Thinking with Theory in an Era of Trump

Kathryn J. Strom
California State University, East Bay
Adrian D. Martin
New Jersey City University

Our introduction to this special issue on "Thinking with Theory in Teacher Education"[1] dedicates considerable space to broadly discussing the current U.S. political context to emphasize why, at this precise moment in history, we—educators, teacher educators, and educational researchers—are in dire need of different ways to understand the world and our connections and interactions with/in it. We argue for the need to use these emergent understandings to become and live differently—as well as to shape systems of schooling and educate differently. In the sections that follow, we first situate this introduction in the global movement (at least in parts of the Western world) toward extreme right wing and ultra-conservative political ideologies. Drawing on the case of Donald Trump's election in the U.S., we present an argument that "good and common sense"—that is, rational ways of knowing—is woefully inadequate to build the needed justice movement to resist the implications of a far-right nationalist agenda for public education. We emphasize the need to shift from rational humanist ways of thinking to

*Kathryn J. Strom is an assistant professor in the Department of Educational Leadership in the College of Education and Allied Studies at California State University East Bay, Hayward, California. Adrian D. Martin is an assistant professor in the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education in the Deborah Cannon Partridge Wolfe College of Education at New Jersey City University, Jersey City, New Jersey. Their e-mail addresses are Kathryn.strom2@csueastbay.edu & AMartin6@*njcu.edu

posthuman, materialist theories of difference that can help members of the education community to engage in new modes of thought and action to counter the growing movement of neofascism in some political circles in the U.S. and abroad, ultimately pursuing the interests of equity and social justice. As St. Pierre (2001) points out, "Living and theorizing produce each other; they structure each other. Not only do people produce theories, but theories produce people" (p. 142). In thinking with different theories, as illustrated in this introduction and in the articles throughout this volume, we can produce ourselves differently—and in turn, produce different ways of living, of teaching, and of learning to resist the encroaching influence of ultra-conservatism in U.S. public education policy and practice.

From Neoliberalism to….

When we first generated the call for this special issue in the fall of 2015, we were firmly entrenched in a neoliberal era characterized by corporatism, rugged individualism, and privatization. This movement spanning the last several decades has focused on "optimiz[ing] conditions for capital accumulation no matter what the consequences for employment or social well-being" (Harvey, 2007, p. 25). In educational systems, the infusion of neoliberal thought, policies, and practices has resulted in over twenty years of "corporate education" reforms that emphasize individual accountability through narrow, high stakes measures and the privatization of public schools through charters and voucher schemes that systematically starve public education of its financial resources (Strom & Martin, 2015). Although often couched in the language of equity, the corporate education movement has actually contributed to an educational status quo that has widened historical inequalities in U.S. schools and communities (Au, 2010; Lipman, 2013), by, for example, using the market concept of "competition" to sanction or shutter "failing" schools (which are almost always those serving low-income students of color). To disrupt the neoliberal agenda in education, we argued in our original call for manuscripts, requires very different ways of thinking about educational phenomena.

Just over a year later, we in the U.S. and abroad face a socio-political shift in power to the far-right, which has made the call for different theories to put to work in teacher education and beyond even more urgent. For instance, ethnic nationalist parties have been on the rise in continental Europe for the past several years, with extremist leaders like France's Marine Le Pen and the Netherlands Geert Wilders gaining in popularity (Polakow-Suransky, 2016). In June of 2016, amid its

own nationalist crisis, the UK decided to "Brexit" after a referendum to leave the European Union. In the U.S., Donald Trump was recently elected as president, a man responsible for the creation of the Obama "birther" movement (a conspiracy theory alleging that Obama was, in fact, a Muslim born in Kenya). Collectively, these global events are underscored by xenophobia, racism, and religious intolerance—expressed as anti-immigrant rhetoric that is wrapped in the guise of ensuring national safety and preserving culture—and anti-globalism, which has been fueled by the extreme wealth inequality across the world.

Neoliberal economic and political ideologies have certainly contributed to these developments by concentrating wealth among a small minority of the population through tax cuts, privatization, and deregulation, while simultaneously dismantling social services and labor protections (Harvey, 2007; Strom & Martin, 2015). In the wake of Trump's election, we argue that the U.S., and likely the Western world, is transitioning from neoliberalism into a new political period that combines aspects of ultra-conservatism, White ethno-nationalism, corporate statehood, and authoritarianism. As we move into this new political era, however, one point has become clear: good and common sense (Deleuze, 2004) ways of understanding the world and the current political movements are unable to account for the complexity and contradictions inherent in the confluence of today's socio-political phenomena. Deleuze (2004) defines *good sense* as linear, uni-directional thinking, while common sense refers to meta-narratives grounded in humanistic rationalism (Braidotti, 2013; St. Pierre, 2000) to which we assume all people subscribe (a discussion of which we offer later in this introduction). To make sense of an irrational world and develop the needed justice movement requires, more than ever, new ways of thinking about social activity—like teaching—that breaks from these good and common sense patterns of "rational," linear, universal thought.

