

Chapter 1: Openings

This thesis had an uneasy conception. My prime motive was not the traditional desire for intellectual stimulation, more an obligation resulting from being newly appointed to a teacher training institution which was about to merge with a university. I felt I needed a doctorate for credibility. Twenty-five years teaching experience, and postgraduate study, was insufficient.

As a scientist, a zoologist by training, steeped in the rigid inflexibility of the scientific method, I was intrigued by, but sublimely ignorant of, postmodernism and poststructuralism, concepts that had captured my interest. Aware of the limitations of science in finding ~~solutions~~¹ to complex educational dilemmas, I wanted to learn if other approaches were more illuminating. In spite of engaging with postgraduate study, I still questioned the value of much educational research, a view shared by many other teachers and academics [Hargreaves 1996; Hammersley 1997; Pring 2000]. Perhaps exploring educational research from the inside, from a position of knowledge and understanding rather than from ignorance and preconception, would enable a more informed and positive view to develop.

I wanted to know if I could do it – that is, to study, think and write at doctoral level. Could I maintain the relentless momentum and motivation necessary to achieve the title ‘Doctor’? Would I be different, would I think differently? Foucault, in response to a question about his intellectual identity in an interview in 1982 replied:

I don’t feel it necessary to know exactly who I am. The main interest in life and work is to become someone else you were not in the beginning. If you knew when you began a book what you would say at the end, do you think you would have the courage to write it? [Foucault, in Martin *et al* 1988:9]

¹ The word ‘solutions’ has been erased, or placed *sous rature* [Derrida 1976] in order to acknowledge that the meaning of this signifier is questioned. To write a word, cross it out, and then print both the word and its deletion suggests that the word is both inaccurate yet necessary [Spivak 1976:xiv].

Would I have the courage to write a doctoral thesis, not knowing what I would write, or who I would be at the end of it?

More frivolously, I wanted the title 'Doctor'. I would really prefer the title 'Lady', but as that is highly unlikely, and I question honorary titles of any sort, 'Doctor' will suffice. Since embarking on doctoral study, I have started to resent those who are awarded honorary degrees because they have not experienced the struggle with the thinking, the writing, and the conceptualising. When an Olympic Gold Medallist was awarded such a title, I was irritated, and the thought crossed my mind that I should receive an honorary Olympic Gold Medal because I had recently started running! Even my attitude to the honorary doctorate awarded to Bob Dylan was only slightly more accepting!

This somewhat inauspicious 'opening' was a 'crack' [Stronach and Maclure 1997] that was prised open by reading, writing and thinking, which, to my surprise, I enjoyed. The deliberate use of the word 'opening' in preference to 'introduction' as the subtitle of this section reflects a desire to move away from the traditional restrictive frameworks that can close down innovative thinking, and towards openness, complexity and uncertainty. 'Introductions are always tricky..... [they] are doomed to disappoint'[Stronach and Maclure 1997:1]. They disappoint if they fail to state clearly what is to follow, and they disappoint if they resist doing so. Similarly, the word 'conception' has replaced 'beginning' in the first sentence. The word 'beginning' implies a middle, and, more importantly, an end. Such a common and secure framework neatly suggests conclusions and answers, and represents scientific structures, such as the 'methods, results, conclusions' style from which I am trying to distance myself. An ending suggests a completion, a finishing and a conclusion, whereas the final part of this thesis suggests a reconceptualising², and is a beginning, an opening for me to go through to the next phase. Thus the ending becomes the beginning, and the closure opens a door.

² Reframing was the original word used but as it suggests edges beyond which we must not stray, and therefore closure, it was replaced.

In Search of a Question:

Originally, I had wanted to prove a hypothesis which I called ‘Mainstreaming Inclusion: The Diversity Model of Education’, but this premise was thoroughly undermined by increasing familiarity with poststructural concepts. I had a question to which I knew the answer, in the form of a hypothesis that I wanted to prove, but engagement with the theory through reading, and the empirical work via the data, interrupted my sense of what the question was. In turn this led to a reconfiguration of the focus of the thesis and a search for different questions, those which avoided the either/or reduction and allowed for more complex consideration than one single correct answer.

Scientific training had persuaded me of its unquestioned infallibility. However, postgraduate study, firstly in the field of special education and later in my substantive area of inclusive education, revealed uncertainty about the role of science and its positive contribution to an education system segregated according to ability/disability. It seemed that scientific ways of asking questions resulted in answers, or ways of knowing, which might be contributing to inequality of educational opportunity [Slee 1996a, Ballard 1999, Skidmore 2004, Thomas and Loxley 2007, Allan 2008]. Objectivity, measurement, grading and hierarchies, which are standard scientific methods used by schools to assess children, might be restricting the aims of an inclusive education system based upon equality and resulting in the devaluation of those deemed less able. Could different ~~solutions~~ arise from asking different questions using different ways of knowing?

Later, the discovery of feminist poststructuralists³ such as Lather, St. Pierre, Richardson, and others who also challenge the dominance of paternalistic, scientific thinking within the research community further troubled my scientific knowing and inspired me to be innovative. Finally, studying the work of Derrida, Foucault and Deleuze and Guattari, the ‘philosophers of difference’ [Allan 2008] which I found

³ My terminology, not theirs.

challenging, yet rewarding, convinced me to move beyond the closed scientific positivism of a previous existence. My desire for proof, order, closure and answers shifted towards a more flexible, less determinate way of questioning and knowing, and one that favours poststructuralist concepts.

However, at no point did I have a traditional research question. The idea of *a* research question seemed limiting and restrictive, implying that there was an answer and closure. Indeed, initial attempts at forming the questions closed off avenues of exploration and discomfited me. A chance remark during supervision suggested that the search for a question, with which I had struggled throughout, might provide the focus which bounded the study, and yet avoided closure. This legitimization of a rather unorthodox approach to research was liberating. The traditional, conventional method whereby the research question foregrounds the thesis, favoured by the literature [Thomas 2009; Burgess *et al* 2006; Phillips and Pugh 1994], and promoted by the final module of the taught course of the professional doctorate, had greatly increased my feelings of inadequacy as a novice researcher and the constant sense of ‘not doing it right’ had been stultifying. The resulting feeling of liberation, and the acknowledgement that my research was, above all, exploratory, led to the first section of the title ‘In Search of a Question’. Thus, in searching for a ~~question~~, this particular signifier is placed *sous rature* [Derrida 1976] and the focus of the work became the question itself, and the ~~solutions~~ that might be generated.

Interrogating the ‘/’ [slash]!:

The second part of the title concerns the poststructural nature of the search for a question. ‘Interrogating the ‘/’ [slash]!’ refers to the forward slash which separates binary opposites such as inclusion/exclusion, black/white, male/female, good/bad, right/wrong, reading/writing, teaching/learning, etc. My thinking has always favoured this oppositional, either/or style, which usually results in privileging one side of the slash and dismissing, or, at the very least, diminishing, the other. An early school report mentioned that I always saw things in black or white, and this tendency to categorise knowledge accordingly, persists despite continuous efforts to the contrary. Derrida

described such oppositional logic, or logocentrism, as ‘a violent hierarchy of meaning’ [1998:93] whereby the first term is always privileged over the second, which is devalued as a result. A recognition that these binaries, whilst enabling us to sort and classify large quantities of information quickly and effectively, are also reductive, encourage partisanship, and polarise debate, led to the second part of the title.

Many questions in education are phrased to require simple oppositional either/or answers, thus disregarding the difficult nature of the dilemmas of making decisions about schooling. Interrogating, deconstructing or troubling the ‘/’ means recognising the ambiguous, uncertain relationship between binary opposites as a positive enabler in discussion and in decision-making. This thesis is concerned, in particular, with the ‘/’ between inclusion/exclusion with the aim of progressing the debate on inclusive education. Appreciating that there are no definitive answers to most educational questions, and no privileged knowledge, means searching for different questions which go beyond whether inclusion is working or not. By posing different questions, therein lies the potential to suggest different, innovative and productive solutions, which acknowledge the difficulties inherent within an inclusive education system, and still reframe it as something we can go on with, and thus rescuing it from its own *impasse* [Allan 2008]. The ‘forward’ direction of the ‘/’ suggests not only this possibility, but also the advances in my own thinking that this work represents. In addition, the ‘/’ [slash] with its excremental connotation represents the messiness of the uncertain, productive, and very difficult to comprehend, area that defies closure and is the stuff of my research into the language of inclusion.

I had thought that the idea of making the punctuation a meaningful part of the title was highly original and very clever. Predictably, others were there before me, notably Biesta and Egea-Kuehne [2001]. In the introduction to their book *Derrida & Education* attention is drawn to the ampersand and its deliberate use to identify content but not closure, to mark a relationship, but not one which is rigid, hierarchical and authoritative. They suggest that the graphical representation reflects a more flexible link, and heralds more openness than that suggested by the grammatical ‘and’ which they claim makes a more definite and closed statement. Fine [1994] talks about living ‘at the hyphen’ which has similarities with ‘interrogating the slash’. Stronach and MacLure [1997] use

a boundary-related metaphor to read between modernism/postmodernism, and regard the '/' [slash] as having polysemous possibilities; a slash as in severing, or a scar representing healing that acknowledges the inaugurating wound. I have used a graphical representation for all those reasons, and because it is slightly different.

Research Aims:

The aim of this thesis, a poststructural interrogation of binary opposites and, in particular, deconstructing the '/' between inclusion/exclusion, replaces the research question. The inclusion/exclusion binary, expressed as the dilemma of difference [Minow 1985; Norwich 1993], is exemplified below:

.... a dilemma in education over how difference is taken into account – whether to recognise difference as relevant to individual needs by offering different provision, but in doing so could reinforce unjustified inequalities, and is associated with devaluation; or, whether to offer a common and valued provision for all but with the risk of not providing what is relevant to individual needs. [Norwich 1994:293]

The exclusive special education approach may jeopardise equality and thereby devalue the individuals concerned. The inclusive approach may disregard the educational requirements of some of the most vulnerable young people and perpetuate social inequality. As an inclusive educator, both in schools and now in higher education, with a concern for ethics, equity and social justice, I have always favoured the latter, to the point of being considered an inclusion 'fundamentalist'. However, deeply aware, as a result of doctoral study, that there is no simple, unilateral solution to this dilemma, the aim of this research is therefore to trouble the binary in as many different ways as possible in order to reconceptualise inclusion and open up possibilities.

Navigating the teacher/academic transition, a sub-text which was always present, provided another stimulus for this doctorate, and the struggle to 'resist resolution and embrace 'in-between-ness'' recognised by MacLure [1996:273] continues. Modernist discourses seek resolution of boundary dilemmas and transcendence of contradictions. In contrast, postmodernist discourses resist resolution and embrace 'in-between-ness'.

Always tempted by closure, this transition, the '*unsettled condition of hybridity*' [MacLure 1996:274 original emphasis] reflected in my professional life, mirrored an uncomfortable liminality of inside/outside – ness. I was both inside teaching and outside it. I am both inside the academy, and outside it – a condition that, alongside doctoral study, continually challenges any sense of professional complacency.

The thesis has a strongly theoretical element. In order for me, a science teacher, then a learning support specialist, and finally a university lecturer, lacking even a Master's degree, to fully comprehend poststructural concepts and then set them to work required much study. Thus the poststructural element of the work is perhaps the most fundamental feature of it. Exploring poststructuralism over the course of the doctorate has revealed a completely new approach to the consideration of educational dilemmas that is both invigorating and productive. In searching for different questions with which to interrogate the '/', scientific certainty is replaced with hesitance, and closure with a more open approach. It has resulted in an experimental and innovative method of discourse analysis in which the data is represented as postcards, which then lead to further theoretical '*lines of flight*' [Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 161]. As there are no questions, there are no answers, but I have certainly searched and re-searched.

Smooth Stories of the Self:

In order to contextualise the research, it is necessary to explain the career path that led me to this juncture, aware that story has been '*smoothed*' [MacLure 1996: 283] in the telling. Over the past decade I have moved from teaching in schools to lecturing within a higher education institution. The polarisation indicated by the '/' between teacher/lecturer, practitioner/academic is not particularly helpful, but suggests the tensions inherent in transition across the binary. That transition has not been particularly smooth, yet the story of my professional career told below is both linear and smooth – a victory narrative [Lather 1995] that does not reflect the paradoxical nature of transitions, the changes of direction and the to-ing and fro-ing of the story across time to achieve continuity.

Schooled within the private education system, aware that I had experienced privilege, I had a desire to put something back into society. No doubt this altruistic impulse, or 'benevolent humanitarianism' [Tomlinson 1982], reflected the changing social mores of the times of which I was part. The 1960's and 1970's saw large-scale political, social and economic change in the context of disenfranchised and marginalised groups, including the civil rights movement, and the beginning of a genuine movement towards integration and desegregation [Winzner 2007]. Consequently, I accepted a post as a science teacher in a difficult inner city school, a new comprehensive formed from the merger of two secondary moderns, where the children came from the lower socio-economic groups, and attainment, achievement, and aspiration were low. The staffroom was gender-polarised and the classrooms were dilapidated and depressing. Initially, teaching was a matter of survival amongst groups of young people to whom I was unable, or unwilling, to relate – and I only just hung on. However, a visionary head teacher mitigated these inauspicious beginnings. His commitment to social justice, equity, and high expectations, his energy in trying to move this school forward, and above all, his generous support, enabled me to succeed and become a 'good' teacher in a difficult school – a source of real pride.

The reason for this personal narrative is to illustrate that whilst social justice and equity has always influenced my thinking, at this stage I fully accepted that there were children who required the newly formed 'remedial department' which replaced the ESN [educationally sub-normal] department, and that it was right and natural that they be catered for within the school, but that they were nothing to do with me, a 'normal' teacher, or rather, a teacher of 'normal' children. I thought their teachers were largely those who were unable to cope in the mainstream and am ashamed to admit that these assumptions persisted until familiarity with special education much later in my career persuaded me otherwise.

It was, therefore, a salutary lesson learned, when one of the 'remedial teachers' had to support me with a particularly challenging class under the pretence of helping the children. She demonstrated the importance of motivation, fun, and above all, building relationships with pupils with whom I had little in common, and, in truth, thoroughly disliked because they made me cry. My teaching priorities changed profoundly as a

result, and five years later I had built a reputation for being able to manage disruptive challenging pupils. I enjoyed teaching the young people that other teachers did not.

Finally, as an experiment I was asked to teach one of the remedial classes. Initially, a little insulted because my self-regard depended on an academic self-image, I eventually recognised it as the compliment that was originally intended. I did not, however, question any of it - the pejorative labels, the remedial class who appeared no different intellectually from many of the other classes in the school [except that they were unruly], or why I was successful where the majority of other teachers were not. I considered it amusing that four of the boys from my 'experimental' remedial class were accepted into the police force. My somewhat arrogant assumption that the police did not demand those of high intellect was a residual attitude from the 'pigs' mentality of 'hippy' student days and protest marches. It is only relatively lately that I have questioned these assumptions, and with relation to those four boys, appreciated what I knew from actually teaching them, that they were not remedial, stupid, thick or unintelligent. They had challenged the system and so the system had categorised them and provided them with a remedial, probably second-rate, education. The fact that they then moved into the front line of public services seems incongruous and ironic, a sort of 'pay-back' for a society that had so little faith in them.

Later in my career, unable to get a permanent post in Scotland commensurate with my experience as a science teacher, I moved into learning support, a branch of special education which is primarily focussed on mainstream education. I suffered a significant loss of esteem, both of the self and in the perception of others, but embarked on the mandatory postgraduate qualifications required. At the time, the early 1990's, I was highly critical of the vast resources needed to provide what I perceived as fairly ineffectual support to small, but increasing, numbers of children with learning difficulties. I objected to being 'trained' to teach a small number of 'special' children, when I was committed to teaching all children⁴, and initially I was unable, or unwilling, to articulate this for fear of being labelled elitist. However, it became clear that what I was learning about children with special educational needs [SEN] was relevant to all children. It was also clear that the knowledge acquired by support specialists was not

⁴ This pre-dated the discourse of inclusion.

getting out into mainstream education, but residing within SEN and encouraging an 'ideology of expertism' [Troyna and Vincent 1996:142] resulting in class and subject teachers 'believing they are not skilled enough to teach 'special' children – children who are finding their work at school difficult' [Thomas and Loxley 2007:26].

As a support specialist, I began to question implicit assumptions about 'learning difficulties'. Observing young people in a variety of different classrooms, it was evident that the same child could make progress in one classroom, but not in another. Children with behaviour difficulties would be quiet and peaceful in one class, but be thoroughly disruptive in another. The suspicion grew that these children did not have 'learning' difficulties, or 'behaviour' difficulties. Instead, they had 'teaching' difficulties. When the teaching was suited to the learning requirements of the pupil, and where there was appropriate expectation, motivation and empathy, the young people learned – within 'deviance insulated' classrooms [Hargreaves 1975]. The corollary was also true. Boring lessons, with little differentiation, didactic teaching, transmission models of learning, and an autocratic approach seemed to inhibit learning and encourage challenging behaviour – 'deviance provocative' classrooms [ibid.]. Whilst a number of children did have identified learning difficulties, many of them were labelled as deviant because they did not fit the system, and were therefore excluded. My perception was that they were less compliant, often unruly, and usually from the lower socio-economic groups. These children were perfectly able learners but little attempt was made to adapt the teaching, pedagogy, curriculum or the school system, to accommodate them.

Reconceptualising a discourse of deviance, deficit or learning difficulties, as *teaching* difficulties⁵ seemed to open up a space for different solutions. Asking different, systems-based questions opened up the possibility of pedagogical solutions, such as adapting the curriculum, the teaching methods or school organisation, to support learning. This contrasts with the deficit, or psycho-medical, discourse that places the problem and the solution, or cure, within the child. Dyslexia, for example, is regarded as a deficit model of reading difficulties that is considered to be the result of a

⁵ As opposed to *teacher* difficulties! That would merely deflect blame from the child on to the teacher.

neurophysiological disorder [Walker and Norman 2006] for which there is no cure. Viewing the same learning difficulty as a teaching difficulty, allows for accommodating the child by using different methods of teaching literacy. Furthermore, it does not label the child as defective. This inclusive educational discourse is less condemnatory and therefore more empowering for both the teacher and the learner. Reversing the learning difficulties/teaching difficulties binary in this way, and privileging the teaching side opened a completely different space in which to consider possible solutions that could benefit all children in the class, and not just those with literacy problems. Thus, I became aware of the transformative power of language to reframe concepts and affect change, enabling us to ‘reshape discursive practices’ [Fairclough 1993:88]. Doctoral study now persuades me that merely flipping a binary is insufficient. The ‘/’ represents a more troubled and complex space, but this was the initial thinking that influenced the methodology of this thesis.

At the same time, professional practice suggested that labels of deviance [learning or behavioural], often rigorously evidenced by scientific measurement, were context dependent. In a school sited in an area of relative affluence a child who was slower to read than their peers would be identified as different and probably acquire the label dyslexia, thereby accessing limited additional resources. A child with a similar difficulty in a school in an area of socio-economic deprivation [where a higher proportion of the school population may have reading difficulties] would be less likely to be identified as different, and therefore remain un-labelled and unable to access additional resources. It is both uneconomic and unwieldy to label an entire school population as having reading difficulties, but a realisation emerged that poverty and social class were factors affecting labelling and therefore resource allocation. Personal experience of children with literacy difficulties, some of whom had the label dyslexia, but others with almost identical problems did not and were therefore denied extra resources, led me to question the ‘truth’ of assessment for the purposes of identification of difficulties in mainstream schools, and question its contribution to inequality within the education system.

Never having experienced special schools or children with severe and profound difficulties, my perspective on inclusion developed within mainstream schools and

emphasised social justice, human rights, equality and participation. Roger Slee notes that early in his career it became apparent to him that ability was a euphemism for social class, with the more able children having a different educational trajectory from those from the lower socio-economic groups [Allan and Slee 2008]. The exclusive special education discourse of meeting individual need seemed inappropriate, and somewhat patronising, for young people who had difficulties in school because of inflexible teaching, institutional structures, and systems which inhibited their progression. Inclusive education represented an approach that was concerned with reducing inflexible systematic, institutional and pedagogical barriers to learning. However, paradoxically, inclusion seemed stuck outwith mainstream education, the exclusive preserve of special educators and support bases, and an enclave of specialism that was both fragmented, disconnected and excluded from the mainstream.

Crossing the boundary into higher education required a complete change of professional focus from teaching children to teaching teachers, yet the problem of the exclusivity of inclusion remained. In higher education as well as in schools, inclusion is used synonymously with special needs and is usually the preserve of a small number of specialists. It is often merely an optional extra to initial teacher education [ITE] courses. During the initial phases of this study I developed 'Mainstreaming Inclusion: The Diversity Model of Education' in which inclusion is approached from a mainstream perspective as opposed to one of disability, special needs and special schools. It progressed inclusion beyond the disability movement critique [Slee *et al* 1998; Clough and Corbett 2000] and updated it for the new millennium by challenging the quality of the experience of children in mainstream education who do not fit certain measurable norms. A different perspective on pedagogy whereby children's learning would be prioritised over teaching a prescribed curriculum was advocated, alongside specialist teachers redeployment into the classroom to bring their expertise into the mainstream. Professional development would include an exploration of values and ethics. Initial teacher education would focus upon reflection, social justice and self-knowledge. Each student would have the opportunity to work in a learning support/special needs base and be encouraged to implement in mainstream classrooms some of the different teaching strategies they had observed. This hypothesis provided the initial focus for my research. I intended to develop the model and somehow 'prove' it.

Supporting the exclusive special education structures within the education system, and, in particular, defending the language of labelling so many children who struggled with schooling as defective, became even less acceptable with doctoral study, as anecdotal evidence of discrimination in schools was supported by research and reading. Who was excluded and why became an imperative which I expressed as interrogating or deconstructing the inclusion/exclusion binary. Searching for questions that opened up the ‘/’ in order to explore different perspectives in this contested area became the focus of the thesis, the aim of which is to attempt to move inclusive education forward and hopefully develop innovative responses to the dilemmas posed by the ‘/’. Hence, the certainty, closure and linear thinking of my scientific self shattered and the following chapter aims to elucidate the different ontological and epistemological positions upon which this thesis has now been constructed.

Chapter 2: Boundary Crossing

An exploration of epistemology & ontology

Indeed he knows not how to know who knows not also how to un-know.
[Richard Francis Burton, cited in Flvybjerg, 2002:166]

This second chapter explores ontological and epistemological concepts in order to build a sound theoretical framework for this research. Originally scientifically trained, and never questioning what I knew or how I knew it, study at doctoral level thoroughly ruptured this complacency. The critique of scientism by philosophers such as Foucault and Derrida, by some within the feminist tradition, including Lather, St. Pierre, Richardson and Butler, and finally within the substantive area of inclusion, such as Slee, Allan, Armstrong and Skidmore, led to a burgeoning interest in poststructural approaches towards educational dilemmas. The title of this chapter refers to crossing the boundary, or the ‘/’, in my thinking between positivism and poststructuralism.

The purpose of the following section is to articulate some of the challenging poststructural concepts upon which this work is foregrounded. One of the main criticisms of educational research centres on a lack of ontological and epistemological transparency and often results in methodological confusion [Pring 2000], a significant possibility in view of the shift in thinking that this thesis represents. I have tried to balance the requirement for explanation whilst avoiding definitions, aware that definitions are contrived, and oversimplify controversy and debate. MacLure [2003:174] reminds us that ‘definitions always shrink, compartmentalise and petrify; and that meanings have a fluidity that always exceeds such attempts to pin them down.’ A tendency to ‘pin the meaning down’ and to favour clear definitions and certainty, remains with me as a recidivistic remnant of a scientific identity, which is somewhat at odds with a discursive epistemology.

Constructing positivism/poststructuralism as a binary for interrogation complements the title of the thesis and represents the initial oppositional thinking that then developed into a much more complex inter-relationship. To begin with I rejected my scientific heritage

completely, and enthusiastically privileged poststructuralism. Aware that, like many a reformed smoker who abhors the habit much more extravagantly than those who have never partaken, as a reformed positivist, I had a tendency to be similarly extravagant in my rejection of science. However, I now recognise that my scientific training is part of what I am, and, in its favour, it has provided a lifetime of biologically-based hobbies, and has bestowed a certain analytical consideration and rigour upon me as an individual who is more commonly characterised by untidiness, illogicality and immediacy.

Crossing this boundary has involved a journey with a destination that has no terminal and is not stationary. It has meant ‘un-knowing’ my scientific knowledge, yet accepting and embracing it as part of my professional being. So whilst I have crossed a boundary in my ways of knowing, in the spirit of rejecting polarised and reductive binary oppositional thinking, I frequently re-cross to acknowledge my ‘other’, resulting in a state of permanent oscillation and tension which is, above all, productive. This has not been an easy or straightforward process, but has culminated in an attempt to construct a thesis based upon a poststructural philosophy and with scientific rigour.

Interrogating positivism/poststructuralism:

Like most scientists educated in the 1950’s and 1960’s I was thoroughly ‘socialised into the legacy of empiricism’ [Ellis and Bochner 2000:735], thus developing an appetite for generalisable abstractions and cumulative, unified, linear knowledge. Over the years, professional instinct, intuition, and experience with young people in schools, particularly those with perceived learning difficulties, suggested that maybe the scientific foundations upon which my view of the world was based was not the only one, and did not represent a holistic view of education, of schools, or of their communities. Along with much quantitative research, it presented instead, a meagre diet of statistical analysis and generalised theories that had little bearing on classroom practice. Study at diploma level, mid-career, involved critiquing scientism and its role in education, especially in the substantive area of special education and inclusion. This ‘crisis of confidence’ [ibid.], whereby my scientific way of knowing was thoroughly challenged, was further emphasised by doctoral study and the discovery of a poststructural alternative.

Historically, the scientific paradigm, with its emphasis on universal truth and rationalism, has been dominant since the 17th century Enlightenment, also known as the Age of Reason. The Enlightenment era regarded science as the illuminator. In the 19th century, at a time when the natural sciences were expanding the field of new knowledge rapidly, Auguste Comte, widely regarded as the first sociologist, introduced positivism - a philosophy which states that the only authentic knowledge is scientific knowledge, and that such knowledge can only come from positive affirmation of theories through strict scientific method.

A paradigm, such as scientific positivism, is 'composed of certain philosophical assumptions that guide and direct thinking and action' [Avramidis and Smith 1999:27]. Guba and Lincoln [1994] identify three questions that help define a paradigm which are, the ontological [what is the nature of the 'knowable' or 'reality'?), the epistemological [what is the nature of the knowledge and the relationship between the knower and the would-be known?), and the methodological [how does the knower obtain the desired knowledge and understanding?). The scientific paradigm adopts a realist-external ontology, that is, that there exists a world 'out there' that is driven by natural laws [Guba 1990] and what sciences have to do is discover the 'true nature' of this reality and how it 'really works', in order to predict and control natural phenomena, and find time- and context-free generalisations. In view of this, positivism is committed to practising an objectivist epistemology, and, in order to discover the real world, questions are put to the nature and nature is allowed to answer back. The inquirer must 'stand behind a thick wall of one-way glass, observing nature as she does her thing' [Guba 1990:19]. Therefore the researcher must use a manipulative, often quantitative methodology and empirical methods, such as questionnaires and factor analysis, which place the point of decision within nature rather than with the researcher. As a zoologist by training, this was my world.

However, Kuhn [1962], in a seminal work where he introduced the term 'paradigm shift', suggested that the logical-rationale, building-block model of science lacked foundations. He demolished the logical empiricist view of science as an objective progression toward the truth by suggesting that science is heavily influenced by non-

rational procedures and that scientific progress was merely new more complex theories usurping simpler ones whilst not being any closer to the truth. Simultaneously, science as transcendental truth was under criticism from postmodern thinking [Toulmin 1969; Rorty 1982; Foucault 1970; Barthes 1977; Derrida 1978; Baudrillard 1994]. Their sceptical stance towards the grand narratives that legitimate and authorise traditional cultural practice, for example, Christian redemption and Marxist Utopia, included challenging the triumph and dominance of science [Butler 2002].

Lyotard [1984:xxiv original emphasis] famously explained 'Simplifying to the extreme, I define *postmodern* as incredulity towards metanarratives.' Usher and Edwards [1994] note that it is neither entirely possible nor entirely desirable to define postmodernism. It is contested terrain and cannot be pinned down, universalised or domesticated. It is perhaps easier to say what it is not [ibid.]. It is not a term which 'designates systematic theory or comprehensive philosophy....It is complex and multiform, resisting reductive and simplistic explanation.' [p7]. It is a loose umbrella term that can encompass a condition, a set of practices, a cultural discourse, an attitude and a mode of analysis [ibid.]. Thus, it is more useful to look at a cluster of terms rather than construct a single, all-encompassing definition.

Postmodernity refers to a historical era or epoch that followed modernity and was a reaction to industrial capitalism and the nation-state. Cultural modernity itself was a challenge to Enlightenment thinking and mirrored a desire to disassociate with the traditional and explore new ideas. Postmodernity represents a new socio-economic, post-industrial order associated with the growth of the service sector, information technology and the electronic media. The resultant changes in lifestyle, culture and identity meant that modern sensibilities no longer made sense. The faith in rationality and science with its promise of inevitable progress and the betterment of humankind, a feature which foregrounds modernity, came under significant attack.

Both Lyotard [1992] and Bauman [1992] argue that the humanising and progressive mission of modernity revealed its bankruptcy in the Holocaust. For them the Holocaust, rather than denying, actually represents the triumph of rationality and the application of scientific principles and knowledge to the 'efficient conduct of human affairs'. [Usher and Edwards 1994:10]

Furthermore, modernist scientificity with its emphasis on the efficacy of the scientific method is questioned, alongside the stance of objectivity and value-neutrality in the making of knowledge-claims. There is an acknowledgement within postmodernity that all knowledge claims are partial, local and specific rather than universal and ahistorical, and that they are always imbued with power and normative interests [ibid.]. Thus, there is a rejection of the universal and transcendental foundations of knowledge and thought, which is replaced by a heightened awareness of the significance of language and discourse. With a questioning of the legitimacy of all knowledge-claims comes a 'de-centring' of knowledge. Fixed referents and traditional anchoring points disappear in a world of rapid change and instability where knowledge and meaning 'float'. Likewise the unified subject of modern humanism is also de-centred and identity is reconceived as multiply constituted and with multiple meanings.

However, creating a stark modern/postmodern binary is delineating when 'it is at the very least a *contested* terrain' [Usher and Edwards 1994:7 original emphasis], and it is worth noting that Lyotard himself regarded the modern as always immanent in the postmodern, 'not the end of modernism, but another relation to modernism' [Lyotard 1984:79], a continuation of it. Typical of the relationship of all binaries is this notion that the one is always inherent in the other and describes itself in terms of the other.

Postmodernism is the cultural expression of postmodernity and relates to art, architecture, literature and philosophy, and negates the totalising effect of grand narratives as sole explicators, thereby resisting closure and allowing openings for innovative and other ways of looking at things. A significant feature of postmodernism is that it breaks down the hierarchical barriers between high and popular culture leading to a stylistic promiscuity that favours eclecticism and the mixing of codes. Therefore, parody, pastiche, irony and playfulness are characteristic. This does not mean that postmodernism should not be regarded seriously, for this playfulness directs attention to the centrality of culture in all aspects of life, including the intellectual and academic.

Postmodernism encouraged different ways of thinking which contributed to the development of gender studies, critical theory, post-colonial theory, queer theory and feminism. Lather [1991:31] notes:

Postmodernism offers feminists ways to work within and yet challenge dominant discourses. Within postmodernist feminism, language moves from representational to constitutive; binary logic implodes, and debates about 'the real' shift from a radical constructivism to a discursively reflective position which recognises how our knowledge is mediated by the concepts and categories of our understanding.

Michael Apple notes in the introduction to her famous book 'Getting Smart':

the form that postmodernism takes is that of the self-conscious, self-contradictory, self-undermining statement. It wants to provide a thoroughgoing 'de-naturalising' critique to 'detoxify' our cultural representations and to show their political importance. [Apple, in Lather 1991:vii]

However, critiques of postmodernism suggest that it is both relativist and nihilist; that there are no absolutes, and therefore anything goes. Lather [1991:95] herself is aware of the 'negatives' of postmodernist research: the priority of aesthetics over ethics; an emphasis on language that forgets traditional questions concerning the maldistribution of global resources and power; the ways in which complex cultural differences become easily packaged 'too often, positively valued marginality deteriorates in to first-world appropriation of third-world difference.' [ibid.:40]]; the lack of an effective theory of agency, which ends to deny the possibility of collective action; and, finally, the inaccessibility of the discourse itself which is often intended for small and very specialised academic audiences. Nevertheless, postmodern concepts such as questioning the legitimacy of knowledge claims, the importance of language and discourse and the disappearance of fixed referents for meaning and knowledge, profoundly influenced my thinking and guided me towards poststructuralism.

Poststructuralism:

Poststructuralism encompasses the intellectual developments of Continental philosophers, and arose in opposition to structuralism. Whilst postmodernism and poststructuralism overlap philosophically and historically, it is important to differentiate between them because in recognising the differences, the theoretical understandings of both are revealed [Peters and Burbules 2004]. Each is an attempt to supersede something that came before. Whilst postmodernism developed in response to modernism, poststructuralism developed in response to structuralism, a movement interested in structure that started in linguistics and then spread to anthropology, sociology and science. Thus, poststructuralism is also concerned with language.

Traditionally, words had been thought of as signs that represented something, and that there was a direct relationship between words and their meaning. In 1916, the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure suggested that words [*parole*], or signs, achieved their meaning, or significance, from their relationship to one another within a language system [*langue*]. In order to demonstrate this he divided the sign in two: the signifier, which is the sound or the visual representation of the word, and the signified, which is its meaning. An unknown language therefore consists only of signifiers that do not express meaning. On the other hand, the signified bears no resemblance to the visual appearance or sound of the word, so the relationship between the two is arbitrary. Hence, Saussure disrupted the direct relationship between words and their meaning.

Meanings are differential not referential i.e. words take their meaning from their difference from other words. For example, the word 'dog' does not signify a four-legged, furry creature to those unfamiliar with the English language. It has no intrinsic meaning otherwise different languages would use the same word. 'Dog' gets its identity in its difference from 'cat', 'horse', 'puppy', etc. There are no pre-existing ideas before the development of a language, new words develop alongside new ideas within a language, and the two are inseparable. Whether we take the signified or the signifier, language has neither ideas nor sounds that existed before the linguistic system, but only conceptual and phonic differences that have issued from the system [Saussure 1974].

Poststructuralism owes a debt to linguistic structuralism. They share two fundamental tenets, that is, the constitutive role of language in shaping realities, and the relationship of ‘difference’ that generates meaning. However, poststructuralism challenges the notion of a closed, coherent language system, and ‘posits instead a radically indeterminate universe in which the relationship between words and their referents is laced with difference through and through’ [MacLure 2003:176]. The boundary between language and reality is unstable, and that difference is a ‘chronic condition’ [ibid.].

One of the key figures in the early poststructuralist movement was Roland Barthes, known for his metaphorical ‘death of the author’ as the authentic source for meaning for a given text. Traditionally, it was thought that meaning was a reality defined by the author. Belsey [2002] quotes Lewis Carroll in ‘Through the Looking Glass’ when Alice questions Humpty Dumpty’s use of a word:

‘When I use a word,’ Humpty Dumpty said in a rather scornful tone, ‘it means just what I choose it to mean – neither more nor less.’

‘The question is,’ said Alice, ‘whether you can make words mean so many different things?’

‘The question is,’ said Humpty Dumpty, ‘which is to be Master – that’s all.’

Barthes argued that text has multiple meanings, beyond that which the author meant it to have, so Humpty Dumpty is incorrect. Humpty is also wrong when he implies that words can mean anything we wish them to mean, for that would render them largely meaningless and thereby restrict dialogue. Barthes recognised that ultimately meaning resided with the reader [the ‘birth of the reader’ metaphorically speaking], but rather than arguing for subjectivism, his reader is not an individual but is more like a space in which alternative meanings can be explored. His argument depended on the ‘I’ of the author shifting, i.e. moving from speaker to speaker as each lays claim to it. In linguistic terms the author is never more than the ‘I’ of the sentence, and thus we constitute ourselves as subjects of the sentences we speak – no more, no less.

