and perceptions does it open in the body (Massumi, 1992, p8)

The rhizome (n-1): becomings

The rhizome is presented as a model of communication and of proliferation (Morss, 2000). We are neither trees nor binaries. We are rhizomes. This figurative visual term describes and prescribes non-hierarchical networks which may be seen in politics, cognition, desire, love, parenting and pedagogy (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987). Rhizomes are oppositional to trees which symbolise hierarchies, linearity and extreme stratification. Ignore trees. Think, instead, of weeds, grass, swarms and packs:

> Plants with roots or radicles may be rhizomorphic in other respects altogether … Burrows are too, in all their functions of shelter, supply, movement, evasion, and breakout. The rhizome itself assumes very diverse forms, from ramified surface extension in all directions to concretion into bulbs and tubers. When rats swarm over each other. The rhizome includes the best and the worst: potato and couchgrass, or the weed (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.7)

Hence, modernist discourse is flattened, its terrain reconceived:

> A rhizome has no beginning or end; it is always in the middle, between things, interbeing, *intermezzo*. The tree is filiation, but the rhizome is alliance, uniquely alliance. The tree imposes the verb 'to be', but the fabric of the rhizome is the conjunction, "and...and...and..." This conjunction carries enough forces to shake and uproot the verb 'to be' …(Ibid, pp27-28, italics in the original)

'To be' (a product of old trees) is now replaced by the 'to become…' (of weeds). The rhizome is not singularly rooted but multiply interlinked and ever growing. The disabled learner is no longer a lacking subject nor a fixed entity. She is ever moving. A body no longer embodied. She is rhizome.

> Write to the *n*th power, N-1, write with slogans: Form rhizomes and not roots, never plant! Don't sow, forage! Be neither a One nor a Many, but multiplicities! Form a line, never a point! Speed transforms the point into a line. Be fast, even while standing still! Line of chance, line of hips, line of flight. Don't arouse the General in yourself! Not an exact idea, but just as idea (Ibid., 1987, p 27)

Rhizomes are more that just horizontal[8]. Rhizomes risk culminating in new hierarchies, paralyzing local production, reterritorialising the becoming body around a single root, around a new lack, a new subject (Gregoriou, 2004, p234). Once a rhizome has been obstructed, arborified, it's all over, no desire stirs; for it is always by rhizome that desire moves and produces. Instead, the rhizome is constantly being produced, constantly becoming. Following Carmody Hagood (2004, p143), points on a rhizome always connect to something else; rhizomes are heterogeneous not dichotomous; they are made up a multiplicity of lines that extend in all directions; they break off, but then they begin again (either where they were before or on a new line). They are not models but maps with multiple entryways. They are in the milieu[9]. There are exciting possibilities, consequences and actions for our rhizomatic learners and co-educators. Using Bogard's (1998, p72) Deleuzoguattarian plateau 1, we can note a key phenomena in relation to rhizomes; w*eaving*. Any point of a rhizome can and has to be connected to anything other. Rhyzomatic happenings involve the principles of heterogeneity, the production of composites and a language that reflects its own essential 'disparateness' and improvisational character. This language is not closed in but:

> a writing of 'the people' not the 'experts' which 'must engage substantive multiplicities and not allow itself to be overcoded into formal unities, binarisms which synthesis into totalities, and so on. To write [or to live] is to 'weave (Ibid).

Hence, pedagogies should engage *alongside* learners who weave away, performing multiplicities of self, resisting over coding and the subtle forms of segregation brought about by assessment. And alongside this learner, the rhizomatic pedagogue cares for the ever-changing, ever moving, becoming learner.

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[8] Gregoriou (2004, p234) proclaims: 'the tragic paradox is that the rhizome has found a hospitable niche in pedagogical discourse *only* as a metaphor for de-centred and non-hierarchical systems of organisation' (my italics).