The Failure of Good and Common Sense in the 2016 Election

The election of the Donald Trump as 45th president of the U.S. personifies how rational, linear logic and common sense narratives are ultimately too narrow to attend to the complexity of human and social phenomena. For one, the taken-for-granted notion that "big data"—the masses of numbers used to explain world circumstances and events—could accurately predict the outcome of a presidential election was annihilated. In the months leading up to November 8, 2016, the overwhelming majority of the polls had given Hillary Clinton a comfortable, and sometimes enormous, lead. The week prior to the election, Nate Silver,

a well-known modern statistician, predicted Clinton had a 70% chance of winning (Five Thirty Eight, 2016). *The New York Times* (2016) gave her an even more optimistic landslide—90% (*New York Times*). Despite all quantitative indicators suggesting that Hillary Clinton would defeat him in a landslide, Trump gained sufficient support in states that are integral to winning the electoral college.

Beyond the numbers, good and common sense understandings of *presidential candidate* broke down during this election. Trump had never held public office (Koran & Browne, 2016), had no political experience (Crockett, 2017), and failed to conform to either a liberal or conservative agenda. He refused to observe civil norms during debates, crassly referring to the size of his own genitals (Flores, 2016), repeatedly interrupting his opponents during their allotted time (Mortimer, 2016), and branding Clinton a "nasty woman" on the national stage (Berenson, 2016). He defied conventional ideas of presidential behavior—at rallies, he mocked a disabled reporter (CNN, 2015), referred to Mexicans as rapists and criminals (*Washington Post*, 2015), and led crowds in chants of "lock her [Clinton] up" (Stevenson, 2016). Among many of his supporters, Trump's vile and vulgar rhetoric and behavior surfaced as an appealing (and even empowering) alternative to Clinton. In these ways, good and common sense understandings failed to account for Trump's ability to become president despite speaking and behaving unlike any other candidate in U.S. history.

Beyond Trump's words and conduct, actions of government officials and entities both foreign and domestic also defied good and common sense understandings of *democratic elections*. According to official government reports, Russian operatives hacked into the Democratic National Committee (DNC) and Republican National Committee (RNC) emails, but released only DNC emails, creating a public relations spectacle intended to pitch the election in Trump's favor (Sanger & Shane, 2016). Foreign powers were not alone in attempting to dictate the election's outcome—the FBI also intervened. James Comey, FBI director, released a letter weeks before election day announcing that new emails had been discovered from an unrelated scandal involving one of Clinton's top aides and indicated the FBI would be reopening an investigation (Goldman, Lichtblau, & Apuzzo, 2017). This unprecedented act was considered by some officials to have cost Clinton the election (Smith, 2016).

Clearly, good and common sense understandings of *progress* (e.g., that once human and civil rights have been achieved for certain groups of society, social systems and structures would "naturally" proceed in a linear fashion towards a more just and perfect union) were also disrupted. Although the U.S. elected a black president twice—evidence to many of

an era of post-racism—we now have a president who was endorsed by former Ku Klux Klan (KKK) Grand Wizard David Duke (Domonoske, 2016), was defended in a de-facto endorsement on the front-page of the KKK paper *Crusader* (Holley, 2016), and is embraced by the "Alt-Right" (an umbrella group of White supremacists, White separatists, and Neo-Nazis) (Southern Poverty Law Center, 2017). However, the disruption of narratives of progress was not solely limited to issues of race. Good and common sense understandings on the progress of women's equity, or indeed, that socio-political systems acknowledge women as fully human, also disintegrated throughout the 2016 election cycle. A video of Trump bragging that his celebrity status allowed him to grab women's genitals with impunity (Jacobs, Siddiqui, & Bixby, 2016), and multiple allegations of sexual assault (Blau, 2016)—one of which involved the rape of a thirteen-year-old (Yuhas, 2016)—did not stymie his popularity. In addition, the long held good and common sense narrative that the U.S. is a melting-pot society who welcomes "*your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free*" (Lazarus, 2002) was smothered by Trump's promises to build a wall on the border with Mexico, institute a Muslim registry, close the borders, and deport every undocumented immigrant—promises which have now begun to bear fruit.

Indeed, good and common sense understandings of *reality* were destroyed in the 2016 election. Throughout his campaign, Trump presented his audiences with blatant falsehoods. A month prior to the election, political fact checkers rated his speeches, cumulatively, as containing approximately 70% lies (Finnegan, 2016). The phenomena of fake news and conspiracy theories was propelled into the mainstream by Breitbart News and other far-right news sources, through social media, and often by Trump himself, who, using Twitter as his preferred communication platform, sent out memes and tweets with false statistics about topics like "Black on Black" crime (Bradner, 2015). The Trump campaign's preference for "feelings over facts"—that is, appealing to people's personal beliefs, prejudices, and fears over research and science—led to the coining of the term "post-truth", which Oxford dictionary proclaimed to be their "2016 word of the year" (Wang, 2016).