Poststructuralism developed in the late 1960's in France at a time of political unrest when the 'insurrection of subjugated knowledges' [Foucault 1976:82] including Marxism, feminism and other more radical philosophies were challenging the dominant 'metanarrative' [Lyotard 1984] of Western philosophy and culture. It was seen as a possible means of justifying these disparate critiques by exposing some of the underlying assumptions and norms. Britzman [2000:36] reminds us that discourses exclude, and, that they are not constant and fixed, but are constantly changing and fluid:

Every discourse constitutes, even as it mobilises and shuts out, imaginary communities, identity investments and discursive practices. Discourses authorise what can and cannot be said; they produce relations of power and communities of consent and dissent, and thus discursive boundaries are always being redrawn around what constitutes the desirable and the undesirable and around what it is that makes possible particular structure of intelligibility and unintelligibility.

Poststructuralists suggest that subjects, such as 'the child with learning difficulties', are constituted within discourses that create their existence. This discourse conveys closure concerning the knowledge, moral values, normal behaviour and 'truth' about the individual 'summoned' by the discourse. Foucault [2002:49] described discourses as 'practices that systematically form the subjects of which they speak'; they enact and so are performative. Hence, discourses produce meaning, form subjects, regulate conduct within societies and institutions, and do so at particular historical times. Contrast the discourse of 'the child with learning difficulties' with those of earlier times, such as 'maladjusted', 'mentally defective' and 'educationally sub-normal'. These former discourses allowed society to segregate those so designated in special schools and mental institutions for life. It can be seen therefore that, not only are discourses historically positioned, but also that they change with time and this may be regarded as progress. Somehow, the current 'child with learning difficulties' is less tainted than the one of yesteryear deemed 'mentally defective', and yet the exclusion experienced remains.

Poststructuralism also has an interest in deepening democracy and in offering a political critique of Enlightenment values [Peters and Burbules 2004]. It criticises the way modern liberal democracies construct political identity on the basis of a series of binary

oppositions [e.g. us/them, citizen/non-citizen, responsible/irresponsible, legitimate/illegitimate] that has the effect of ‘othering’ some groups of people. Western countries grant rights to citizens that are not afforded to non-citizens. This has the effect of ‘othering’ non-citizens such as immigrants, asylum-seekers and refugees. Poststructuralism examines how these boundaries are socially constructed by deconstructing political hierarchies of difference which contributes greatly to the current debates on multiculturalism and feminism, and provides the framework for this thesis.

Poststructuralists are often described negatively as apolitical and their work dismissed as meaningless and disingenuous contributing nothing to analytical or empirical knowledge [Chomsky 2003; Rorty 1998]. Foucault is accused of denying ‘objective truth’ and of introducing an amoral and highly dubious relativism’ [O’Farrell 2005:83], a charge that he himself rejects [Foucault 1984], describing his detractors as simple-minded and insisting that he does not refute all verified truth. Derrida is often charged with nihilism because of his, often misunderstood, saying that ‘there is nothing outside the text’. Yet for all of the ‘philosophers of difference’ [Allan 2008] responsibility, ethics and politics play a central role. There seems to be a widely held, and often reiterated, belief that Derrida’s deconstruction, in particular, is concerned with anything but these issues. Caputo [1997:36] writes:

It is not uncommon to portray Derrida as the devil himself, a street-corner anarchist, a relativist, or subjectivist, or nihilist, out to destroy traditions and institutions, our beliefs and values, to mock philosophy and truth itself, to undo everything the Enlightenment has done – and to replace all this with wild nonsense and irresponsible play.

Derrida himself noted that some of his fiercest critics had not taken the trouble or expended the necessary effort to read his writings or engage with his reasoning [Biesta and Egea-Kuehne 2001]. There appears to be an elemental fear of something different instead of a reasoned, researched response to their work.

MacLure [2003:180], in a ‘crude and rather unruly’ way summarises some of the notions associated with poststructural discourse:

- ‘Realities’ are discursive; that is, there is no direct reality ‘outside discourse
- ‘Language’ is not transparent; that is, it is not a neutral medium or vehicle for providing access to the world, or to thought
- People are ‘made subjects’ through their involvement as speaking subjects within discourses
- The self is therefore ‘*decentred*’: instead of the self-actualising individual conceived of in humanist philosophies, selves are multiple, fragmented and ‘subjected’ to the constraints of discourse
- Power, knowledge, truth and subjectivity are interlinked and produced in/through discourse
- Language is never innocent
- Ambiguity, uncertainty, irrationality and indeterminacy lie ‘at the heart’ of meaning, reason and truth

Poststructuralism therefore questions the reliance on a transcendental signified; a symbol of constant, universal meaning and an orienting point in a closed system. Without symbols of constant and universal significance, meaning is therefore created by the reader through a process of textual analysis that acknowledges the statements listed above.

Yet, the terms postmodernism and poststructuralism are often ‘confused and deliberately conflated’ [Peters and Burbules 2004:7]. There is bewilderment surrounding these two concepts which are actively rejected by some most closely associated with them. I have tried to show a clear distinction between postmodernism and poststructuralism, emanating from their differing origins. However, the terms are often used synonymously and interchangeably. St. Pierre [2000b] and MacLure [2003] reject the term ‘postmodernism’ and describe their work as poststructural. Atkinson [2002] describes herself as a postmodernist, yet uses poststructural theory in her work. Lather [1993] differentiates between the two, suggesting that postmodernism raises issues of chronology and economics, and poststructuralism describes the working out of academic theory within the culture of postmodernism. I have categorised the work of Barthes as poststructural, others place it within structural linguistics, and Barthes himself says that he started as a structuralist but his views moved towards poststructuralism later in his life [Belsey 2002]. Foucault refused to be categorised at all. Butler *et al* [1992:4] conclude, understandably somewhat testily:

A number of positions are ascribed to postmodernism, as if it were a kind of thing that could be the bearer of a set of positions: discourse is all there is, as if discourse were some kind of monistic stuff out of which all things are composed; the subject is dead, I can never say 'I' again; there is no reality, only representations. These are variously imputed to postmodernism or poststructuralism, which are conflated with each other and sometimes conflated with deconstruction, and sometimes understood as a indiscriminate assemblage of French feminism, deconstruction, Lacanian psychoanalysis, Rorty's conversationalism, and cultural studies.

Perhaps it would be better to regard neither postmodernism nor poststructuralism as monoliths of theory with rigid and uniform sets of shared assumptions or axioms, but instead as loose associations of thought which draws on several shared sources. If I have to articulate a position I would aim to be a postmodern thinker who uses poststructural theory and methodology.

The Philosophers of Difference:

The work of Foucault, Derrida and to a lesser extent Deleuze and Guattari underpin this thesis. Along with Irigaray, Kristeva, Lyotard, and others, they are recognised as philosophers of difference because of their socio-ethical orientation towards a politics of difference that is based upon an acceptance of multiplicity [Patton 2000], in contrast with liberal notions of tolerance⁶. In engaging with the political in this way their work is seen as 'a philosophy of affirmation' and a belief in the future [p57]. Hence the work of these philosophers has real relevance to how we approach difference and the inclusion/exclusion binary.

Allan [2008] notes that philosophers and educators do not usually speak to each other, and acknowledges that philosophy is essential for education if we are to think differently. She cites Gregoriou [2004:234] who calls upon educationalists to establish:

⁶ Slee [2003] notes that tolerance is the language of oppression and cites a disabled colleague who told him that 'if anyone else inferentially told him that they would tolerate him and others like him he would *'kick their fucking head in!'* [p26 original emphasis].

a minor philosophy of education which isn't haunted by the big figures of philosophy's fathers, picks up these ideas from social science without anxiety about risking its identity, and connects these ideas in new encounters.

Using some of the work of these philosophers she illustrates ways in which their concepts can be used to rethink inclusive education. The following section highlights some of the ideas from each of these 'big figures', Foucault, Derrida and Deleuze and Guattari, whose concepts I have borrowed with humility rather than anxiety, and used to make new connections. I am aware that in doing so, I may have done them an injustice in simplifying their '*oeuvres*' to a few pages, and that this shrinks and compartmentalises meanings which overlap and are much more fluid. I know that it is not enough to sprinkle all the right key words such as deconstruction, genealogy, rhizome, episteme, *différance*, or becoming, at strategic intervals throughout the text [O'Farrell 2005], and I do not wish to reduce their profound thoughts to trivial statements about the implications for schooling [Biesta 2001]. Rather, in recognition of their scholarship and immense discipline, I have tried to be rigorous and thorough in explaining their concepts throughout the work. In my defence, Foucault at least, seems keen that his concepts are used by others in 'thinking again and afresh' [ibid:34].

I would like my books to be a kind of tool box which others can rummage through to find a tool they can use however they wish in their own area.... I would like [my work] to be useful to an educator, a warden, a magistrate, a conscientious objector. I don't write for an audience, I write for users, not readers. [Foucault 1974:523]

Foucault:

Initially, the greatest influence on my changing way of knowing was Michel Foucault, one of the most renowned thinkers of the twentieth century. He defined discourse as 'a certain way of speaking' [Foucault 2002:193], and as 'the group of statements that belong to a single system of formation [of knowledge]' [p107], for example the medical discourse or the economic discourse. Foucauldian discourse analysis is concerned with institutions [such as the law, education and the family], and disciplines [the structures

that regulate and normalise the conduct of those associated with them]. He was not interested in language, but rather in discourse as a system of representation [Hall 1997], a discourse being a group of statements which provide a language for talking about a particular topic at a particular moment in time. In Foucault's view human beings are limited by their history and culture, and likewise our discourse reflects knowledge bounded, or characterised, by the history of the time [the 'episteme']. This limitation also opens up possibilities hence the language of mental disability has changed over time to reflect different, arguably more accepting, attitudes within society.

Foucault thought that discourses produced knowledge through language, that is, discourse constructs the topic by defining and producing the objects of our knowledge⁷. It governs the way that a topic can be meaningfully talked about, influences how ideas are put into practice and used to regulate the conduct of individuals [Hall 1997]. Discourses also construct individuals as objects of a particular kind of knowledge: 'we do not speak the discourse. The discourse speaks us' [Ball 1990:18]. Foucault also acknowledged that a different discourse, or episteme, could open up in the future allowing a different discursive formation to develop, and so producing new knowledge.

Discourses are also about power. Foucault describes many manifestations of power, the principal two being juridical and disciplinary. He later described biopower, which operates within populations, and governmentality in relation to the State. Sovereign or juridical power, which 'presents itself as a referee, a power capable of putting an end to war, violence, pillage and saying no to these struggles and private feuds' [Foucault 1980:121], is deployed to 'restrain or punish what escapes the bounds of a unified scheme of what is right' [Rouse 1994:101]. This form of feudal power, where authority figures such as the king, priest or father rule via the divine right, public ceremony and making examples of those who transgress its' authority, was superseded, to a great extent, in the 18th century by another form of power.

In contrast disciplinary power represents a diffuse 'micro-physics of power' through which the body is manipulated, shaped and trained, which obeys, responds, becomes skilful and increases its forces' [Foucault 1991:136]. He claims that the power that

⁷ The example given previously is of 'the child with learning difficulties' [p 20]

pertains in large organisations is disciplinary power and that all within are subject to it. It is much more subtle in its effect than juridical or sovereign power, as it circulates within institutions, holding all in its pervasive ‘gaze’ and rigorously controlling the distribution of individuals in time and space. Discipline is described as a ‘technology’ aimed at keeping someone under surveillance, and controlling their conduct and behaviour. Space was organised by ‘enclosing’ people in institutions, and within these broad enclosures smaller partitions such as cells, dormitories, wards or classrooms were created and people occupied them according to a rigid hierarchy. The development of timetables which controlled every minute of available time, the organisation of group activities e.g. army drills or reciting lessons, and the methods of training the individual e.g. marching or holding a pen correctly, further ensured social control.

Thus discipline produces subjected and ‘docile’ bodies. Discipline increases the forces of the body [in economic terms of utility] and diminishes these same forces [in political terms of obedience]. [Foucault 1991:138]

The success of disciplinary power was guaranteed by additional technologies of generalised surveillance [O’Farrell 2005], such as hierarchical observation, normalising judgements and the examination. Allan [1999] uses this understanding of disciplinary power in her analysis of the inclusion of children with disabilities, and describes the transgression, or resistance, of each individual in challenging their disabled identity.

Discourses serve to support disciplinary power, which, rather than being wielded by one person or a group against weaker opponents, is diffuse and circulates capillary fashion around and through institutions reaching ‘into the very grain’ of those who are made subjects through their involvement in the discourse – parents, children, prisoners, teachers, therapists, clients, claimants, lawyers, employers and so on [MacLure 2003:176]. However, some discourses are more powerful than others. The psycho-medical special education discourse is more powerful than either the sociological discourse, or the inclusive discourse, in defining children who do not fit preconceived norms of schooling [Tomlinson 1982; Slee 1993; Clough and Corbett 2000]. Middle class parents apprentice their children to the education system by reciting nursery rhymes, reading books, manipulating letters, watching educational programmes on television and sending them to pre-school.

Most important of all, they make clear to their children that *people like us* use language, think, value, and talk *in these ways, with these objects at these times and in these places*. They introduce their children to discourses that have, for [...] historical, political, and social reasons come to overlap their homes and our schools. The Discourses are not ‘natural’ and ‘normal’ – lots of groups neither do them nor find them very senseful. [Gee 1992:123; original emphasis]

[It should be noted here that Gee [1999] distinguishes between Discourse with a capital ‘D’ and discourse with a small ‘d’. The former he uses to describe broad sociological conceptualisations and Foucauldian definitions, and the latter as the more localised linguistic approaches where discourse is often synonymous with ‘language in use’.] Children who do not get this kind of apprenticeship risk not being ‘heard’. MacLure [2003] cites the example of children who tell their stories at morning ‘news time’ in the idiom of black, working-class culture who are often heard as disorganised, rambling, exaggerated and repetitious. These children have different narrative practices at home, and are often judged as having learning difficulties, and underachieve, because assumptions are made about their ability based upon a discourse of schooling that they do not engage with. The discursive distribution of disadvantage often falls out along lines of gender, ethnicity, class and other large-scale social categories [*ibid.*]. However, Foucault thought that these inequalities evolve and amalgamate as the result of complex interactions that are not exclusively under the direct control of the dominant group.

Studying Foucault’s work enabled me to reframe questions about inclusion from the somewhat simplistic ‘what works and why’, ‘where are we now’ and ‘what should we be doing’, to more complex questions about the origins of inclusion, how the language of inclusion constructs us, and how interplay of knowledge and power affects the more vulnerable, less dominant in society. Later, and once the focus became the ‘/’ between binary opposites, my thinking was interrupted again, and the questions changed to reflect the power of the discourses either side of the inclusion/exclusion binary. Thus, the first part of the literature review foregrounds ‘why inclusion’ and not something else entirely, and this is followed by an examination of the inclusion/special needs discourse and the shifting power of the discursive formations therein.

It would be a mistake to assume that Foucault perceived power as a purely negative. While his tone often represents power as insidious, and essentially repressive, he also argues that power, in particular, disciplinary power is productive:

What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it doesn't only weigh on us as a force that says no, but that it traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourses. It needs to be considered as a productive network which runs through the whole social body, much more than as a negative instance whose function is repression. [Foucault 1980:119]

The same powers that make us 'docile' empower us. Power is multiple, constant and enabling. By organising and controlling our actions and exposing us to scrutiny it increase our usefulness and productivity thereby increasing our own power. It generates certain types of knowledge and social order. He observed that power and knowledge operated interchangeably, and explains that 'no form of knowledge emerges independently of complex networks of power, and that the exercise of power produces certain types of knowledge' [O'Farrell 2005:107]. Thus, the power of language to reframe our constructs is reflected in my desire to use a discourse of *teaching* difficulties in place of *learning* difficulties in order to address power differentials and think afresh about how we categorise children.

Foucault's entire *oeuvre* could be considered 'one long effort to reinstate a form of truth that has consistently been marginalised since Descartes' [O'Farrell 2005:83]. His form of truth is not fixed and unchanging and is not the province of a privileged few. It is discursive and dependent upon our history, on choices made in the daily lives of individuals, and is frequently revealed by the most marginalised of individuals, such as mad or ill people, prisoners, and those who are perceived as 'abnormal' in some way. In other words truth is 'an emphatically worldly matter, tangled up with power/knowledge' [MacLure 2003:177].

Foucault claims that the history of the truth that he describes is specific to the West and developed in order to honour those privileged people who have access to 'the truth'. MacNaughton [2005], in her Foucauldian study of early childhood education, describes the Western world [i.e. USA, Australia, western Europe] as the 'Minority World'. She

suggests that their scientific, positivist truths about childhood which focus on Piagetian developmental psychology, have silenced the discourse of the 'Majority World' [i.e. the poorer countries], who regard childhood somewhat differently. She explores ways to disrupt these 'regimes of truth' by examining childhood through a poststructural lens that highlights questions of power, privilege and desire and marginalises judgements about developmental norms that negatively label very young children and commit them to a life of continual surveillance. Truth, then, is produced according to the prevailing discursive regimes of different societies, and it seems inevitable that the authority of one 'truth' is continually produced at the expense of another.

Foucault [1991] uses history in challenging truth, order and the status quo. He did not see history as another kind of metatheory that will explain everything, but as a shifting set of constructs and concepts limited by 'a fundamental arrangement of knowledge' which he referred to as the 'historical *a priori*' or 'implicit knowledge'. Archaeology [Foucault 2002], which characterised much of his earlier work, describes the notion that knowledge is constrained by what we do not know. Within a historical context, he claims that in a given period of time, there are substantial constraints on how people are able to think e.g. it was 'unthinkable' for centuries that heavenly bodies could move other than in a circle, or that the earth was anything other than flat. He later developed this thinking into genealogy [Foucault 1976], with its focus on power/knowledge relations, so while archaeology is used to describe the conceptual systems underlying practice, genealogy is used to describe the effects of that practice. This shift reflected a change in his interests from discourses to discursive practice and from a macro- to a micro-level of analysis. Archaeology was used to illustrate the historical *a priori* whilst genealogy was used to analyse 'regimes of truth' and the 'dispositif' [the institutional, physical and administrative mechanisms and knowledge structures which maintain the exercise of power within a social body].

His repositioning of objective truth as an effect of social and institutional practice subjects Foucault to frequent accusations of nihilism, yet, while he does reject any thing fixed or self-evident in the field of human history and culture, he has a strong commitment to describing social injustice, mostly through his thoughts on power. This suggests a desire for social change, though he did not regard it as his field to address the

practicalities. He describes himself as a ‘moralist’ and lists three elements in his morals; refusal, curiosity and innovation. By refusal, Foucault means that nothing in our society should be accepted as definitive, and that people should be aware of the limits under which they are operating in order to lower their threshold of acceptance of social injustice. Curiosity is the rendering of the familiar strange, and innovation follows from this. Throughout his personal life he demonstrated a commitment to social justice, and some of the iconic images of him are in attendance at some protest march in support of some oppressed or marginalised group in the late 1960’s and early 1970’s. I have tried to foreground these three elements of refusal, curiosity and innovation, alongside a concern for social justice, throughout this work.

Derrida:

Jacques Derrida is best known as being associated with deconstruction – another concept that is notoriously difficult to define. Like Foucault, he was a twentieth century polymath of great distinction, who resisted all efforts to categorise himself and his work. His theories suggested the title of this thesis and foreground much of the thinking behind it.

Derrida identifies hierarchical binary pairs at the heart of meaning making and the inscription of power relations, for example, mind/body, writing/speech, man/woman, white/black, inclusion/exclusion, and Same/Other⁸ [Youdell 2006]. He argued that Western philosophy is logocentric [*logos* is a Greek word meaning word, reason or spirit]. It privileges some concepts over others. The original privileging was speech over writing [phonocentrism] – a view held by many structuralists including Saussure, and dating back to Plato. He believed that to overcome logocentric thinking, which results in a ‘violent hierarchy of meaning’ [Derrida 1998:93], we must deliberately consider the other.

⁸ [There is considerable variation on the capitalisation of ‘other’. Youdell [2006] uses it whilst Biesta and Egea-Kuehne [2001] choose not to, unless particularly warranted by the text. I intend to follow their protocol because capitalisation suggests an importance that may not be warranted.

The ‘epistemic violence’ within binary oppositions is exemplified by MacLure [2003] in elaborating the case of the infamous ‘freedom fighter/terrorist’. Whilst they might be one and the same person, for example Nelson Mandela, how they are described locates the describer in a ‘particular moral universe and invests them with a particular identity – heroic or villainous’ [p.9]. It also suggests political allegiance. She continues to illustrate this using an example from the British press [*The Guardian*] satirising how the British soldier is portrayed as opposed to the Iraqi. The former are described as brave, loyal, resolute and professional, whereas, for the latter terms such as fanatical, blindly obedient, ruthless and brainwashed are employed. She concludes by remarking that these binary oppositions are to be found everywhere in educational research e.g. teaching/learning, teacher/pupil, able/less able, literate/illiterate, good/bad, inclusion/exclusion. So the ‘/’ is relational and not simply a divider or boundary. It has far reaching implications.

These binaries demarcate presence and absence, domination and subordination, and they are bound in inextricable dependency because the dominant presence is always defined in terms of the absent other, that is, in terms of what it is not [ibid.]. Thus, black is extrapolated to define what is not white, disabled is extrapolated to define what is not able-bodied, the other is extrapolated to define what is not the same, what is not normal and taken for granted. ‘The Same depends on the Other, even as it disavows it’ [Youdell 2006:39]. This entanglement of binaries is so deep that concepts from one or other sides of the binary become almost synonymous, for example, man-masculine/woman-feminine, and, more especially relevant to this study, mainstream-normal-able/exclusion-special-disabled.

an opposition to metaphysical concepts.... Is never the confrontation of two terms, but a hierarchy and the order of a subordination [...] every concept, moreover, belongs to a systematic chain and constitutes itself in a system of predicates. [Derrida 1988:21]

These systematic chains can be understood as discourses in which ‘the central signified, the original or transcendental signified, is never absolutely present outside a system of differences’ [Derrida 1978:354]. Hence, the privileged term is only meaningful in relation to its subordinate partner, and the residue of the subordinate term remains as an insistent absent presence. Meaning of the privileged term does not reside in itself but is

deferred through its relationship with further terms. Thus, simultaneous difference and deferral is Derrida's [1978] concept of *différance*, the pun or neologism [he preferred neographism] that does not translate into English, and is one of the most complex and intriguing of his ideas. Meaning, therefore, is never constant. It is always being deferred, perpetually slipping away from word to word in the linguistic chain. Logocentrism seeks a universal truth or meaning, but the signifier has supplanted it. Only the signifier is present in speech and writing, so meaning is constantly deferred. *Différance* therefore is the only source of meaning.

'There is nothing outside the text' [Derrida 1976:226-227] which is 'one of the most thoroughly misrepresented utterances in contemporary philosophy' [Caputo 1997:78] encapsulates Derrida's thinking on language and meaning. Rather than some scandal of 'linguisticism' [Caputo 1997:104], Derrida means by this statement that there are no cultural practices that are not defined by contexts, and that these contexts are 'caught up in conflicting networks of power, violence and domination' [Baker 1995:129]. Derrida himself [quoted in Baker 1995:16] says:

I never cease to be surprised by critics who see my work as a declaration that there is nothing beyond language.....it is, in fact, saying the exact opposite. The critique of logocentrism is above all else the search for the 'other' and the 'other of language'....If deconstruction *really* consisted in saying that everything happens in books, it wouldn't deserve *five* minutes of anybody's attention'. It is about the loss of transcendental signifiers and the situating of reference within differential systems from which making meaning is possible.

Deconstruction offers an intervention that moves past opposing the hierarchical nature of the binary pairs and championing the subordinate partner. But these hierarchies cannot simply be erased or equalised. Instead, they should be interrogated to expose the *aporias* [Derrida 1993], that is, the tensions, contradictions and the political nature of the hierarchy, and we should be aware of the work they do.

Derrida argued that if you had to ask 'what is deconstruction?' you had missed the point; he preferred to say what it was not. 'What deconstruction is not? Everything of course! What is deconstruction? Nothing of course!' [Derrida 1992:275]. However, it is not a playful intellectual game, nor is it any kind of nihilistic relativism.

Deconstruction is not negative, nor a critique, nor a methodology, nor an analysis, nor a process of demolition. To name it as such is to call it to order, to harness it to familiar logocentric notions of what thinking should be. Analysis reduces and simplifies text [and for Derrida, text is everything] in order to be explanatory and find origins. This is representative of Western metaphysics and what deconstruction seeks to avoid. Critique implies taking a stance outside its object, often an oppositional stance, whereas deconstruction seeks to create movement across such boundaries.

It is not a method, as that suggests something technical and procedural, ‘leading to domestication, re-appropriations by academic institutions’ [*ibid.*] and therefore its destruction, neither is it about discovering an underlying truth. Instead, it is a particular type of reading that is about disrupting or looking for the silences, or the othering – not about foundational understanding. Deconstructive readings of texts challenge ‘decidability’ [Patrick 1996:141], undermining and subverting the ‘ideology of expertism’ [Troyna and Vincent 1996:142]. It is ‘an opening up of critiques to more comprehensive and less complicitous formulations’ [Stronach and MacLure 1997:85]. For example, to refer to ‘Latin America’ is not just to refer to an area of the globe; it is ‘to help reproduce an institutionalised form of dominance, one in which the minority, Hispanic part of populations in the region control the original indigenous groups.’ [Shapiro 2001:319]. Perhaps Caputo [1997:32] sums it up best:

Whenever deconstruction finds a nutshell—a secure axiom or a pithy maxim—the very idea is to crack it open and disturb this tranquillity. Indeed, that is a good rule of thumb in deconstruction. *That* is what deconstruction is all about, its very meaning and mission, if it has any. One might even say that cracking nutshells is what deconstruction *is*. In a nutshell. ...Have we not run up against a paradox and an aporia [something impassable]?...the paralysis and impossibility of an aporia is just what impels deconstruction, what rouses it out of bed in the morning... [original emphasis]

For Derrida deconstruction always has an element of justice. He even claimed ‘deconstruction *is* justice’ [Derrida 1992:35]. Like Foucault, his work carried a strongly ethical and political dimension. According to Derrida, decidability and closure create injustice and deconstruction offers a hesitancy in the rush to make decisions; a remembrance of the often excluded ‘other’. For him, deconstruction is justice because ‘it has always to do with the other’ [Derrida 1997:17].

These concepts foreground my research, and are reflected in the title. The ‘Search for a Question’ has metamorphosed into a deconstruction of binaries, ‘Interrogating the ‘/’ [slash] and, in particular, inclusion/exclusion. I recognised logocentric thinking in myself, and was conscious that, as an ‘inclusion fundamentalist’, I used an oppositional approach [inclusion/exclusion] in my teaching very effectively in order to stifle dissent. Whilst I welcomed challenge and debate when working with teachers, the discourse of human rights, which I used to argue the case for inclusion, achieved dominance over their discourses of experience, practicality, and, above all the medical deficit discourse of special needs. This may not be wholly negative because my professional role involved challenging fixed, hierarchical thinking about ability, but using deceptive tropes to inhibit real debate went ‘against the grain’! My tendency to favour one side of the ‘/’ [slash] produced closure and decidability. The aim of this thesis is to ‘interrogate the ‘/’, to open it up, to trouble the binary, to deconstruct it, and, in doing so appreciate the undecidability in all its complexity, confusion and discomfort, instead of favouring logic, order, comfortable unilateralism – and closure. Thus, I hope it will illustrate ‘some of the impossible choices we face in trying to be inclusive’ [Allan 2008:82] and suggest some new, and hopefully more just, possibilities.

Deleuze and Guattari:

Deleuze, a philosopher, and Guattari, a psychoanalyst, collaborated on some seminal work in the latter part of the last century and have been highly influential on poststructural educational research [Allan 2008, St. Pierre 2000b, Lather 1993]. A *Thousand Plateaux* [Deleuze and Guattari 1987], their most famous work, is a book which dismisses the use of chapters as a traditional method of organisation, preferring instead to use a multiplicity of plateaus. Chapters and books are self-contained units with beginnings and endings, with climaxes of understanding that dissipate energy in the climbing. In contrast, a plateau represents something without clear delineation [no beginning and therefore no end] where the energy of the climax is not dissipated by the climb, implying sufficient strength to maintain progress, as opposed to descending from a peak.

This study reflects rejection of traditional, hierarchical, arborescent thinking which is rigid, striated, in favour of a smoother, flatter, non-hierarchical, rhizomatic association. The tree represents this traditional approach which relies on logic of binarism and relegating those on the negative side of the binary and targeting them for remediation and control. Arborescent learning places the learning and repetition of facts at the top of the tree and asserts the binary distinction between the teacher and the taught. Rhizomatic structures are not hierarchical. A rhizome, according to Deleuze and Guattari, is an underground root, such as ginger, which grows horizontally and sends out shoots and roots at points of rupture [nodes]. Rhizomatic learning echoes the growth of this underground root as being messy, unpredictable, and thus releasing it from the false bondage of linear relationships and allowing for endless proliferation, new lines of flight and new forms of knowledge [Allan 2008]. The nodes represent 'rupture and new sproutings' of knowledge, and are not secure spaces where individuals can be passive, but a series of lines in which they must participate [Deleuze and Guattari 1987].

Features of the rhizome which enable it 'to function effectively and do its disruptive work' [Allan 2008:61] include connectivity and heterogeneity, as opposed to being fixed and rooted, multiplicity allowing for many different positions which disrupt unity, as opposed to singular hierarchical states, points of rupture at the nodes which, metaphorically, allow for new growth and knowledge and no beginning and no end. Learning, according to this rhizomic approach, is more networked, never ending, constantly changing and growing and always in process and inclusive. Hierarchical learning has created a system along linear lines that differentiate and exclude in particular ways.

Aware that this is heretical, some might argue trivial, as a scientist by training, I challenge some of the statements made about trees and rhizomes. I think, tentatively and respectfully, that the work of some of the most potent thinkers is diluted by a certain ignorance of biology. Firstly rhizomes are not underground roots. They are underground stems that differ considerably in their structure from roots, whilst having a similar function. This challenges, or at least questions, the metaphor of rhizomic

organisation as it suggests that even if *how* we think [the structure] changes or differs we end up *doing* the same thing [the function] – a very different proposal from that which was intended. Examples of rhizomes are given as bulbs or tubers. Whilst the latter is a rhizome adapted for storing food, a bulb is not a rhizome [think of the cross-section of an onion [bulb] as opposed to a potato [tuber] to appreciate the difference]. Allan [2008] gives an example of a rhizome as a strawberry plant, which is a stolon, not a rhizome, and is propagated not underground, but by above ground runners, again somewhat changing the metaphor.

Lastly, a rhizome suggests sterility. It is an organ for asexual reproduction that merely repeats identical genotypes and phenotypes over and over again. It is sexual reproduction via seeds that introduces new genetic material thereby strengthening the rootstock and reducing the likelihood of mutation. This changes the metaphor of the rhizome and reduces the notion of new knowledge through rupture to repetition of the same old stuff! For Watson [2008], a botanist in a former life, the reproductive capacity of the rhizome represents the colonisation of the other in the way that it suppresses the natural vegetation, in yet another change to the metaphor.

Whilst it may be considered inconsequential, the dualism rife within academia with arts and science as two completely separate domains that rarely meet or acknowledge each other is highlighted. It could even be suggested here that philosophical metaphor is privileged over biological accuracy. The rhizomic metaphor might have been much more powerful had the approach been truly rhizomic and knowledge-seeking, rather than hierarchical and exclusive.

Nonetheless, ignoring the biological inaccuracy, the rhizome as a metaphor for connective, non-hierarchical thinking remains effective. Schools are highly striated, regulated and hierarchical places though the building, the curriculum, pupil/teacher relationships, timetables, and so on. Deviation results in intervention from pathologising regimes. Deterritorialisation, another idea from Deleuze and Guattari, seeks to create smooth spaces for a different way of thinking and acting, possibly creating chaos, but also creating the potential to attack the territorialised rigid spaces and introducing new creative possibilities. These are not safe spaces, for they are

between territorialisation and deterritorialisation, and if not acted upon may lead to reterritorialisation

For deterritorialisation to be achieved in relation to inclusion certain elements need to be considered; questioning taken for granted assumptions by stammering as if speaking in a foreign tongue, a refusal of signifieds [transcendental meanings] that produce closure, creative subtraction to make way for innovation, and lastly, the ‘removal of agency from expression’ [Allan 2008:65]. This final element frees individuals up to express themselves outside their identity when theorising about difference and arises from the notion that ‘...there is no individual enunciation. There is not even a subject of enunciation’. [Deleuze and Guattari 1987:79]. These four elements of deterritorialisation above might mean that special educators ‘stammered’ about the necessity to pathologise difference and questioned whether this approach may be supporting mainstream educators in absolving themselves from the responsibility of educating those who are different; that the meaning of a signifier such as dyslexia was opened up to genuine debate as to whether it is helpful to consider it as a separate literacy difficulty; that learning support departments in mainstream schools might be creatively subtracted and the ‘specialists’ therein redistributed as classroom teachers thereby significantly reducing class size, possibly improving relationships and pedagogy and certainly a positive step towards a more inclusive education; and lastly, that all of us in the profession are able to suggest innovative and different approaches that disrupt the *status quo* and challenge orthodoxies without fear of vilification, accusations of naiveté or unprofessionalism, and the possibility of exclusion.

Deleuze [2004:38] recognises that society fears difference, and therefore needs to ‘mediate’ it by regarding difference as negative. This is because it challenges our sense of identity and self-worth. He notes the difference between diversity [a given] and difference [how we categorise a given], but his conceptualisation of difference is affirmative. He refuses to regard difference as deficient or secondary. Instead Deleuze and Guattari [1987] suggest that minorities should explicitly articulate their difference and divergence from the majority in order to force the majority to examine their own standard [Allan 2008]. The silenced voices of children, particularly those labelled as ‘special’, may then be heard by teachers and policymakers which may then allow for a

different approach from the exclusive, meeting additional need agenda of present systems.

The final concept taken from the work of Deleuze and Guattari, and possibly the most powerful one, is that of ‘becoming’ other. This kind of ‘becoming’ is revolutionary, forming new subjectivities and new connections, and inviting all of us to become minor to enable the majority [mainstream] to be worked upon. Becomings are unpredictable and rhizomic, often resulting from crises and predicaments. The influence of Deleuze and Guattari on this thesis is less evident than either of the other two philosophers, but present and pervasive nevertheless.

Re-knowing:

With reference to the quotation at the start of the chapter, unknowing my scientific heritage in order to know a poststructural way of thinking has been hard but has radically changed the way I view the world, and in particular, education. Returning to the title of this chapter, ontologically, I believe that all knowledge claims are relative and situated, calling in to question the belief that objectivity guarantees true knowledge of reality, and that there are no absolute truths outside language or discourse. Objective truths correlate with modes of government. ‘Truth effects’ are fictions produced in language and discourse through metaphor. Words do not point to some ultimate reality but refer to other words – the ‘signifier’ never arrives at a stable ‘signified’ in recognition of the fundamental plurality and uncertainty of meaning. My epistemology is therefore discursive, and acknowledges that knowledge is positional, contested, partial, fragmented, provisional, subjective, constructed from multiple standpoints by many voices, and mediated – always subject to review and revision. Hopefully, this will avoid any ‘methodological confusion’ [Pring 2000:6] and provide a theoretical framework for what follows.

The next chapter reviews the literature on inclusion and special needs from this different way of knowing. Being familiar with the literature in my professional capacity, I had originally thought that this part of the thesis was under control.

However, my complacency was thoroughly interrupted by increasing familiarity with the poststructural concepts described above, and a very different type of literature review from the original has resulted. In interrogating, or deconstructing, the inclusion/exclusion binary different questions have been asked of the literature. The search for a question has involved exploring the origins of inclusion, the historical *a priori*, and the power and interplay of the many current discourses in order look again and afresh [Biesta 2001] and to rescue inclusion from its own territory of failure [Allan 2008].

Chapter 3: An Interruptive Review of the Literature

A Textual Interrogation of Inclusion/Exclusion.

An Interruptive Review:

It is self-evident that the prerequisite of a doctoral dissertation is extensive reading. I enjoy reading and this was an important part of my professional role, and I was confident that I could produce a comprehensive review of the required standard. My only dilemma was how to present an appropriately scholarly review of the literature on inclusion/exclusion that is necessarily restricted by word-count. ‘A comprehensive literature review’ is an over-worked phrase much used when looking at the requirements of writing at this level. The word ‘comprehensive’ implies wide-ranging and thorough, and whilst this must be the aim, there is also a risk that attempting such a task will result in a superficial skimming of the literature. This type of ‘comprehensive’ review tends to silence the selective process, and is often characterised by numerous citations which disrupt the meaning of text to the point of unintelligibility, and thereby somewhat irritating to the reader.