[9] The multiple must be made, not by always adding a higher dimension, but rather in the simplest of ways, by dint of sobriety, with the number of dimensions one already has available – always n-1 … A system of this kind could be called a rhizome. (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p7)

> When women educators engaged in philosophy of education write about caring and organised schooling's violent severing of intimate links … it is a philosophy at the n – 1 dimension: breaking from the 'referential genre' and commencing philosophical thinking again, acting new allusions to what is conceivable' (Gregoriou, 2004, p247)

And similarly:

> The interpersonal care and assistance that I experience and that shapes my becoming [as a disabled woman] is situated in a rhizomatic proliferation of connections, in nodular social networks coalescing in temporary points of assemblage, that profoundly reshape all our identities and ultimately the dimensions of the worlds we inhabit (Shildrick and Price, 2005/2005, point 17).

This links back to Lynn's (2004) point about the prominence of 'care' in the reformation of socially just pedagogies[10]. But any conception of care has to be rhizomatic: as becoming-care. To clarify 'The rhizome is reducible neither to the one nor the multiple. It is not the one that becomes two… it is not a multiple derived from one … it has neither beginning nor end but always a middle (milieu) from which grows' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p23). The rhizome is n-1: the multiplicity without the transcendental signifier of 'one' (God, science, man, truth …)[11]. For Morss (2000), Deleuze and Guattari's materialism is of the 'sensuous' kind that Marx (1845) envisions in *Theses on Feuerbach:* human sensuous activity, practice. These

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[10] In relation to nursing and social care, Holmes (2000, p80) has argued that "the challenge is to oppose the processes of technicization and to help generate alternatives that are meaningful and theoretically grounded, and can assist the nurse to survive and resist the subtle, institutionally approved but dehumanizing forces they and their patients face each day. It is a strategy which seeks to protect and extend the place of communicative action in nursing, and thereby contribute to quality care and its valuing throughout the profession" (Holmes, 2000, p80).

[11] For Gregoriou (2004, p245), in considering the rhizome as n-1, Deleuze and Guattari are encouraging us to subtract the grand unifying element from any state of affairs. Only then can we give up on the false analogies, oppositions, and comparisons inspired by a philosophy of identity. When we subtract the single unifying element, like god, science or man, the complexities of the situation become clear. No more transcendence. 'n-1 thinkers' (instead of n-as-compared-to-1) can occupy the middle ground where accidents happen and events occur, without overcoding them with the sainted sign of the same.

activities promise many possible becomings: 'becoming-animal', 'becoming-child', 'becoming-women'. Becomings that are so often 'othered out' of pedagogy.

Consequently, becoming-learners and becoming-educators teeter on the edge. They often feel uncertain. But they are also the best times of becoming-pedagogy. They lack the 'one', the truth. They are becoming-socially just because of their openness; to becomings. To flux. To change in relation to the process of learning. Moreover becoming challenges the marketised product of being. And our 'unable', 'deviant' and 'impaired' beings – these trees of modern pedagogy – are not simply chopped down but burrow underground. Learners swarm and desire with their peers. And they do so in particular ways:

> In a model in which corporeality is no longer to be thought in terms of given and integral entities, but only as engaged in ever dynamic and innovatory linkages, bodies are neither whole nor broken, disabled nor able-bodied, but simply in a process of becoming. And the point is that the process follows no set pattern, nor has any specified end. There are, then, no fixed hierarchies, nor predetermined limits on the nature or trajectory of the connections to be made. It is not that there is no distinction to be made between one corporeal element and the next, between one human body and another, or equally – for Deleuze and Guattari - between the human and animal, or human and machine, but rather that becoming is a process of ever-new and always provisional points of *coming together* (Shildrick and Price, 2005/2006, point 14, my italics).

Desire as productive: disabled bodies without organs

Rhizomes also rupture organisms. Bodies explode[12]. Deleuze and Guattari conceptualise desire as productive. While capitialism and psychoanalysis view desire as lack (in relation to consumers and instinctually driven subjects), Deleuze and Guattari view desire as productive (they are against the law of lack), intense, rhizomatic and becoming[13]. Therefore, becoming-students' desires must be conceived

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[12] This notion of the 'exploding disabled body' is currently being explored in the doctorial work of Andrew Dick, University of Sheffield, School of Education, see www.shef.ac.uk/applieddisabilitystudies/.