We contend that normative attempts to understand the 2016 presidential election and the present socio-political context with good and common sense fail because the rational logic derived from such thought is rooted in Enlightenment principles and thus unable to conform or attend to the contradictions, inconsistencies, incongruities, and irrationality manifest in the scope of current social and political activity. We agree wholeheartedly with St. Pierre, Jackson, and Mazzei (2016) when they note, "Continuing to think and live in the structures of that [rational]

image of thought is no longer possible or tolerable, and, we argue, unethical" (p. 100). Yet, neither can we be paralyzed in the face of the atrocities promised (and being carried out) by Trump and his administration. The urgency of the moment demands that we push ourselves into new ways of thinking, understanding, and participating in the world, to enable us to comprehend, analyze, and fight against a neo-fascist political agenda and movement.

Implications of an Era of Trump for Schools and Beyond

Trump's election has emerged as symbolic of globally shifting social norms, political trends, and a repackaging of nationalism, xenophobia, and far-right reactionism as mainstream populism. For members of the education community worldwide, the implications of these shifts for both short and long-term impact on students and educational systems are multiple and urgent. In the U.S., the increasing cultural and linguistic diversity of the student population suggests that teachers in varied contexts will engage with, and be tasked with, protecting and advocating for young people who represent those groups most targeted by the rhetoric of the Trump administration and the "alt-right." Furthermore, teacher educators will now be preparing future educators to navigate through an increasingly authoritarian political context that is highly hostile to the unionization of teachers, seeks to deprofessionalize their work, and aims to further the privatization of public education via corporate education reform and deregulation.

Clearly, all members of the teacher education and broader education community are subject to the deleterious effects of the rising tide of neo-fascism. For instance, the consequences of the ultra-conservative, nationalist political climate began to be reported immediately, even before Trump was inaugurated. On the morning after the 2016 election, students at York County School of Technology in Pennsylvania were captured on video parading throughout the school shouting "White power!" while yielding Trump signs (Bever, 2016). In Kansas, students chanted "Trump won! You're going back to Mexico!" to other students of minority backgrounds, and in Tennessee, White students chanted "Trump! Trump!" as they prevented a Black student from entering a classroom (Wallace & LaMotte, 2016). Just days after Trump's victory, in a survey of more than 10,000 educators, nine out of ten reported a negative impact on students' mood and behavior following the election results, and eight in ten reported heightened anxiety among students from marginalized populations, especially Muslims, African Americans, and LGBT individuals (Southern Poverty Law Center, 2016).

The tension and anxiety experienced by students extends to concerns beyond the walls of the classroom. The increased anti-immigrant sentiment in conjunction with Trump's repeated assertion to "build a wall" between the U.S. and Mexico, his characterization of Mexicans as criminals and rapists, and his intent to repeal the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival (DACA) within the first 100 days of his presidency has led to concerns about families being divided, undocumented young people being unable to attend institutions of higher education, and a fear of deportation (Ramirez-Gonzalez, 2017). Obviously, for the 1.1 million undocumented children in the U.S. (Gleeson & Gonzalez, 2012), the processes of learning and teaching that take place in classrooms are affected by the larger social discourse and rhetoric promulgated by the President that has now become core to mainstream U.S. politics.

The anti-immigrant sentiment and xenophobia personified by such conditions is similarly reflected in the increase of hate crimes against Muslims (Southern Poverty Law Center, 2016). The President's characterization of Islam as a religion that "hates us [i.e. the West]" and thus a need for the U.S. to be "very vigilant, very careful" with his repeated calls for a Muslim ban and registry has been met with an increase of anti-Muslim bullying and harassment in schools (Lobosco & Whiteside, 2016). Further, given the President's repeated misogynistic comments about women (Pearson, 2016) and sexual assault (Jacobs et al., 2016), the oppression of women, narratives of male dominance, and the perpetuation of rape culture will continue and likely worsen.

The individuals selected for Trump's cabinet and government positions are also highly problematic and indicative of an ultra-conservative and nationalist inclinations that will further affect students. The record of Mike Pence, the vice president, is concerning to the LGBTQ community, given his opposition to policies that would benefit this community, such as a workplace discrimination law in his home state of Indiana, the repeal of the military policy "Don't Ask Don't Tell," and the Obama administration's directives on the use of school bathrooms among transgender students (Drabold, 2016). More directly involved with public education is the appointment of billionaire Betsy Devos as Secretary of Education. Devos, an advocate of school choice, vouchers, and the privatization of public schools, belongs to a family who has spent tens of millions of dollars to fight against the rights of queer people, and has been described as a religious zealot who has sought to reform public education in order to "advance God's kingdom" (Signorile, 2017). Far from seeking to counter the underpinnings of heteronormativity and heterosexism dominant in society, instead she will likely champion the distribution of public dollars for private, Christian schools.

The rhetoric of the current presidential administration in conjunction with the collective record of previous business dealings and political affiliations reveals that multiple social groups will be the explicit target of policies to promulgate a neoliberal, neofascist, and unrestrained form of capitalism. Women, LGBT individuals, Muslim Americans, immigrants, African-Americans, Latinos, and members of other marginalized groups will need to form coalitions amongst themselves, with each other and other allies to battle economic, education, and social policies, agendas, and regulations that are antithetical to equity and democracy.