However, recently, another concept has superseded the ‘comprehensive’ literature review, and proved tempting as a solution. The ‘systematic’ literature review, which, on the face of it, is another worthy effort, implies a methodical structure that leads the reader through the literature in a coherent and meaningful way. Again, this would be an aim of any literature review. However, the term has been co-opted by many in the research community, and particularly by the EPPI-Centre [The Evidence for Policy and Practice Information and Co-ordinating Centre], to mean something very specific. Originally, this type of review was designed to be an efficient method of sorting vast amounts of research literature to sift out extraneous material by using agreed search criteria, thereby ensuring relevance and quality. However, relevance and quality are judgments open to question, and a ‘systematic literature review’ can also be considered as a prescriptive, restrictive and reductive approach to the literature on any given topic, where the parameters are closely defined by narrow search criteria that tend to limit and

close down extensive reading. Formulaic protocols for framing the research question, and narrow exclusion criteria used to systematically filter out much of the literature, result in many of these systematic reviews using fewer than ten primary studies [MacLure 2005:401]. Indeed, in a withering critique of the discourse of ‘systematic review’ she claims that it actually ‘constitutes a threat to quality and critique in scholarship and research’, particularly when it is seen as part of the wider evidence-based, or evidence-informed ‘movement’ [p393].

Hammersley [2001:550] in a slightly more measured critique, notes that ‘both labels are so formulated as implicitly to disqualify others’, and suggests that ‘systematic review’ ‘....assumes the superiorityof the positivist model of research’ [p544], which remains at the top of the ‘credibility hierarchy’ [p545]. The reason for this being criteria such as objectivity, reliability, replicability, and generalisability, yet this ignores the considerable criticisms of the mid-20th century in which the positivist view of science is questioned as a method for capturing the complexity of human social life. He comments upon the ‘rhetorical sleight of hand’ [p550] required to privilege systematic review over other kinds of review, such as ‘narrative’ review, which advocates of the systematic review consider ‘selective’, ‘opportunistic’, and which ‘discard studies which use methodologies in which the researcher has little or no interest’ [Davies 2000:367].

MacLure [2005:395] also argues that the language used to describe and justify ‘systematic review’ such as ‘systematicity, reliability, rigour, and replicability’ reflects an old-fashioned positivism, whilst the familiar rhetoric of ‘transparency, quality assurance, and standards’ mirrors the audit culture currently prevalent in educational policy. She continues that Oakley’s [the Director of the EPPI-Centre] description of the approach as ‘explicit, transparent, replicable, accountable and [potentially] undateable’ [Oakley 2003:23] recycles a ‘discourse of distrust’ of educational researchers and academics, by implying that they are prone to bias, incompetence, chaos, opacity, solipsism and methodological impoverishment. Hence, research and scholarly activity such as ‘reading, writing, thinking, interpreting, arguing and justifying – out of which knowledge is precariously produced’ [MacLure 2005:410] is suppressed.

Desforges [2000] uses the term ‘interpretive’ in his ‘review of reviews’ for the steering committee of the Teaching and Learning Research Programme [TLRP]. He regards all non-‘systematic’ reviews as ‘interpretive’ because they use ‘evidence selectively from a field to argue a case’. He continues that such reviews ‘make no claim to scientific method’ and ‘cannot be evaluated on the criteria set for technical reviews’.

‘They are best judged not on whether, on the basis of evidence, they settle a question but on the basis of whether they vitalise workers in the field.’
[Desforges 2000, paragraphs 3 and 3.2]

He acknowledges that this may not be a particularly safe evidence base, but, as a teacher, I favour the idea that this thesis could be evaluated thus, though remain unsure as to how it could be achieved. An evaluation based upon this criterion would be highly relevant to my professional role as a Lecturer in Inclusive Education. It might ‘vitalise’ teachers into doing some research themselves. Much of the ‘systematic review’ literature is ‘dispiriting’ [MacLure 2005:404], if not dull and boring. It is often characterised by a uniformity of method, and use of such obfuscating concepts as data capture, data extraction, keywording, mapping, weighting, screening, handsearching and inclusion and exclusion criteria [ibid.]. Whilst ‘systematic review’ may provide an attractive recipe for novice researchers, critical thinking, reading and innovation are subdued by this approach.

I have read widely and in depth, but selectively. The choice of reading has been of the ‘follow one’s nose’ variety, serendipitous, catholic, eclectic, joyous, and a sort of nomadic wandering through the literature. Deleuze and Guattari’s [1987] notion of the rhizome reflects the horizontal, not hierarchical, spreading in to smooth, as opposed to striated, spaces and the web-like, horizontal connections that were made, often unexpectedly, leading to the ‘smooth spaces’ of fresh thinking. Whilst regular searches were made using keywords, instead of being rigorously ‘systematic’ and ‘creating an audit trail’, they were used somewhat randomly, haphazardly and opportunistically. This is not to imply that this literature search was not thorough, merely that I did not follow recognised criteria. Hence, the review does not make any claims of replicability, transparency, accountability, etc. Rather, it acknowledges the ‘intertextuality, connectivity, critique, interest, expertise, independence, tacit knowledge, chance

encounters with new ideas and dialogic interactions between researcher, ‘literature’ and ‘data’ [MacLure 2005: 394]. The explicit intention has been to produce a review of the literature on inclusion and inclusive education that is academic, scholarly, and rhizomic as opposed to being narrow, hierarchical, over-simplified and reductive.

So this literature is neither ‘comprehensive’ nor ‘systematic’ according to the literature, though it aims to be both. It might be considered ‘interpretive’ because it uses evidence selectively, or purposively, from a field to argue a case. However, I prefer ‘an interruptive review’ which more directly reflects the discontinuity between interrogating the literature from a previous scientific, and rather uncritical, perspective and my present poststructural one. It also characterises an interruption to the oppositional thinking that binaries represent. The inclusion/exclusion binary is enacted in education as the dilemma of difference mentioned in the first chapter, that is, whether to recognise difference and offer alternative provision to support individual needs, and in so doing possibly reinforce unjustified inequalities associated with devaluation, or, whether to offer a common and valued, inclusive provision for all but at the risk of not providing for the individual and their needs [Norwich 1993].

This literature review aims to interrogate this inclusion/exclusion binary by posing questions that avoid the polarised, reductive, either/or answers that position us on one side or the other, such as ‘why inclusion’ and not something entirely different. Destabilising the binary in this way will hopefully surface implicit assumptions that have led to an exclusive education system, and will expose the power/knowledge relationships between the current discourses of inclusion/exclusion, the intention being to think otherwise and creatively about the potentially overwhelming dilemma of how we educate all children.

Destabilising inclusion/exclusion⁹:

The inclusion discourse, replaces words such as deficits, difficulties, needs and support with equity, opportunity, difference and rights. The inclusive education discourse represents a paradigm shift away from exclusive special education and the associated psycho-medical discourse of deviance. If a child has a difficulty with learning then the focus is on the classroom rather than the individual, and teaching methodology rather than assessment by a specialist. Collaboration and cooperation in learning replace diagnosis, which labels children as defective, and teaching strategies supplant prescriptive programmes aimed at a 'cure' [Thomas and Loxley 2007]. Inclusive education has a different epistemology from the scientific, psycho-medical, special education discourse. It is a social movement against educational exclusion [Slee and Allan 2001:177], and strives to enable an education system that focuses on *every* child and accepts that they will all be different. The essentialist perspective of the special education discourse, which locates children's learning difficulties, or disabilities, unproblematically within their own pathology, excludes children in many ways whilst trying to support them.

Inclusion is understood in terms of opposition to exclusion. It cannot exist without the other side of the binary, exclusion or segregation [Booth and Ainscow 1998, Ballard 2003]. As discussed in the previous chapter, Saussure considered the binary opposition as the means by which the units of language have value or meaning; each unit is defined against what it is not, and reflects the human inclination to think antagonistically. This hierarchical thinking, according to Derrida, is typical of Western logocentrism and the perceived desire of Western thought to locate the centre of any discourse or text within the *logos* [a Greek word meaning word, reason or spirit]. Logocentrism also refers to the tendential privileging of signified over the signifier, reflecting the structuralist assertion of the signified's privileged status. Essentially it is the desire for a centre that generates binary oppositions. Derrida goes on to reveal the problematic character of all centres and employs the tactic of deconstruction to de-stabilise the hierarchy, thus de-centring the primary term and temporarily privileging the secondary. I privilege

⁹ Special education structures, which segregate children on the grounds of ability/disability, are taken to be the exclusion side of the inclusion/exclusion binary.

inclusion, so in attempting to trouble, or deconstruct, the inclusion/exclusion binary, it is therefore necessary to privilege exclusion in order to explore why inclusion has developed as a discourse.

I do not intend to reinstate the violent hierarchy by suggesting that exclusion or segregation is wholly inappropriate, or that inclusion in mainstream is inevitably the best for all children. The perspective that I am using arises from my own professional experience that suggests increasing numbers of children are being identified as different and therefore requiring a different education. Ignoring the ethical, this is neither economically, nor practically, sustainable. Differences are often expressed as a defects, be they physical, behavioural or learning difficulties, and thereby the children are in some way excluded from mainstream education, be that in a special school, in a separate base within a school, or in the classroom but excluded from full participation by an the presence of an extra adult such as a learning support auxiliary or teacher. The children most commonly identified as defective in the last two categories, in particular, come from the lower socio-economic groups and there is an over-representation of those from ethnic minorities, and boys [Tomlinson 1982] and this is continuing [Wright *et al* 2000]. This literature review attempts to surface some of the assumptions beneath the apparently benign concept of special education.

The discourse of inclusion has developed in response *to* exclusion and segregation within the education system. What is the *a priori* or implicit knowledge that has enabled an education system that segregates and excludes those perceived as different by labelling them as defective, and that requires the recent discourse of inclusion to challenge it? Traditional forms of knowledge lurking behind the exclusive special and regular education policy and practice require deconstruction in order to ‘avoid re-runs of old theatre’ [Slee and Allan 2001:175]

The Historical Context:

For Foucault, history is the tool *par excellence* for challenging and analysing existing orders, and also for suggesting the possibility of new orders. In his own words: ‘In a

way we are nothing other than what has been said, centuries ago, months, weeks ago' [Foucault 1978:469 DE III¹⁰]. History is about beginnings and ends and about change and freedom. [O'Farrell 2005:61]. He did not wish to set up history as another meta-theory to explain everything, but instead used it to show the limits of systems of thought and institutional practice, and to break down the oppressive claims to universal truth of any one system, 'a model of what has happened that will allow us to free ourselves from what has happened' [Foucault 1974:644 DE II].

Educational exclusion has a history. Institutions for educating deaf and blind children were built by lay reformers in the 19th century, but it was at the beginning of the 20th century that educational segregation of large numbers of children began and continues to this day. Since the middle of the 20th century, this segregation has been legitimated by a psycho-medical discourse of deviance camouflaged as the apparently benign one of 'special education'. In the early 1980's this was superseded in the UK by 'special educational needs', the aim of which was to move the responsibility of training those with disabilities from the medical profession to that of education. A decade later the concept of inclusive education surfaced.

Optimists may view the historical record of exclusive educational practice as one of progress from the first uncoordinated attempts to make provision for marginalised students, through the development of state provision, the move into mainstream and the integration movement, to the current emphasis on inclusive education [Ainscow *et al* 2006]. An alternative view of the past is more pessimistic suggesting nothing much has changed. Tomlinson [1982], in her influential socio-political study, suggests that the benevolent cloak of special education has been repeatedly used to damage the interests of those it claims to serve, and to further the interests of those professional groups who stood to benefit from maintaining the *status quo*. Many other academics within the field of special education/inclusion highlight the resilience of special education [Brantlinger 1997] as a discourse, which, in spite of the increasing influence of inclusion, seems to dominate education professionals thinking when considering

¹⁰ DE refers to Foucault, M. [1994] *Dits et ecrits: 1954-1988. Vols I-IV*. D. Defert, F. Ewald, & J. Lagrange [eds]. Paris: Gallimard. The date given is the original publication date of the work cited followed by the volume of the above where it is reprinted.

children who do not fit traditional schooling structures. How has the education system arrived at the position where a discourse of inclusion is required to challenge that of special needs and exclusion, and why is the inclusion/exclusion binary such a contested area?

The *a priori*:

Foucault described the implicit or unconscious knowledge about a discipline or discursive formation that forms the object of which it speaks as the historical *a priori*:

This *a priori* is what, in a given period, delimits in the totality of experience a field of knowledge, defines the mode of being of the objects that appear in that field, provides man's everyday perception with theoretical powers, and defines the conditions in which he can sustain a discourse about things that is recognised to be true. [Foucault 1970:158]

He also used the word 'episteme' or 'epistemological field' to mean a sub-set of the historical *a priori* to describe the underlying orders or 'conditions of possibility' [O'Farrell 2005:63].

Thomas and Loxley [2007:22] write eloquently about the epistemology, the 'knowledge roots of special education', from its intellectual foundations, through the construction of a segregated system to its perpetuation in contemporary educational discourses. They claim that faith in certain types of 'rock-solid' [p2] knowledge provides the credence, the believability behind special education's status, and that trust in this knowledge secures special education's reputation as a rationale, sensible way of educating a significant part of the population. Discourses of 'ability' or perhaps, more appropriately, 'inability', construct those whom they describe, and words like 'intelligence' are taken to have straightforward, uncontested meanings, the *logoi* of Derrida [1978]. Yet his concept of '*différance*' suggests there is no plain, ordinary uncontaminated language. The taken for granted assumptions and frameworks that undergird special education, require examination, and the influence and power of positivism and the natural sciences, the historical *a priori* perhaps, requires questioning.

Segregated schools originated in the late eighteenth century, with special schools firstly for blind children, but subsequently for deaf and dumb children as well. Philanthropic, charity and religious discourses constructed individuals as objects of particular kinds of knowledge, usually as poor, deserving unfortunates. However, at the beginning of the twentieth century, there was a jump in the special school population, which was not due to any humanitarian discourse of benefactors, the government, or by the public. A new epistemology was developing which enabled educators to segregate children who had less conspicuous difficulties, or differences, than the more obvious ones aforementioned. New ways of looking at the world, or new perspectives on the natural world led to discourses of deviance based upon scientific positivism.

Darwin's theories of evolution were gaining credence and the discourse of survival of the fittest, and the development of Social Darwinism, was influencing thinking across Europe and beyond, including that of many intellectuals such as Sidney and Beatrice Webb [Thomas and Loxley 2007]. The growing popularity and successes of the natural sciences meant that the scientific method was held in high esteem to the extent that it was thought to be the only reliable knowledge [ibid.]. It was an unpleasant realisation for me, trained as I was in zoology and geology, committed to scientific thought as the only logical, rational way, and steeped in natural selection as 'truth', to discover its negative impact in the justification of the prejudices and half-truths incorporated in discourses of racism, nationalism and eugenics, and therefore in the genesis of anti-Semitism and Nazism. It was an equally serious rupture, interruption, or stutter [Deleuze and Guattari 1987], to appreciate the negative influence of scientific knowledge as a means of justifying segregation within our education system. These justifications are so commonplace that they remain largely unchallenged by educators, and include the use of IQ [intelligence quotient] tests, and other ubiquitous assessments, to determine potential, many of which I have used unquestioningly.

It could be argued that just as Darwin's theory of evolution has been misinterpreted when applied to society as in Social Darwinism, thus Cyril Burt, the first educational psychologist for London in the early part of the twentieth century misinterpreted the psychometric tests developed by the Frenchman Albert Binet. Originally intended to identify children with learning difficulties in order to support them, they were used to

promote the fallacy of hereditarianism and to label children accordingly. This misinterpretation has led to widespread testing for intelligence that persists to the present day as a means to justify segregation and categorisation within education.

Burt's commitment to psychometrics and the idea that intelligence was inherited and immutable, alongside ambition and egotism, enabled his significant influence in the development of a segregated education system, culminating in the 1944 Education Act which listed 10 categories of handicapped, including the 'feeble-minded' and the 'maladjusted' categories which, perhaps, many of us fall into at certain times in our lives. Goffman, in his classic text *Asylums* [1961], posits that institutions for the mentally handicapped were not the humane solution to difference, but instead acted as society's storage dumps [Thomas and Vaughan 2004:31]. He also suggested that in creating institutions we create the discourse that constructs those who fill them. Similarly, in creating categories such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia, etc., educators identify the children that fit them – in Foucauldian terms, the discourse is constructing the subjects of which it speaks. There was a great expansion in categories for the handicapped children that were never fully explicated or defined, but reified into existence by medical or psychological screening, diagnostic testing, and the false legitimisation of *a priori* scientific knowledge [Thomas and Loxley 2007].

This reification of intelligence testing and categorisation led to a ten-fold increase in the number of children excluded from mainstream education and attending special schools in the UK in the second half of the twentieth century.

It has been the single merit of the English school of psychology.....that it has, by this very device of mathematical analysis, transformed the mental test from a discredited dodge of the charlatan into a recognised instrument of scientific precision. [Burt 1921:130]

It is therefore somewhat ironic that Burt's reputation and influence on the education system has been tarnished by accusations of fraud, leading many to question his 'exalted niche in the pantheon of psychology' [Gould 1996:268]. Hearnshaw [1976], Burt's official biographer, appointed by the family, and an unqualified admirer, nevertheless uncovered evidence of fakes and fabrications, disputed by many loyal

admirers such as Eysenck [1971], who's notions of neoteny led him to suggest that Blacks were of lower intelligence, harking right back to the eugenics movement fifty years earlier. Gould [1996] notes that Burt's 'patently manufactured data' went unchallenged for so long because of 'hereditarian suppositions' [p266] and the *a priori* convictions of many people at that time, the problem being one of epistemology [ways of knowing] that inhibited the 'duty of doubt' [Haldane 1965].

At the same time the new science of psychology, popularised by the work of Freud and Jung, and including the psychometrics of Binet, Burt and others, was attempting to establish itself as a respected profession. Similar to the medical profession, under whose governance came special schools right up until the early 1980's, psychology seeks difference from the norm and diagnoses that difference as being within. Professionalization of the discipline of psychology, and its increasing involvement with education, parallels the rise of the natural sciences at the end of the nineteenth century and aids understanding of the dominance of the 'psy-sciences' [Rose 1989; 1998] within special education.

The zoologist within me was profoundly influenced by Stephen Jay Gould's book 'The Mismeasure of Man' [1996], in which he thoroughly undermines the concepts of biological determinism and innate limits of intelligence. He does this by critiquing the implicit assumptions, or *a priori knowledge*, that intelligence is a single, innate, heritable and measurable thing. As a scientist himself, he is not a relativist, believing that factual reality exists and that science can learn about it. But he also recognises that science is a social phenomenon, embedded in social activity 'a gutsy human enterprise' [p53] rather than the objective pursuit of truth by 'robots programmed to collect pure information' [ibid.]. He discusses our reification of the concept of intelligence, and the quantification of this via psychometric testing which leads to ranking - 'our propensity for ordering complex variation as a gradual ascending scale' [p56]. However, the most powerful part of the book is the challenge to craniometry [the measurement of skulls in order to rank races by the sizes of their brains] as 'a rigorous and respectable science' of the late nineteenth century. Gould [1996:59] 'continually located *a priori* prejudice, leading scientists to invalid conclusions from inadequate data, or distorting the gathering of the data itself'. He reanalysed the classic data sets of skull measurements,

and ‘recalculated sums to locate errors that support expectations, discovering how adequate data can be filtered through prejudice to predetermine results’ [ibid.] to show that quantitative data is subject to cultural constraint as any other aspect of science, by revealing bias and prejudice, rather than fraud, in proclaiming the white man’s superiority. His words below have particular impact:

We pass through this world but once. Few tragedies can be more extensive than the stunting of life, few injustices deeper than the denial of opportunity to strive or even to hope, by a limit imposed from without, yet falsely identified as lying within. [Gould 1996:60]

Yet ability-labelling, ranking and biological determinism, have never gone away. The notion that IQ, ethnic origin and poverty are genetically linked, remains popular among a section of the population as the success of Herrnstein and Murray’s book *The Bell Curve* [1994] illustrates. The book’s ‘anachronistic social Darwinism’ seems to ‘reflect the depressing temper of our time – a historical moment of unprecedented ungenerosity’ [Gould 1995:4].

I would suggest that anachronistic scientism, the assumption of a cognitive hierarchy of ability which is measurable, is the *a priori* knowledge which the education system uses to justify excluding increasing numbers of children by continuing to label them as defective and then to educate them differently from others, be that in different classes, in different schools or in different groups within a classroom. The traditional, psycho-medical approach to difference focuses on the pupil and what is wrong with their cognition, followed by assessment by a specialist [usually a psychologist, doctor, teacher, or another agent of social control], resulting in diagnostic, prescriptive outcomes leading to appropriate [almost always exclusive] intervention [Porter 1994]. Professional experience suggests that once a label is given, this process is repeated annually, to reinforce further, what is wrong with the individual. Whilst there is no doubt that this diagnosis of difference or exclusivity can benefit some children by enabling access to additional support, for others it signals that beginning of an exclusive process that can last a lifetime and help perpetrate cycles of deprivation and social exclusion.

Scientific positivism has been surfaced as the historical *a priori*, the implicit knowledge which legitimates exclusion within our education system. The power differentials of the discursive formations circulating around the '/', and their impact upon education is considered in the following section.

The Competing Discourses of Inclusion/Exclusion:

Foucault used the term 'archaeology' in the 1960's to describe his approach to writing history. Archaeology, which is foregrounded on the historical *a priori* above, deals with discourses and neutral theoretical systems. In the following decade this term was superseded by 'genealogy' which deals with power and real practical struggles. Even Foucault himself was 'less than enlightening' [O'Farrell 2005:68] and 'generally rather vague and confusing' [p129] when trying to distinguish between them. Genealogy, in contrast to archaeology, concerns the 'constraints' that limit the orders of knowledge, such as 'power', 'the will to truth', 'games of truth', and 'regimes of truth'. Following Nietzsche, Foucault considered 'knowledge itself at its very origin was the product of struggles for domination and power' [O'Farrell 2005:66] and thought that we build discourses not to arrive at the truth, but to win. The following section questions the struggle for power and privilege within the '/' between the discourses of inclusion and exclusion [special education].

The Discourses of Exclusion:

A discourse of deficit, the language of special education belies its seemingly benign phraseology. One of the common everyday uses of special denotes someone who is 'exceptionally good or precious' [<http://oxforddictionaries.com/definition/special> accessed on 19/9/11]. When educators speak of a child requiring special education as 'special' the implicit assumption is that the child is impaired or defective in some way, be that physically, intellectually or behaviourally. This can lead to a lifetime of surveillance, or the 'gaze' [Foucault 2003:ix].

In a seminal work on ‘special’ children with physical disabilities, Allan [1999:20] notes the way the ‘gaze’ constructs the individuals as both subjects and objects of knowledge and power and identifies three mechanisms of surveillance; hierarchical observations, normalising judgements and the examination. She describes the common experiences of the group and analyses them genealogically in terms of power. Hierarchical observations such as progress reports are always completed by agents of social control, such as support teachers, playground monitors, educational psychologists, etc. Normalizing judgements, such as poor literary skills, are made by the same adults. Thus binary opposition of what is permitted and what is forbidden [ibid.:184] within institutions is highlighted, resulting in a ‘constant pressure to conform to the same model, so that they might all be subjected to subordination, docility, attention in studies and exercises, and to the correct practice of duties and all the parts of discipline - so that they might all be like one another.’ [ibid:182]. Difference is highlighted in order to eradicate it.

The perpetual penalty that traverses all points and supervises every instant in the disciplinary institutions compares, differentiates, hierarchizes, homogenizes, excludes. In short, it *normalizes*. [Foucault 1991:183 original emphasis]

The examination, according to Foucault, combines hierarchical observation and normalising judgements and, whether this be a medical, diagnostic examination, or an educational assessment to establish hierarchy or ability, it ‘establishes over individuals a visibility through which one differentiates and judges them’ [ibid:184]. Foucault suggested that the examination is a technique that makes an individual an object of power and knowledge [Allan 1999:22]. The constant, lifelong multi-disciplinary examination and assessment of those perceived as different, particularly those children identified as having special needs, has long been recognised as a political and social process [Galloway *et al* 1994]. ‘The gaze is alert everywhere’ [Foucault 1991:195].

The Warnock Report [DES 1978], which was enacted as the 1981 Education Act [DES 1981] and The Education [Scotland] Act 1980 introduced the discourse of ‘need’. Both Acts abolished the numerous categories of diagnosed medical handicap established in 1944, replacing them with the overarching category of ‘special educational needs’ [SEN], thus reconceptualising such pupils as having educational needs rather than

requiring medical treatment. The language of ‘remedial’ and ‘educationally subnormal’ was replaced by ‘learning difficulties’, and the concept of integration¹¹ was introduced. The Warnock Report, and its enactment, was considered by many to be a significant watershed as it was the first time that a discourse of social justice was applied to a marginalised, powerless group, in the promotion of a more holistic view of the individual. It was, therefore, the first large body of work to challenge the ‘otherness’ of special education provision [Gold *et al* 1996]. However, many educationalists were deeply disappointed by it, and the subsequent legislation, not only for the lack of resources allocated to support the changes, but also for the looseness of the language and loopholes that allowed education authorities to interpret the Act differently [*ibid.*]. This looseness in the language of government legislation is not unusual and addressed again later with regard to the most recent Scottish legislation.

Intended to be helpful, the discourse of need, including additional support needs [ASN] in Scotland, has come to reinforce concepts of deficit and disadvantage [Thomas and Loxley 2007]. Rather than simply naming a supposed category of problems, instead this discourse points as emphatically at the child as the source of the problem as before. It has allowed many of the exclusionary practices to remain in place. Whilst it could be argued that integration of children with SEN into mainstream was a positive move towards inclusion, in reality it was often nothing more than a change in location as children were placed in unreconstructed schools that remained unchanged and unfit to educate them [Ainscow 1999]. Skrtic [1991:150] noted that ‘the new practices associated with mainstreaming simply reproduced the special education problems of the 1960’s in the 1980’s’ and highlighted the continuing re-emergence of the kind of thinking that leads to ever-newer forms of segregative and exclusionary practice. Parsons [1999] notes that the exclusionary practices are still there: there is still labelling; exclusion shows no sign of declining.

Whilst supposedly an educational discourse, the child-deficit ‘needs’ discourse which focuses upon assessment, diagnosis, treatment, and, if possible, a cure, remains very much predicated upon the psycho-medical. It is hard to challenge the notion that children with physical or learning difficulties which make it difficult for them to cope in

¹¹ Integration concerns the movement of children with disabilities into mainstream schools. It is called mainstreaming in the United States.

mainstream schools should have separate, more appropriate, provision for their education. Simplistically, it appears to be a humane solution. However, this apparently benign discourse encourages the construction of a defective child whose education requires specialist intervention, and is used to legitimate unwarranted exclusion.

The ‘needs’ discourse is patronising and disempowering and begs the question about whose needs are actually being met by segregation [Thomas and Loxley 2007]. This exclusive discourse, in parallel with that of special education, thus becomes a regime of truth which legitimates what can and cannot be articulated, constructs the individuals of which it speaks and is bound by the historical, scientific *a priori* so that it is ‘that which has always been’, and so remains largely unquestioned as evidenced by its widespread use in schools and in government documentation.

Beneficiaries of both deficit discourses are the powerful professionals such as psychologists and specialist teachers who work with children with SEN:

New types of disability have sprung into existence. The proportion of students categorised as disabled and the number of professionals designated to serve their needs has grown exponentially. Professional organisations and journals have proliferated at a corresponding rate. Those within the field are occupied with tightening definitions of disability; determining eligibility for services; establishing ‘due process’ testing, classifying, and service provision routines, developing distinct special education pedagogy and curriculum, and designing a cascade of service delivery arrangements from special schools to special classes to resource rooms to inclusion classes. [Brantlinger 1997:427]

Such exponential growth of special education has a false legitimacy based as it is upon psycho-medical ‘psycho-babble’ which privileges and reifies certain types of knowledge, in this case, scientific knowledge [Thomas and Loxley 2007:46]. Such a powerful and ubiquitous discourse within education is hard to displace.

Recently, another discourse has developed to sit alongside that of SEN, and, it could be argued, supports the psycho-medical approach of assessment, diagnosis, treatment and ultimate exclusion of children who have difficulties in the education system. This is the market or managerial discourse that reflects neoliberal policies of competition, consumerism, and accountability, which Ball [1990:18] refers to as a ‘discourse of derision’. The subject is constructed as a consumer, de-personalised and open to the

vagaries of the marketplace. As far back as 1994, Riddell and Brown observed how Warnock had entered the marketplace by extending the language of competition and choice to SEN and creating a climate of accountability. Within this ‘new discursive regime’ [ibid.], the words spoken by professionals have been replaced by ‘an abstract mechanism and technologies of *truth* and *rationality* – parental choice, the market, efficiency and management’ [ibid.]. Barton [1997] argues that government policies such as devolving resources to schools and publication of league tables undermines justice and equality by creating winners and losers and increasing the impetus for exclusion and segregation.

One effect of this discourse has been to reinforce perceptions of individual deficits and to encourage parents and teachers to seek acknowledgement of these, leading to dramatic increases in request for statements, Records of Needs [now defunct], or other forms of support [Allan 1999]. In schools, the discourse of behaviour management replaced that of discipline, superficially progressing that particular discourse on from one of punishment and retribution, but, arguably, replacing naughtiness with a deficit discourse of ‘disturbed’ children, beyond the responsibility of classroom teachers. Increasing numbers of children are identified with dyslexia, dyspraxia, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder [ADHD], and more recently ASD [autistic spectrum disorders]. These are an effect of a ‘disciplinary technology of surveillance and control’ [Slee 1996c:108] to which children are willingly submitted by parents and teachers. Respectability is thus provided for parents – ‘better to be seen as pathologically impaired than as bad’ [ibid.], and it also avoids difficult questions for educational institutions about the exclusionary nature of categorisation, and the reasons for it, such as pedagogy, curriculum and school organisation.

The associated ‘standards agenda’ [Ainscow *et al* 2006] is a discourse of ‘driving up’ standards of attainment, including workforce skill levels and ultimately national competitiveness in a globalised economy. Arguably, it has been used to legitimate the exclusion of increasing numbers of children, particularly those from ethnic minorities, as they fall below arbitrary yardsticks exemplified by league tables and attainment targets [Gillborn and Youdell 2000]. Whilst in principle higher standards of attainment are worthy and entirely compatible with inclusive education, the discourse of standards

has concentrated on a narrow view of attainment as evidenced by national literacy, numeracy and science targets [ibid.]. It is not surprising that schools are caught in the inclusion/exclusion dilemma reflecting the significant tension between becoming more inclusive and responding to the standards agenda [Rouse and Florian 1997, Bines 1999, Audit Commission 2002, Thomas and Loxley 2007]. Schools with high numbers of students who do not conform to school and classroom behavioural norms, or require high levels of attention and resources, are seen as less attractive, which may go some way to explaining why the inclusion of students in mainstream education from special schools remains so painfully slow [Norwich 2002], and internal exclusion in bases and units continues apace. Schools remain ambivalent about the desirability of the inclusion agenda [Ofsted 2004], levels of disciplinary exclusion remain problematic [National Statistics 2005], and there is a growing backlash against inclusion amongst both politicians and educators [Cameron 2005, Warnock 2005].

The dominance of these exclusionary discourses described above creates a regime of truth within the education system that constructs individuals as victims of their own pathology and economic forces, and, in my professional experience, goes largely unchallenged within schools. It functions to rationalise myths [Allan 1999] about progress and the actions taken in the name of 'support'. As a consequence of this mythologizing process the schooling of many children and young people who do not fit the norms has been allowed to continue as 'a perverse kind of prohibition in which desire and human agency is not permitted to explore its own constitutive possibilities' [McLaren 1995: 233]. However, in academia and educational research circles, if not in schools, there are challenges to the exclusive side of the '/'. The inclusion/exclusion binary is being destabilised allowing for different, more inclusive discourses to develop.

Challenges to the Discourse of Exclusion:

Tomlinson [1982], in a seminal work, challenged 'the legacy' of the pathology of difference [Clough and Corbett 2000] with a sociological discourse that constructed the individual as a subject of social processes. At the heart of this discourse are notions of the vested interests of professionals and the institutional reproduction of disadvantage.

The taken-for-granted assumption that special schools and segregation existed benignly and for the benefit of their inhabitants was challenged and it was suggested that the advantages of such segregated schooling accrued mainly for those professionals with a vested interest in maintaining their own status and power i.e. the doctors and educational psychologists. Teachers are not innocent in this discourse either. Tomlinson [1982:66] argued that construction of a child with special needs ‘will depend more on the values, beliefs and interests of those making the judgements than on any qualities intrinsic to the child’.

In 1996 an Open University text [Swann 1982] challenged the pivotal role of the deficit discourse of psychology, and the role of its practitioners, in deciding the education of children with SEN. The authors describe the vitriolic reaction of both the professional bodies representing psychologists, to the extent that a letter was sent to the chancellor of the OU [Open University] asking that the piece, and the course from which it was uplifted, be withdrawn. This did not happen and Swann [1982 cited in Thomas and Vaughan 2004] wrote a scathing passage about the power vested in educational psychologists and their dominance in the discourse, research, politics and practice of special education, which continues to this day.

Barton (1988), writing about the politics of SEN, progressed the debate by contending that 'special educational needs' is a euphemism for school failure and a way of deproblematizing and thus depoliticizing the failure of schools for an increasing number of students. Driven by the functionalist imperative of maintaining the present organisation and order of regular schooling, special, segregated education serves as a safety valve to contain those who do not conform to preferred individual and social pathologies [Slee 1996a].

Thomas and Loxley [2007] highlight the problematic of language in the segregation of children labelled with EBD [emotional and behavioural difficulties]. Despite searching the last ten issues of five leading national and international journals, they found not a single paper ‘which discusses in any detail the provenance, status, robustness, legitimacy of the term ‘emotional and behavioural difficulties’’ [Thomas and Loxley 2007:47]. Yet, it is used widely and unquestioningly in the UK as an administrative and

quasi-clinical category, which combines legal, medical and educational connotations and meanings. They claim that such exclusive special education metaphors which use quasi-scientific explanations are little more than ‘psycho-babble’ which rests in the ‘reification of what is little more than tentative scientific conjecture’ [ibid.].

Corbett [1996], in another highly influential work, continued the discussion of special education as a social construct, claiming that the language and discourse of SEN is one of control and domination. She says it ‘is the language of the status quo – the voice of a confident and complacent establishment’ [Corbett 1996:8]. She recognises that the Warnock Report was the voice of ‘enlightened modernity’, but goes on to claim that it is the voice of a dominant discourse that is associated with power, status and a confident authority. She questions why an eminent Oxbridge figure should chair a committee of enquiry about the education of ‘handicapped children’ generally accorded low status, and concludes that the British establishment represented by Warnock ‘lends weight and authority, brings with it centuries of historical legacy, and has the overriding confidence of those who are comfortable and familiar with possessing the right values to impart to others’ [ibid.].

Another challenge to the exclusionary discourse, and one which is increasingly powerful is the disability rights discourse – overtly political and pioneered by disabled people themselves such as Mason, Oliver, Rose and Shakespeare. Their social model of disability challenges the ‘dominant orthodoxy’ [Barton 1993:237] of the medical model at least within academic circles, and claims that ultimately people are disabled and excluded because of systemic and attitudinal barriers within society. However, within this discourse there is significant tension that highlights the reductive, polarising nature of oppositional thinking around the ‘/’ between inclusion and exclusion. Proponents of the structuralist social model of disability maintain a strong political focus whereas poststructural accounts focus on the individual experience of impairment and disablement. Theorists of the former are concerned that the specificity of latter will fracture the political struggle towards equity and press policy-makers towards individual pathological models of service delivery [Slee and Allan 2001]. Nevertheless, as a discourse challenging special education it is a fundamental contribution [Terzi 2004].