[13] One of the ways in which desire is discussed in *A Thousand Plateaus* is in relation to Bateson's analysis of Balinese culture, where desire is considered in terms of ongoing, productive intensities – that never climax – but form together to create plateaus. 'A plateau is

as constantly being productive in the classroom. For John Morss (2000), this sounds much like the stuff of resistance associated with the early writings of critical pedagogy. It engages learning as already an expression of students' power, energy and joy. It is not associated with a process of empowerment but of channelling and supporting (rhizomatically) this productive desire. These flows of desire ask us not to think of individuals[14]. Elizabeth St Pierre (2004) notes that for too long we have used the grammatical 'I' as a linguistic index to *produce* ourselves as a certain kind of subject (we learn how to think, want, believe, love from those given within society - "I think therefore I am"). Many poststructuralist writers, Harraway, Spivak, Derrida, Foucault, Butler have confirmed the fragility of a subject whose legitimacy had become increasingly suspect: our problem is we produce ourselves as a subject on the basis of old modes which do not correspond to our problems (Ibid). As Morss (2000) reminds us, children's bodies, the subject-matter of so much educational practice, are assembled and re-assembled in many and varied ways (indeed assembly has been a daily ritual for many schoolchildren). We should also hunt out resistance.

> ***An assembly: The Disabled Body as Organism (The 'Tom Jones Syndrome')***
> *The special school Christmas concert. Julian takes the stage left. Dressed in black leather trousers, black shirt undone to the navel, medallion around neck. He performs the Tom Jones' classic 'It's not unusual' to piano accompaniment. The crowd go wild. The special teacher informs me over the cries of 'Encore'; 'It's his impairment you know. It makes him like that' [Goodley, 1997, research diary]*

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always in the middle, not at the beginning or the end. A rhizome is made of plateaus. Gregory Bateson uses the word 'plateau' to designate something very special: a continuous, self-vibrating region of intensities, whose development avoids any orientation toward a culmination point or external end' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p-21). And 'In Deleuze and Guattari, a plateau is reached when circumstances combine to bring an activity to a pitch of intensity that is not automatically dissipated in a climax. The heightening of energies is sustained long enough to leave a kind of afterimage of its dynamism that can be reactivated or injected into other activities, creating a fabric of intensive states between which any number of connective routes could exist' (Massumi's trans. Notes in Ibid., pxiv). For a useful application of these ideas visit
http://wwwsshe.murdoch.edu.au/intersections/issue2/Josko.html

[14] 'It's a mistake to believe in the existence of things, persons or subjects' (Deleuze, 1990, p26 cited in St Pierre, 2004, p290)

*An act: The Disabled Body without Organs (Encounters with Tourette
Syndrome in India)*
*Rob Evans – a researcher with the label of Tourette syndrome remembers
sitting on a train in India. As 'Mr T' emerged on the train, a passenger came
over to ask about the commotion. 'Why do you make these noises?' the
stranger asked. Rob introduced the phenomenon of Tourette. The man listened
and then responded. No. Your noises are your energy [see Evans, 2004].*

An experiment: The familial body without organs (Anti-normalisation)[15] you
see, I can't keep chasing the normal. I mean I've done so much to try and make
my son normal but I can't keep that up. It really does detach you from life. I
need to accept him in the ways that he is and just enjoy them and him. I must
stop pressurising myself [Rebecca Greenwood, mother of a young disabled
boy, interview material from ongoing funded research see
http://www.shef.ac.uk/disabled-babies/ and Goodley, forthcoming]

The Deleuzoguattarian contribution to the poststructuralist destabilisation of the
human subject is sustained in their illumination of the body without organs[16] (BwO).
The BwO is no longer a body subordinated by the mind, no longer an organic system,
no longer a vessel that contains organs, but an assemblage of parts and organs, of
actions, and flows; it is a state that can never be reached, and it is what remains when
you take everything away (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p166). The BwO is conceived
in ways that question the hierarchical and systemic organisation of the organs; it is
conceived in ways that open up to new connections, a body that is occupied and
populated by intensities, flows and gradients; but only those intensities that can pass
and circulate, are neither negative nor oppositional[17]. Suddenly, impaired bodies and
minds are no longer lacking entities but BwOs: the stuff of creative pedagogy:

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[15] Gabel (2002, p178) asks that the definition of pedagogy be broadened to 'a way of being, or
… living with or parenting children'. This, she contends, involves the dual task of
deconstruction (constantly doubting parenting and teaching) and social transformation (the
abolishment of marginalisation).