The current revitalization of ultra-conservatism, fueled by neoliberalism, and emerging as a neo-fascist political regime indicates the vital need to build a social justice movement to resist state-sponsored efforts that seek to dismantle public education and an education agenda that aims to produce a country of workers indoctrinated with the myth of meritocracy and equality and the subordination of critically conscious and politically active citizens. We will need to prepare teachers to work for social justice in multiple aspects of K-12 education and beyond. Inaction and lack of movement will result in the steamrolling of initiatives and policies that seek to bulldoze the last vestiges of public education. The corporate reform movement will continue its aims to privatize as many aspects of public education as possible. The right-wing Christian evangelical movement will persist in the imposition of Christianity in all schools (despite the growing religious diversity in the U.S.). School choice advocates (such as Devos) will seek to funnel public dollars into school vouchers for private institutions (including religiously affiliated schools), ultimately draining the funds allocated to already-embattled public schools. Other reformers are in favor of abolishing the Federal Department of Education and relegating full oversight of school districts to states and local municipalities.

Despite the claims that such an agenda serves the interest of low-income and students of color, the body of research produced by education scholars and sociologists suggest that privatization efforts ultimately serve to narrow the opportunity for such to gain access to high quality teachers and schools (Au, 2008; Lipman, 2013). In the present-day context when quantitative data and logical rationalization are increasingly unable to "predict" the net effects of such policies, and with the marginalization of intellectuals in conjunction with a surge of anti-intellectualism globally, we argue that new ways of engaging in the battle for social justice, and for equitable teaching and learning experiences for members of the school community, are needed. In particular, we suggest that posthuman theories, discussed in the next section, provide conceptual tools that enable nuanced investigations and analyses of benefit not only for

members of the school community fighting for equity and social justice, but for all individuals advocating on behalf of the global community.

From Rational Humanism to the Posthuman Turn

The failure of traditional modes of thought presses us to find new ways to conceptualize human phenomena and activity, including those involved in educating our nation's children. Straight-forward logic and positivist empirical evidence have failed to explain (or counter) efforts to dismantle public education and the rise of ultra-conservative, ethnonationalist regimes. We desperately need theories and concepts to put to work in teacher education, K-12 settings, and in the broader community to think differently, and generate different thinking (St. Pierre, 2004; Strom & Martin, 2015), for new possibilities. To do this, we argue for a dramatic shift from rational, common-sense, binary ways of understanding the world to monistic, materialist, non-linear, multiplistic theories of difference (e.g., Barad, 2007; Braidotti, 1994, 2013; Deleuze & Guattari, 1983, 1987,1995)—what Braidotti (2013) identifies as the posthuman. These theories, which are employed by the authors in this volume, provide entry points into new and different modes of expression and action to enable social justice movements in classrooms, schools, universities, and in the field of education at large. To illustrate the affordances of posthuman thought to investigate systems of teaching and learning in the present political context, we first discuss the narrow and limiting tenets of humanism, specifically the "grand narrative" of reason, or rationalism (St. Pierre, 2000), from which posthumanism veers away.

The Hegemony of Rationalism

In the Western world, the dominant image of thought is based on rational humanism (Braidotti, 2013; St. Pierre, 2000), or what Deleuze and Guattari (1987) call "arborescent" or "tree" thinking, a nod to its static, linear, reproductive nature (a tree trunk is rooted into the ground, and reproduces itself through smaller branches, growing uni-directionally upward in a dichotomous fashion). A legacy handed down from the Enlightenment, humanistic rationalism imposes hierarchical, dualistic, essentialized logic as a universal standard of thinking. Over time, rational humanism has become a "hegemonic cultural model" (Braidotti, 2013, p. 14) so ingrained that it is synonymous with good and common sense (Deleuze, 1994).

Rational humanist thought is constructed as universal and transcendent of culture and location—simultaneously a view from nowhere

and everywhere (Barad, 2007; Braidotti, 2013)—while actually representing the thinking patterns of a specific group: White, male, Christian, heterosexual Europeans (Braidotti, 2016). By positioning this thought as universal, (White/Eurocentric) Man is posited as the referent for the species—as the "measure of all things" (Braidotti, 2013, p. 13). From a rational humanist lens, the world is a stable, fixed, ordered place striated by dualisms, or separations, such as subject/object, human/nature, black/white, man/woman, self/other (St. Pierre et al., 2016).

The dualism of "self/other" provides an entry point into one of the great dangers of rational humanism, the defining of one's ontological status by the ability to reason, or think rationally. Stemming from Descartes' axiomatic statement "I think, therefore I am" (*cogito ergo sum*), a mind/body binary was created that allotted consciousness, free will, and self-regulating capabilities to the rational thinker (Braidotti, 2013; St. Pierre, 2000). That is, a separation was forged between a rational-thinking, conscious, self-monitoring self and an "other" who does not possess these capacities (Braidotti, 2013). By virtue of this divide, those who have judged themselves to be reasonable/rational (i.e. fully human) identify groups who do not conform to this type of thinking or being as subhuman/inhuman. Such "rational" thought justifies the dominant group in excluding "others" from the rights and privileges they themselves enjoy, ultimately subordinating the "others" and subjecting them to violence, indignities, and/or genocide. In this way, rational humanism's "restricted notion of what counts as the human" (Braidotti, 2013, p. 16), undergirds the thinking patterns that drive forms of exclusion and hate. Xenophobia, racism, misogyny, homophobia, transphobia, and/or religious intolerance—all of these are defined in terms of negative or pejorative difference (Braidotti, 2011/2013).