The confusion surrounding the language and discourse of the exclusive, deficit model both contributes to, and challenges, its power. Terzi [2005] suggests that SEN is an unworkable concept firstly because the government legislation is unclear about what constitutes a learning difficulty or a special need and secondly because it is theoretically difficult to specify. Even OFSTED [2004], in a review of provision for SEN, challenged the prevailing discourse, finding inconsistencies in definition and in practice, and noted their concern that some schools were using the SEN discourse to refer to children who merely displayed low attainment or were 'below average' upon entry into school [Hodkinson and Vickerman 2009]. There is much confusion between discourses of special education and special educational needs. In England and Wales, the latter is usually used for children who have a significant learning difficulty that calls for special provision to be made. The former, which was common pre-Warnock, nowadays constructs a child who comes from 'a social group whose circumstances or background are different from most of the school population' [Frederickson and Cline 2002:36]. They may not experience barriers to learning but the label may lead to low expectations of children whose first language is not English [ibid.], and is sometimes used to place them inappropriately in support bases and other forms of segregated provision. This confusion is not apparent in Scotland because of the more recent, singularly Scottish, piece of legislation with the unwieldy title of The Education [Additional Support for Learning] [Scotland] Act 2004 [thereafter referred to as the ASL Act [2004]. Whilst this Act abolished the SEN discourse, it adds its own level of confusion to the inclusion/exclusion binary by replacing SEN with the grammatically clumsy 'additional support needs' [ASN] discourse. A well-intentioned effort to develop inclusive policy and legislation perhaps, but which has led to a 'repetition of exclusion' [Allan 2006], has added yet another discourse into the play of power which on the one hand may threaten the more exclusive discourse, and on the other, merely repeats it.

Scottish policy documents and legislation:

Teachers tend to regard government policy in straightforward terms as the actions of government aimed at securing certain outcomes [Ozga 2000]. They expect policy to

support them in their practice and decision-making [ibid.] and thereby reduce the dilemmas of inclusion/exclusion by offering clear guidelines. The reality, however, is somewhat different. Researchers, such as Ozga herself, view policy more diffusely, as a process, an area of negotiation and contestation between different ‘interested’ groups who lie outside the formal machinery of policy-making. She continues that policy is ‘struggled over, not delivered, in tablets of stone, to a grateful or quiescent population’ [p1].

An example of the inclusion/exclusion struggle was played out during the construction of the ASL Act [2004]. Allan [2008], acting as an Adviser to the preceding Parliamentary Inquiry, describes the *volte face* by officials in terms of ‘deterritorialisation’ and ‘reterritorialisation’ [Deleuze and Guattari 1987]. Government ministers, guided by herself and others, originally appeared sympathetic to inclusive education and recognised distinctions between inclusion, integration and special education, whilst being aware of the uncertainty of how a more equitable system could be achieved. For some of them, this represented a profound change from a child deficit discourse to a much wider understanding of inclusive education. However, the process of deterritorialisation was not seen through with the result that ‘officials have been able to reinstate fudge and blur within policy and to refuse anything that requires significant change’ [Allan 2008:33] and so the new legislation reterritorialises the same old ground by repeating the exclusive, child deficit discourse under the slightly different name of additional support needs [ASN].

The broader category of ‘additional support needs’ [ASN] introduced in the 2004 Act is ambiguous, tautological and confusing. It includes those children who may require additional support because they are bullied, are carers or are in care, have parents who are substance abusers or mental health problems, have English as an additional language, etc., as well as those with learning difficulties or sensory or motor impairments. On the face of it this is a laudable extension of the support that schools can offer vulnerable young people, and raises awareness of the difficulties faced by many of them. However, there is a danger that in identifying thirteen different categories of ASN, somewhat reminiscent of the 10 categories of handicap of the 1944 Education Act, increasing numbers of ‘defective’ youngsters will be labelled and

excluded through the attempts to support their inclusion. Broadening the therapeutic or support discourse may not result in more young people being segregated in special provision, but it remains disempowering, and by highlighting differences as aforementioned may result in inequality through low expectations. The exclusionary practices are still there: there is still labelling; exclusion shows no sign of declining [Parsons 1999].

Other ambiguities of this Act, considered the flagship of the new Scottish Parliament with its vision of accountability and remoralising politics, include the omission of any mention of inclusion in the subsequent Code of Practice designed to give guidance on its' implementation: avoidance of any definition of inclusion; confusion about the replacement of the Record of Needs; and disregarding children's voice. The mission statement published prior to the Act uses the discourse of inclusion with a vision of education for all that is 'inclusive', with reference to 'welcoming diversity', 'providing equal opportunity' and 'fullest potential' [SEED 2003]. The Act itself, and the Code of Practice, relies on an exclusive, special [additional support] needs discourse. The 'ghost' of inclusion is there, but what is not said becomes more important than what is. Derrida [1998:162] cautions against naturalising what, as yet, is only an apparition. The legislation assumes inclusion without fully articulating it, or, gives us inclusion with one hand whilst taking it away with the other.

This is not the only piece of Scottish legislation to perform this conjuring trick whereby the discourse of one side of the '/' ghosts the other side and is magically transformed, or even disappears, by a linguistic sleight of hand [Slee 2008]. The Standards in Scotland's Schools, etc. Act [SEED 2000] contains the presumption that 'the education of all pupils will normally be provided in a mainstream school unless exceptional circumstances apply', thus immediately nullifying the concept of inclusion by allowing alternative provision. It states that all children have an entitlement to mainstream schooling then continues to add caveats such as 'where appropriate' etc. Count Us In: achieving potential in Scottish Schools [HMIE 2003] is another policy document that promotes inclusion, even specifying what is an inclusive approach to education, but then gives examples of inclusion of wheel chair users thereby firmly positioning itself as associated with disability and the exclusive special needs discourse. Even more

confusing is that this document also favours setting and streaming according to ability, somewhat contradictory to a discourse of inclusive education.

So the legislation uses the discourse of inclusion in its visions, but privileges the exclusive discourse of special education in its policies. Whether this is deliberate appeasement of powerful professionals and parents, or in order to maintain the *status quo*, or the result of confusion among politicians and legislators, is arguable. Whatever the case, theoretically it is contested ground. It may be regarded as illustrating confusion across the violent hierarchy of the binary, or the discursive struggle between inclusion/exclusion for power and legitimacy.

The Inclusion Discourse:

The term ‘inclusion’ was first coined circa July 1988 when a group of educators, writers and parents, together with adults who had been taught in special schools, met at Frontier College, Toronto. Concerned with the deficiencies of mainstreaming [the integration of children with disabilities into mainstream schools] as was then happening, they came up with a new idea: inclusive education – a sort of ‘discursive backlash’ [Allan and Slee 2008:28]. The initial focus was disability and desegregation [O’Brien and Forest 1989]. However, ‘their ideas about rejecting exclusion and encouraging participation for all spread rapidly to inspire a global education community about the benefits of inclusion.’ [Thomas and Loxley 2007:1]. They claim, with some justification, that what started as a discourse of disability and desegregation thirty years ago has now broadened to encompass diversity and social justice [ibid.]. Discourses of integration and valuing of children with disabilities have evolved into a more three-dimensional discourse of education for all, valuing diversity or inclusion. On the face of it, considered from a child’s viewpoint, the inclusion discourse should perhaps be more powerful than it is, with its emphasis on enabling and empowerment as opposed to needs and support. Likewise, the focus of inclusive education on teaching methodology, instead of assessment and diagnosis, deserves to be more influential than it is. Yet inclusion in education is under threat – ‘it appears to be in something of a sorry state’ [Allan

2008:3]. Whereas the exclusive special education discourse appears to be thriving and is in the privileged position, the inclusive discourse is one which is subordinate.

As a discourse, inclusion is becoming increasingly common. From a structuralist perspective, whereby the relationship between words and their meaning is stable, this is not without its own problems:

‘Inclusion’ has become something of an international buzzword. It is difficult to trace its provenance or the growth in its use over the last two decades, but what is certain is that it is now *de rigueur* for policy documents, mission statements and political speeches. It has become a slogan – almost obligatory in the discourse of all right-thinking people. [Thomas and Loxley 2001: Series Editor’s Preface]

Inclusion appears to be losing its’ original meaning and becoming a cliché. The discourse is being used to add a progressive gloss to political speeches ensuring that those in authority are thought of as enlightened and open-minded. Special educators use the discourse synonymously with that of special education possibly for similar reasons.

Correspondingly, the inclusive education discourse is being used to add progressive gloss to policy documents thus circumventing all sorts of difficult practical questions [Thomas and Loxley 2007]. Almost meaningless epithets frame much of the inclusion discourse, such as ‘welcoming diversity’, ‘education for all’, ‘achieving full potential’. Yet, ‘welcoming diversity’ implies a dilemma between highlighting difference and ignoring it. If diversity is welcomed then difference is highlighted. The inclusion discourse would suggest that difference is an accepted part of the human condition and is therefore a given, neither to be welcomed or otherwise. State education was never designed for *all* children, based as it was, and is, upon selection according to ability. ‘Achieving full potential’ begs the question ‘who decides’ and, of course, it is usually an authority figure such as a teacher, psychologist, etc. If a child is ‘achieving their full potential’ this limits expectations and is deeply implicated in power differentials that rarely benefit the child. Brain research suggests that only a fraction of our brain is used during a lifespan [Shaw and Hawes 1998]. This implies *unlimited* potential. Perhaps the worst example of the inclusive discourse, and whom it constructs, is ‘the included

child’ – nominally included but in reality excluded. I have witnessed class teachers point out to visitors, somewhat proudly but pityingly, ‘the included children’, and support specialists putting their head around classroom doors to withdraw ‘the included children’ – a perfect example of the ‘theatre of the absurd!’ [Slee 1993:2].

Allan [2008:19] notes the ‘territories of failure associated with inclusion’ and confirms the ‘confusion, frustration, guilt and exhaustion’ experienced by teachers. The confusion is characterised by theoretical conflation and blurring of the discourses of inclusion and special education, and a non-recognition of the epistemological and philosophical differences between the two. It is reflected in the rhetoric of inclusion used by politicians and legislators being conditional and chimaerical [Slee 2001c], and the assumption of a benign commonality [Graham and Slee 2008] between inclusion and special education. The absence of a stipulative language of inclusive education allows its use as the default vocabulary for assimilation [Slee 1993:2&3] whereby nothing changes.

Though current education language is replete with epithets of equity and justice, this language often stands in direct opposition to bureaucratic procedures and teaching practice. Inclusive discourse deflects from practices which exclude. Policy enacted in systems, schools and classrooms frequently runs counter to the descriptions, official and anecdotal, of what is happening. [ibid.]

Garcia and Alban-Metcalf [2005] point out that there is a continuous invention of new terminology and nomenclature aimed at being more neutral than what previously existed, for example, perhaps, ASN. Galbraith [2004] notes the subtle shift in language, or ‘innocent fraud’ whereby difficult concepts are re-named using terms which are benign and without meaning, such as ‘working towards inclusion’ replacing full inclusion.

However, the discourse of inclusion is also under threat from economic discourses [it costs too much], the pedagogical discourse [it is bad for other children and traumatic for the disabled children] and the social discourse [just too much for the teacher’s workload]. Flatter management structures in schools, which Slee [1996a:19] scathingly refers to as ‘distributive logic’, have resulted in senior managers using a managerial discourse of resource allocation and the deployment of appropriate professional

expertise, thus eliminating any ‘duty of care’ for the individual child. Teaching unions, such as the Educational Institute of Scotland [EIS], use military metaphors in their discourse, describing the strain of inclusion experienced by teachers ‘as a time bomb waiting to explode’ [Douglas Mackie, Presidential Address 2004]. The National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers [NAS/UWT] described it as ‘a form of child abuse’ following a report it commissioned from a well-known academic [Macbeath *et al* 2006]. Allan [2008:1] cites a Canadian Union in which teachers unanimously voted to withdraw its support for inclusion, heralding the teaching of disabled children in regular classrooms as a ‘nightmare’.

Market discourses of audits, targets, and league tables threaten the inclusive discourse. There is web of accountability in which teachers are enmeshed, characterised by a ‘tyranny of transparency’ [Strathern 2000:309], which emphasises proving rather than improving [Ball 2005] and which forces the fabrication of success [Allan 2008:14]. Smyth *et al* [2004] talk about the intensification of teacher’s work that undermines their professionalism by prioritising administrative tasks over teaching. Booth [2003] notes that teacher’s work is characterised by fear of, and obsession with, inspection and centrally set targets that disrupts the balance of the curriculum as education becomes an incessant process of preparing for tests and being tested. The requirement of written evidence for all aspects of schooling betrays the lack of trust inherent within a culture of accountability and is profoundly exclusionary [Allan 2008].

Baroness Warnock [2005], commonly, but rather misguidedly heralded as the architect of inclusion, has ‘*come out* against inclusion’ [Allan 2008:10 original emphasis], using words such as ‘traumatic’ and ‘disastrous’ in describing the experiences of children with disabilities in mainstream schools. Lastly, special educators have dismissed the inclusion discourse as an ideological and unproven bandwagon [Kauffman and Hallahan 1995; Kavale and Mostert 2004].

The discourse of inclusion, as a social movement against exclusion [Slee and Allan 2001] appears to be under threat from the many different directions. Shakespeare [2005] notes the hysteria, moral panic and alarming backlash against the principle of inclusion. The ‘repetition of exclusion’ [Allan 2006:121] by policy makers, particularly

in reference to the ASL Act [2004], illustrates a lack of commitment, and a ‘deferral of responsibilities’ [ibid.] to both the spirit and practice of inclusion in Scottish Schools. Similarly, the refusal of the Executive to accept a definition of inclusion supported by experts in the field and the Members of the Scottish Parliament because a common definition ‘would be difficult to secure’ [Allan 2008], indicates an unwillingness to commit in favour of continuing the *status quo* of inclusion as special education. Inclusion as a discourse has become ‘a headache that won’t go away’ [Baker 2002:97], a ghostly presence that can never quite be achieved [Allan 2008], ‘a repetition of exclusion’ [Allan 2006:121], a cliché [Benjamin 2000], ‘a vacuous concept’ [Allan 2008:57], ‘a prettifying euphemism’ [Shapiro 1993:33] and an ‘illusory interiority’ [Graham and Slee 2008].

In conclusion, by interrogating or destabilising the inclusion/exclusion binary via the literature, the exclusive special education discourse is dominant and privileged. Scientific positivism is revealed as the historical *a priori*. This discourse of inclusion, which I had previously privileged unquestioningly, has arisen as a contender to challenge exclusion within the education system, but is struggling against misappropriation by the dominant discourse thus undermining its position, the market discourse which favours targets, league tables and accountability, and accusations of inadequacy for purpose as mentioned in the previous paragraph. Exploring the literature in this way, that is, from a poststructural perspective in contrast to ‘comprehensively’, interrupted my understanding of the interplay across the inclusion/exclusion binary. Interrogating the ‘/’ via the data allowed a fuller exploration of this dynamic.

Chapter 4: Dilemmas of Method

‘a strategic act of interruption of the methodological will to certainty and clarity of vision’ [Stronach and MacLure 1997:4]

This chapter concerns method and the all the dilemmas that arose in data collection and analysis during the evolution¹² of this thesis from scientific positivism to poststructuralism. The quotation above neatly encapsulates my desire to interrupt my science way of knowing and to try something very different. ‘Writing as a method of inquiry’ [Richardson 2000:923] starts the chapter because it has been so critical to the research process throughout. Subsequently, the data collection, using participatory interaction and activatory phrases, is described, followed by ‘an ethical interruption’ provoked by troubling assumptions about ethics and the research process. Lastly, the dilemmas of data representation, and how they were resolved, are addressed leading to the development of the postcards, the method that I have used to represent my data.

My intention in this chapter is to replace naïve certainty with radical uncertainty and a most rigorous confusion [Lather 2001]. Resisting the naïve certainty of my positivist training with the radical uncertainty of a poststructural epistemology embodies a transgression that was demanding and illuminating, and required much time and thought. The culmination of that process is the way in which I have represented the data, and indicates the rigorous confusion of finding my way through an unsettled and contested area in which the data posed questions back to me in unexpected ways.

I also desired to explore and try something new even if it meant getting lost. Like Lather [2003:265] ‘getting lost was one of my methodological goals in my desire to interrupt the reductiveness of restricted economies of representation’. Lamenting the ‘science as usual’ [Flyvberg 2001:166] mentality of the return to methodological

¹² I have used the word ‘evolution’ here to mean only ‘the gradual development of something’ [retrieved 27/9/11 from <http://oxforddictionaries.com/definition/evolution>] as opposed to the Darwinian sense of the ‘survival of the fittest’ which may run counter to poststructural notions as one side of a binary pair.

conservatism which, she claims, dominates education in the USA, St. Pierre [2004:286] opines:

We are in desperate need of new concepts, Deleuzian or otherwise, in this new educational environment that privileges a single positivist research model with its transcendent rationality and objectivity and accompanying concepts such as randomisation, replicability, generalizability, bias and so forth – one that has marginalised, subjugated knowledges and done material harm at all levels of education, and one that many educators have resisted with some success for the last fifty years.

I wished to challenge the single positivist research model, with which I was very familiar, and experiment with something new that might provide new ways of thinking about education, and in particular about inclusion/exclusion.

Writing as a method of inquiry:

Writing as a research method has enabled me to create and analyse, inquire, and above all, explore. Richardson [2000:923] ‘in the spirit of affectionate irreverence toward qualitative research’ considers writing as ‘a method of inquiry’, as a way of finding out about oneself and the topic.

Like Richardson, I was taught not to write until I knew what I wanted to say. Writing as a method of inquiry freed me of this profoundly inhibiting notion and allowed me to write in order to find something out. What is written is always a surprise, and never finished, but always in flux. She summarises that writing is not just a way of ‘telling’ but is also a way of ‘knowing’ [ibid.]. It is itself, a method of discovery and analysis where form and content are inseparable. Using writing as a method is to ‘word’ the world into existence, and then to ‘re-word’ it by proofreading, editing, etc. This ‘worded world’ never accurately, precisely, or completely captures the studied world. It provides a research practice through which we can investigate how we construct the world ourselves, and others, and, perhaps illuminates how standard objectifying practices of social science unnecessarily limit both us as researchers, and social science as a discipline.

Linked in to this approach is the author's 'voice'. As a zoologist by training, I was educated as a traditional empiricist schooled in the art of scientific writing which is supposed to be objective, linear, cumulative and impersonal. This static model coheres with mechanistic scientism and quantitative research, and contributes to the 'flotilla of qualitative research that is simply not interesting to read because adherence to the model requires writers to silence their own voices and to view themselves as contaminants' [Richardson 2000:960]. Scholarly discourse in the social sciences often privileges the anonymous essay over the personal, autobiographical story, which then becomes 'a delinquent form of expression' [Ellis and Bochner 2000:734].

By not insisting on some sort of personal accountability, our academic publications reinforce the third-person, passive voice as the standard, which gives more weight to abstract and categorical knowledge than to the direct testimony of personal narrative and the first person voice. [ibid.]

Although these two authors use narrative inquiry and autoethnography, they seem to favour poststructural concepts. They suggest that the 'facts' that the so-called 'experts' use to represent knowledge are inextricably linked to the current historical discourse, and note that there are no sharp distinctions between facts and values. The researcher is always implicated in the product.

Richardson [2000] describes much qualitative research as boring because it is written by passive-voiced authors about passive subjects, whereas qualitative research cannot be interpreted through tables and summaries but must be read, as the meaning is in the entire text. She locates this static model of writing as a socio-historical invention that reifies the world of the 19th century and ignores the dynamic, creative process. She also argues that it undermines the confidence of beginning qualitative researchers because their experience of research is inconsistent with the writing model. Our sense of self is diminished as we are homogenised, 'through the suppression of individual voice and the acceptance of the omniscient voice of science as if it were our own' [ibid:925]. This certainly restricted my own writing for over a year, and the block only freed itself when I started to write – anything, but freely, without inhibition, and without a structure.

Murray [2006:87] suggests 'freewriting' as an exercise to 'force' the writer to 'get something down on paper', and to build their confidence in writing. Writing as a 'stream of consciousness' was therapeutic and liberating for me. It 'silenced the internal editor' [p91], and I now promote the idea with students who find the writing process difficult. This is not to say that freewriting produces a final draft that does not require editing. Editing is an essential part of this process of producing a text that is meaningful to others, but, as she continues, the problem is that editing goes on at the same time as producing, and that this damages concentration and coherence, and in my case, the 'internal editor' had stopped me from writing at all. I felt I had nothing coherent to say.

Freewriting is not without its critics who 'accuse it of being an invitation to produce garbage' [Elbow 1973:7] because of the personal nature of the task and the lack of any clear structure. Murray [2006] acknowledges the subjectivity of freewriting, but highlights its value in developing the relationship between the writer and their epistemology. She notes the difference between students who favour freewriting and talk about 'developing' their knowledge, and those who favour a more structured approach and talk about 'cementing' their knowledge, suggesting that this may reflect a greater willingness to change on the part of the freewriters. Personally, the freedom bestowed by freewriting allowed me to overcome obstacles by articulating them, and allowed me to explore my own thinking, and thereby I started to write this thesis.

Poststructuralism links language, subjectivity, social organisation and power. Language is the centrepiece producing meaning and is part of the enacting of social reality, rather than merely reflecting it. Our subjectivity and our sense of self are constructed through language. Different languages and different discourses within languages give meaning in ways that are not reducible to one another, and are the means by which power and social organisation are defined and contested [Richardson 2000]. Understanding language as competing discourses makes it a site of exploration and struggle. This site, for me, is metaphorically represented by the '/' [slash] between the binary opposites of two competing discourses, and highlights the importance of recognising the reductive results when privileging one side or the other. The struggle involves learning the value

of ‘nomadic inquiry’ [St. Pierre 1997c] within the messy, excremental ‘/’ [slash], and writing has enabled me to articulate that wandering.

Language is not the result of one’s individuality; rather, language constructs the individual’s subjectivity in ways that are historically and locally specific. Thus, the individual is both site and subject of these discursive struggles for identity. Individuals are subject to multiple and competing discourses and their subjectivity is shifting and contradictory, not stable and fixed [ibid.]. Writing as a method of inquiry creates my self in ways of which I was unaware, and opens up new lines of flight [Deleuze and Guattari 1987]. Poststructuralism suggests continual co-creation of oneself and the subject, each being known through the other, and the knowing of both being intertwined, partial, historical and localised. Thus, by reflecting upon poststructural method, new ways of knowing can be explored. Poststructural methodology directs understanding of ourselves reflexively within a given situation at a given time, and it liberates the text from trying to explain everything to everybody. Using personal voices and reflexivity releases the censorious hold of science writing that can be restrictive and inhibiting. Writing is a process of discovery and writing as a method of inquiry is a way of knowing whereby the researcher’s self-knowledge and knowledge of the topic develop alongside each other [Richardson 2000].

‘Writing as a method of inquiry’ could be considered representative of a new species of qualitative research that includes autoethnography, layered texts, poetry, drama, hypertexts, museum displays, etc. Heralding a paradigm shift in ethnographic interpretation and representation, which are produced through what Richardson calls ‘creative analytic practices’ [p929] or CAP, ‘the *writing process* and the *writing product* are deeply intertwined; both are privileged’ [Richardson 2000:930 original emphasis]. The writing cannot be separated from the writer or the writer’s way of knowing. Thus the problems of subjectivity, authority, authorship, reflexivity and process on the one hand are intertwined with representational form on the other. These problems are reflected in the unfolding of the research methods, and in the decisions about data collection and analysis. Using ‘writing as a method of inquiry’ and the concept of ‘creative analytical practices’ [ibid.] directed me towards innovative ways of

both collecting and representing the data and enabled me to move beyond the traditional scientific methods in which I have been inculcated.

Collecting the Data:

Nomadic Inquiry:

In charting the journey from the original attempt to prove a hypothesis to the final poststructural discourse analysis interrogating binary opposites, quantitative methods such as questionnaires, surveys and statistics have been replaced by a different method of interviewing called ‘participatory interactions’ using ‘activatory phrases’. Also in contrast with the more traditional scientific approach, the data have been represented as postcards using graphics and verse. The unfolding of these methods of data collection and analysis are now described.

It reads sequentially from start to finish but this does not mirror how the thesis evolved. Rather it is a requirement of the academy. Narrative, with a beginning and an ending is seductive to our cultural inclination [Scheurich 1997]. It is a simulacrum, an imitation of something that never existed. The story of the evolution of method is told as a smooth narrative, a construction that does not reflect the reality. It was far more messy, unstructured, disordered, haphazard and incomplete. Serendipity played a part, as did contradiction, transgression and confusion. Structure was imposed after the event.

The lengthy struggle involved in ‘un-knowing’ my scientific inheritance is not fully reflected in the relatively straightforward ‘creation myth’ that follows either. It is better reflected by St. Pierre’s [1997c] notion of ‘nomadic inquiry’, which suggests the itinerate and peripatetic nature of the journey which was slow, ponderous, wandering and originally lacked any clear direction. She cites Deleuze and Guattari [1987] in describing the nomadic approach as one that is about flux, heterogeneity and becoming, ‘as opposed to the eternal, the stable, the identical and the constant’ [p361]. The story told below recounts such a journey, a ‘becoming’ and includes a sense of never arriving.

The recidivist tendency towards the old essentialist self raised its head on a regular basis in a search for truth, closure, order, and the comfort of quantitative empiricism.

Denzin and Lincoln [2005] describe the eight moments of qualitative research from the traditional period of positivism through to the eighth moment of the fractured future. The moments are listed chronologically. My thinking has progressed through all eight of them, though in a far less linear, and much more haphazard, way, and this has enabled me to understand the nomadic nature of this journey as the research unfolded.

Initially, my research project was positivist, designed to prove the hypothesis that the 'Diversity Model of Inclusion' described earlier was the model for the new millennium, and in order to achieve this, teacher educator attitudes towards difference had to be exposed and changed. The intention was to design a questionnaire for around thirty colleagues, possibly using the ubiquitous Likert Scale, and look for 'treasonable sentiments' [MacLure 2003:102] that would prove my own expertise and their need for professional development about inclusion, probably delivered by myself. Throughout this traditionally scientific moment [Denzin and Lincoln 2005] I felt I had many of the answers, and intended to present them to the world much like the 'lone ethnographer' [ibid.] – the man-scientist who goes off to study the natives, or other [teachers], perhaps in a different land [schools], and returns to write up an objective account in the form of a complex theory!

A serious flirtation with grounded theory followed which appeared to offer the novice researcher many solutions. This post-positivist compromise appeared to bridge the gap between my scientific self and the newly emerging non-positivist. The notion of allowing research questions to arise from the data was very attractive to a novice and seemed to remove the responsibility of decision-making. The prescriptive, rigid coding and categorising system for analysing the data was the answer to the demands of the academy that decisions about data analysis are made at a very early stage in the process of doctoral research, and long before I was ready!

A time of confusion and blurred thinking reminiscent of the third moment of 'blurred genres' [ibid.] ensued. It is representative of the stage when my original scientific

ontology and epistemology were under serious doubt, yet not fully understanding the implications of poststructuralism and a discursive epistemology. I was toying with the interpretive paradigm and a subjective epistemology at this stage and an interest in ethical, democratic, participatory and inclusive research was developing.

Acknowledging that a radical reconceptualising was ahead and with no clear idea of what to do or where to go, this dilemma resulted in a time of stagnation, an *impasse* that lasted for over twelve months. Unfortunately, in some respects, this was the time that I chose, deliberately, to collect my data. At least I would have completed something constructive towards my doctorate during that fruitless year.

By this stage, I knew that I wished to explore the language of inclusion through interviews. Originally, I had wanted to talk to Principal Teachers of Support for Learning [PT SFL] in schools about how they thought inclusion could be introduced to initial teachers more effectively, and the pilot interview was conducted as such. However, time constraints and limited access to schools made this very difficult, so instead I decided to interview my colleagues on the Professional Graduate Diploma in Education [PGDE]. There is a large body of research on teacher's views of inclusion including Croll and Moses [2000 and 2003], Avramidis *et al* [2000a], and a comprehensive literature review which summarises it all [Avramidis and Norwich 2002]. Pupil's views on inclusion have also been elicited, though significantly less comprehensively [Pear 1997; Allan 1999; Hornby 1999; Hilton 2006]. Both parental views [Farrell 2000] and student teachers' views [Avramidis *et al* 2000b] have been also been researched. However, following a search of the comprehensive ERIC database, the views of teacher educators in higher education have not been explored. In view of their potential influence upon the teachers of the future, this should be a fruitful area for study.

The pilot interview, conducted long before I was ready, was in April 2007 with a PT SFL. It was semi-structured with questions and prompts about her role as an inclusive educator in school and how she thought that teacher education could be improved. It was not a success. A previously articulate, energetic, feisty colleague with definite views on inclusion became tongue-tied and instead of engaging with the questions, merely 'toe'd the party' line quoting from governmental guidelines. Upon requesting

the reason for this, she replied that it was what she thought I had expected! I decided not to do further pilots but instead to completely rethink what I wanted from an interview and how to achieve that. Once again, I approached the literature on interviewing, but this time asking very different questions, mostly about power and ethics, which led to a method of interviewing called 'participatory interaction' replacing the ill-conceived pilot.

Participatory Interactions:

The data consisted of seven, hour-long interviews, or participatory interactions, with colleagues who worked on the PGDE course. These voluntary participants were asked to sign consent forms and could choose whether the participatory interactions were conducted in their office or mine. Biscuits and tea were provided in an attempt to produce a relaxed and friendly atmosphere in which to talk about inclusion. The interactions were recorded on an iPod, transferred onto a password-protected laptop computer for transcription. Thereafter the original was deleted to ensure confidentiality.

As a Lecturer in Inclusive Education it had become important to me that my own research was inclusive. Inclusive research [Allan 2008, Thomas and Glenny 2005] could be considered the new times in educational research [Slee 1998]. Inclusive research, as opposed to research into inclusive education, has similarities with ethical research, emancipatory research [Oliver 1997], new- or 'post-paradigmatic' research [Casey 1995:235] in that they all question an exclusively positivist approach to research. This type of research is more participative, collaborative, equitable and ethical than traditional models and I wished to accommodate the four specific aspects of inclusive research below:

- A recognition of the constant and inevitable power differential between the researcher and the researched;
- An awareness and accommodation of the emotional or affective dimension;

- Participation of, and collaboration with, the researched, as opposed to distinct and separate roles, i.e., that the research is contextualised, done by insiders ‘with’, rather than by outsiders ‘to’.

The first two aspects were achieved to an extent as is discussed below. However, as the research progressed, the data posed questions about a poststructural reading of the data that invalidated notions of participation and collaboration.

At this stage of the process the intention was to attempt a Foucauldian discourse analysis on how secondary educators, including myself, construct their understanding of inclusion. Foucault [2002] describes a type of discourse that he called ‘mediation’. A model of mediation allows the subject to change as a result of the discourse being practiced, and is transformative. This contrasts with ‘didactic’ discourse, where an unchanging and fixed subject ‘teaches’ an already acquired truth, and likely to prove challenging to me as a teacher and lecturer!

Instinctively, I realised that I questioned the standard, traditional type of interview, considering it to be restrictive, contrived, possibly unethical, due to an unhelpful power differential. I challenged the objectivity of the conventional interview, its transcendental nature as seeking out truth, and its naïve acceptance as a reasonably straightforward method for gathering information [Scheurich 1995]. Gubrium and Holstein [2003a:29] note that it is a mistake to consider an interview as an information gathering technique or as a simple research procedure – ‘it is not just a way of obtaining information’. In their book ‘Postmodern Interviewing’ they advocate a collaborative interview process that empowers the participants. This deeper, less superficial interaction replaces the ‘stimulus and response’ approach where the interviewer is all-powerful – and which I suspect I used to ill effect in the pilot.

A postmodern epistemology would indicate that the interview is the site of, and occasion for, the production of knowledge itself. Interviews fundamentally, not incidentally, shape and form the content of what is said:

...interviewers are deeply and unavoidably implicated in creating meanings that ostensibly reside within respondents. Both parties to the interview are necessarily and unavoidably *active*. Meaning is not elicited by apt questioning, nor simply transported through respondent replies; it is actively and communicatively assembled in the interview encounter. Respondents are not so much repositories of knowledge – treasuries of information awaiting excavation – as they are constructors of knowledge in collaboration with interviewers. Participation in an interview involves meaning-making work’. [Gubrium and Holstein 2003a:43 original emphasis]

I wished to use a less traditional, more ethical method of interviewing, which acknowledged power differentials as both productive and unproductive and sought a more equitable balance. It would also involve active participation and collaboration of both the interviewer and the interviewee in discussion and debate. The aim was to replace rational neutrality with openness, honesty and a degree of emotional engagement and trust – a friendly conversation [Spradley 1979] or a participatory interaction.

In attempting to facilitate a mediated discourse feminist research literature was influential. This body of knowledge regards the traditional, modern interview as a masculine paradigm, embedded in masculine culture and excluding sensitivity, emotionality and other traits culturally viewed as feminine. Oakley [1981], in some seminal work, identified the contradiction between scientific positivist research requiring objectivity and detachment, and feminist interviewing requiring openness, emotional engagement, and the development of trust in a potentially long-term relationship. Interviewing colleagues with whom I already had a secure professional relationship raised ethical dilemmas, not the least of which was the risk of jeopardising an already established trust. Openly and reflexively questioning my own uptake on inclusion alongside the participant, with both of us engaging with the material, seemed a way of participating in the interaction that was less intimidating. Thus the participant would not be constructed as passive, and therefore not be ‘socialised’ into giving the correct answer, as appeared to happen in the pilot interview.

The traditional interview, with a power differential favouring me the interviewer as the expert on inclusion, and asking the participant questions about potentially sensitive matters, was unlikely to be a great success. Minimising status or power differences

between the interviewer and the participant has the potential to develop a more equal relationship based upon this trust which then may include self-disclosure by the researcher and reciprocity from the participant, both essential for a mediated discourse. This can avoid the 'hierarchical pitfall' (Reinharz 1992) of narrow gender essentialism, enabling greater openness and insight, and a greater range of responses. In turn this can result in richer data. Reinharz [1992] argues that the reflexive nature of postmodern interviewing contributes to a more equitable power balance as the discourse of the analyser is no less significant than the discourse being analysed, a particularly important principle for participatory interactions.

Gubrium and Holstein [2003b] also emphasise the requirement for active listening and exhibiting gestures that encourage the participant, and conveying genuine caring and respect. I do not consider myself a particularly good listener, in fact, aware of this weakness I recorded all my supervision sessions and transcribed them. However, I do have good interpersonal skills and this was evidenced in the final request of the interaction. When asked how they had felt about the experience, all seven said that they enjoyed the experience – once they had got over their initial anxiety! This suggests that the power differential may have been more balanced, and because the interactions were enjoyable, and possibly cathartic, they contributed positively to further developing the professional relationships between my colleagues and myself. There was a strong sense of satisfaction among the participants in being asked their opinions, and, above all, in being listened to.

In respect of the above, I replaced the term 'interview' with 'interaction' to reflect active creation of meaning through mediated discourse. 'Participatory interaction' acknowledges the active role of both parties in what I hoped would be a free-ranging, serendipitous and unpredictable hour.

Activatory phrases:

Don't be misled. The interview is not a simple tool with which to mine information. It is a place where views may clash, deceive, seduce, enchant. It is the inter-view. It is as much about seeing a world – mine, yours, ours, theirs – as about hearing accounts, opinions, arguments, reasons, declarations: words with views into different worlds. [Shostak 2006:1]

The next dilemma of method was how to develop a participatory interaction that mirrored the ideas in the quotations above. Having dismissed the traditional question and answer session as potentially reductive, as verified by the unsuccessful pilot, an alternative was required.

Punch [1998] states that unstructured interviews are a powerful research tool, capable of producing rich and valuable data. A successful unstructured interview shares many of the characteristics of a prolonged, in-depth, intimate conversation, and this was my aim. Apprehensive that a completely unstructured interaction might be too wide-ranging and lose momentum, the idea of 'activatory phrases' [AP] was born. These are slightly provocative phrases aimed at stimulating discussion, chosen to highlight the tension, dilemmas and aporias within. Five activatory phrases were used in the participatory interactions:

- AP 1 - 'the inclusion in mainstream of children with additional support needs is tantamount to child abuse' [MacBeath *et al* 2006]
- AP 2 - Streaming or setting children according to their ability provides the best environment for learning for all children
- AP 3 - All children have a right to be educated together [CSIE 2002]
- AP 4 - The rights of some children to education always seem to take precedence over the rights of other children
- AP 5 - There are no legitimate reasons to separate children for their education [CSIE 2002]

With hindsight, I recognise that these five statements chosen represented the questions that had dogged me professionally both in schools and within the academy. They were framed by two initial queries requesting information about the participant and their

professional history and present role, and two concluding questions asking how they felt about the interview and the activatory phrases. Aware that going straight into discussion on inclusion, with me as the perceived expert, may not be the best way of eliciting debate, the purpose of the former was to make the participants feel comfortable. The purpose of the latter was to provide feedback for me about the process, particularly with regard to the comfort of the participant and the power differentials of the interaction.