[16] In one of their more coherent sentences of *A Thousand Plateaus* and in answer to the
question 'How do you make yourself a Body without Organs' they reply: 'At any rate, you
have one (or several) … At any rate, you make one, you can't desire without making one'
(Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p166).

[17] Shildrick and Price (2005/2006) observe that "Deleuze and Guattari promote dis-organ-
isation and offer a virtual model of 'desiring production' (1984), the take up of which is
limited neither to those who already fulfil certain corporeal criteria, nor who conform to the

The will to be against really needs a body that is completely incapable of submitting to command. It needs a body that is incapable of adapting to family life, to factory discipline, to the regulations of a traditional sex life, and so forth. (If you find your body refusing these 'normal' modes of life, don't despair – realize your gift!) (Hardt and Negri 2000: 216, cited in Shildrick and Price, 2005/2006)

Rather than being viewed as the stuff of shame or deficit, these new 'bodies' and 'minds' promote opportunities for reconfiguring the classroom, the learning environment, the school, spaces and times of pedagogy. Bodies that refute normalisation are reconsidered in terms of their resistant possibilities: acts and experiments instead of assemblies and bloackages.

Planes of immanence: disabled nomads in desert places

Rhizomatic becomings of emerging BwOs take place on planes or plateaus of becomings or immanence. They are best placed in the desert[18]. For Morse (2000, p195), this plane of immanence is occupied by concepts, but occupied without measuring it out and without dividing it up. It is like a desert in which concepts populate rather like nomadic tribes, or like species moving about on a plane of immanence. The concept, above all, is that which is invented (Morss, 2000, p195). This nomadic style has, of course, been adopted by the feminist scholar Rosi Braidotti (1994):

> The nomad … stands for the relinquishing and the deconstruction of any sense of fixed identity …The nomadic style is about transitions and passages without pre-determined destinations or lost homelands. Thus, nomadism refers to the kind of critical consciousness that resists settling into socially coded modes of thought and behaviour. It is the subversion of set conventions that defines the nomadic state, not the literal act of travelling. But

modernist scenario of autonomous action. It is not the agency of a self embodied in a complete and integrated organic unity that is the driving force, but the flows of energy that bring together part objects – both living material and machinic – to create surprising new assemblages. In place of the limits that the ideal of independence imposes, the emphasis is on connectivity, and linkage"

[18] A Deleuzoguattarian approach is often termed 'geophilosophy'; rather than providing a history, they conceptualise philosophy in spatial terms (see Allan, 2004; Peters, 2004)

more figurations come to mind, and not only classical ones like gypsies and the wandering Jews (Braidotti, 2006, no page).

These planes of immanence, populated by nomadic becoming-learners, becoming-educators and becoming co-educators, are smooth places 'in which each person takes and makes what she can' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p177; see also Bogard, 2000). The idealised educational context is a smooth desert: a go-game, devoid of limitations, strata and the blockages of creativity. *A place of hope.* The positivity of desiring production 'arises in the flows, energies and intensities of nomadic wandering, in hybrid associations, in the acceptance of ambiguity, and above all in an ever-expansive connectivity in which not human beings as such, but human becomings, are but one element (Shildrick and Price, 2005/2006, point 13). In reality, of course, educational contexts are stratified in ways that create organisms (rather than BwOs) and subjects (instead of becomings). Remember the market? In actuality, you probably need enough of the organism/educational subject left to reform each day (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p178). There's a class to teach[19]! But in conceiving of pedagogical spaces and places as immanent desert like planes populated by becomings, rhizomes, lines of flight, BwOs and nomads, then new pedagogies are inevitable. A Deleuzoguattarian vision appears to value pedagogies that emphasises human activity, productive desire and consciousness as constructive (Olkowski, 1999). Humanness as grouped and resistance as flight. A number of opportunities emerge for deconstructing and transforming pedagogy in ways that are also of relevance to critical disability studies and to the development of socially just pedagogies.