Another binary—human/world—is similarly problematic. Rational humanism constructs the human as separate from nature and, summarized expertly by St. Pierre (2011), as "sovereign, lucid, free, agentive, self-sufficient, rational, knowing, meaning-giving, conscious, stable, coherent, unified, self-identical, reflective, autonomous, intentional, and ahistoric individuals" (p. 618). It is this construction that informs the American (and neoliberal) notion of individualism, the notion that we are isolated and autonomous actors in the world who can "pull ourselves up by our own bootstraps." This type of thinking drives the myth of meritocracy, equates poverty with laziness, and constructs students of color as containing the problem (e.g., they are "at risk" or are "low performing" students), rather than victims of an institutionally racist system. It also underscores the educational ideal of the teacher who transmits knowledge to students or "controls" or "manages" her class-

room (Martin & Strom, 2015). It is no wonder that Deleuze and Guattari (1987) write, "we are tired of trees… They've made us suffer too much" (15). Producing substantially different kinds of thinking that break with rationalism, the "good and common sense" narratives that perpetuate a harmful status quo, requires new forms of thought and action.

Turning to Posthuman Thought

As Deleuze (2004) argues, "We need concepts that simultaneously surpass the dualities of ordinary thought and give things a new truth, a new distribution, a new way of dividing up the world" (p. 22). Accordingly, we contend that monistic, non-linear, affirmative, multiplicitous philosophies and theories of difference offer the opportunity for the education community to confront the multiple challenges that are intensifying in our current political context. These posthuman theories signal not just a "coming after" of humanism (rational, Eurocentric thinking) and anthropomorphism (centering the human as the universal reference point of reality), but also enable creative, affirmative ways of being, becoming, and doing (Braidotti, 2013; Taylor & Hughes, 2016). As such, these bodies of thought hold potential for the development of new ways of being teacher/teacher educator/student, the processes through which we become teacher/teacher educator/student, and the practices that are enacted (the doing) by these multiple subjectivities.

The theories employed in this issue of *Issues in Teacher Education* espouse a shift from dualism to monism—a movement that comes with massive philosophical implications (Braidotti, 2016). That is, these ways of thinking move from dualistic, binary thinking that cuts up and segments the world and offer instead a Spinozan ontology of "radical immanence" (Braidotti, 2013). In this worldview, there is nothing transcendental—not any higher truth, no objectivity, no being or deity—nor are there any separations or boundaries, except those we impose (Barad, 2007). Rather, humans, non-humans, and the physical world collectively exist as matter—self-organizing, vital, agentic matter (Braidotti, 2013; Barad, 2007). Deleuze (1988) describes this central Spinozan ontology as "a single substance having an infinity of attributes, Deus sive Natura, all 'creatures' being only modes of these attributes or modifications of this substance" (p. 17). In other words, we are part of a larger unity that has an infinite number of ways to shape itself into temporarily assembled sets, arrangements, or mixtures. There is nothing above or below, just us, all together, in the middle (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). We are "embodied and embedded" (Braidotti, 2007, p. 70), immanent to ourselves and our connected material world.

However, being part of a single plane of matter does not mean that we are all the same or identical. Although connected, we are very different elements continuing to morph in relation to each other. As Deleuze and Guattari (1987) relate, "Being expresses in a single meaning all that differs. What we are talking about is not the unity of substance, but the infinity of the modifications that are part of one another in this unique plane of life" (p. 254). Because we are always in motion and in flux, we are constantly changing, shifting, becoming-different than we were before (Semetsky, 2006). Rather than existing in the world as preformed individuals, as separate bodies, instead we exist as aggregates, or multiplicities, or assemblages, of people, spaces, ideas, objects, and forces (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987; Strom, 2015) that are constantly transforming themselves into different multiplicities. These assemblages or multiplicities cannot be reduced to their parts—they are composite, but at the same time, are substantive by virtue of their relations (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987).

Despite the multiple challenges and battles that are likely to occur over the next four years of Trump's presidency and the global rise of nationalism, we find ourselves in a space of hope. A considerable segment of the population has awoken. Individuals of diverse backgrounds are mobilizing, coming together as self-organizing forces to make their voices heard, to fight for equity, social justice, and democracy. Nowhere in the U.S. has this early resistance been more evident than in the state of California, where more than forty cities have declared themselves sanctuaries to undocumented immigrants, and some cities, like San Francisco, have refused to allow local police to assist U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) with apprehending undocumented citizens (Vives, 2017). Indeed, in his 2017 California State of the State address, Governor Jerry Brown reminded Californians, with the (albeit male-centric) words of the poet Donne, of the need to acknowledge our interconnectedness (with the human, nonhuman, and more-than-human) and stand in solidarity in the face of the battles to come: "No man is an island entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main…And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee."