Thus, the interaction began with the participants describing their professional pathway in an attempt to put them at ease. As aforementioned, the participants chose the location, which was either my office or theirs. It was explained that the five activatory phrases would be presented one at a time for discussion because at the time the intention was to analyse my own discourse alongside the participants. It was also stated that the nature of the phrases was deliberate in order to stimulate discussion on areas that were notoriously sensitive and to which there were no definitive correct answers. We, the participant and myself, were going to discuss them as freely as possible. Aware that there was a possibility of me as the 'interviewer' being too intrusive, I made every effort to be less vocal than the participant. Once the interaction had begun, this did not prove a problem as each individual had much to contribute. I did put forward my own considerations, but as briefly as necessary to maintain the momentum of the discussion. Thus, many of the interactions lasted longer than the allotted time, and, as has been mentioned previously, the feedback was very positive. The participants seemed to appreciate an opportunity to both think about and then articulate their positions.

With hindsight, I realise that these participatory interactions using activatory phrases were the stimulus for the reflexive nature of the method chosen to read the data. The discursive format of the 'interview' was the source of the notion that the data was posing different questions back to me. Each interaction was unique. Each activatory phrase provoked a different response from both the participant and myself, and every time my thought process was interrupted in a new way. At the time, I was completely unaware that this was the origin of my data presentation and the reading thereof. It took another two years to develop into the postcards.

In conclusion, Gubrium and Holstein [2003a:4] note that postmodern interviewing is not a set of guidelines but 'more a set of orientating sensibilities'. They continue that this new approach now 'entertains trenchantly inventive questions and moves in ambitiously new directions, where traditional interviewers with modern sensibilities understandably fear to tread'. Whilst not claiming that the design of interviewing in this research is 'trenchantly inventive', I have tried to do something new. In calling my method of interviewing 'participatory interaction' it distances it from the traditional interview, and using activatory phrases that are controversial, contested or provocative to stimulate discussion is also innovative.

An Ethical Interlude:

During the data collection, re-reading the literature and asking different, possibly more poststructural questions, ethical concerns interrupted the process. This was initiated by the consent form in which I was asking colleagues for permission to use potentially sensitive interview data when I had very little idea of exactly what I intended for it. They were placing their trust in me to act appropriately. Thus, I became concerned about the ethics of data collection and analysis. My thinking was interrupted as the nature of informed consent became problematic, alongside notions of voluntary participation, risk of harm, and anonymity. These principles are part of standard ethical guidelines, but they roll off the tongue as if they are self-evident and do not require analysis or examination.

There is a wealth of material on research ethics in general, for example in bio-ethics, the social sciences, in psychology and so on. In 1993, the Australian Association of Research in Education [Halasa 2005] noted a paucity of available published material on the ethics of educational research which resulted in an on-line literature review which proved illuminating in its willingness to engage in debate about some difficult issues. For example, dilemmas as to whether covert research can ever be justified as being in the public interest as Punch [1998] suggests, but others challenge [Halasa 2005]; whether data gathered without express permission should be used for analysis [e.g. clinical interviews which are confidential], or whether there is really such a thing as

informed consent when the balance of power is with the researcher. Once the data has been collected the participant has no control over it, as is evidenced by my asking for data for one purpose [a Foucauldian mediated discourse] and using it for another [a poststructural discourse analysis using Derrida's metaphor of a postcard]. In my defence, the methods for representing and reading the data acknowledges this power imbalance and were chosen in respect for these ethical principles.

Cornett and Chase [1990, cited in Halasa 2005] make a significant contribution to the ethics debate when they suggest that the degree to which a study is ethical or unethical does not ultimately rest with the scientific research community, some abstract canon of ethics or even an ethics checklist. Rather it is the result of a process of continuous interaction between the researcher and participant. This process must be based on an element of trust that may be built up through the participant finding the researcher approachable, communication that is two-way, a sense that the researcher is 'human' and able to reveal personal aspects of him/herself and assurances of confidentiality. Trust is the foundation of an ethical study and is foregrounded both in the participatory interactions and the analysis of them.

This proposal can be furthered by the suggestion that ethical research is also based upon personal ethics. Whilst trust is fundamental, the decision as to how trust is understood, and how far it is taken, is often a judgement made by the researcher, and is based upon a personal code of ethics, or, more cynically, upon expedience, as with some funded research. Researching the discourse of colleagues implies a considerable degree of trust, and I have taken this very seriously. Foucault, cited in O'Farrell 2005:114], specifies that 'ethics is the considered form that freedom takes when it is informed by reflection' and upon which our morality [a collection of rules and precepts] are based. He talked about 'technologies of the self' describing them as the techniques or tools through which human beings constitute themselves. He argued that we as subjects are perpetually engaged in processes whereby we define and produce our own ethical self-understanding. According to Foucault, technologies of the self are the forms of knowledge and strategies that

permit individuals to effect by their own means or with the help of others a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state

of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immortality. [Foucault cited in Martin *et al* 1988:14]

Concern not to betray my own ethics and the trust of my colleagues led to an approach to data analysis which foregrounded the complete anonymity of the participants.

Christians [2005] locates ethics and ethical guidelines within a broad historical framework and suggests that the standard guidelines reflect the positivist inquiry and utilitarian ethics of the social sciences. He adds that ethical guidelines are to protect institutions rather than the individual and continues by detailing the poverty of this model suggesting that it creates the conditions for deception, for the invasion of private spaces, for duping subjects, and for challenges to the subjects' moral worth and dignity. Arguing for a more ethical set of guidelines, he suggests using a feminist communitarian model, where community ontologically and axiologically precedes the person, and the community values include care, shared governance, collaboration and respect. Christians [2005] radical proposal for a different ethical framework aligns feminist traditions with the politics of the oppressed, and makes researchers responsible to the researched, instead of responsible to the sponsors, the field of educational research or to the community of educational researchers [SERA 2005], that is, the institutions. My responsibility to the participants was imperative.

Allan [2008] summarises the prevailing research in the field of special education and inclusion as excluding research. She cites Oliver [2002] who suggests that research in this area has contributed to the marginalisation of disabled people and his frustration, pain and disillusionment with the exclusionary nature of research on disability performed by the able-bodied as 'an intrusion into their life, even a form of rape or voyeurism' [p43]. She continues that new researchers of inclusive education often find themselves forced to deny their values or beliefs as they are 'unwittingly enlisted into a series of unwritten special education codes' [p50] which forces them to search out the pathological and the labelled. Thus they collude with the repetition of exclusion because the favoured positivistic approach encourages 'constructing a sample of students within particular categories of need and formulating interview questions which are informed by a deficit model of disability and which assume certain characteristics among the students in accordance with the categories being deployed' [ibid.]. I did not

want this research to be voyeuristic, nor did I wish my own ethics to be compromised. This research should not be ‘excluding research’.

The philosophers of difference were all concerned with ethics. Foucault was deeply committed to change and social justice, and one of the iconic images of him is on a protest marches in Paris in 1968. Derrida’s foregrounding of justice as characterised by ‘caring, an openness to the other, a form of hospitality in which one is inviting and welcoming to the stranger’ [Allan 2008:75], his defence of deconstruction as an ethico-political project, and his concern for difference and minorities [as an Algerian living in France, he regarded himself as a European hybrid] reveal an openly acknowledged concern, if playful, with justice and ethics. Deleuze and Guattari’s concepts of smooth spaces, rhizomic thinking, deterritorialisation and becoming all invite ‘new lines of flight’ for the consideration of social justice, difference and ethics. This ethico-political standpoint also contributed to the decisions made in relation to my research methods.

Dilemmas of Representation:

Never interpret; experience, experiment. [Deleuze 1995:7]

There is no textbook or manual that guides the researcher through poststructural discourse analysis. However, great comfort has been derived from Foucault who describes his work as ‘an experiment.....No recipe, no general method....’ [Foucault 1994:414]. This appealed to the scientist in me – a desire to experiment with something that is new and difficult. He describes his books as:

....a kind of tool box which others can rummage through to find a tool they can use however they wish in their own area.... I would like [my work] to be useful to an educator, a warden, a magistrate, a conscientious objector. I don’t write for an audience, I write for users, not readers. [Foucault 1994:523]

MacLure [2003] was exemplary, yet, whilst admitting that her book provides plenty of examples of discourse analysis, she continues:

.....this is not a recipe book. It does not set out to present discourse analysis as a method or a model, with rules and principles that can be ‘applied’ to educational phenomena.....It is more concerned with helping readers to grasp,

or glimpse, something that is quite elusive - namely, the discursive nature of educational and other social realities. It is very hard to grasp the discursive texture of educational, or any other, worlds. [MacLure 2003:Preface viii]

So, this part of the thesis has been the most difficult to write and represents the apogee of my research and the culmination of many years in the wilderness between positivism/poststructuralism. The original astronomical use of the word apogee is the point at which an orbiting body is furthest from the earth. The method developed for reading my data is the furthest point away from the scientific presentation of data and analysis in which I was trained, and from what I had imagined the end result of this thesis would be, hence the choice of word. It also represents a pinnacle or a summit, because of the effort required to climb to this point, which represents significant achievement in the distance travelled from positivism¹³.

The Irruption of Transgressive Data:

The title of this section reflects two things. Firstly, the rather surprising bursting in, or irruption of using verse to present the data. The latter was something I had admired in the work of some of the American feminists such as St. Pierre [1997b:175] who talks about ‘the irruption of transgressive data’, and Richardson, Lather, Butler and others. The paragraph below written in August 2008 illustrates how I thought then:

I feel that I will have reached the zenith of my intellectual development should this thesis be presented as a poem or a play, but I know this is beyond my ability and understanding at present, and the old positivist self whispers wickedly in my ear suggesting that some of the more experimental presentations may be navel-gazing nonsense! [author’s notes]

The representation of the data as postcards, and my reading of them transgresses the limits of conventional forms of data analysis, but in a Foucauldian sense, rather than being straightforwardly oppositional. I do not wish to ‘oppose’ science or my scientific

¹³ Positivism has not been rejected as this statement might imply. Rather I consider now that poststructuralism is a different perspective, instead of the less privileged side of a binary. I am no longer struggling to align the two but accept their difference – a possible analogy being sitting on the ‘/’ ready to use either paradigm as and when appropriate!

training. I am, at last, aware of its limitations, but regard it as complementary – useful, but in very different ways, and in different places, and as open to critique as any other paradigm.

Secondly, the unexpected irruption of, questions *from* the data that persistently interrupted initial attempts at analysis. These I perceived as transgressive in the way that they contravened conventional data analysis whereby I should be questioning the data.

Initial attempts at data analysis were tiresome, fruitless, and frustrating, revealing, with hindsight, a desire for the coding and categorising suggestive of a recidivist tendency towards scientific positivism. Weeks were spent transcribing my data in the belief that doing it myself was familiarisation and the first stage of analysis. However, I found I could switch off and type for hours without being aware of the data in any way. With hindsight, in attempting to make ‘sense’ of the data, I was searching for closure, answers, and definitions. The desire for clarity foregrounded my thinking, and was profoundly inhibiting when confronted with the messy, contradictory transcripts of seven, one hour-long, participatory interactions. Repeatedly, I read the transcript of each individual interview linking discourse to meaning, and meaning to the individual, and being thoroughly essentialist, searching for closure and truth. Foucault [2003:xv] describes this desire to capture or tame the ‘wild profusion’ as an imperial need of white western civilisation. ‘Poststructuralists would say that this need is the typical western attempt to turn the Other into the Same’ [Scheurich 1995:251]. I looked for different discourses, metaphors, and, in grounded theory mode, tried to group, class, classify, sort, grade, order and rank page upon page of words and sentences. It was unremittingly tedious, unproductive and unsuccessful. Kvale [1996] likens the transcript to ‘dried flowers’ that have lost their life and vibrancy through decontextualisation.

This was in complete contrast to my response when I listened to the data. I re-engaged with the participant and the interaction every time and went off on different trajectories, tangents and ‘new lines of flight’ [Deleuze and Guattari 1987:161]. The data was posing questions back to me. I found listening to the data so absorbing, stimulating and

engrossing that I wrote my car off one night by driving over a well-lit bollard, much to the amusement of the local ‘hoodies’ who were vastly entertained by the mechanics of the tow truck!

Gradually, there came a recognition that instead of making ‘sense’ of the data, an impossibility from an ontological perspective of poststructuralism, the more productive on-going attempts at analysis involved a reflexive, contextual, contingent and experimental reading of the data. The data were speaking back to me in unexpected ways. Certain words, phrases, sentences such as ‘this dark element of utopianism’ were interrupting from the data, troubling me persistently, but almost subconsciously. I wanted to do something different, to transgress, to move away from the traditional type of analysis, and to challenge myself. St. Pierre [2008:327] echoes this desire ‘to produce different knowledge and produce knowledge differently’. Interrogating the ‘/’ should be about opening up new spaces for knowledge construction [Guillemin and Gillam 2004]. I began to use the data as a stimulus to further trouble the inclusion/exclusion binary, and thereby challenge my uptake of inclusion through repeated re-engagement with the recordings and through critical reflection.

The word ‘analysis’ was thus replaced by ‘interpretation’. Analysis, as used by scientists, chemists in particular, concerns the decomposition of something into its constituent elements to discover what it is made of. The essentialist nature of this was something I wished to avoid. However, interpretation has similar tones of elucidating and making clear the meaning of data. Latour [1996] suggests that ‘to translate is to betray’. Interpretation, like translation, particularly when presented as ‘truth’, is a similar betrayal by either the author or presenter. I wished to use the data to disrupt my own positivist tendencies towards transcendental truths by interrogating the ‘/’ between inclusion/exclusion, rather than ‘interpret’ the data for others. I realised that I was unwilling to ‘betray’ my colleagues by interpreting their words. How would I know that what I interpreted was what they had meant? St. Pierre captured this sentiment below:

How in the world can I presume to continue to interpret the lives of my participants, lives they have lived for decades within one theoretical description of the world [humanism], using another theoretical description

[poststructuralism] that is committed to the persistent critique of all claims to truth, including the truth of their lives.....' [St. Pierre 1997c:377]

Therefore the word 'reading' has been used in preference to either analysis or interpretation. Whilst the word 'reading' has connotations of interpretation, it also acknowledges the performance aspect of presenting text, which subsequently acknowledges that texts can be read, performed or presented in different ways. Harold Bloom [1975 cited in Lather 2003] has famously argued that all readings are misreadings, given the weight of perspective on what we see and how we see it. Thus, the way I have chosen to represent and read the data is singular.

The singular nature of reading the data was further explicated by William Boyd, in his novel *Brazzaville Beach*, where a mathematician extrapolates:

What are the dimensions of a ball of string, he asked me? The answer is: it depends on your point of view. From a mile away a ball of string will appear dimensionless. A point. A full stop. Moving closer you can see that the ball is three-dimensional, solid, shadowed. Closer still and the ball has resolved itself into a two-dimensional mess of filaments. Place a filament under the microscope and it transforms itself into a three-dimensional column. Magnify that – hugely, monstrously – and the atomic structure of the filament is revealed: the three-dimensional thread has become a collection of dimensionless points again. The short answer is: the position and scale of the observer determine the number of dimensions of a ball of string. [Boyd 1990; 235]

It became apparent that how the data is read depends upon your perspective. Thus, I, the reader, used the three dimensions above, that is, the dimensionless, filamental and atomic levels as metaphors for describing the initial stages of reading the data.

The 'dimensionless' reading:

The first serious attempt at reading the data represented the more dimensionless perspective – the rather superficial, 'what you see is what you get' and more like description than analysis, but perhaps a necessary stage on the journey.

Repeated listening to the data revealed that participant responses differed significantly and this was linked to their narrative, their professional history and their experience.

Large chunks of data in response to an activatory phrase about an aspect of inclusion, such as shared placements, were lifted and described using pseudonyms. However, this seemed self-evident and I did not want the ‘burden of authorship’ [Geertz 1988:138] that ‘becomes heavier once we admit that we are not only inventing them, but then speaking for others’ [St. Pierre 1997c:368]. She captures what exactly I wanted to avoid:

Even though we write theoretically about fractured, shifting subjects, participants in our reports retain the characteristics of humanist subjects – we organise them under proper names, ‘pseudonyms’, and we write rich, thick descriptions of their appearances, personalities, and experiences embedded in stories. We continue to serve them up as whole as possible for our readers, believing that richer, fuller descriptions will get us closer to the truth of the participant. And, of course, we celebrate their voices, trying to stay as close to their spoken original spoken words as possible, worrying about editing out the ‘you know’s’ and the ‘um’s’ in our written transcripts. [St. Pierre 2008:329]

I felt that representing the ‘voice’ of the participants, a discourse that has much currency at the moment, was slightly arrogant. Once again, St. Pierre [2008:319,320] notes better than I do, her troubles with data, ‘especially the privileging of interview data – the voices of participants transformed into written text’. She continues that a research methodology that privileges voice as the truest most authentic data and/or evidence is part of the humanist discursive formation that poststructuralism works against.

Voice is especially troublesome for those who are wary of the supposed conscious, stable, unified, rational, coherent, knowing autonomous and ahistoric humanist individual who is ‘endowed with a will, a freedom, an intentionality which is then subsequently expressed in language in the public domain [Butler 1995:136]. To be fair, I will out myself here at the beginning of this essay and confess that I find the unexamined celebration of voice in qualitative research increasingly tiresome. I believe we have burdened the voices of our participants with too much evidentiary weight. I suggest we put voice in its place as one data source among many from which we produce evidence to warrant our claims and focus for a time on other data to think about our projects that we’ve been ignoring for decades. [ibid.]

St. Pierre [2008:327] criticises the notion of *voice* as data that ‘speaks for itself’ and notes that theory is often abandoned in the ‘analysis’ section of research reports and replaced by ‘an unreflexive description of participants followed by a collection of

stories'. I also wished to dodge narrative as it seemed too easy and to accompany 'nostalgia for the presence of the one true Word' [Haraway 1988;590] – a desire to recover a lost origin – 'the point where the truth of things corresponded to a truthful discourse, the site of a fleeting articulation that discourse has obscured and finally lost' [Foucault, cited in Rabinow 1984].

St. Pierre [2004] also struggles with problems of subjectivity because she could not separate herself from her data. I could not separate my knowledge of the participants from the interview data [their voice] and from my reflexivity. Furthermore, she no longer believed that 'language could transport meaning unmediated from one unified subject to another, say, in an interview' [ibid.] and mentions the commonness of Butler's [1987:183] 'linguistic misfires' in ordinary speech to question the authenticity of the interview data. She also questions the presence of voice, as it vanishes immediately and 'our poor attempts to capture it on tape or in field notes always fail' [St. Pierre 2008:321]. In fact, using Derrida's concept of the metaphysics of presence, *phonocentrism*, or the privileging of speech or voice, she goes on to critique the supposed stability and coherence of *qualitative* as a recognisable signifier when used to describe research!

If I wanted to use the data, the discourse of my colleagues, to further trouble the inclusion/exclusion binary and disrupt commonplace thinking, I had no need and no desire to bring the participants to life, or to get closer to the truth, by either naming them, providing rich descriptions of them, telling their story or using their voice. To quote St. Pierre [2008:331] once again: 'I have not studied participants; rather I have investigated a topic – an object of knowledge.....' which, in my case, is the '/' between inclusion/exclusion.

However, the dilemma of 'finding somewhere to stand in a text that is supposed to be, at one and the same time, an intimate view and a cool assessment' [Geertz 1988:10] was proving deeply problematic. One participant in particular gave responses that really troubled my thinking. This was an individual whom I know well and had assumed that the responses could be predicted. It came as a considerable shock to find otherwise. Sands and Krumer-Nevo [2006] note that shock is related to the process of othering.

My assumptions had effectively othered the participant and without identifying the individual, reflexively this was significant and forefronted the dilemma of how this inside/outside binary was to be negotiated in praxis and in the enactment of reading the data. Reflexivity was present in my responses to the activatory phrases but it appeared superficial and dimensionless compared with this. Using mediation as a means of reading the data was thus rejected. I wanted to practise ‘uncomfortable reflexivity’ [Pillow 2003:175] as a methodological tool which forefronts complexity and messiness. The dilemma was how to achieve authentic reflexivity which avoided complacency and ‘confession, catharsis or cure.’ [ibid.].

The ‘filamental’ reading:

Filaments or threads of reflexivity are woven into pleats or folds throughout this thesis and form an important part of it. St. Pierre [1997c:375] used asides in her dissertation, an old theatrical convention when an actor speaks to the audience unheard by others on the stage, ‘to speak to the reader without the rest of the text hearing me’. In the ‘folding of one text into another’ [Deleuze and Guattari 1987:6], she created ‘a nomad space that could gnaw at the authoritative, legitimate and ponderous text that surrounded it’ [St. Pierre 1997c:375].

St. Pierre [1997c] sees the aside in the performance of the text as a pleat where the inside/outside binary is folded in on itself – the inside has become outside, and the outside itself has become intimacy, intrusion [ibid.:376]. It opens a space for ‘play and fancy’ [ibid.]; it encourages ‘subversive repetition’ [Butler 1990:147] and interrupts form for meanings sake. It is a space for nomads ‘those emigrant thinkers who deterritorialise accepted notions of space’ [Conley 1993: xv] enabling disruption as one text intrudes upon the other. It is a space to be other and move towards the other and present ‘those unassimilable fragments of experience that refuse to be woven into a neat tale, the unspeakable, what literally cannot be talked about’ [Linden 1993:17]. The aside is a pause in the text ‘a movement of play, permitted by the absence of a centre or origin.....a *supplementarity*’ [Derrida 1970:260], the excess, the overflow [St. Pierre 1997c]. The scientist in me sees a rather more prosaic metaphor,

the aside as a fold or pleat that increases the surface area of the binary creating more space for exploration!

Deleuze's image of the fold, which he derived from Foucault, disrupts our notion of interiority since it defines 'the inside of the operation as the outside' [Deleuze 1988]. The fold's function is to avoid distinction, opposition, fatal binarity, thus it breaks apart humanist dualisms like inside/outside, self/other, identity/difference, and presence/absence [St. Pierre 1997b]. Reading of the data and reflexivity are pleats in which the inside/outside binary folds in on itself. The reading of the data is reflexive and thus the reflexivity becomes part of the data. Both aim to trouble the inclusion/exclusion binary and to open space for further consideration.

Increasing familiarity with the data produced increasing frustration. Attempts to analyse my own discourse during the interactions was contrived and did not trouble the inclusion/exclusion binary in a way that was acceptable in either rigour or criticality. I was stuck at reacting to the data rather than reading it to disrupt certainty and open up space for challenging my assumptions. Attempts at deep reflexivity were unsatisfactory and resulted in something not unlike psycho-babble. However, eventually, on holiday in Australia and reading a challenging novel I gained an insight that led to a method which suited my purposes.

Gao Xingjian, the first Chinese author to win the Nobel Prize for Literature, in his book *Soul Mountain*, an autobiographical account of his travels across China in a quest to find inner peace and freedom, dissects the authorial self using the singular pronoun 'you', enabling him to distance himself from his experiences whilst achieving a rigorous and critical analysis of his 'self' [Lee 2000 cited in Xingjian 2004: ix]. Using the same literary trope, the pronoun 'you' as replacement for 'I', an attempt has been made to 'other' myself, that is, to distance or separate my responses to reading the data from the data itself. I have used the data to mediate my own thinking reflexively on inclusion/exclusion and this is where the trope of 'you' is used to replace 'I'. A different font, Garamond, has been used for this, and placed *aside* the data, as an aside, to represent a fold or growth of the space for analysis.

The ‘atomic’ reading:

Still dissatisfied that the data was not being read with sufficient depth or rigour, and feeling that it had more to deliver, I began to highlight certain phrases that were particularly and persistently meaningful and initiated reflection and reflexivity. Richardson [1997:296] uses the metaphor of ‘a pleated text’ to describe the way her data ‘can be spread open at any point, folded back, unfurled’. Highlighting the phrases that prompted deeper consideration unfurled the text and added another dimension which opened the text up to deeper contemplation. The participant disappeared as the text became the sole focus.

Thus, the text began to ‘sing’. It became disassociated from the voice of the participant and gained a rhythm, or energy, of its own. The word ‘atomic’ is associated with a particular type of energy released from within the element by fission or fusion. The word is also associated with very small constituent parts. I felt I was beginning to ‘hear’ the data in a way that challenged my thinking about the ‘/’ between inclusion and exclusion. I liked that notion that ‘to sing’ as slang means to confess or to inform, which is what the data was doing in giving up its secrets [Punch 1998]. I connected with the deconstructive element of ‘fission’ and the synthesising element of ‘fusion’, both aspirational methods of reading the data. I wanted to use deconstruction as a means of disrupting knowledge and certainty and subsequently to synthesise new knowledge.

Hence, it seemed but a small step to break up the prose into stanzas. Once again, this opened up spaces for reading the data differently. This wholly unexpected ‘irruption of transgressive data’ [St. Pierre 1997b:175] surprised me and therefore my original reflexive aside is below using the different font:

Why a poem? You did not mean to write a poem. You suspected that poems might be rather a contrived way of presenting data, and appreciated Richardson’s [2003:192] little stanza ‘A line break does not a poem make’. You also regarded them as aspirational, but beyond your capability, the domain of the ‘really clever’. However, under exhortation from your supervisor to ‘play with the data’ [e-mail correspondence 2.4.09], and having repeatedly and unsuccessfully tried coding and

categorising, seeking discourses and silences, and searching for multiple and fragmented subjectivities and finding little satisfaction, you had nothing to lose. In desperation, and with a somewhat cavalier approach, you tried the thing you felt least likely to work, and that was a poem [you prefer to call it verse]. You liked it immediately. It had rhythm and shape and emphasis, but above all, it disrupted the homogeneity of the transcript by breaking it up, and the resulting dislocation revived the text, bestowing both texture and depth. [May 2009 own notes]

Richardson [2003:191] cites Robert Frost who articulates a poem as ‘the shortest emotional distance between two points’ – the speaker and the reader. It breaks the conventional prose trope of reporting social science research, and in so doing allows a fresh reading. I have not done as Richardson suggests and attended poetry classes, done multiple revisions or construct the research method to favour metaphor and elicit similes. I have done exactly what she does not recommend and merely broken the existing text up in to ‘a poem’, although some of the hesitations have been omitted. I did not wish to alter the text and compromise trust by misrepresenting the participant’s voice, and I felt that the text did not require enhancement as it came alive immediately, as mentioned above, and conveyed the emotional element far more effectively than the prosaic version. It also allowed for further dissociation from the participant and enabled sole concentration on the discourse. The resultant shift in method revitalised and re-energised efforts to read the data and proved exciting and productive of ‘new lines of flight’ [Deleuze and Guattari 1987:161]. The text thus became the stimulus for theoretical exploration that seemed to achieve the necessary rigour and produce knowledge differently – and different knowledge.

Representing the data:

Snapshots of the data presented as verse took my thinking horizontally, rhizomically and into unexpected places. Performing the act of reading the data deeply affected my construction of inclusion and thus troubled the binary leading to productive exploration. It took some considerable time to discover a stage upon which to present the performance, or, in more prosaic terms, a method of representing the data in a way that

enabled my reading of it. Mazzei [2007] directed me towards the metaphor of a postcard.

Derrida enacts the performative stance of deconstruction through the metaphor of a postcard to figuratively represent the written text [Malabou and Derrida 2004]. The sender of the postcard [the participant] cannot know which side of the card the recipient [the reader] will read, or which part of the postcard will be most interesting, i.e. the message, the stamp, the picture, or the address. Whichever, the reader selects ultimately depends upon what they are looking for, and is subjective, thus dependent on ontology and epistemology. Whether the postcard arrives on time, or late, or at all, affects the reading of it [emotional response]. The sender does not know if the message is understood as it was meant. There may be an encrypted message, but the sender does not know if the recipient understands it as it was meant. The reader of the data, cannot not know if the reading of their words is what they intended, or if it is the same reading as the next person who receives the postcard [Mazzei 2007]. Thus, the metaphor illustrates the approach taken in reading the data, and, to an extent, the poststructural notion of there being nothing outside the text¹⁴. Derrida [1988] himself, in response to criticisms by Foucault, paraphrased it ‘there is nothing outside context’ in recognition of the importance of the historico-cultural contingency of context in the reading or writing of texts. I have removed snapshots of the text from their context, but am aware that any reading of them is contextual.

Therefore I have used the metaphor of the postcard to represent the data. Each snapshot of verse is presented on the left side of the postcard with particularly relevant phrases highlighted in bold. Aside this, and as an aside, is the reflexive response in a different font and using the literary trope of ‘you’ to achieve distance from the authorial self. The snapshots of verse have stimulated theoretical discussions called ‘New Lines of Flight’ [Deleuze and Guattari 1987:161], which follow each postcard and further interrogate the ‘/’ within the inclusion/exclusion binary. They use the notion of deterritorialisation to knock existing understandings into a different orbit or trajectory, ‘stuttering’ so that ‘we become foreigners in our own tongue’ [Allan 2008:63] by

¹⁴ The actual text reads ‘il n’y a pas de hors-texte’ [Derrida 1976:158] and translates as ‘there is no outside-text’. This assertion led to accusations of relativism and nihilism.

inserting doubt ‘blow by blow’ [Deleuze and Guattari 1994:76]. The stamp is a small portrait of philosopher Deleuze, Foucault or Derrida, whose concepts have been borrowed and used in the theoretical discussion. The picture on the reverse side of the postcard suggests the subject matter¹⁵ in some way.

¹⁵ Originally, I had uploaded photos from the Internet on the false and naïve assumption that they would be copyright free as they were widely available. Too late I realized my mistake and replaced them with my own photographs. Sadly, they do not reflect the irony of some of the on-line pictures, and some only bear a passing relevance to the subject matter of the postcard. However, I prefer them as they are much more meaningful to me, though I acknowledge that perhaps it will not be the same for my readers. But then, Barthes’ premise ‘birth of the reader’ suggests that the reading of the pictures may be different from the authorial intention whatever is chosen.

Chapter 5: Reading the Data - The Postcards

An Empirical Interrogation of the ‘/’ [slash]!

The original intention was to analyse the discourses of inclusion used by my colleagues, and myself, to co-construct meaning via Foucault’s concept of mediation. Repeatedly listening and reading the data disrupted this as the data began to speak back to me in unexpected ways. For reasons previously discussed I became unwilling to analyse, interpret or speak for my colleagues. Instead, the data threw back questions that were different, more diffuse and less definite. Indeed, they began to pose a different emphasis in research – focussing in on ever richer questioning rather than providing answers. These questions, posed in the reflexive asides, required more reflexivity and critical thinking with reference to the literature and so the method for representing the data as postcards emerged. New lines of flight follow stimulated by participant comments and the reflexive asides, whereby theoretical exploration is used to show how the binary gets played out.

The postcards show, display or exhibit the data like a picture in a gallery. They are performative. The new lines of flight, or commentary, are telling, guiding the reader in making sense of the postcard, similar to a catalogue of the exhibits.

Telling alone is not believable. *Showing* alone is too hard on the reader. It is about telling the reader that something is true [an assertion] and then showing them [the evidence]. [Leki 1998:105 original emphasis].

In this way, the commentary is also a demonstration of how my own thinking was interrupted by the postcard, that is, the data as verse and the reflexive asides. It also illustrates how my way of engaging with the data leads to searching for different questions. The postcard both represents the interruption and acts as a way of interrupting. Thus the postcards reflect a multiplicity of factors associated with my reading of the data and the ‘/’ between inclusion/exclusion is interrogated.

Abstract:

- Postcard 1 Dark Element of Utopianism Polarisation**
- The nature of ideologies is questioned in respect of the inclusion/exclusion binary using the work of Derrida and Zizek. Deleuzian concepts of ‘stuttering’, deterritorialisation and doubt are used in the interrogation of my own ideological leanings.
- Postcard 2 The OK Corral Power**
- Foucault’s concept of discourse and power is foregrounded. The politics of social inclusion/exclusion are examined. Lastly, the question of whether I have been constituted into a neoliberal discourse of inclusion.
- Postcard 3 The Ghost Haunting**
- Derrida acknowledged a debt to the work of Levinas whose work on the said/Saying binary is used to illustrate responsibility to the other in interrogating the inclusion/exclusion binary. The latter haunts the former and is inseparable. Market discourses of education and the effect of the audit culture are questioned.
- Postcard 4 Fitting into Somebody Else’s Shoes Othering**
- Bhabha’s post-colonial theory, which owes much to Derrida, facilitates an interrogation of othering, mimicry and colonisation. The interdependent, mutual and reciprocal nature of the inclusion/exclusion binary is explored with reference to educational institutions such as schools.
- Postcard 5 The Banned Class Misappropriation**
- Understanding and misunderstanding as a binary are explored and found to be mutually dependent. This postcard demonstrates that the one side of the binary may be misappropriated, and thus merged or conflated into one entity with potentially damaging results.

Postcard 6 Regime of Truth

Reversal

In reversing or flipping the binary, inclusion is de-privileged and examined as a regime of truth. In practice, this is seen as inclusion being used to exclude. Both sides of the binary are seen as potentially beneficial and harmful.

Postcard 7 The Silence of Culture

Suppression

The silences within the binary are exposed in the reading of this postcard in the creation of a silent, unspoken norm, or illusory interiority, which others or excludes. Thus, significant numbers of children are marginalised unquestioningly.

The Dark Element of Utopianism¹⁶.

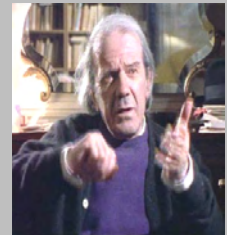


The Dark Element of Utopianism:

*You knowit's this....
dark element of utopianism
that I don't go in for....*

*because in order to produce this
utopian ideal
of all children being educated together*

*there are actually some
quite nasty decisions
that have to be made.*



Gilles Deleuze

You thought:

The phrase 'the dark element of utopianism' is disturbing. You look up the meaning of 'utopian' and find 'someone who advocates impracticable reforms or who expects an impossible state of perfection in society' [Chambers 1993] and you are taken aback afresh. Though an inclusion 'fundamentalist' you have always regarded yourself as pragmatic and realistic rather than utopian, and your vision of inclusion as a goal worth striving for, is a practical one rather than utopian. You now wonder if your construction of inclusion is ideological in the worst sense of the word. You are disturbed by the possible 'dark element' of the utopian ideal of educating all children together and by the 'nasty decisions that have to be made'. What nasty decisions?

¹⁶ Kuredu Island, Maldives 2011 – my idea of utopia!

Postcard 1: The Dark Element of Utopianism.

Polarisation

Response to AP 3: ‘**All children have a right to be educated together**’ [CSIE 2002],

We constantly lose our ideas. That is why we want to hang on to our fixed opinions so much. [Deleuze and Guattari 1994:202]

This is the postcard that initiated the method of reading the data because it was so persistently troubling. The suggestion that inclusion might have a dark element of utopianism, which may require nasty decisions to be taken on behalf of children, was unnerving. I had always and somewhat unquestioningly, believed that children have a right to be educated together. Reading the postcard posed the question of whether my own uptake on inclusion has a dark element of utopianism. This significantly disrupted my thinking, causing it to ‘stutter’ [Deleuze 1998:113] and thus, for me, the language of inclusion was ‘taken out of its natural equilibrium where there is security with definitions and meanings’ [Allan 2008:57]. Hence, the stamp is a picture of Deleuze.

Deleuze and Guattari [1987] use the notion of deterritorialisation to knock existing understandings into a different orbit or trajectory, ‘stuttering’ so that ‘we become foreigners in our own tongue’ [Allan 2008:63], allowing us to question implicit assumptions and forces us to confront existing certainties by inserting doubt ‘blow by blow’ [Deleuze and Guattari 1994:76]. Thus, this reading stimulated reflection on the darker side of dominant discourses, ideologies, utopianism and ‘the nasty decisions’ that have to be made. The inclusion/exclusion binary is interrogated by examining the polarising, divisive nature of ideology. Special education is regarded as the exclusion side of the binary.

New Lines of Flight:

To talk of ideology is contentious, for the word is replete with covert assumptions, yet ideology ‘is at work in everything we experience as reality’ [Zizek 1994:17]. Eagleton [1991:1] identifies sixteen meanings of the word along a continuum from the simple

‘process of production of meaning, signs and values in social life’ to ‘systematically distorted communication’. The word is often used as an insult, conveys discredit and itself becomes an instrument of symbolic domination [Bourdieu and Eagleton 1994].

Nobody would claim that their own thinking was ideological, just as nobody would habitually refer to themselves as Fatso. Ideology, like halitosis, is in this sense what the other person has. [Eagleton 1991:2]

In contrast, Zizek [1994:7] suggests that rather than pin down the essence of ideology and our relationship to it, we should seek to obfuscate and estrange ourselves from it:

Herein lies one of the tasks of the ‘postmodern’ critique of ideology; to designate the elements within an existing social order which – in the guise of ‘fiction’, that is of ‘Utopian’ narratives of possible but failed alternative histories – point towards the system’s antagonistic character, and thus estrange us to the self-evidence of its established identity [Zizek 1994:7].