First, we are drawn to the *interconnection of bodies* where we are no longer embodied but emergent interconnected BwOs (becoming-learners/teachers). The non/disabled learner/teacher is thus conceived as becoming and interconnected with other BwOs. Liberating together (Shor, 1999). Second, *BwOs are interdependent.* The classroom is viewed is a space for development of relationships between disabled, non-disabled

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[19] This links to the Deleuzoguattarian concepts of appropriation (see Goodley, 2006) and the necessity for lodging on available strata (see Markula, 2006)

and other types of BwOs. But our interests are not in formulating clear aims – stratifying the desert – but in openly embracing the becomings of relationships. Such a move would have massive impacts for the current dominance of pedagogy by multi-disciplinary professionals. Instead, emphasis is placed on the possibilities for the formation of planes of immanence between groups of non/disabled learners in which they create new concepts and values. The old concepts of 'inclusion' and 'professional empowerment' may no longer hang together. The potency of professionals may be challenged. Third, if *desire is productive then (disabled) students are always considered productive.* The becoming BwO and nomadic learner reject the static/fixing assessment of impairment labels offered by statementing and diagnosis. The impaired BwO is emerging, never still, nor lacking. Don't be pinned down (nor pathologised)! Hence, educators struggle to 'know' their students on the basis of labels and conditions. Instead, they are forced to embrace the productivity of desires within the classroom. To engage with different forms of meaning-making. To deconstruct disability/impairment via rhizome. To view disabled learners as BwOs, as becoming-learners and, crucially, becoming-educators.

Fourth, is the promotion of *new sensibilities for all involved in the doings of pedagogy.* This can involve erasing the subject of enunciation (I think …), facilitating the erosion of individuals (… therefore I am) and allowing anonymous assemblages of voices, acts, affects and bodily habits to invoke a new sensibility: to become multilingual or foreigner in one's own language (Gregoriou, 2004, p248). Listening to different types of voices is crucial here. Or, for St Pierre (2004), considering education in terms of Deleuzian articulations of space provides potent and stimulating entry points to a personalised (but not interiorised) field of collective memories: articulating uncertainty, the present and the future. Fifth, we appear to be offering *hopeful planes.* When forming planes we should 'have a small plot of new land at all times' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p178). Never settle, but move and continue with Freire's conscientization: 'learning to perceive social, political and economic contradictions and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality (Holmes, 2002, p76). Sixth, and crucial to critical pedagogies, is *experimentation with a caring*

pedagogy: not in terms of caring for subjects but caring becomings. This may well involve elucidating those everyday happenings that constitute social justice: caring, reciprocity in the educational relationship, ordinariness, extraordinariness, intuition and personal shared understandings between the agents of pedagogy. It also involves accepting and facilitating becomings rather than beings. Creating concepts not in order to determine some things' essence but as vehicles for expressing events: pedagogy of the concept (Peters, 2004).

CONCLUSIONS/BECOMINGS

For those who might suggest this is all too much:

> At best, theories of resistance are useful as highly nuanced theoretical tools for understanding and intervening within structures of power as they define diverse contexts across a range of institutional and ideological formations … Theories of resistance become useful when they provide concrete ways in which to articulate knowledge to practical effects, mediated by the imperatives of social justice, and uphold forms of education capable of expanding the meaning of critical citizenship and the relations of democratic public life (Giroux, 2003, p9)

In the current climate of marketisation and the celebration of the autonomous human subject the time is ripe for experimenting with socially just pedagogies towards hopes, possibilities and becomings. This is, therefore, not a conclusion but a call to experiment: to create the concepts of a socially just pedagogy. To resist over-coding. To enter and define new territories. To define, again and again, concepts that resonate with the emotions we associate with 'justice' and 'pedagogy'.

Sheffield, School of Education 'Pedagogies, policies and professionalism' seminar series in which a version of this paper was presented.

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