The Women's March that took place worldwide on January 21st, 2017, is further evidence of a burgeoning mass resistance interested in embracing productive difference rather than reviling it. Across the country and globe, identity politics and divisions that previously served as rational justifications for independent social movements (including the historical imposition of a White feminist narrative that erased the stories and struggles of women of color and trans women) were subverted in favor of collective solidarity.

While we do not suggest issues relevant to exclusive political alliances were in any way "solved" by the Women's March, we believe there was an acknowledgement of the self as part of the multiple, as part of the nation, and as part of the planet, which in turn facilitated the largest demonstration protest in global history. By engaging, working, uniting, and coalition-building with one another across lines of gender, race, class, and other social categories, an emergent form of action arose. This movement reflects how the concept of "human" extends beyond White/heterosexual/male to encompass the diversity of life who share the globe's natural and material resources as "embedded and embodied" beings (Braidotti, 2007, p. 70). We encourage our colleagues to consider these arguments not only in the interest of teacher education and research, but also as moral, ethical, and principled imperatives in the preservation of democracy and the furthering of social justice.

Thinking with Theory Differently: A Social Justice Endeavor

The articles presented in this special issue each take up lines of posthuman, complex, materialist thinking, answering questions of "how might we live," "how might we educate," and "how might we research education/teaching" with affirmative, monistic, immanent, multiplistic theories of difference. These serve as points of departure from normative (humanistic) ways of thinking about teacher education, teaching, and research on teaching. We envision the theoretical scope of the articles in this issue as spanning a continuum, ranging from modes of thought that trouble and dismantle normative and circulatory social categories to conceptual and methodological frameworks that reinterpret the human condition itself. The broad and diverse conceptual and methodological approaches in this collection are "put to work" as guiding frameworks regarding a wide range of equity and social justice issues relevant to education and teacher education.

We begin this issue by examining how regulatory and governing discourses of gender and sexuality affect the livelihoods and professional practices of LGBTQIA educators and the decision whether (or not) to) disclose one's gender or sexual identity. Laura Bower-Phipps employs queer theory, a non-linear critique that deconstructs normative conceptions of gender and sexual identity categories. Bower-Phipps reports on interviews conducted with 20 K-12 LGBTQIA teachers practicing in diverse contexts across the U.S. As a conceptual, methodological, and analytic tool, in this article, queer theory generates insights on the complexities and nuances regarding the decision to "come out", and highlights the imperative to consider social structures in conjunction

with local and widespread discourses about teachers and the tensions experienced by LGBTQIA educators to conform to these discourses and identify with this role.

In the article that follows, Alan Ovens employs a bricolage methodological approach and complexity theory to think differently about engagement with a transformative pedagogy in a teacher education course. Attending to members of the classroom holistically (rather than solely as students), Ovens describes an initiative to implement individualized and negotiated grading contracts with preservice educators. Complexity theory served as a productive means of attending to the multiple inter/intra-actions among elements that inform the processes of teacher education. His work also sheds light on the possibilities of enacting a transformative pedagogy that supports the emergence of new epistemologies for teacher education and new ontologies for future educators central to critical citizenship and dispositions towards social justice.

John Lupinacci and Alison Happel-Parkins similarly employ a systems-level theoretical orientation to explore possibilities in STEM education and disrupt prevalent conceptualizations of mapping striated modes of teaching and learning upon educators, teacher-educators, and students. Identifying as eco-critical scholars, Lupinacci and Happel-Parkins utilize an amalgamation of concepts and frameworks that critique linear and closed models of teaching and instruction that fail to acknowledge the entanglements and mangles that characterize phenomena and aim to (re)claim inquiry from scientism. Such modes of inquiry are open to reinterpretation, morph to contexts, and shift to suit the needs of participants. As the authors suggest, local educational spaces emerge as prime sites to engage in critical work and disintegrate the fallacious boundaries and limitations of STEM as normatively constructed. New spaces that engage with post-human and new materialist frameworks offer promising modes of thought to participate in such work.

Similarly engaged in erasing socially constructed boundaries and onto-epistemological division, Malka Gorodetsky, Judith Barak, and Eto Dhaan employ Deleuzo-Guattarian concepts and their own notion of the Educational Edge to explore the emerging subjectivity of an elementary teacher amid the struggle to engage in an unfolding of the self when surrounded by striated, neoliberal discourses of what it means to be a teacher. The researchers utilized the concepts of major and minor literature to discuss means of expression that reproduce social norms (major literature) and means that counter and reimagine possibilities for human experience and expression (minor literature). Characterizing the inquiry as Baroque, the authors put these concepts to work to multiply and extend the possibilities for subjectivities afforded to the

teacher participant. In doing so, they highlight how the dominant social-political constructions of educator fails to attend to the complexity and myriad facets of life in the classroom. This work demonstrates how even veteran educators struggle to negotiate between expectations for professional productivity and professional involvement that attend to the holistic needs and development of students.