He continues that what seems like an impasse between two opposing ideologies can be viewed as a productive insider/outsider space in which:

Ideology is not all; it is possible to assume a place that enables us to maintain a distance from it, but this place from which one can denounce ideology must remain empty, it cannot be occupied by any positively determined reality – the moment we yield to this temptation, we are back in ideology. [ibid. p17]

The utopian ideal of distance is one at which I have aimed in the following critique of the ‘paradigm wars’, the highly divisive debates within inclusion/special education which focus upon ideology and illustrate the simplistic, reductive nature of polarising binary opposites. Whilst attempting impartiality, I do not claim to be neutral and acknowledge the partisan nature of my own views on inclusion. However, I am attempting to illustrate the limitations of ideological ‘battles’ [Brantlinger 1997] rather than take sides.

Criticisms of inclusion usually centre on either ideology [Croll and Moses 1998, Wilson 1999] or rhetoric [Hornby 1999]. The rhetoric critique focuses on inclusion as a moral philosophy discourse that does not and cannot work in practice, is therefore utopian, and is associated closely with the ideological critique. The ideology critique focuses on

inclusion as a way of thinking, and as a body of doctrine, myth or belief that guides an individual, an institution or a society, without there being any evidence to support it. There is no substantial body of evidence to prove that inclusion works for many reasons, not least of which is how, what or who define what works, and what counts as proof? However, there is considerable evidence that inclusion does not impact on the attainment of others [Dyson *et al* 2004; Ainscow *et al* 2006a; Black-Hawkins *et al* 2007].

Inclusion is described by some influential special educators in the U.S. as a bandwagon [Kauffman and Hallahan 1995], ‘a collective voice whose power exceeds its importance’ [Kavale and Mostert 2004:232], rhetoric which promises far more than it can hope to deliver, and lacking empiricism to support its claims of being ‘the right thing to do’ [ibid.]. This thesis began with the premise that scientific positivism and objectivity may be contributing to educational inequality [Slee 1996a, Ballard 1999, Skidmore 2004, Thomas and Loxley 2007, Allan 2008]. Poststructuralism and postmodernism allow for a reconceptualization of education that is wholly different, arguably, more inclusive. The aforementioned special educators have an epistemology rooted in scientific positivism and inclusionist views are described as ‘fatuous’ [Mostert *et al* 2008: 15], ‘vacant’ [p24], and inextricably linked to postmodernism and therefore relativist and nihilistic. Sadly, in their defence of traditional special education structures the aforementioned authors descend into derisive insults, which significantly detract from the potential seriousness of their argument:

Postmodern philosophy, I believe, makes the people who adopt it look mulish. Someone who looks mulish shouldn’t be surprised at being called an ass.
[Mostert *et al* 2008:53]

The authors state that their book ‘is obviously and necessarily about ‘us’ versus ‘them’ [p24]¹⁷, thereby polarising the debate in a particularly unproductive way. In truth, on reading the book I was shocked by the invective, vituperative nature of the language employed.

¹⁷ ‘them’ being Gallagher, Heshusius, Iano and Skrtic [2004], authors of a book which challenges the orthodoxy in special education and dissents from the positivist norms.

In turn, Brantlinger [1997, 2006] highlights the ideological nature of the special educator's views on inclusion, but like Gallagher *et al* [2004] takes a much more measured tone, does not resort to vitriolic attacks. She is transparent about her own ideology though it does tend a little towards righteousness. Both approach their critiques of special education in a more scholarly, less vindictive way. However, as Allan [2008:12] remarks, both sides berate each other 'in a fight which resembles a form of handbagging, with one side smacking the other with the accusation that the other is being 'merely' ideological. She continues with the truism that ideology is like sweat – you can't smell your own [ibid.]!

Is it possible to achieve the place that Zizek described above, an ideology free zone? Ken Kavale, a special educator mentioned above and interviewed by Allan and Slee [2008], saw his own work as ideology-free, yet his critique of inclusion as postmodern 'fads, fancies and follies' [Kvale and Mostert 2004: title page] descends into unscholarly insults. As Brantlinger [1997] so aptly noted, the guise of neutrality is frequently invoked in the service of disguising the primary values one holds. In the aforementioned interview [Allan and Slee 2008:35&61] Kavale seems insecure and inarticulate, resorting to numerous hesitations and 'you knows', which may indicate an awareness of the indefensible nature of his extremely polarised position. Gallagher *et al* [2004] suggest that claiming a neutral stance is a form of one-upmanship, which confuses neutrality with impartiality.

The crucial distinction, though, is that neutrality is a moral stance concealed by neutral pretention. Impartiality is a moral position that is served by the deliberate effort to recognise our prejudices or self-interests so that others' interests and well-being are treated as our own. [Gallagher *et al* 2004: 372]

Having questioned the ideological positioning of both sides of inclusion/exclusion [special education] and attempted impartiality, the defensive, accusatory and childishly insulting tone of the special educators makes it hard to regard them as genuine scholars with a real concern. Linking inclusion so intimately with postmodernism is questionable, but suggesting that those of that persuasion 'seek the demise of Western thinking and education replacing it with a rabid anti-individual dogma submerged in a bloated insensitivity to anything but their own points of view..... They inhabit, if you

will, a Gulag of Garbage' [Mostert *et al* 2008:106], seems wholly exaggerated. This emanates from educators 'who have a particularly powerful influence within the US, within Higher Education Institutions and on editorial boards of journals' [Allan 2008:13].

Other ideological clashes in the field of inclusion/special education include Oliver [2004, 2007] and Shakespeare [2006], two esteemed academics whose dispute over the social model of disability has degenerated into a dispute about who has the right to speak. If ideology is articulated, then unproductive 'ideological warfare' [Allan and Slee 2008:53] positions parties in opposition that closes debate and deflects from more important issues such as 'the children in school who had to bear the consequences of ...a wrong-headed belief' [ibid. p63]. If ideology is not articulated, the result is confusion, conflation and misunderstanding as ontological and epistemological positions can only be assumed.

Allan and Slee [2008] use their poststructural perspective to untangle the web of ideology and to make sense of the tensions, ambiguities and contradictions inherent in the different perspectives adopted by their interviewees - key researchers in the field of inclusion/special education.

What was striking for us was that their stances in relation to ideology had none of the elements of undecidability which characterised their approach to their research and scholarship and the choices they made as they carried it out. [Allan and Slee 2008: 65]

Derrida [1992] argues that the pressure to reach a decision closes down options and produces injustice. He would have us leave these options open, engaging with the 'undecidable' [Derrida 1988:116] and with obligations to the other:

The undecidable is not merely the oscillation or the tension between two decisions; it is the experience of that which, though heterogeneous, foreign to the order of the calculable and the rule, is still obligated.....to give itself up to the impossible decision, while taking account of laws and rules. [Derrida 1992:24]

Whilst the key researchers interviewed demonstrated considerable undecidability in terms of the research process, they appeared much more 'decided' about their beliefs and values irrespective of which side of the inclusion/special needs binary they privilege.

However, Allan and Slee [2008:65] also note that 'the researcher's and scholar's commentaries on ideology confirm the existence of an impasse between both sides and the entrenchment of both within camps'. They continue that this must be alarming for the new researcher embarking on a doctorate or a career in research. I concur, and in the desire to lessen my personal entrenchment, the final part of this reading posits the question of whether my uptake of inclusion is ideological, and if so, then is it damaging?

Upon reflection, my construction of inclusion, always privileged in the inclusion/exclusion binary, was largely ideological both as a belief system and as systematically distorted communication [Eagleton 1991]. Whilst it was based upon fairness, equity, justice and human rights, it was also used to silence or dominate others. My use of the language of inclusion, based upon such principles, was always highly effective with practitioners who generally used a more needs-based language focused on the pragmatics of practice. Thus, the 'dark elements' of the postcard might refer to a seemingly worthwhile, ethical, if utopian, belief system being used to silence others perhaps less practiced than myself at articulation – utopianism as both totalising and totalitarian!

At the start of this thesis I described myself as an inclusion 'fundamentalist', clear about the inclusion/exclusion binary, privileging the former and excluding the latter to the point of rejecting it almost completely, but wanting to explore my almost evangelical commitment. The word 'fundamentalist' is probably significant with its overtones of strict adherence to a set of ideological principles, though to me it merely represented my commitment to social justice. However, lately, and influenced by discourses of national security and terrorism, the word 'fundamentalist' has come to mean something distinctly more sinister, associated with a particular religious fanaticism [utopianism?] which often equates with individuals prepared to kill innocent people alongside

themselves in their commitment to their beliefs and their search for posthumous glory. My version of inclusion could be described as ideological in the pejorative, unproductive sense of the word. Yet, as Ballard [2003:90] heralds, using the more benign meaning of ideology as belief system, ‘only ideology matters’ and invites us to ‘identify, analyse and evaluate the ethical and social implications of the ideologies that guide our research and our actions in policy and practice’ [ibid.].

Lastly, the ‘nasty decisions’ associated with the dark element of inclusion as a utopian ideology probably refer to decisions made about the placement of children with learning difficulties, or impairments such as autism, in mainstream schools unprepared, and sometimes unwilling, to accommodate them. I have made such nasty decisions in the interest of inclusion, to the detriment of the individual child who has suffered accordingly, and may well have been better served by exclusive special provision. I am somewhat ashamed to admit that the utopian ideology preceded the well-being of the child, and behind it was a desire to force the school, and the teachers, to become more inclusive.

Reading this postcard allowed the exploration of the work that binaries do in ideological partisanship that creates an *impasse*. The ‘/’ [slash] in this postcard polarises and divides. Interrogating my own ‘inclusive fundamentalism’ revealed its ideological nature and some of the questionable decisions of my professional career. An ideological stance depends upon and reproduces oppositional binaries which are divisive and inhibit the potential of aporetic and open interrogation of the inclusion/exclusion dilemma in education.

The OK Corral¹⁸?



The OK Corral?

And I think there are legitimate reasons to separate children for their education.

What if children want to be separated for their education?

What if a child wants to learn something that someone else doesn't want to learn?

What do we mean by separation here?

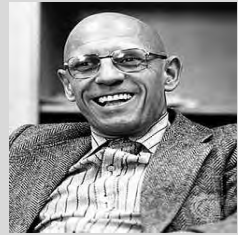
Slow down a bit.....focus on this word.

I mean..... does separation mean that we have to corral...?

Not to have separation.... does that mean that we have to corral children together all the time for everything?

Or does it mean that children can do different things, indulge, engage in different activities, different interests?

Is that separate or is that not separate?



Michel Foucault

You thought:

An impassioned polemic against inclusion? Separation from whom, for what? Exactly what does the word separation mean - exclusion? And then there is seclusion? What about choice and desire? Is the opposite of separation corralling children together all the time for everything? Is that what inclusion means to some people - treating everybody the same? But there is also separation or exclusion by disability [special schools], religion [faith schools], ability [specialist schools] and wealth [independent schools]. This gets to the heart of the inclusion/exclusion aporia. Exclusion is not all bad, inclusion is not all good. It is a much more complex relationship than an oppositional one. If inclusion is to be privileged, and I would argue that it should be [but with conditions], exactly what are we including children into? What have I been included into? By banging the inclusion drum, whose drum am I banging? Can I answer any of this?

¹⁸ Isla and Gigha, my two Shelties at Larchfield 2009 – in their corral!

Postcard 2: The OK Corral?

Power

Response to AP 5: **‘There are no legitimate reasons to separate children for their education’** [CSIE 2002].

Reading this postcard focussed upon two words, corral and separation. The discourse of exclusion, or separation, is used to suggest choice, whilst the discourse of inclusion suggests corralling and has negative connotations. This reverses the binary and changes the power balance, disrupting the good/bad, right/wrong assumptions therein. Inclusion as a discourse is placed under erasure and interrogated as ‘coralling’, and then in terms of the political, social inclusion discourse. Finally, it calls into question exactly who is being corralled, and into what.

Foucault’s concept of discourse was developed as a critique of Marxist ideology [Hall 1997]. He claimed that the Marxist theory of ideology was essentialist, reducing all relations between power and knowledge to a question of class struggle. He did not believe that any form of thought could claim an absolute ‘truth’ of this kind, outside the play of discourse. Thus, his notion of discourse reflects the interplay of power and knowledge within a specific historical and socio-political context. Truth is regarded as discursive rather than ideological and accepting this premise liberated my thinking.

The stamp is a picture of Foucault as the reading of this postcard looks for understanding how power is exercised upon individuals and how they are subsequently constrained to behave in particular ways. He described discourses as ‘practices which systematically form the objects of which they speak’ [Foucault 2002:49].

New Lines of Flight:

The inclusion/exclusion dilemma highlighted by Norwich [1994]¹⁹ at the start of this work is mirrored by the discourse of corralling/separation mentioned by the postcard. Inclusion as corralling suggests enclosing, confining, capturing, as with herding domesticated animals, possibly for their own good, but without the subjects having any choice. This discourse constructs the corralled as penned in, locked up or imprisoned, and possibly mirrors the experience of many students in our education system.

In this century, we *must* find alternatives to our primary method of education organization - what I call *herding*. Herding is students' involuntary assignment to specific classes or groups, not for their benefit but for ours. Nobody likes to be herded, and nobody learns best in that environment. As educators become “teacherds” rather than teachers, we all lose. And creating smaller schools or classrooms is no solution if the result is simply moving around smaller herds. [Prensky 2005:11]

Children are rarely involved in decisions about how they are corralled in to groups, and whilst it is probably necessary to group children for their education, it is important to acknowledge choice and perhaps inclusion is only corralling when this dimension is absent. The discourse of separation, or exclusion, is used powerfully in this postcard to imply that choice, and that reversal of the binary interrupted my uptake on inclusion.

The negative connotations of corralling or inclusion can be further exemplified. Over the past decade, there has been a proliferation of different ‘inclusive’ types of provision for children experiencing difficulties in school, most commonly in the form of bases where the children are corralled into separate areas away from the mainstream, thus blurring the corralling/separating binary. Often they are designated names designed to mask their exclusivity such as ‘curriculum support’ bases. Is this inclusion or a whole series of exclusions, inclusive exclusion or exclusive inclusion, or is the dilemma illusory as suggested below?

¹⁹ Whether children should be educated together [inclusively], risking overlooking some of the most vulnerable, or separately [exclusively] risking reinforcing inequality and devaluation.

Stiker [1999:16] argues that ‘marginality is implicitly underscored by the request for inclusion itself’ and calls for an examination of the different discourses of social inclusion. He states:

The dilemma, exclude or include, hides a whole series of exclusions that are not all the same and of inclusions which are not all commensurate. We could just as well say that the dilemma is illusory. What are societies doing when they exclude in one way or another and when they integrate in this fashion or that? What do they say about themselves in so doing? The study of everything that we could call the marginalised allows us to bring out previously ignored or neglected dimensions of society.

The discourse of inclusion was used effectively by newly created Scottish Parliament to state their vision of a better Scotland:

The Government believes that everyone has a right to participate fully in society, and to have the opportunity to reach their full potential. No democratic society should tolerate the misery and divisions which social exclusion represents. No democratic society should permit the development of conditions in which alienation, racism and violent disorder can flourish. Moreover, in an increasingly global economy, economic competitiveness and the ability to thrive depends on the extent to which the full human resources of Scotland can be mobilised and maximised. The Government believes, therefore, that action must be taken to achieve true equality of opportunity. [SOEID 1999]

Yet, participation, opportunity, full potential and equality are set alongside the equally powerful market discourse of economic competitiveness within the global economy and the mobilisation of human resources in the mission to reduce social exclusion.

However, the discourse of social inclusion/exclusion, to which education is a contributor, has now been questioned. Fairclough [2000] notes that New Labour has used social inclusion as part of the neoliberal discourse of a free market economy. Social exclusion replaces poverty as the cause of disadvantage so that government action need not include the redistribution of wealth or increasing benefits. Instead the focus is on much more nebulous concepts such as ‘prospects, life-chances, networks and self-esteem’ [ibid.]. Responsibility has shifted from the governmental policy on to the individual, illustrating a subtle alteration in the distribution of power.

The discourse of social exclusion mentioned in the statement above is intrinsically problematic. It represents the most significant division in society as the one between an

included majority and an excluded minority. Attention is drawn away from inequalities and differences among the included, notably the very rich who are discursively absorbed into the included majority so their power and privilege slips out of focus. Simultaneously, the poverty and disadvantage of the so-called excluded are discursively placed outside society. The result is an overly homogenous and consensual image of society, in which inequality and poverty are seen as pathological and residual, rather than endemic. Exclusion appears as essentially peripheral and a problem for the individual, rather than a feature of a society which characteristically delivers massive and widespread inequalities and chronic deprivation for a large minority.

The solution implied by a discourse of social exclusion is a minimalist one: a transition across the boundary to become an insider rather than an outsider in a society whose structural inequalities remain largely unchallenged. [Levitas 2005:7]

Social exclusion is a much broader, more comprehensive discourse than poverty. It refers to the dynamic processes of being shut out from the social, economic, political and cultural systems of a society, and includes homelessness, ill-health, unemployment, gender, ethnicity, and education. The discourse is so powerful because instead of social exclusion being the result of poverty, it becomes the cause of poverty.

The strength of social exclusion is in its multiplicity of meanings which give it wide acceptance. It shifts between three different discourses; the redistribution of wealth discourse of which poverty is a prime concern, the moral underclass discourse which centres on moral behaviour and delinquency, and the social integrationist discourse whose focus is paid work. Social inclusion therefore is narrowly constructed in terms of paid work rather than inclusion into a broad social, democratic definition of citizenship, and thus to civil, political and social equity and thus part of a neoliberal discourse of a free market economy which began with the Thatcher government of the 1970's and 80's and was continued by New Labour.

The question for me, and many others of a similar generation and professional history, is whether I have been constituted by, or corralled into, a neoliberal discourse of inclusion instead of choosing my own destiny in the manner of the rational humanist

with free will? I entered the special education sector in the early 1990's and began postgraduate study some time later, and thus experience and study resulted in the development of an inclusive philosophy - or so I thought! Reading this particular postcard suggested the possibility that other agencies were at work.

Foucault's [2002] notions of discourse as constitutive, linked to institutions [for example, education] and to disciplines that regularize and normalize the conduct of those who are brought within, 'fabricates' the individual into the social order. Thus, people are woven into and out of the discourse [MacLure 2003]. Discourses are about power, a diffuse power that circulates in a capillary fashion around and through institutions, which makes docile and obedient subjects. They also concern knowledge as 'no body of knowledge can be formed without a system of communications' [Ball 1990:17]. Discourses are invested with power and knowledge and Foucault often bound the two together [*pouvoir/savoir*] to indicate their interdependence. This suggests that I have been constituted by a state discourse of inclusion which aims to corral its subjects onto economic productivity – a profoundly disquieting thought!

To conclude, Foucault [1976] specifies that it is not a question of power between the dominant and the excluded discourse, but rather a complex and unstable network of strategic exercises of power and resistance operating across a large range of discourses. The inclusion/exclusion assumptions of corralling/separation as good/bad have been examined, and the power and interplay of the discourses are more complex, contested and discomfiting than had originally been presumed. The '/' [slash] in this postcard represent a power struggle between two competing discourses, that when reversed changes the power balance and opens a space for a much more complex relationship to develop.

The Ghost.²⁰



The Ghost:

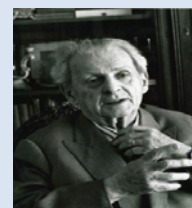
*I think the biggest group of children
who are not included are those
Who sit and daydream.
Who are told through the hidden
curriculum*

The things that are said to them.....

*He was slightly different.
He was quirky.
And that signalled to him that he was
weird,
And that his creativity was not
welcomed.*

*There's a big hidden curriculum.
The exclusion thing going on and on.....*

And it's getting worse.



Emmanuel Levinas

You thought:
What remains unsaid here is of interest and troubles the inclusion/exclusion binary. The implication is that SEN is no longer a helpful phrase because not only are the defective excluded, but also the eccentric [referring possibly to children of another socio-economic group with potentially more articulate, powerful parents?]. A hidden curriculum [the unsaid] of normativity, which acts to maintain the *status quo* and outlaw creativity, is conveyed to the child by what is said – and it is getting worse [more frequently or increasing numbers of individuals not ‘normal’?]. What part does the managerial discourse of audits, league tables, and targets play in the Saying of what is said to the child which may inhibit innovation, or empathy, even? However, there is another unspoken ghost that shadows this postcard. An unspoken tragedy, highly relevant to the discursive formation, which reflects the inside/outside dilemma of this reading.

²⁰ A Ghost pipefish Florida 2007 Sea World – scuba diving is my principal hobby.

Postcard 3: The Ghost

Haunting

Response to AP 1: **‘the inclusion in mainstream of children with additional support needs is tantamount to child abuse’** [Macbeath *et al* 2006].

This postcard troubles inclusion/exclusion through consideration of the said/Saying binary and the supposition that the said is haunted by the ghost of the Saying. The spectre of an unspoken tragedy haunts this postcard. This prompted questioning of what is said and how we say it. The actual event remains unsaid, but haunts the Saying. What is told is haunted by the Telling. There is a second spectre in this postcard, that is, the ghost of normativity in the Saying which haunts the said of the teacher’s interaction with the boy and ‘signalling to him that he was weird’.

Although Emmanuel Levinas is usually regarded as a phenomenologist rather than a poststructuralist, his work on the said/Saying binary is used below therefore his face is on the stamp. Derrida acknowledged that he owed a considerable debt to the work of Levinas to the extent that Derrida even delivered the eulogy at his funeral.

New Lines of Flight:

Levinas believed that human interaction goes beyond the linguistically third-person domain of one person talking to another. Person A talking to Person B is formal and role dependent [Edgoose 2001] for example, husband to wife, teacher to student, interviewer to interviewee. He recognised that the encounter with the other is present in every interaction, and that this encounter is not merely exchange of information, but delimited by rank and power, with its assumptions of closure, and therefore more unstable and uncertain. In the to-and-fro of conversation, closure is ever evasive. The ambiguity of language fails to satisfy the desires of speaker and listener for agreed meaning and mutual recognition. Derrida’s work suggests the same. In fact Derrida conceded that the differences between him and Levinas were biographical rather than philosophical [Peters and Biesta 2009].

Levinas writes that the content of speech – the ‘said [*le dit*]’ - strives for universality, solidity and closure. We want our utterances to be understood as we intended. Yet in the failure of that striving, ‘the Saying’ [*le Dire*] is revealed. [Following recent translations of Derrida and Levinas, a capital letter has been used for ‘Saying’ but not for ‘said’ or ‘other’ [Edgoose 2001:132]]. The Saying is the complete undermining of the idea that the interaction with the other is a discrete exchange of information, or can be a third-person interaction. It is the messing up of the dream of certainty in interaction.

The Saying of utterances is that which links it to the lips of the speaker, to the time of the utterance, to the context. However, the saying cannot be reduced to these facts. The Saying is all that we try to hide in interaction that undermines the power of the said – the Saying constantly undermines the implicit power structures built into utterances. [Edgoose 2001:122].

I take this to mean that interactions are complicated by the intervention of the Saying which constantly disrupts the said. In this postcard, I was aware of the tragedy that haunts the Saying, and which is never said. I had permission to disclose it but am not comfortable in doing so because it would have immediately identified the individual. This reflects the inside/outside dilemma of using data from colleagues. I have tried to distance myself from the data in order to be more critically and rigorously reflective by using the pronoun ‘you’ on the postcard. Yet, I work with the participants and am inevitably aware about the personal circumstances which inhabit the Saying [or, at least, my perception of the Saying]. Therefore, I am both inside and outside the data, and the reading of it. The disruptive dimension of the Saying explains some of its ethical potential. It carries with it an inherent responsibility and it exposes the flimsiness of the social structures which govern the said and promise to regulate interactions and formal exchanges. No ethical code or guidelines that I found hinted at how to address personal responsibility concerning confidentiality.

Human interactions show that the said/Saying cannot be followed by separation and closure. Once we have interacted with the other we are responsible to them because our interaction never gains the status of closure that, in our interactions with objects, enables us to discard them. This responsibility to the other inhibited exploration of the association between participant narrative and their discourse of inclusion, because in

doing so they would be identified. So, in spite of full permission to use the data, I have chosen not to do. Levinas described this responsibility as ethical resistance in the face of the other. The ethics of method have been examined elsewhere in the thesis.

Reluctance to even hint at the identity of the participants has influenced my approach to the data, to the point where it is no longer relevant as the text becomes the sole focus.

The importance of the Saying is illustrated by Lingis, the translator of some of Levinas' work in the description of his experience at his mother's deathbed. He noted how no words seemed appropriate [there was nothing in the said that was adequate], yet the Saying was imperative. What mattered was the son's presence, speaking, and sharing a proximity and uncertainty with the other [Lingis, cited in Edgoose 2001:124]. Within this participatory interaction in particular, I was very conscious of the said/Saying as a responsibility to the other.

The ethical power of the Saying can also be seen through places where we try to hide it, e.g. the military. Institutionalised rules of interaction absolve one of responsibility. The order 'Open fire!' removes personal responsibility by privileging the said and removing the Saying. There lingers a suspicion that the way we use some of the discourses of inclusion, for example 'welcoming diversity', 'achieving their full potential', and 'meeting individual needs' that trip so lightly off the tongue, actually have the same effect of privileging the said and removing the Saying, therefore absolving us of responsibility. Benjamin [2002] highlights the ubiquitous use of these meaningless phrases which foreground the said as superficially forward-thinking, whilst removing the Saying and our responsibility, as they have been reduced to clichés or truisms. Derrida, as mentioned before, develops this responsibility to the other as justice, and notes the aporia between the universal and the particular, using the concept of undecidability in order to avoid injustice. There is no inclusion without exclusion, 'the one installs the haunting of the one in the other' [Derrida 1993:20]. Likewise, there is no said without Saying and no told without telling. They are contextually and reflexively dependent on one another, and this had a profound influence upon the reading of the data. The transcriptions of the participatory interactions, the said, i.e. what leaves the lips of each participant, were of initial interest. Awareness of the Saying subsequently locked my thinking into relating the said directly to the Saying and

the participant's narrative. The breakthrough came upon the realisation that my reading of the Saying was exactly that, and something I was uncomfortable with. Poststructural theory enabled a focus upon the said and a reading of the Saying which distanced me from the participant narrative.

The second spectre in this postcard suggests a teacher who is less than receptive to difference or to creativity and conveys that to the child by what is said. The message given is that normativity or conformity is desired. It is haunted by the ghost of the Saying informed by the pressure on teachers to deliver results. The said is haunted by the Saying, in this case, the ghost of the audit culture.

The free market economy, resulting from neoliberal policies, has impacted significantly on teacher professionalism and how they are judged. 'At the moment, the direction of policy privileges the economic purposes of education.....As the economising agenda of education has increased in importance aspects of education's purpose are overlooked' [Ozga 2000:36]. Autonomy, critical reflection, responsible citizenship and contribution to a democratic society seem to have been subsumed by the language of the global economy, and discourses of choice, audit, competition, targets, achievement and league tables dominate schools [Tomlinson 2001]. She suggests [p2] that teachers are being gradually 'stripped of their professionalism and policed by new inspection regimes', and continues that teachers are 'increasingly held responsible not only for failing individuals', but also on a wider scale 'for failing to make the national economy competitive in global markets' [ibid.].

.....it is no accident that concerns about de-skilling and de-professionalization have been expressed. Teachers who get on in the system are not the critical thinkers or those with genuinely innovative and creative ideas: they are those who parrot the approved policy discourse of the moment without stopping to consider what it really means and whose interests it really serves. [Humes 2004: unpublished]

Ozga [2007] talks about 'hollowed out' concepts such as client, stakeholder, excellence, quality, leadership, performance, and so on, replacing more meaningful ones such as social justice, equality and citizenship – and creativity? Similarly, creativity is excluded in favour of conformity by such limited notions of professionalism.

The hidden curriculum is also mentioned and refers to what the child learns from school that is not part of the formal curriculum i.e. what is not taught, therefore remains unsaid. The message that children get from schooling, that creativity is unwelcome and conformity is desired in order to meet targets, is transmitted by the Saying. The implication of the postcard is that children who are quirky, creative and different are not valued. Creativity cannot be audited, takes up teacher time and is often surprising, therefore children who are creative are excluded, and according to the sender, it is getting worse. The ‘/’ in this postcard represents the boundary between conformity and creativity. Conformity, equivalent to the inclusive side of the binary, is thus privileged in the Saying. The said of the data is haunted by the Saying which I have which I have read as the ghost of the neoliberal economic drivers which foreground education policy. Increasingly teachers are required to be technicians who have a set of skills and competences to deliver a prescriptive curriculum according to externally imposed targets which are then inspected and the results publicised [Bottery 1998].

This postcard illustrates that one side of a binary is always haunted by the other side, the said by the Saying, and creativity by the ghost of conformity. The interdependency across the ‘/’ is thus exemplified.

Fitting into Somebody Else's Shoes²¹!



Fitting into Somebody Else's Shoes:

Describing the difficulty of a child in a wheelchair crossing a bumpy playground to get to Maths.

No, we don't do enough.....

and sometimes being in somebody else's shoes....

*fitting into somebody else's shoes
and standing back*

*and thinking what would it be like for me,
or even mimicking it,*

and trying out some of these things.....



Homi K. Bhabha

You thought:

First reading suggested an inclusive, empathetic teacher desirous of understanding what it is like to be in a wheelchair. However, the example of inclusion cites a child with a physical disability suggestive of the more traditional special needs discourse which focuses on impairment, not social justice. This is not unexpected as the participant is a secondary science teacher who is unlikely to be aware of the implications and assumptions therein. The use of the able-bodied metaphor of 'standing back' highlights the otherness of the dis-ablebodied. However, it was the notion of mimicking that was troublesome implying 'taking the micky' or making fun of someone?

²¹ 70 Mirza Mansur Kuçesi 2011 - My neighbour's daughter in her father's shoes.

Postcard 4: Fitting into Somebody Else's Shoes

Othering

Response to AP 4: **The rights of some children to education always seem to take precedence over the rights of other children.**

Derrida's work on othering and Bhabha's postcolonial theory have been used to illustrate the interdependence of the relationship between the two sides of the binary. There is no inclusion without exclusion and *vice versa*.

New Lines of Flight:

Derrida thought that a concern for the other, and openness toward the other, was the ethico-political horizon of deconstruction [Biesta 2001]. The other, or othering, is a key concept in Continental philosophy, and in particular, poststructuralism, and is one side of the same/other or self/other binary. It refers to that which is other to the concept under consideration, so in the case of inclusion, the other is exclusion. The other represents difference. It has become an important dimension of gender studies [where women are often considered othered] and post-colonial theory [where colonised peoples are othered].

One of the ways that we establish our own identity is by differing the self from the other, that is, by what, or who, we are not – 'identity *presupposes* alterity' [Derrida 1984:117]. He goes further by affirming that 'identity *is* in fact constituted by the other' [cited in Biesta and Egea-Kuehne 2001:187]. I do not exist without the other. Yet, there is an obvious tendency therefore to privilege the self, the 'I', and marginalise, or exclude, the other. Accordingly, injustices arise through forgetfulness of the other.

Injustice – not to mention racism, nationalism and imperialism – begins when one loses sight of the transcendence of the Other and forgets that the State, with its institutions, is informed by my relation to the other [Critchley 1999:233].

So justice aspires to constant identification with the other.

In analysing of the relations between self and other in post-colonialism, Bhabha [1994] talks about identification rather than identity, because an identity defines itself by deferring from the other in terms of distinction and constant deferral. Identification is a perpetual movement between the irreconcilable opposites of self and other, rather than a stable state in which the self exists and knows itself in its difference from the other. He argues that theories of the oppressed, which seek to transcend the dilemma of the self/other dualism and bring about reconciliation in the interests of the oppressed, rest on a fantasy of resolution which always leaves the logic of oppression in place.

Bhabha [1994], who is concerned with the ways in which the self-certainty of colonial administrators and missionaries was shored up by their sense of difference from their colonial subjects [their complete otherness], then suggests that the native subjects of colonialism were not only required to be the dark, pre-rational other of European civilisation, they were also required to emulate the habits and virtues of civil subjects of the home country.

Imperialism required colonial subjects that were ‘almost the same, but not quite’ [Bhabha 1994:89]. Thus, mimicry lies at the heart of the colonial project ‘and mimicry is a disturbing and ambivalent force. [MacLure 2003:97]

It plays havoc with difference. It is both appropriate and inappropriate. Mimicry served the ends of the colonial discipline and power by suppressing dissent and difference by appropriation of the other. Colonial subjects are obliged, or permitted, to be almost the same, but not quite. But mimicry can be inappropriate, dangerously liable to tip over into farce, mockery or menace. It profoundly destabilised the coloniser’s identity by reflecting back a disordered and incomplete version of the self ‘the hidden threat of the partial gaze’ [Bhabha 1994:89]. The observer becomes the observed and alienated from its essence.

This postcard mentions the possibility of mimicking the wheelchair user as a means of experiencing the other. Superficially, this is not such a bad idea, particularly if it leads to understanding and improving conditions for the other. There are plenty of examples in the media of experiencing the other, such as Michael Portillo experiencing life with a disadvantaged family, journalists attempting to experience homelessness and, really

tipping over into farce, ‘wife-swap’ where spouses exchange family life for a short period. During the delivery of a course on literacy difficulties, I use an activity that mimics dyslexia, and it can be profoundly effective in raising awareness of difference, and the difficulties that some children experience. However, mimicry, whilst it may be considered positively, is not necessarily true identification with the other. Mimicking is flipping the self/other binary, which is finite, stable and hierarchical, merely replacing one side, the self, with the other, and carrying the possibility of caricature, pastiche and parody. It is the stable state of knowing the self as distinct from the other, a form of colonisation, in the sense of taking over, or inhabiting the other, whereas identification with the other implies perpetual movement, an interdependence, a continual crossing of the ‘/’, the boundary between self and other.

MacLure [1996] asks whether in trying to overcome alterity – that incalculable otherness that deconstructionists argue is the foreign ‘origin’ of the core self – can we be sure that we are not acting on behalf of the institutions whose business is the colonisation of the other? As teachers, we act as colonisers when making decisions about children without reference to the other, the child, the parents, etc., and often for the benefit of the institution. Troyna and Vincent [1996:142] talk about ‘an ideology of expertism’ which plagues inclusion practice [Allan 2008]. As trained educators we think we know best, but often act on behalf of the school rather than in the interest of the child. The support which specialists offer children with difficulties in school, irrespective of whether it is inclusive or exclusive, is predominantly designed to ensure that the smooth running of the institution is maintained, and could be considered colonisation. Inclusive in-class support is often offered for reading difficulties because, whilst it does not actually address the difficulty itself, i.e. the children are not actually taught to read, the smooth running of the class is maintained. In contrast, children with behaviour difficulties are often automatically withdrawn from classrooms or schools to enable the smooth running of the institution without consideration of the child’s needs. The pressure to conform to standards of learning or behaviour in order to fit the system could be thought of as colonisation of the other, rather than identification with the other.

The presumption within Scottish legislation that all children be educated with mainstream [SEED 2000], rather than a step towards inclusion could also be considered

as colonisation, disregard for the other or exclusion. Children with disabilities have been integrated into schools without the concomitant institutional change required to accommodate or include them. Often there is no wheelchair access and little understanding of difference. Inclusion goes beyond the restructuring of schools in response to the needs of all pupils [Sebba and Ainscow 1996]. A focus on institutional change, which is notoriously difficult to achieve, is arguably exclusive because it omits consideration of the other. The change required to progress inclusion from disregard, or colonisation, to identification with the other requires a constant examination of values and ethics by the individuals within that institution.

‘Fitting into somebody else’s shoes’ implies empathy and identification with the other, but as with mimicry, it lacks the essence of perpetual movement between self/other which Bhabha claimed characterises the nature of the relationship. The interdependence of self and other reflects the liaison between inclusion/exclusion. One side of the binary relies upon the other side for its existence. There is no self without other, no inclusion without exclusion. However, justice is achieved by constant identification with the other side of the binary. In this postcard interrogating the binary surfaces a system of ethics in a search for justice. Justice within educational institutions might involve a greater degree of autonomy for children and a wider discussion of values.

The banned class²².