David R. Cole and Susanne Gannon also engage with Deleuzo-Guattarian concepts in their case study of the experiences of two beginning teachers. This work highlights the multiple ways that financial capitalism, corporate influence, and neoliberal discourses undergird teacher education and the processes of becoming a teacher, and how these ultimately emerge as elements that enable a narrow and reductive conception of education and educators in the 21st century. Through the use of schizoanalysis, the researchers consider macro (social, political, and cultural) as well as micro (affective, material, psychological and cognitive) forces that coalesce to "produce" status quo norms, practices, and discourses in teacher education. Schizoanalysis enabled the researchers to consider these multiple forces from diverse perspectives, holding each in relation to the other as well as engaging with the ruptures and folds that manifest between these levels. The researchers skillfully deconstruct the interplay among these normative forces, attending to the need for nuanced, emergent, and novel constructions of teacher education and teachers to counter unfettered capitalist and neoliberal regimes.

Maria F. G. Wallace takes up complexifying the landscape of teacher education, and more specifically, linear, developmental models of "novice to veteran" educator growth trajectories, in her work examining the experiences of a beginning science teacher and the methodological processes employed when analyzing those experiences. The Deleuzo-Guattarian concepts of "becoming" and "threshold" are utilized to consider the ontological possibilities that enable new, productive forms of being which can liberate educators with differing years of professional practice from traditional models and assumptions about who they are and what they do. Simultaneously, Wallace interrogates research practices used to study science teacher development as a site of social justice. The feminist, post-structural and post-qualitative approach to this work signals the possibilities and potential for such research as well as critiques the assumptions and heuristics that narrow the scope of inquiry via traditional models of investigation.

Christopher Beighton takes up Deleuze's concept of non-normative ontologies to critique the limiting structures and discourses of teacher education under the influence of neoliberalism. Arguing for the need to rethink pedagogy and practice beyond previously conceived ideas of

the self, other, teachers, schools, and students, Beighton discusses the necessity of engaging with new "images of thoughts," unencumbered by past associations, connotations, or denotations of the role, place, and function of education and teacher education. Such a move suggests the deconstruction of current education practices and systems, facilitating the capacity for new modes of thought and action in service of equity and social justice.

We close this collection with Tammy Mills' skillful employment of post-coding analysis to provide a detailed and innovative approach towards the construction of teacher expertise by a veteran Reading Recovery educator. Mills' work attends to the multiple inter/intra-actions among material and discursive elements that enabled the production of particular pedagogical practices and the formation of the teacher participant's knowledge base. The concept of the mangle is thought with and through the research data, supporting a diffractive reading that highlights multiple, shifting, emerging, and amorphic elements that entangle in diverse (and potentially contradictory) ways over the course of a temporal sequence. This serves not just as a proxy or descriptive illustration for phenomena in classrooms and in accounts of teacher knowledge, but contributes to the construction and enabling (or limiting of) these very processes themselves.

The articles in this special issue were purposefully selected to convey to the readership of *Issues in Teacher Education* the productiveness of engaging with non-linear, emergent theoretical and methodological frameworks to study teacher education in particular and education more broadly. The works of the authors demonstrate the capacity for novel, nuanced, complex, and innovative analysis attentive to affordances, limitations, challenges, and opportunities for educators, teacher educators, and teacher education programs in the current neoliberal regime and the rise of fascist/neo-facist rhetoric that has become increasingly prevalent among policy-makers and members of each of the three branches of U.S. government. The research in this issue emerges as a line of flight (to borrow from Deleuze), a break from the status quo of research and systematic inquiry, that holds great potential to refashion systems of education and teacher education in service of equity and social justice for all members of the school community, but most especially those who have been (and continue to be) marginalized in society. We would like to express our thanks to the authors for their contributions to this volume, and for their commitment towards pushing the boundaries of traditional qualitative research. Finally, we would like to acknowledge Bradley Porfilio and Richard Kahn for their support, guidance, and encouragement in the production of this work.

Note

[1] The title and framing of this issue is inspired in part by the work of Lisa Mazzei and Alecia Youngblood Jackson in their 2011 book *Thinking with Theory in Qualitative Research*.

References

Au, W. W. (2008). Devising inequality: A Bernsteinian analysis of high-stakes testing and social reproduction in education. *British Journal of Sociology of Education, 29*(6), 639-651.

Au, W. W. (2010). *Unequal by design: High-stakes testing and the standardization of inequality.* New York, NY: Routledge.