The Banned Class:

*My gut reaction is.....
I don't know the answer to
this.....
I've asked myself this question.....
We did set children at [the school]
According to whether they were*

*A banned class or not.
{A banned class?}*
A band class!*

* reader's interruption and interrogative



Jacques Derrida

You thought:

Banned? Banned from what? From teaching, from school? The ultimate exclusion! The least able, most disruptive all grouped together in one class? Whilst you were Principal Teacher, you had supported the formation of a very small first-year class of children with very low reading ages, because specialist support could be better targeted at a single, small class. Problems arose very quickly as the group realised why they were together, and relationships deteriorated. Shortly thereafter it was disbanded [dis-banned?] as it became almost impossible to teach, and the individuals were moved back into ordinary classes. But the banned of this text refers to 'band' as in streamed or setted to support high achievers and raise attainment – the complete opposite of what I had assumed and understood! This is telling you something!

²² Aberdeen 2006 – 'Banned' logo superimposed upon a class of ITE students.

Postcard 5: The Banned Class

Misappropriation

Response to AP 2: **Streaming or setting children according to their ability provides the best environment for learning for all children.**

The example given is of a fairly simple misunderstanding where the reader of the postcard [myself] has assumed understanding of a word used during the interaction. This misunderstanding, which is the result of the reader's preconceptions and assumptions, raised questions about the nature of misunderstanding, and requires differentiation from a lack of understanding. The latter suggests an absence of knowledge reminiscent of the '...unknown unknowns' from the US Secretary of Defence, Donald Rumsfeld on 12/02/2002:

There are known knowns. These are things we know that we know. There are known unknowns. That is to say, there are things that we know we don't know. But there are also unknown unknowns. These are things we do not know we don't know.

In contrast, a misunderstanding implies some knowledge but perhaps a failure of interpretation.

The potential for misunderstanding when discussing an area as slippery and elusive as inclusion is significant and potentially problematic. There is no unified discourse of inclusion, no single understanding of inclusion. As if to capitalise on this, and in response to criticism of exclusivity and ineffectiveness, special educators have misappropriated the discourse of inclusion and applied it to their field. Thus misunderstanding becomes inherent and interpretation is open to the construction of false assumptions, as with the word ban[ne]d in the postcard.

New Lines of Flight:

Interrogating the understanding/misunderstanding binary and putting understanding, as Derrida might say, *sous rature*, or under erasure, allows a different understanding to be

explored. Gayatri Spivak [1976] in her Preface to *Of Grammatology* [Derrida 1976] explains that there are some signifiers, such as truth, that we seem unable to do without. However, if we are to think differently, we must question the meaning of such signifiers. Thus, we may choose to write *sous rature* which Spivak translates “as ‘under erasure’”. This is to write a word, cross it out, and then print both word and deletion. [Since the word is inaccurate, it is crossed out. Since it is necessary, it remains legible]” [p. xiv]. Lather 2004:263 explicates as follows:

...to keep something visible but crossed out, to avoid universalising or monumentalising it, a form of a warning of an irreducibility outside of intentional control in the play of the world, keeping a term as both a limit and resource, opening it up to the margins.

Thus, ~~understanding~~ is put under erasure in the following paragraphs in order to deconstruct it and because it is necessary but inaccurate.

~~Understanding~~ each other is the key to effective interaction. It follows therefore, in the hierarchic, scientific way of thinking, that mis-understanding produces ineffective communication and is therefore to be avoided. The relationship between understanding and misunderstanding may be seen as a binary opposition; understanding as real or successful readings of the text, misunderstanding as distortion, unreal or incorrect but coming from without, as apparently happened above.

However, Derrida regards misunderstanding as much part of the language and communication as understanding, and on the ‘inside’ [Derrida 1988]. From this it follows that the idea of normal communication as successful understanding is not a fact, but rather ‘an ethical and teleological determination of what normal communication is’ [Biesta 2001:36]. This means that the purity of communication can only be maintained by an act of exclusion, revealing that what one tries to keep outside of communication [i.e. misunderstandings] inhabits the inside. Derrida also holds that there would not even be an inside without that fact. We might say therefore, that the term excluded by the binary returns to sign the act of its own exclusion. And, even more importantly, ‘that this apparent complicity is precisely what outlaws the legality of this exclusion in the first place’ [Biesta 2001:36].

Deconstructing this binary is not an attempt to make misunderstanding the law. Derrida only wants to make clear that the structural possibility of misunderstanding must be taken into account when describing so-called normality, and also ‘that this possibility can neither be *excluded nor opposed*’ [Derrida 1988:157 original emphasis]. The condition of possibility of communication can therefore be found neither in pure understanding nor in pure misunderstanding, nor in some higher unity of the two. What Derrida wants to bring into view is ‘the ultimate undecidability of this opposition, an undecidability that cannot be traced back to some original, pure unity, but which itself is always already at work’ [Biesta 2001:36].

Understanding is always contaminated by misunderstanding, which is essential, and therefore all understanding is a risk. Biesta [2001:37] continues ‘the only way to avoid the risk is not to engage in the act of reading or interpreting at all’. Translation is not the transmission, or reproduction, of an original meaning that preceded it, because ‘the originality of the original only comes into view *after* it has been translated – which in turn means that the very sense of a pure original preceding translation is but an effect of translation’ [ibid.]. This illustrates the logic of *différance* embracing the notion of meaning being constantly different and deferred. Translation is therefore a response to the singularity of the text. The use of Derrida’s idea of the postcard in analysing the data reflects this notion of not translating or interpreting the text for original meaning, which might be considered essentialism. Another reading of this same postcard may have focused on the ambivalence that the participant reveals in his reluctance to respond to the question of setting or streaming according to intellectual ability, which this reader has chosen to bypass.

The rather straightforward misunderstanding conveyed in this postcard highlights the potential for misunderstanding when humans communicate. Derrida’s concepts of the continuing risk within communication, the contamination by misunderstanding, the constant deferral of meaning, and the absence of an origin, may appear negative, even nihilistic. But Derrida is always pointing out that deconstruction is ethical and I understand it to be so, for the undecidability of the ‘/’ and the lack of privileging of understanding over misunderstanding indicate an absence of presence, origin,

centredness, or foundation. Understanding is not something concrete, foundational or essential. There is no pure understanding. Understanding is always contaminated by misunderstanding. As Derrida has indicated, once understanding is achieved, and once a decision is made, an injustice has occurred. By interrogating the understanding/misunderstanding binary and placing understanding *sous-rature*, the good/bad nature of the binary is challenged. Similarly, interrogation of the inclusion/special education binary and placing inclusion *sous-rature*, the right/wrong nature is similarly challenged. Inclusion comes at a price for some children whose needs can remain unmet in mainstream. Conceptualising understanding [and inclusion] as so completely ensnared by their binary opposite as above disrupts linear thinking and suggests that there is never closure, certainty, or clarity. Instead understanding is open and uncertain and never achieved, and the lack of clarity, the in-built misunderstanding, is a positive for maintaining and continuing constant questioning and communication at all levels.

However, misunderstandings do occur and false assumptions are made as the postcard illustrates. When interrogating inclusion/exclusion or inclusion/special education, there is an assumption that we all mean the same thing, have a shared understanding of both concepts, and make the same distinction between the two. Yet, there are many different discourses, definitions, perspectives, models, and understandings of inclusion, and therefore exclusion and special education, as discussed in a previous chapter. Inclusion has been used to refer to unconditional access for all by some educators, while it refers to a sliding scale of partial access for others [Slee 2001]. Rustemeier [2002] states that inclusion has come to mean almost everything except the elimination of exclusion. Before commencing doctoral work, my uptake on inclusion was that it did mean the elimination of exclusion. Poststructural theorising has enabled a much more complex relationship between the two terms, including the acceptance that the one side of the binary is wholly dependent for its meaning on the other.

The greatest potential for understanding/misunderstanding of inclusion/special education is the misappropriation of the inclusion discourse by special educators, despite the two being completely different and having different theoretical origins.

Traditional special education attempts to improve its credentials as a force for social reform by [mis]appropriating the discourse of inclusion to deploy old assumptions based upon quasi-medical pathologies of defectiveness to relocate its practice in regular schools and capture new clients. [Slee 2001b:168]

By contrast, inclusion is ‘an aspiration for a democratic education...that addresses the experiences of all children at school’ [ibid]. A previous postcard explores the two ideologies and the reductive nature of polarisation of the two sides of the binary. This postcard illustrates the negative effect of misappropriation, which might be considered dishonest misunderstanding, which ‘talks across deep epistemological ravines’ [p169] and results in confusion amongst policy-makers, education authorities and in schools.

Allan [2008:13] notes that, under criticism of exclusivity and effectiveness, many special educators have reinvented themselves as inclusionists, continuing to preach special education to students under a more publicly acceptable guise using more judicious language. Inclusion and special education are used synonymously by many educators. In Foucauldian terms this is discursive practice in action with the dominant special education discourse overwhelming the inclusion discourse by assimilating it into its own, but it paints a troublesome picture of special educators, who, in being challenged about exclusive practices, misappropriate the discourse of inclusion in order to improve their credentials as a force for social justice [Slee 2001b].

Traditional special educators demonstrate a remarkable resilience through linguistic dexterity. While they use a contemporary lexicon of inclusion, the cosmetic amendments to practice and procedures that reflect assumptions about pathological defect and normality based upon a disposition of calibration and exclusion. [Slee 2001b:167]

He regards ‘inclusion as an act of special education ventriloquism’ [Slee 2001c:395] to be the result of under-theorising and the failure of academics and policy-makers to analyse the epistemological foundations of special education practices, which allows the conflation of two different discourses.

Whilst this could apply equally to teachers in schools, perhaps the commonplace conflation [rather than misappropriation] of the discourses in schools is more the result of expedience, ignorance and carelessness. Hence the irony of a learning support

teacher entering a classroom and asking unthinkingly to withdraw ‘the inclusion children’. Few teachers are ever given the opportunity to explore the ‘deep epistemological ravines’ [Slee 2001b:169] of inclusion/special education, so there is a lack of awareness of the difference between the two. When the opportunity does arise, professional experience suggests that they welcome the chance and respond very positively in appreciating the difference between the two discourses.

As a committed inclusionist²³, I have little sympathy or patience with the ‘linguistic sleight of hand’ [Slee 1995] practiced by special educators, and wholly support the call to ‘challenge that which parades as inclusive schooling yet masks traditional deficit thinking’ [Slee 2001c:385]. Yet, ‘inclusion is also undeniably the child of special education’ [Hick and Thomas 2009:xxiv] whose lineage is visibly traceable to its forbear’s of special education. Hence, misunderstanding is inherent in the understanding. Inclusion is dependent on exclusion or special education for its existence.

Language is never innocent. Words are received and put through our own interpretive sieve as we construct meaning or understanding. This process is shaped by our theoretical or ideological disposition, experience and, of course, our attendant limitations [Slee 2001a]. Misappropriation of the language of inclusion by some special educators in order to gain increased credibility and maintain vested interests is, perhaps, deliberate. In schools, there is probably misuse, rather than misappropriation of the discourses. In the ‘absence of a stipulative language for inclusive education’ [Slee 2001a:114] policy-makers and educators should be aware of the potential for misunderstanding be more explicit about our understanding of these words so as to reduce the possibility of false assumptions. The ban[ne]d class in this postcard suggested to the reader the very opposite of what was intended. If the word inclusion is used, or misused, within a special education discourse, meaning can be the opposite of what was intended. The strength of poststructural theory as discussed above is that this misunderstanding is seen as an integral part of understanding, and so even misappropriation of the discourse, epistemology and the pedagogy of inclusive

²³ I remain a committed inclusionist but my view of inclusion is much more troubled, complex and indeterminate. Perhaps now I am a committed ‘slasher’!

education by special educators need not be regarded as negative. In this postcard the ‘/’ could represent an opening, or a discursive space in the inclusion/exclusion binary, which may yield positive outcomes.

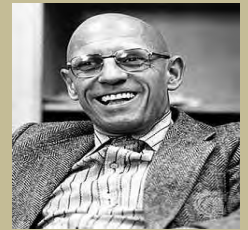
Regime of Truth²⁴?



Regime of Truth?

*I do not like the CSIE.
I see them as
a totalitarian
organisation
who are attempting to....
to hegemonise the
situation
and... um...*

*what do they mean
'have a right to be
educated together'?
Supposing you
don't want to be educated
together?*



Michel Foucault

You thought:

Inclusion cannot exist, or have meaning, without exclusion. Simplistically the inclusion/exclusion binary reflected good/bad and you were relatively content with that. Striving towards inclusion in your professional life often meant privileging inclusion unquestioningly, whilst othering or diminishing exclusion. You consciously and deliberately othered exclusion, particularly in-school exclusion, and saw little justification for it. The CSIE represented an organisation that promoted inclusive education both philosophically and pragmatically, and was wholly good. But, words like 'hegemonise' and 'totalitarianism' discombobulated and discomfited you – and over a considerable period of time. Such words do not sit comfortably within a discourse of inclusion. The thought then occurred 'has inclusion replaced special educational needs as the dominant discourse'? If you have been seduced by a master narrative of inclusion, then this certainly suggests a counter-narrative!

²⁴ Royal Palace, Monaco 2008 – where my sister lives [not in the Palace though!].

Postcard 6: Regime of Truth

Displacement

Response to AP 5: **There are no legitimate reasons to separate children for their education** [CSIE 2002].

The verse on the postcard mentions the CSIE [Centre for Studies in Inclusive Education] as a 'totalitarian organisation'. Totalitarianism is a word used to describe modern regimes or political systems where the government controls every part of public and private behaviour including the way people talk and think. It is usually associated with Nazism, or the collectives of the Soviet Union. There are no limits to the authority of a totalitarian state. Hegemony is a term often associated with Antonio Gramsci's theory of cultural hegemony whereby dominance of a group is achieved by ideological consensus rather than brute force, the less dominant group 'consenting to their inferior status. Neither of these words flatters the CSIE, an independent organisation supporting inclusion, and one which I have always favoured and whose philosophy of human rights I have never questioned. This postcard flips the binary in order to interrogate it, and infers that a discourse of inclusion is being used as dominant and authoritarian, which is unsettling.

Lather [2001] calls on us to replace naïve certainty with radical uncertainty. In a previous chapter special education has been examined as a regime of truth which produces certain types of knowledge. Specifically, the sovereignty of scientific positivism [the historical *a priori*] has enabled the powerful exclusive, psycho-medical discourse to function as truth. In order to disrupt my naïve certainty about inclusion, this postcard invites a flipping or a reversal of the inclusion/exclusion binary, thus to interrogate inclusion as the dominant, powerful discourse, the regime of truth, thereby exposing inclusion as a discursive practice to the same scrutiny as exclusion.

New Lines of Flight:

Foucault defines regimes of truth as ‘the historically specific mechanisms which produce discourses which function as true in particular times and places’ [O’Farrell 2005:153]. He later replaced ‘regimes’ with ‘games’ [ibid.]. Hence, truth is not absolute but a discursive formation sustaining a regime of truth. The power/knowledge relationship constructs the ‘truth’.

‘Truth’ is to be understood as a system of ordered procedures for the production, regulation, distribution, circulation and operation of statements, and is linked in a circular relation with systems of power which produce and sustain it, and to effects of power which it induces and which extend it. [Rabinow 1984:74]

Regimes of truth are historically situated, contextual and specific. Knowledge and practice is constructed by the discourse and regulated by the disciplinary techniques of a particular society and time. The term inclusion was coined in the mid-1980’s to challenge segregation and exclusion. How does it function as a regime of truth in the 21st century? This is explicated below adapted from Hall [1997:45]. His statements are italicized followed by my commentary.

Statements about inclusion which give us a certain kind of knowledge, such as ‘education for all’ and ‘welcoming diversity’ which imparts implicit, unquestioned knowledge, yet they are verbal constructs which have been reified as ‘truth’.

The rules which prescribe certain ways of talking about inclusion, and exclude other ways, for example, the morally superior human rights discourse of entitlement is used which silences the more pragmatic, practitioner discourse of need. Yet the rights discourse is regarded by some as the classic normative discourse, ascribed, as it is, to the individual regardless of what they want, authoritarian and with Western imperial overtones. It demotivates people from holding the values that these rights are meant to assert [Blattberg 2009], and is considered illogical and irrelevant by others [MacIntyre 2007/1981]. Those same rules enable us to disregard the other.

‘Subjects’ who in some way personify the discourse, for example, ‘the inclusion kid’, usually from the lower socio-economic groups, ethnic minorities, those with disabilities, and boys – disregarded as illustrated by the exclusion data. The learning support teacher – usually perceived as a middle-aged woman returning to teaching after child-bearing, and unprepared for class teaching, yet

often gaining additional post-graduate qualifications and imaginative and visionary in terms of teaching and learning.

How the discourse of inclusion gains its authority at a particular historical moment. Since 1997 and the rise of the recent Labour Government, inclusion has gained credibility within a discourse of social inclusion. This is considered more fully in another postcard, and has led Thomas and Loxley [2007:vi] to comment on the increasing use of inclusion as an ‘international buzzword..... *de rigueur* for mission statements, political speeches and policy documents’.

The practices within institutions for dealing with the subjects mentioned above. The aim of inclusion is to ensure that the excluded participate more fully in mainstream education which is difficult, with the result that increasing numbers of children are placed in ‘bases’. They are integrated, that is, nominally in school yet excluded from most of it.

Acknowledgement that a different discourse or episteme will arise at a later historical moment, supplanting the existing one, opening up a new discursive formation, and producing a new ‘truth’ by which social practices such as education are regulated. A new discursive formation, a discourse of ethics, is considered, and rejected, in the final chapter.

Colley [2003:98] posits that regimes of truth act as a juggernaut careering ahead without the necessary ‘critical thinking about its practice [which] are needed to temper the celebratory hype that currently fuels its rampant progress’. The power of inclusion as a regime of truth as illustrated by those in authority, be they politicians, administrators educators, teachers, etc., when the word is used frequently, but without full awareness of its possible meanings, as a conversation filler, and to add a progressive gloss to what they are saying. The power of inclusion is evident when we know that in using the word we will be seen as open-minded, enlightened and right-thinking – the halo effect of inclusion [Thomas and Loxley 2007:vi]. However, perhaps the greatest indicator of the power of inclusion as a regime of truth is the misappropriation or territorialisation of the discourse by some special educators. This has been addressed in another postcard.

As an ‘inclusion fundamentalist’ I was often implicated in decisions that favoured inclusion over the child in the mistaken belief that bringing vulnerable youngster into mainstream schools might produce change – a good example of a regime of truth in action inhibiting critical thinking. However, experience of the suffering and unhappiness of some of these young people, particularly those on the autism spectrum

in mainstream secondary schools, placed there in the name of inclusion, yet excluded in everyway except by place, led me, disillusioned, into higher education. I had watched a situation beyond my control develop where some very vulnerable young people were used as pawns in order to access additional funding for 'inclusion' which had resulted in one of them attempting serious self-harm in school. The sheer cruelty of this sad affair was difficult to understand or come to terms with for a long time until I was able to frame it theoretically as inclusion operating as a 'truth game', the discourse of inclusion being used by a powerful individual to disregard the other. That 'other' being the child with autism, and myself whose opinions and professional expertise were disregarded. The power of the discourse, in this instance, is being used to ill effect and enabled by inclusion as a regime of truth.

There are other examples where a discourse of inclusion as a regime of truth functions positively within institutions which enable them to claim that they are operating as inclusive schools. In theorising pedagogical discourse, Skidmore [2004:x] highlights two discourses, one of deviance and one of inclusion, in two schools, in an effort to 'bridge the gap between theoretical discussion..... and the real world of schooling'. He states that it is the inclusion discourse which is necessary for the advance of true inclusive practice and the acceptance and promotion of student individuality and difference'. Whilst observing that each school differs in both the discourses, the two schools are using inclusion as a regime of truth to try to enact change. Thus the discourse of inclusion, based upon institutional reform in recognising difference, usually precedes change to practice which is resisted by those who use a discourse of deviance which focuses upon deficiencies and meeting individual need.

Inclusion as a regime of truth, a series of statements and procedures that reify a certain type of truth which then circulates to reinforce the power of that truth, can be a hegemonic, totalitarian discourse which is as difficult to challenge as the special education discourse of meeting individual needs. Inclusion as a regime of truth is used, arguably, to exclude increasing numbers of children in support bases. However, it can also be seen as positive in reshaping discursive practice [Fairclough 1993], and support bases themselves can be viewed positively. Reversing or flipping the binary about the '/' [slash] illustrates that both sides of the inclusion/exclusion binary can be regarded as

regimes of truth, and both sides can be positive and beneficial, or harmful and reductive. Regimes of truth always invite transgression, resistance and apathy!

The Silence of Culture²⁵.



The 'Silence' of Culture:

*I really believe
that inclusion
is not just about
ability and needs
but it's about
cultures as well.*



Jacques Derrida

You thought:

Initially, as a complete sentence and written on one line, you read this as a recognition that inclusion concerns consideration and openness towards other cultures suggesting acceptance and even welcoming difference. Breaking the sentence up, you read it differently and as a more exclusive discourse. The inclusion/exclusion binary is mirrored as the ability/needs or able/unable binary. The primary term is privileged whether in terms of intellectual ability or physical ability. Under the guise of support, this perceived 'need' may be used to justify exclusion, either from school, class or social group. Could the label of different 'culture' within a discourse of deficit be used to exclude children as well? For instance, children of Polish immigrants who are not fluent [therefore deficient] in English are often assigned to special needs units, or remain in the classroom but excluded from participation because of the language difficulty – 'a repetition of exclusion'? [Allan 2003]. What is not being said here?

²⁵ Baku at Novruz [New Year] March 2011 – where I now live.

Postcard 7: The Silence of Culture

Suppression

Response to AP 4: The rights of some children to education always seem to take precedence over the rights of other children.

Superficially benign and uncontroversial, this postcard stimulated thinking about the suppression of voices and the silences within the inclusion/exclusion binary. It has long been recognised that children from ethnic minorities, more specifically Black students, are represented in disproportionately large numbers in special education [Tomlinson 1982, 2001, 2004]. Since 1968, when Dunne wrote his ground-breaking paper, regarded as one of the markers initiating de-segregative thought [Thomas and Vaughan 2004], which suggested that so-called 'learning disabled' children were merely poor [and often from ethnic minorities], there appears to have been little change. Black students dominate the exclusion statistics in the UK and this phenomenon is not peculiarly British [Slee 2001].

In discussing issues of difference and diversity with teachers, it is noticeable that they find it less inhibiting to use discourses of disability rather than race, culture, socio-economic group or sexuality, and as their teacher I find it very challenging to actively enable debate around such sensitive and emotive issues. Possibly the most demanding, and rewarding, area of my work is to reduce that inhibition and to create an unthreatening environment in which all of us can challenge preconceptions and examine our attitudes and values. This postcard stimulated an examination of the silences of culture and identity that haunt the inclusion/exclusion binary in an effort to disrupt my own thinking and then reframe it differently – thinking again and afresh [Biesta 2001].

New Lines of Flight:

What I don't want to say or cannot, the unsaid, the forbidden, what is passed over in silence, what is separated off ...- all of these should be interpreted.
[Derrida 2000:12]

Mazzei [2007] notes the reticence of white teachers in multicultural urban schools in the U.S. to engage with questions of race and culture in education. This group of white teachers teaching mainly Black children did not see themselves as having a 'visible' racial identity that they could comfortably articulate. Instead, they focused only on their racial identity in relation to others, the Black children, without considering themselves as part of a racial discourse. The result was to continue to see their world through a veil of whiteness. They were not seeing themselves, nor were they seeing themselves seen [Cixious 2001]. Edward Said [1978] challenged readers to question how our writing and thinking about the other reinscribes our 'false' notion about the other. Tavis [1992] in a book called *The Mismeasure of Woman* [in contrast with Gould's book about biological determinism mentioned in Chapter 3, *The Mismeasure of Man*] wrote that women are not the better sex, the inferior sex, or even the opposite sex. They are the different sex, but they can never be normal if man is the measure for normalcy. Normalcy does not allow for difference. Non-white can never be normal if white, particularly white middle-class, is the measure for normal. Othering polarises distinctions. Discussing the self in binary opposition to the other [either silently or in speech] perpetuates the polarisation and the other is 'held accountable to a measuring stick of the wrong size' [Mazzei 2007:5].

Merleau-Ponty asserts that we should be sensitive to the thread of silence from which the tissue of speech is woven.

But what if language expresses as much by what is said between words as by the words themselves? By that which it does not 'say' as by what it 'says'.
[Merleau-Ponty cited in Mazzei 2007:31]

Thus Mazzei [2007:29] hears the haunting spectres of silence in her data not as an absence, lack or omission, but as 'positive, strategic, purposeful and *meaning full*' [original emphasis]. She questions what are the silences *about* whiteness, racism, homophobia or sexuality that are not spoken *with* words, but spoken *between* words? What is unspeakable? What are the assumptions, prejudices and intolerances, 'the oppressions, the defiance, the ignorance and the bigotries in the to-be-said or ought to be said' [Mazzei 2007: 42] that are unacceptable to others and therefore unspeakable?

Keeping silent, being silent, or not speaking, are all examples of what might be considered discursive moves.

Keeping silent [original emphasis] is an essential possibility of discourse. In talking with one another, the person who keeps silent can ‘make one understand’ [that is, he can develop and understanding], and he can do so more authentically than the person who is never short of words. Speaking at length [Viel-sprechen] about something does not offer the slightest guarantee that thereby understanding is advanced. On the contrary, talking extensively about something covers it up and brings what is understood to be a sham clarity – the unintelligibility of the trivial. [Heidigger, cited in Mazzei 2007:42]

Too many words drown out what is being said [Caputo 1997:167]. Silence is not an end in itself, as in negative theology, but as a ‘caesura’ within language, not beyond language, but a linguistic operation lying therein [Mazzei 2007]. Do my students, experienced teachers, use silence strategically as a discursive move when discussing values? Is this the silence of culture or the culture of silence? I am aware that I find silence difficult and often fill it with verbosity. As qualitative researchers we are commanded to listen to what is said, to hear it and to organise it. A poststructural discourse analysis allows us to recognise the importance of the silences.

The silences haunting the inclusion/exclusion binary are predominantly racism [whiteness] and classism [middle-classness] alongside gender, sexism and sexuality. Inclusion is talked about in general terms of *all* children. The unspoken centre of socio-economic grouping remains silent, often dismissed as a sociological phenomenon, and therefore poverty is often disregarded by educators. Yet, ‘what is named and what goes unnamed is an effect of power [Popkewitz and Lindblad 2000:9].

Graham and Slee [2008] highlight the normative discourse of the able-bodied, white, English-speaking, heterosexual, middle-class masculinities which conjures up the ‘illusory interiority’ [Deleuze 1988] of limited notions of inclusion. They cite an example of an Australian school’s mission statement of inclusivity which then lists the various syndromes and nationalities of those who are included [including Indigenous Australians!], elucidating that naming of the other in order to demonstrate their ‘inclusion’ functions to exclude them, and naturalising normalised ways of being. Alterity is named and so difference is emphasised. But different from *what*? ‘Existing

un-named in this tokenistic play that Said [1993:310] calls the ‘pure politics of identity’ are the characteristics held by dominant groups’. Normalcy is established through silence, an unsaying, an absence of description of what it is that constitutes normalcy, in this case the characteristics mentioned in this paragraph’s initial sentence.

Inclusion ‘implies a *bringing in*’ [Graham 2006:20], presupposing a whole into which something [or someone] can be incorporated. Yet this notion of a whole is illusory. The inclusive education movement is troubled by the multiplicity of meanings that lurk within the discourses that surround it. The term inclusion arguably presupposes something already begun, so Graham and Slee [2008] argue for the deliberate use of the word inclusive as it has less of the sense of foreclosure, and posit that authentically inclusive education invites the denaturalisation of normalcy to arrive at a ground-zero point from which we banish all idealisations of centre. They note, however, that this is far from the case and that normalcy is derived from two discursive poles denoting consistent subject and object, or error. Statements valorising and affirming the desirable and normal are set against statements of deficit, abnormality and conceptualisations of other than normal. Dominant discourses invoke a mythical norm which results in:

...an illusory interiority; an apprehended inclusion, where the maintenance of notions relating to normality, mainstream, natural and majority ensures that certain children lead a marginal existence as representatives of ‘the included’. [Graham and Slee 2008:285]

Derrida [1976:352] argues that the desire for a centre to ‘orient and organise the coherence of a system’ leads to the supplementation of a central signifier which is played off against other signifiers in a system of differences. By discursively constructing an other the central signifier is maintained in an appearance of centredness within the social imaginary that is spoken into existence through statements which allude to a natural human essence. This establishes a socio-political pivot to secure dominant relations of power, fulfilling ‘humankind’s common desire for a stable centre, and for the assurance of mastery – through knowing and possessing’ [Spivak 1976: xi]. Derrida’s notion of *différance*, whereby meaning is simultaneously differing and deferring, implies that the naming or signification of the other obtains meaning only

through the effacement of other meanings. Thus, for one meaning to prevail, it must both differ from other meanings and suspend, or defer, them. Signification [naming or labelling] both differentiates and defers. 'It makes visible certain characteristics whilst effacing or naturalising them, thus achieving invisibility for *that-which-is-not-named*' [Graham and Slee 2008:286 original emphasis].

Naturalisation effaces. In naturalising a particular mode of existence, we construct a universalised space free from interrogation, a ghostly centre which eludes critical analysis and thus recognition of power relations embodied within notions of normalcy which exert influence over other ways of being. [ibid.]

And so the silent norm, or illusory interiority, of able-bodied, white, English-speaking, heterosexual, middle-class masculinities, are constructed at the centre of certain limited, but commonplace, notions of inclusion. The power of this discourse and the play of *différance* leads to normative [in]visibilities which offers some individuals up to the full force of the gaze, whilst leaving others in the relative safety of being unobserved. Foucault suggested [Ewald 1992] that there are proximal-zones of scrutiny and that the force of the gaze and intensity of light increases incrementally upon one's deviance from the 'norm'. Thus we are:

...returned to the invisibility of the centre. In our society dominant discourse tries never to speak its own name. Its authority is based on absence. The absence is not just that of the various groups classified as 'other', although members of these groups are routinely denied power. It is also the lack of any overt acknowledgement of the specificity of the dominant culture, which is simply assumed to be the all-encompassing norm. [Ferguson 1990:11].

Within education, however, there is a suggestion that it is now the masculine voice that is being silenced. Since the early 1990's there has been national concern, particularly amongst politicians and the media, about the relative underachievement of boys [Smith 2003]. Whilst she refers to this concern as a discourse of derision, emphasising the difficulties of defining and conceptualising underachievement and questioning the way it is measured, statistics continue to suggest that boys are excluded in far greater numbers than girls. The majority of those excluded are boys²⁶ and they represent a

²⁶ In Scotland between four and ten times as many boys were excluded than girls, depending on their age and stage, in 2008/9 [Scottish Executive 2010].

much higher percentage of those identified with learning difficulties. Boys make up two-thirds of students in special education in the U.S. [Mead 2006]. A similar proportion is identified with SEN in England and Wales [Lindsay and Muijs 2006], and also in Scotland [Scottish Executive 2003].

Girls appear to cope better with schooling than boys. It could be argued that the invisible norm at the centre is female, and that, in contrast to the illusory interiority of Graham and Slee [2008] aforementioned, it is the maleness that is othered. Teachers in school are predominantly female, girls are achieving better than boys in public examinations and are excluded far less frequently. Whilst there is little empirical evidence for the feminisation of education [Dreissen 2007] it might be that teaching methodology and school and classroom is less suited to boys. It may be that adolescent males may establish their identity by othering femaleness, which perhaps contributes to their perceived disregard of some female teachers, who interpret it as insolence and disruptive behaviour. Some, particularly female, teachers other maleness in their preference for quiet and compliant, girls in their classrooms [Jones and Myhill 2004], and a teacher survey reveals a contradictory set of attitudes and assumptions around pupil gender:

.....they speak of boys and girls having equal academic potential, yet give voice to a deficit model of male achievement, whereby expectations informed by pupils' gender are seen to disadvantage boys. The underachieving boy appears to be viewed as the norm for boys, while the high-achieving girl is the norm for girls [Jones and Myhill 2004:556].

The authors conclude that the apparent tendency to associate all boys with underachievement and all girls with high achievement does little service to the complex needs of individuals, not least the troublesome girls and the compliant boys. The latter are both silenced, or suppressed, by the '/' between high achieving girls/underachieving boys. Within education gender is a silence which requires surfacing, but these silences are multiple and not adequately reflected in simplistic, reductive binaries.

This postcard suggests that the '/' between binaries could be said to represent the silence of the suppressed. The '/' between inclusion and exclusion effectively silences the voices of those who do not meet normalised ways of being. Which voices are

silenced is arguable as illustrated by the discussion of gender above. Graham and Slee [2008] regard masculinity as part of the 'illusory interiority' [Deleuze 1988:43] of limited notions of inclusion that serves to disenfranchise girls. I have suggested that it may be otherwise order to challenge the reductive polarising nature of binaries. The '/' between binaries symbolises an illusory interiority that excludes and supresses those who are marginalised as effectively as exclusion itself, yet nominally included!

Synopsis:

Reading the data allowed for an in-depth interrogation of binary opposites, in particular inclusion/exclusion, and the work that they perform. The polarising nature of binaries encourages ideological entrenchment on either side of the '/'. Powerful discourses around the '/' [slash] construct their subjects, suggest what can and cannot be said. The interdependence of the relationship between binary opposites is illustrated by:

- haunting, where the spectre of one side of the '/' constantly ghosts the other - they are inseparable;
- othering, whereby the reciprocity of the relationship is demonstrated as one side of the binary defines itself by its difference from the other;
- misappropriation, reflects mutuality, as one side of the binary is misunderstood as, or conflated, merged or confused with, the other side.
- reversal, in which flipping the binary exposes both the positive and negative aspects of either side.
- suppression, whereby the '/' represent the silence of the suppressed of either side of the binary, in the illusory interiority of inclusion.

This is not to deny the productive work of binary opposites in organising and categorising vast amounts of knowledge. They act as a form of shorthand that bypasses lengthy descriptions and explanations. This supposes tacit, unspoken, mutually held assumptions, which is not necessarily a bad thing as long as we are aware of them and interrogate as appropriate. My reading of the data explored the potential of interrogating the '/' [slash] in searching for a different, more reflexive and difficult set of questions about the nature of knowledge, and what should, or should not, be asked if there is to be progress towards a more inclusive education system.

The following chapter seeks to evaluate the research and set it within the context of professional practice.

Chapter 6: A Deliberate Ethical Interruption

The final chapter of this thesis considers whether the research question has been answered, or in this case, whether the aims stated in ‘Openings’ have been accomplished. The impact of my research upon professional practice is presented as a deliberate ethical interruption – an interruption *to* practice in order to interrupt practice and potentially bring about change towards a more inclusive education system. Finally, how the research might be evaluated is posited.

In Search of a Question: Interrogating the ‘/’ [slash]!

The absence of *a* research question provided the stimulus for this research and prompted a quest for a different type of questioning. Simple either/or questions, which require equally simple yes/no answers, were replaced by an interrogation of binary opposites, and predominantly inclusion/exclusion. Interrogating the ‘/’ [slash] via the literature revealed the historical *a priori* of exclusion, and therefore of its opposite inclusion, as scientific thinking, and in particular scientific measurement. The power dynamics of the special education discourse, which relies on quantification and assessment, and the inclusion discourse, which does not, were explored. The apparent challenge of the inclusion discourse was revealed as fragile, beset by confusion, misappropriation and conflation.

Reading the data exposed the nature of binary thinking as polarising and reductive, yet wholly interdependent, the one side reliant on the other for meaning. Therefore, as expected, no ~~solution~~ was found to the inclusion/exclusion aporia of ‘Openings’. The dilemma over how we approach difference in education was posed thus: whether to meet individual need, a special education approach, which is exclusive, and may result in stigmatisation, devaluation, rejection and the denial of opportunity, or whether to create a more inclusive educational environment which accepts diversity as a given, but may then disregard the educational requirements of some of the most vulnerable young

people, and thereby perpetuate social inequalities [Norwich 1994]. Reading the data suggested that simplistic binaries such as this ignore the complexity and reciprocity of the relationship between the two sides, and therefore close down debate. An awareness of the work that binaries do within education, both positive and negative, could lead to a much more mature discussion of inclusion/exclusion which would welcome as productive the messy contradictions inherent in the '/' [slash]. In searching for a question, I have not found a question, but, by interrogating the '/' [slash], I have discovered a more enlightened method of questioning.

Whether inclusion is working or not, the favoured oppositional question of the media, and sometimes of educators themselves, is unhelpful, implying a failed educational experiment. If the answer is affirmative, then it is perhaps delusional. If the answer is negative, then what are the consequences? Maintaining the *status quo* or a return to the exclusive educational practice of yesteryear? Thus, open debate and discussion are inhibited and frustration and guilt results.

Interrogating the binary requires different questions around power, ethics and legitimation, as exemplified by reading the data. Many education dilemmas have no answer. They are aporia, that is, double contradictory imperatives, a 'not knowing where to go' [Derrida 1993:12]. As an Algerian living in France, Derrida's dilemma concerned how to respond to differences and minorities at the same time as acknowledging the law of the majority, the need for agreement and univocity, as opposed to racism, nationalism and xenophobia [Derrida 1992]. This aporia, the tension between the individual and the universal, highlights the responsibilities that need to be faced without privileging one or the other. 'These double duties are not in opposition to each other; rather there is the haunting of the one in the other'. [Allan 2008:81], as demonstrated by Postcard 3 The Ghost.

Education is full of aporias and this research focused upon one: whether to include or exclude. Interrogating the '/' between inclusion/exclusion via the postcards allowed me to explore in more detail dilemmas posed back to me by the data. These included yes/no oppositional questions such as:

Is inclusion workable or a utopian ideology? – Postcard 1

Does inclusion mean treating everyone the same whilst exclusion represents acknowledgement of the individual or *vice versa*? – Postcard 2

Can inclusion ever be achieved without the spectre of exclusion? - Postcard 3

Is concern for the other inclusive or exclusive? - Postcard 4

Does special education use the language of inclusion in order to hide its exclusivity or is the development of a new discourse? – Postcard 5

Is the discourse of inclusion displacing special education as a regime of truth – Postcard 6

Are the voices of the excluded suppressed by limited notions of inclusion? – Postcard 7

Interrogating the ‘/’, in each case via the reflexive aside and the following theoretical discussion, allowed for such questions to be more deeply considered and reconceptualised, and enabled certainty, closure and outcomes to be replaced by a search for the undecidable, the incalculable and the unpredictable.

The resulting question prompted by reading the data, and the acknowledgement of theaporetic nature of the inclusion/exclusion dilemma, is now about the nature of inclusion and ‘into *what* do we seek to include?’ [Graham and Slee 2008:290 original emphasis]. This is Foucault’s *telos*, the ultimate goal towards which we are always striving. Contemporary educational inclusion is limited, based upon an illusory interiority of a white, English-speaking, middle-class, heterosexual, arguably male, centre which renders others invisible [ibid.] as explored in Postcard 7 The Silence of Culture. Allan [2008] notes the failure of educational researchers to impact on policy and practice, or to question the purpose of inclusion, or to articulate precisely what is one to be included into. She continues that there is an assumption of shared understanding of what is meant by inclusion, or an acknowledgement that it is a contested and complex area but with little or no explication of these terms. Yet Postcard 5 suggests that there can be no understanding without misunderstanding. So this is where educational research might focus, but how? I suggest by conjuring up, via research, an illusory interiority of inclusion that accepts diversity as a given:

It is in general a question of method: instead of moving from an apparent exteriority to an essential 'nucleus of interiority' we must conjure up the illusory interiority in order to restore words and things to their constitutive exteriority. [Deleuze 1988:43]

Thus, an exteriority can be constituted that is not limited by a silent centre that marginalises others. As seen from the data, the contested and complex nature of the inclusion/exclusion binary requires surfacing by researchers who are explicit about their ontology and epistemology so that the debate is whole and all ways of knowing are represented.

There was a subsidiary aim and that was to explore poststructural theory from a previously scientific ontology. This is reflected both in the literature review, which uses Foucauldian concepts of power and discourse, and in the methodology. The lack of a traditional research question, along with ontological and epistemological instability, might, and, perhaps should, have been a significant inhibitor to the data collection. However, instead the participatory interactions using activatory phrases allowed for a depth of discussion that posed unexpected questions to me, and lead towards a consideration of ethics and a particular type of poststructural discourse analysis. The representation of snapshots of the data as postcards symbolizes a momentous shift away from the traditional scientific 'method, results, and conclusion' of my training.

Questioning the reliance on a transcendental signified, and other poststructural concepts such as the fundamental plurality and uncertainty of meaning, the data has been read as postcards sent from the participant. The meaning of a text is not neatly determined by authorial intention and cannot be recreated without problem by a reader. Meaning necessarily involves some degree of interpretation, negotiation, or translation. Hence, I have read the data and responded to it reflexively as an 'aside'. This stimulated a 'new line of flight' which interrogated an aspect of the '/' with respect to poststructural theory and then related it to inclusion/exclusion. The reductive work of the '/' was considered in terms of polarization and discursive power, and the mutual interdependence of oppositional pairs though haunting, othering, misappropriation, reversal and suppression. Thus, this subsidiary aim has also been achieved via the

representation of the data as postcards that demonstrates the distance moved from scientific positivism and certainty.

Deleuze and Guattari [1983:25] refer to this loss of certainty as schizophrenia, or ‘the breaking apart of reason’. They do not regard this as a malady or a sickness. ‘It is a process [that of becoming]’. Troubling the binaries has shaken the complacency of my closed ‘inclusion fundamentalism’ and inevitably this has surfaced some difficult knowledge.²⁷ The difficult knowledge, for me, principally being the acknowledgement of the interdependence and mutuality of the inclusion/exclusion binary, neither side of which has meaning without the other. Also, that inclusion as one side of an oppositional binary has the potential to be as equally damaging as exclusion [for example, when the discourse unquestioningly becomes a regime of truth in Postcard 6 Regime of Truth], and that exclusion can be as beneficial as inclusion [for example, when exclusion is regarded as separation and the acknowledgement of the individual in Postcard 2 The OK Corral]. The resulting more open, schizophrenic approach, where both sides of the binary are regarded, I consider my own ‘becoming’.

Thus, the two aims of the research have been achieved. The next part of this chapter is concerned with the impact that my research might have on changing professional practice by way of an original contribution.

A Discourse of Ethics:

Initial, perhaps naïve, attempts at writing the final chapter proposed a radical change to the discourse. The reading of the data, and in particular, the literature, illustrated the confusion and instability of meaning across the binary. Foucault [1970] uses the term ‘floating signifier’ to emphasise the slipperiness of a concept such as inclusion, which acquires different meanings in different discourses, to the extent that it becomes a

²⁷ Pitt and Britzman [2003] distinguish between difficult knowledge and lovely knowledge. The latter reinforces what we think we want from what we find, whereas the former is knowledge that induces breakdowns in representing experience.

phrase the most important meaning of which is that it does not mean anything. Inclusion as a useful signifier was perhaps exhausted.

Deleuze and Guattari [1987] talk about exhaustion as the end of the possible, and something ‘which is *not realised*’ [p152 original emphasis]. Its dependency on exclusion for meaning is problematic as exemplified by Postcard 3 The Ghost which considers the haunting of another binary, the said by the Saying, and highlights the inseparability of the two sides of the binary. The very word itself conjures up exclusive practice, for naming inclusion immediately creates an exclusion, and therefore an injustice, as illustrated by Postcard 7 The Silence of Culture in which the illusory interiority of limited notions of inclusion is discussed. Interrogating the inclusion/exclusion binary in other readings of the data revealed its polarising effect in Postcard 1 The Dark Elements of Utopianism, what happens to the power differential when the binary is reversed as in Postcard 2 The OK Corral, and the potential for misunderstanding and misappropriation in Postcard 3 The Banned Class. The negative impact of othering and the mutual reciprocity of either side of the binary was investigated in Postcard 4 Fitting into Somebody Else’s Shoes. Reading the data led to a suspicion that inclusion was no longer a positive force for change. This was supported by the literature which emphasised the confusion and vulnerability of the discourse. Bourdieu [1993:90] said ‘between two evils, I refuse to choose the lesser’, so whilst remaining loyal to the philosophy underpinning inclusion, I thought, quoting Shakespeare, ‘a plague on both their houses’ and wished to ‘think again and afresh’ [Biesta 2001:34] and explore the possibility a new, possibly more productive and less contentious discourse.

A discourse of inclusion, re-framed as one of ethics, might have allowed a re-conceptualising of difference on more global scale beyond education, that relinquishes the traditional inclusion/special education binary, and which is not bedevilled by exclusion. Educators would use a discourse of ethics rather than inclusion and, as the other side of the binary is unethical, in theory, it would be less easy to justify than exclusion. Hopefully, the discourse of ethics as practice for producing meaning would progress educators towards a more inclusive approach.

However, Spivak [1997:xv] cautions against [re]inventing language in an attempt to escape that-which-has-gone-before stating ‘to make a new word is to run the risk of forgetting the problem or believing it to be solved’. Replacing one discourse with another may reframe the problem, which may be helpful, but it does not often progress it. The knowledge roots of special education [exclusion] rest epistemologically on scientific positivism [Thomas and Vaughan 2007], where words like ‘intelligence’ and ‘inclusion’ are taken to have relatively straightforward meanings, the *logoi* of Derrida [1978]. Inclusionists would argue that inclusion has its knowledge roots in equality and human rights [Thomas and Vaughan 2004]. However, there is no escaping the fact that the provenance of inclusive education was, and is, exclusive special education, as demonstrated by the literature. Whilst the term inclusion may have grown to include a discourse of social justice, disability and segregation were the original focus for developing ideas of inclusive education and mainstreaming. A discourse of ethics does not have such epistemological ‘baggage’, but the danger is that if we ignore the ‘baggage’ we are ignoring the problem. Whilst a new discourse of ethics to succeed that of inclusion remains an attractive option, it is perhaps somewhat idealistic, and possibly contains the seeds of its own demise. It may just shift the binary from inclusion/exclusion to ethical/unethical with all the concomitant impediments.

A Deliberate Ethical Interruption:

Appreciating the somewhat ingenuous nature of a discourse of ethics, paralleled with further consideration of my research, especially the empirical data and its representation, led to the development of a deliberate ethical interruption. Ethical considerations, using poststructural concepts borrowed from the philosophers of difference, were imperative during the course of this research yet professional experience suggests that ethics are rarely deliberated upon within the education system. As a result, I am therefore proposing a deliberate ethical interruption *to* education practice, in order to interrupt traditional methods of thinking and thus bring about change. The prime focus is on teachers as potential researchers, but educational researchers in academia and other educators may also be included.

Doctoral study allowed the space to interrupt, or deliberate upon, and change my thinking on inclusion and ethics, and it was also the interruption itself. Space to research, study, and think was a prerequisite to this. To achieve meaningful educational change requires the selfsame. The Chartered Teacher Programme [CTP] in Scotland provides the space for study and research, but many teachers argue, not the time. Study must be fitted around professional commitments, and this can be a source of tension. Teacher workload and stress are an internationally recognised phenomenon [Naylor 2001]. Time is scarce during the working day and, increasingly, lesson preparation, marking and administration intrude on personal and family commitments. In recognition of the possibility of teacher burn-out, the new head of Ofsted [Office for Standards in Education], quoted in *The Times* newspaper supports sabbaticals for committed teachers [Hurst 2011]. Perhaps more effective would be a reconceptualising of continuing professional development [CPD], not as an unnecessary burden, but as a benefit and as a space, or a deliberate interruption, for the recharging of energy and vigour. Research within the CTP indicates that *continuing* professional development can renew teacher enthusiasm, confidence and general well-being [Kirkwood 2006].

So, a deliberate interruption commences with space deliberately carved out of the daily grind of professional life in order to deliberate, or study. That space may be time, but it also may be the commitment to study for its own intrinsic benefits. The commitment required, enables the time to be found even in the busiest of schedules, as most of those completing professional doctorates, or any other award-bearing CPD, in addition to full-time employment have discovered. The CTP, which remunerates teachers for completed stages, may be the vehicle, but not exclusively.

Critical to a deliberate ethical interruption is the content and quality of the interruption. CPD may be regarded as a form of government control of standards and competencies with a discourse that prioritises outcomes, performance, targets, benchmarks and guidelines [Kennedy 2007]. Teachers are often dismissive of the value of study. Kirk [2000:11] refers to a 'culture of negativity' and Humes [2001:10 original emphasis] suggests that there is a pervasive anti-intellectualism which 'favours experience in the classroom [whatever the *quality* of the experience] above all else'. Completing this doctoral thesis suggests that study, if it is transformative, provides intrinsic motivation.

For me, the transformative aspect was the profound questioning of scientific thinking and moving to favour poststructural thinking. Longer-term study is also more worthwhile than short-term CPD. Again, my own doctoral research suggests this, but also professional experience advocates it. Working with teachers doing the CTP, or on other Master's degree programmes, appear to get much more satisfaction when studying over an extended period of time. This might avoid the snake oil effect of some of the dafter, expensive, short-term courses on offer, which do little other than entertain [Adey 2008].

Kennedy [2005], in relation to the Chartered Teacher Programme, suggests that the most effective, transformative professional development for teachers is research, in fact, she iterates action research which is often situated and context specific. A deliberate ethical interruption to practice would include all types of research, but ethical considerations would be foregrounded via reflexivity and engagement with theory as exemplified by the postcards. Reflexivity, for example, the asides of the postcards, would allow for personal deliberation of the dilemma according to explicitly explore ontology and epistemology as aforementioned. Theoretical exploration, for example, as in the new lines of flight stimulated by the reflexive asides, allows for a reconceptualising of the dilemmas as perhaps binary opposites or ethical deliberations. This is not to suggest that representing the data as verse on postcards, and reading them as asides and followed by theoretical lines of flight are the only method, merely that they exemplify the reflexive and theoretical principles of a deliberate ethical interruption of educational practice.

The ethical element of the deliberate interruption to educational practice in the form of research would involve a look at our selves. Slee's [2001b] enjoinder that inclusion starts with ourselves is the starting point for a critical analysis of the self;

This includes examining and re-examining the assumptions informing our perspectives, the concepts that we use including 'inclusive education' and our intentions, especially in relation to the question of change. We need to be aware of the danger of unexamined orthodoxies, the possibility of adopting inclusive language with little, if any, changes in our thinking and practice and a sterile and insensitive position with regard to the pursuit of new or alternative ideas. [Foreword by Barton and Rioux cited in Allan 2008:vii]

Interrogation, or deconstruction, of binaries plays an important role in surfacing assumptions, and the need to pose questions rather than search for answers, as illustrated by the reading of the data. Teachers who are looking to change, resist, or transgress the education system in some way should be aware of the power of research in interrogating the ‘/’ which allows for immanent critique. This is summarised neatly by Youdell [2006:40] who articulates that ‘practices of deconstruction, then, supplant oppositional modes of resistance’. Personal ethics and value systems are surfaced, and thus we are aware of the other.

Foucault’s practices of the self would therefore foreground a deliberate ethical interruption. The four dimensions of which are below with my own interpretation *in parenthesis*:

- ‘Ontology’ or ‘ethical substance’ is the part of the self that has to be worked upon in order to achieve moral conduct. Foucault offers the desire to be faithful within a binding relationship. [*To move away from oppositional inclusion/exclusion thinking*]
- ‘Deontology’ or ‘mode of subjection’ is what makes an individual recognise their moral obligations. [*Discrimination within the education system*]
- ‘Ascetics’ or ‘ethical work’ is the process by which individuals transform or work on themselves, including will-power, meditation and practising physical and mental techniques. [*Reflection, reflexivity, ethics, poststructural theory*]
- ‘Telos’ or ‘teleology’ is the ultimate goal that the individual wishes to be. [*Uncertain, independent, just, fair and a critical thinker*]

[Adapted from Foucault 1985:26]

Foucault himself notes that these practices of the self are not acquired easily, but have to be learned, and continually worked upon. They are worthwhile because through an awareness of our own technologies of self, which includes reflexivity, and not just reflection, we become aware of how our actions may impact negatively upon those we educate or research. Thus, I deliberately sought to avoid potential harm to colleagues and this decision contributed to the development of a method of representing the data

which focussed upon inclusion/exclusion and not upon the individual, thus allowing complete confidentiality. Reflexivity and an examination of myself, which was often uncomfortable, resulted in an innovative methodology. Foucault cautions that human beings should:

‘know what they do.....know why they do what they do what they do.....[and].....know what they do does’ (Foucault cited in Dreyfus, Rabinow 1982 p187)

Critical, reflexive self-analysis would be a prominent precursor for all those participating in educational research. Simons and Usher [2000] note that this type of situated ethics, specific to the individual and their context, is convincing because it is local, and therefore it is immune to universalization.

If Foucault’s technologies of the self are precursors of the deliberately ethical part of the interruption, then the ethics of deconstruction, and in particular, Derrida’s concept of justice and undecidability, should foreground questions and decisions especially in terms of exclusion. Reading the empirical data and the literature as data acknowledge the interdependent nature of the inclusion/exclusion binary. Inclusion is dependent on exclusion and if children have to be excluded, then what are the reasons? Whose interests are being served by the exclusion? What are the conditions of the exclusion and how are they implemented? How is exclusion legitimated? Derrida regards the instant of the decision as profoundly irresponsible and unjust, because once made one loses sight of the other, and one simply applies or implements a programme. It makes of ethics and politics a technology. No longer the order of practical reason, it begins to be irresponsible [Derrida 1993]. The data highlights the impossibility of separating inclusion/exclusion. Interrogating the ‘/’ with questions such as those above, surfaces a system of ethics to support, or otherwise, educational decisions.

Justice results from ethical hesitation and a ‘failure of fluency’ [Edgoose 2001], a consideration of the other. It recognises the impossibility of a decision if the other is being fully considered. The postcards are a way of representing that deliberate ethical interruption, or hesitation, and act as a method of deliberately interrupting. They both show the interruption and describe, or tell it. Linking the data to my own particular

context allowed for greater reflexivity, increased critical thinking and a broader consideration of ethics. Slee [1993:2] notes that many teachers become illogical when dealing with disability. Echoing personal professional experience he says: ‘Ordinarily sensitive, ordinarily caring, ordinarily rational, it appears that many teachers’ logic fails them when dealing with disability.’ Perhaps it is in instances like the one that follows that undecidability may be of use, both in consideration of the child, but also in the injustice of decisions that lead to implementing a programme of action so inappropriate that it defies belief. He gives an example of a child whose vision starts to fail and who is required, in addition to all her other difficulties, to undergo an intelligence test to measure her ability to remain with the class she had always been with. The tale becomes even more bizarre when one realises that the test was visually based! He continues that we could be forgiven for thinking that this episode was scripted for the ‘theatre of the absurd’ [ibid.]. Experience suggests that examples like this are not uncommon when education professionals make decisions about children who do not conform to ‘normality’. A deliberate ethical interruption implies a discontinuation, and a space, the ‘/’ perhaps, in which to deliberately consider ethics via research, reflection and reflexivity as aforementioned.

A deliberate ethical interruption is a suspension of decision that resists closure, a paralysis of indecision that allows for full consideration of all possibilities [Edgoose 2001:129].

When a language is so strained that it starts to stutter, or to murmur or stammer.....then language in its entirety reaches the limit that marks its outside and makes it confront silence..... [Deleuze 1998:113 original emphasis]

Decisions must be taken, but prior to this, particularly when concerning inclusion/exclusion, a deliberate ethical interruption is needed in order to create a space for consideration of whether that decision is ethical. Therefore, even if a teacher is not engaged in study or research according to the recommendations mentioned above, the principle of a deliberate ethical interruption remains as a proposal for all teachers. Accepting that binary oppositional thinking is commonplace and contributes significantly to organizing human thoughts, but acknowledging it may be value-laden and ethnocentric, a deliberate ethical interruption would allow interrogation of the ‘/’

and so surface the work that binaries do, and allow for exploration of the potentially productive, but messy and uncomfortable area of the ‘/’.

The final principle of an ethical interruption is the Foucauldian notion of *parrhesia* or ‘speaking the truth to power’ [Foucault 2001:11]. It is embodied in the classical Greek concept of *parrhesia* which means ‘frankness in speaking the truth’ but goes beyond the accepted English translation of ‘free speech’, ‘the *parrhesiastes* is someone who takes a risk’ [p16].

Parrhesia is a form of criticism, either towards another or towards oneself, but always in a situation where the speaker or confessor is in a position of inferiority with respect to the interlocutor. The *parrhesiastes* is always less powerful than the one with whom he speaks [Foucault 2001:16].

I propose that all inclusive educators at all levels of the profession, but perhaps especially those within higher education, challenge the exclusive discourse of special education when it is misappropriated and masquerades as inclusion, as exemplified in Postcard 5 The Banned Class, so that the two opposites are not conflated, but regarded as different sides of the ‘/’ [slash] with all the relational complexities up for debate and consideration. This is not simply about truth telling. It is about taking a risk. The method I chose to represent the data and the reading thereof was a risk because of the many, mainly but not exclusively scientists, who may regard this type of qualitative research as questionable.

The postcards may be considered to exemplify this deliberate ethical interruption and I have used them with teachers studying at Master’s and doctoral level. Critical thinking and reflection, reflexivity, and surfacing the implicit assumptions characterised by oppositional thinking are prerequisites of this advanced method of study. Some teachers find such skills difficult to acquire and struggle with the necessary interruption of their thinking and to their thinking. Engaging critically with academic literature is also challenging initially. This led to me using the postcards as a way of both telling and showing teachers these aforementioned techniques.

Presenting teachers with a journal paper on inclusion to read and comment upon often induces stimulating discussion, but sometimes invokes feelings of depression and despair when they find the nature and substance of the text challenging. Thus, by way of supporting them, they are asked to highlight phrases and sentences that are meaningful to them and their professional practice in some way, and select one of these interruptions of their thinking. Frequently, dilemmas of an ethical nature are surfaced. On a blank sheet of A4 paper they are then asked to construct a postcard. Their selected text is equivalent to the left hand side of the postcard, and they are encouraged, but not forced, to ‘play’ with it, as I did by presenting it as highlighted verse. The right hand side is for their reflections and reflective asides, often referring to the ethical dilemma, about why their piece of text interrupted them. The teachers are encouraged, again, not forced, to personalise their postcard by using a picture or drawing on the reverse side and a stamp if they so choose. This individualisation functions as a way of increasing their engagement with the process and make it less threatening by introducing an element of fun, which is an often neglected motivational aspect of learning. The final stage in the process is to read around their selected text and the reflexive aside to create a new line of flight, an interruption to their thinking with reference to the theory and literature, in order to think differently. A critical examination of themselves, their ethical dilemmas, and their professional practice with reference to the theory and literature, a process which they had previously found difficult, thus becomes possible.

To conclude, my research leads me to advocate a deliberate ethical interruption *to* professional practice in order to interrupt practice and bring about change. This would involve teachers deliberately interrupting their practice with a quality interruption that is transformative, long-term, theoretical and reflexive. Research that is situated, openly states its ontology and epistemology, and has an explicitly ethical component would be the appropriate vehicle for this. The ethical element would incorporate research into themselves and would have three components: Foucault’s technologies of the self as a precursor, Derrida’s concept of undecidability as a principle and *parrhesia* as a necessity. A deliberate ethical interruption would hopefully result in ‘becoming’ other, forming new subjectivities and connections. New becomings are unpredictable and rhizomic, often resulting from crises and predicaments. Allan [2008] suggests that the present perceived failure of inclusion could be transformative material for becoming-

inclusive, and so rekindle interest in a controversial, difficult, but ethically desirable project.

Evaluation of the Research:

Richardson [2005:964] describes innovative ways of representing data as ‘creative analytic practices’ [CAP] and ‘holds it up to high and difficult standards; mere novelty does not suffice’. She uses four criteria when judging whether papers that use this method are submitted for publishing. These are: whether the practice makes a substantive contribution, does it have aesthetic merit, is it appropriately reflexive, and does it have impact, either emotionally or intellectually. This is how I would like the research to be evaluated.

The substantive contribution would be two-fold. Firstly, methodologically, this research is an attempt to challenge traditional, positivist models of research that suggest a direct relationship between words and their meaning. The methods used to collect, represent and read the data strived to be innovative and in recognition of Derrida’s notion of *différance*, where meaning is both different and differed, the emphasis is on reflexivity and theorisation in reading the data instead of interpretation, analysis and objectivity. Secondly, the substantive contribution is in terms of interrupting thinking about inclusion and allowing a fresh approach to the dilemmas of the inclusion/exclusion binary. This is evidenced by the discussion about the use of the postcard with teachers doing postgraduate degrees on the previous page.

Using the postcards as a method of surfacing the assumptions typical of oppositional thinking, when working with experienced teachers at Master’s level, has been unexpectedly successful in demonstrating this. A troubling situation, sometimes experiential, and sometimes from the literature, is surfaced by the teacher. The teacher free-writes about the problem, as described in Chapter 3. Some of this free-writing is selected and may be presented as verse which is then responded to firstly reflexively as the aside, and secondly, and at some length, with reference to the theory and literature in the new lines of flight. Not only is this valuable in scrutinising personal ethics, and

developing critical reflection, but it also allows the teacher to reconceptualise the dilemma. Often it is poststructural theory that is most effective. Thus, deconstructing binaries, as exemplified by the postcards, has an intellectual impact.

Aesthetic merit is more of a subjective judgment. Representing the data as postcards was pleasing to more senses than the usual academic paper, and was fun and kept me motivated. The rhythm, shape and texture of the verse bestow a visual element in addition to the picture and the stamp. As a consequence, the data was opened up and revitalised. It threw questions back at me, enabling increased reflexivity. Fracturing the prose facilitated a deeper and more complex reading of the text that stimulated theoretical exploration.

Lastly, the data as a poem exposed more of an emotional range than as prose. The latter was homogenous and conveyed a dull sense of uniformity. Rupturing the paragraph into phrases of varying length, and the use of bold print as emphasis brought dimension and feeling to the text. In two of the postcards, 'The OK Corral' and 'Regime of Truth' the strength of feeling came through particularly strongly when the prose was fractured and made verse. An additional impact of the postcards is that they are different, exploratory and imaginative. I would also suggest that they fulfil the academic requirements of rigour, theory, and reflexivity.

There are others in the academic community for whom this method of representation is contentious and for unexpected reasons. Those with positivist predispositions may well have little affinity with visual or poetic presentations of data, although when I presented the postcards to colleagues, many of whom work within positivism or postpositivism, I received an encouraging response. They appeared to understand what I was trying to do, that is, to question traditional ways of analysis that imply that words are transcendental signifiers and convey 'truth'. However, in a recent editorial in the journal 'Qualitative Health Research' called 'Data Expressions or Expressing Data' [Morse *et al* 2009], the editors explain their decision to resist accepting manuscripts of 'this genre', that is, poetic representation of text, for publication. They justify this on the following grounds: that poems or free verse take up too much space thereby denying it to others; that changing the form of the data does not change the meaning, and 'if it

does change the meaning, we have a validity issue; if it does not change the meaning, then why bother doing it?' [p1035]; that a suitable rationale for representing data as verse is rarely given by the author; and that verse has no 'added value' and detracts from the *research* [their emphasis] by diverting the focus onto the literary device. In 'sticking to a policy that prefers plain text, plain speak, and profound conclusions over artistic forms of data presentation' they finish with their own piece of verse:

As editors whose feet are on the ground,
we try to stay within our method's reach.
So until you convince us that profound
And warranted conclusions will abound
from poetry, you're stuck with simple speech. [Morse *et al* 2009:1036]

The initial shock of this from editors whose work I had respected was replaced by sadness and incomprehension, for this stance rules out any research which falls within poststructuralism. The editors have assumed that language is transparent and meaning is universal – anathema to poststructuralism which 'posits instead a radically indeterminate universe in which the relationship between words and their referents is laced with difference through and through' [MacLure 2003:176]. Perhaps their position reflects the return to 'methodological fundamentalism' [Lincoln and Canella 2004:7] whereby constraints have been imposed on the qualitative research communities in the USA by authoritarian definitions of the 'gold standard' methods of producing knowledge, which are based upon quantitative, experimental designs such as large-scale, randomised, controlled trials.

There are weaknesses in the research that, with hindsight, are mainly derived from the struggle to use poststructural theory and method. These flaws are more evident in the earlier parts of the work, reflecting initial conceptual naivety and the learning that has occurred right up until the finish and is still continuing. It is only relatively recently that I can distance myself enough to allow that the literature review could be improved. Framed as a discursive Foucauldian power struggle across the inclusion/exclusion binary, it may have been better approached from Derrida's concept of *différance* and the inevitable play of language across the binary, recognising the instability of words and their meaning.

The data was collected before the conceptual framework was firmly established. The participatory interactions were completed long before I was ready to work with the data. Although I eventually found a satisfactory method of representing and reading the data, hours were wasted both collecting and transcribing the interactions, much of which remained unused. The desire to reflect a power balance might be considered ingenuous, and looking back on it, the activatory phrases could have been rather more sophisticated than the oppositional binaries that were selected. Had I been clearer in my ontology and epistemology at an earlier stage, the process would have been easier and the results may have been different, but this entire work has been about learning to think differently and poststructurally.

I hope and suspect that this is all part of the doctoral experience, and coming to the end, I now know what I want to research which is how studying changes how we know and what we know, and the effect upon professional practice.

Ending/beginning:

In the beginning, there was a genuine attempt to find a question to answer. This was followed by a period when the search itself was the focus. Finally, I am no longer concerned with the search for *a* question, or with *an* answer. Now I look for a method of questioning that encourages open discussion that is productive. I have no answers because there are no answers to the aporetic types of dilemmas of this research, just lines of flight to be explored.

Reflexivity was foregrounded. It has been a personal exploration of assumptions, prejudices, views, opinions, values and ethics through poststructural discourse analysis. Language is not transparent and never innocent. Writing is not simply a neutral vehicle for transporting 'truth', nor is it an unmediated means of communicating reality that is 'outside' the text. This contrasts with the scientific paradigm which tends to regard research writing as decontextualised, disembodied and 'pure reason', therefore reflexivity gets in the way of objectivity, and introduces bias. However, writing postructurally requires acknowledging its textuality in order to understand how the

writing of it constructs its own reality (Scott 1996). The reflexivity dilemma posed is not new and the 'problem' is deceptively simple; 'that the activity of the knower influences what is known' [Scott and Usher 1996:35]. Therefore is this thesis, particularly the method chosen to read the data, just researching myself?

Perhaps the answer is predominantly 'yes'. Yet, reflexivity is axiomatic, an essential part of the process. Scott [1996] hints that within a framework of postmodern theory, which argues for a foregrounding of how we construct what we are researching, reflexivity is a resource. It encourages the researcher to be upfront about the subjective elements, including the values they espouse which are often 'repressed', silenced or ignored. It enables the researcher to be *a part* of the world they are constructing, rather than *apart* from it. My reading of the data starts with reflexive asides that lead to new lines of flight, which explore poststructural theory and inclusion/exclusion. My research highlights reflexivity as a resource but uses it to interrogate the '/' [slash].

A second element of research which is often silenced is the place of power, discourse and text, that which in a sense, goes beyond the personal [Scott 1996] and is also revealed by reflexivity. Foucault [1980:109-33] reminds us of something that is usually silenced, forgotten or unacknowledged, that the will to truth is also a will to power. Research, even when driven by an emancipatory ideal, is still writing the self and fulfilling a desire for mastery, self affirmation and maintaining selfsameness [Usher 1996]. This notion discomfits me. I recognise and admit the desire for mastery and self-affirmation in attempting a professional doctorate using poststructural ideas that have challenged the way I was educated and trained. I recognise a certain arrogance in selecting the ideas of Foucault, Derrida and Deleuze and Guattari to foreground my methodology. I have tried to emulate those academics who have most influenced my thinking over the past two decades. But I was striving for change, rather than maintaining selfsameness. I have tried to distance the narrow, scientific training that encouraged closure and certainty, and embrace the uncertainty, the ambiguity, and the irrationality of a new way of thinking. Then, as I wrote this, I realised with a blinding flash, that the selfsameness that I have maintained is the arrogance, the need to be different, academically superior, even, which led me to choose poststructuralism in the first place! This is writing as a method of inquiry in the raw, and not comfortable!

Reflexivity, however, is not merely a matter of becoming aware of one's self. Epistemic or disciplinary reflexivity [Usher 1996] locates the research within a community, and therefore subject to that community's disciplinary matrix and reflecting theories about knowledge and truth, and their relationship to the world or 'reality'. Much social science research carries an epistemology of an independent, objective reality which is only truthfully accessed by a scientific methodology. This epistemology is not innocent but 'contains a set of values within itself which privilege the interests of individualism, capitalism and patriarchy' [ibid.:37]. This thesis used reflexivity to illustrate the journey towards a poststructural epistemology, and so the research can be located within both poststructural methodology and educational inclusion communities.

Returning to the question of who I would be at the end of this thesis, posed in 'Openings', I am definitely different, though whether this is of benefit, or not, is equivocal. Interrogating the '/', and now being fully alert to the reductive nature of binary oppositional thinking, has opened a new way of ~~understanding~~ that is full of ambiguity and misunderstanding. Understanding is infinitely deferred. Misunderstanding lurks to haunt certainty, and the search for causes and explanation is permanently in abeyance, as in the popular example of *mise en abyme* on the Quaker Oats box, where the Quaker pictured on the box holds a box depicting a Quaker holding a box with a picture of a! Even more pertinent is the example of the pig sitting on the Plumrose Ham tin which bore a picture of a pig sitting on a tin, etc. MacLure [1996:285] notes with glee 'the additional element of self-cannibalism/consumption involved'. The pig was promoting the contents of the tin, yet also 'was' its contents, and therefore simultaneously outside and inside the tin.

Study made me aware of the uncomfortable, liminal space between teacher/academic, and being inside/outside both, 'an illicit coupling and uncoupling' [MacLure 1996:284], the professional self of one is continually devoured and regurgitated by the other, in constant deferral. In theory, this should have been productive, and, in that it has produced this thesis, it has been. The feelings of dispossession, displacement and dislocation which override, overwhelm, and threaten to undermine, productivity, under normal circumstances would reduce as the research gained a wider audience through

conference presentations and papers. However, having taken voluntary redundancy/early retirement and completing the writing whilst living on the border of Europe and Asia, I wonder whether the cost was worth it either to myself, my family, or the funding institution. The other side of this is the pride in completion, and I prefer the different 'I', the 'I' that I have become, who struggles with decision either side of the '/', and who is far less ready to jump to conclusions, even though the doctoral process has compromised much that I used to enjoy, such as reading novels of questionable literary worth! I am both delighted and bereft upon its ending and look forward with some trepidation to the beginnings that I hope will follow.

Whether the two aims of the doctorate, to search for a question through interrogating the '/' using a poststructural framework have been achieved, is, with reference to Roland Barthes, for the reader to decide. I have certainly learned, and am sorely tempted to use Isaac Newton's 1676 quotation 'standing on the shoulders of giants', but it seems overused and trite. Instead, and in acknowledgement of those whose work has been used in this thesis, I will quote Derrida [cited in Stronach and MacLure 1997:145] 'everything "begins", then, with citation'.

So, to finish, and yet, to resist the negativity and finality of closure. Stronach and MacLure [1997:148] write their final chapter 'Enclosures' as both a closing and an opening, a de-ceased text which may 'stutter' into life and language', 'a deconstructive inter-relation, not separate, not independent of each other in their ability to do their work, not dialectically related, so much as mutually and reflexively self-constituting and self-subverting at the same time'. For me this is a beginning/ending. I mourn the de-ceased, somewhat complacent professional teacher and university lecturer and the 'inclusion fundamentalist'. The self has become other, the teacher has become the academic [now retired], from which it once, oppositionally, drew its definitional strength – a potentially uncomfortable ontological position of other to itself. Yet, paradoxically, the core self [the teacher] has remained unchanged and retains its essential 'itself'. Transitions are foreshadowed in the life course up to that point, so people 'become' and in a sense were 'always already' [Derrida 1976]. I continue to 'become' an academic, caught in the liminality of the hybrid, but encouraged by having been 'always already'. This old/new self is welcomed as I try to 'stutter into life and

language' the new uncertainty in a very different country from my own, and hopefully, use my new skills to contribute in some way.

There was no research question so there is no answer. I am content with that. Interrogating the '/' between question/answer reveals a much more ambiguous, complex, troubled, inter-dependency than the more traditional direct question and answer relationship. Prior to doctoral study, I was always seeking answers.

Gertrude Stein on her deathbed asked her lifelong companion Alice B. Toklas 'What is the answer?' When Alice could not bring herself to speak, Gertrude asked, 'In that case, what is the question?' [cited by Fontana and Frey 2005:723]. It is the question that is imperative to the answer. My becoming will be foregrounded by questions and uncertainty, an awareness of the reductive nature of binary opposites, the ethical dimension of deconstruction, and the opening that can be achieved though interrogating the '/'. This is neatly encapsulated by the following epigram:

'For every complex issue there is a simple answer, and it is wrong.'
[H.L. Mencken quoted in Vlachou 1997:165]

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