Barad, K. (2007). *Meeting the universe halfway: Quantum physics and the entanglement of matter and meaning*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Barbaro, M. (2016). Donald Trump clung to birther lie for years, and still isn't apologetic. https://www.nytimes.com/2016/09/17/us/politics/donald-trump-obama-birther.html

Berenson, T. (2016). Watch Donald Trump call Hillary Clinton a 'Nasty woman'. http://time.com/4537960/donald-trump-hillary-clinton-nasty-woman-debate/

Bever, L.(2016, November 11). Video shows Pennsylvania teenagers celebrating, shouting 'white power' after Trump win [Editorial]. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/education/wp/2016/11/11/video-shows-pennsylvania-teenagers-celebrating-shouting-white-power-after-trump-win/?utm_term

Blau M. (2016). These women have accused Trump of sexual harassment. Retrieved from http://www.cnn.com/2016/10/14/politics/trump-women-accusers/

Bradner, E. (2015). Trump retweets fake, racially charged crime data from non-existent group. http://www.cnn.com/2015/11/22/politics/donald-trump-black-crime-police-retweet/

Braidotti, R. (1994). *Nomadic subjects: Embodiment and sexual difference in contemporary feminist theory*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.

Braidotti, R. (2007). Feminist epistemology after postmodernism: Critiquing science, technology and globalization. *Interdisciplinary Science Reviews, 32* (1), 65-74.

Braidotti, R. (2011). *Nomadic theory: The portable Rosi Braidotti*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.

Braidotti, R. (2013). *The posthuman*. Cambridge, UK: Polity.

Braidotti, R. (2016). The critical posthumanities. Paper presented at the Summer Institute of the Antipodes, Penrith, Australia.

CNN (2015). Trump mocks reporter with disability. Retrieved from http://www.cnn.com/videos/tv/2015/11/26/donald-trump-mocks-reporter-with-disability-berman-sot-ac.cnn

CNN (2016). Trump: Media is the opposition party. http://www.cnn.com/videos/politics/2017/01/27/donald-trump-media-opposition-party-sot-nr.cnn

Crockett, Z. (2017). Donald Trump is the only president ever with no political

or military experience. Retrieved from http://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2016/11/11/13587532/donald-trump-no-experience

Deleuze, G. (1988). *Spinoza: Practical philosophy*. San Francisco, CA: City Lights Books.

Deleuze, G. (2004). *Logic of sense*. New York, NY: Bloomsbury Publishing.

Deleuze, G., & Guattari, F. (1983). *Anti-Oedipus* (trans. Robert Hurley, Mark Seem, and Helen R. Lane). Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Deleuze, G., & Guattari, F. (1987). *Capitalism and schizophrenia: A thousand plateaus* (trans. Brian Massumi). Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Deleuze, G., & Guattari, F. (1994). *What is philosophy?* New York, NY: Columbia University Press.

Drabold, W. (2016, July 15). Here's what Mike Pence said on LGBT issues over the years. Retrieved from http://time.com/4406337/mike-pence-gay-rights-lgbt-religious-freedom/

Domonoske, C. (2016). Former KKK leader David Duke says 'of course' Trump voters are his voters. Retrieved from http://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2016/08/05/488802494/former-kkk-leader-david-duke-says-of-course-trump-voters-are-his-voters

Finnegan, M. (2016). Scope of Trump's falsehoods unprecedented for a modern presidential candidate. http://www.latimes.com/politics/la-na-pol-trump-false-statements-20160925-snap-story.html

Five Thirty Eight. (2016). 2016 election forecast. Retrieved from https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/2016-election-forecast/

Flores, R. (2016). Republican debate: Donald Trump defends the size of his hands and more. Retrived from http://www.cbsnews.com/news/republican-debate-donald-trump-defends-the-size-of-his-hands-and-other-body-parts/

Gleeson, S., & Gonzales, R. G. (2012). When do papers matter? An institutional analysis of undocumented life in the United States. *International Migration, 50*(4), 1-19. doi:10.1111/j.1468-2435.2011.00726.x

Goldman, A., Lichtblau, E., & Apuzzo, M. (2017). Comey letter on Clinton email is subject of Justice Department inquiry. Retrieved from https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/12/us/politics/james-comey-fbi-inspector-general-hillary-clinton.html

Gonzalez-Ramirez, A. (2017, January 13). What Trump's presidency could mean for undocumented students. Retrieved from http://www.refinery29.com/2017/01/131627/daca-repeal-under-trump-what-will-happen

Harvey, D. (2007). *A brief history of neoliberalism*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Holley, P. (2016). KKK's official newspaper supports Donald Trump for president. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-politics/wp/2016/11/01/the-kkks-official-newspaper-has-endorsed-donald-trump-for-president/?utm_term=.e7ca17581946

Jacobs, B., Siddiqui, S., & Bixby, S. (2016). 'You can do anything': Trump brags on tape about using fame to get women. Retrieved from https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2016/oct/07/donald-trump-leaked-recording-women

Koran, L. & Browne, R. (2016). Can Trump be the first to go from corner office to

oval office? Retrieved from http://www.cnn.com/2016/08/11/politics/donald-trump-businessmen-presidents-history/

Krieg, G. (2016, December 22). It's official: Clinton swamps Trump in popular vote. Retrieved from http://www.cnn.com/2016/12/21/politics/donald-trump-hillary-clinton-popular-vote-final-count/

Lazarus, E. (2002). *Emma Lazarus: Selected poems and other writings*. Toronto, Ontario, Canada: Broadview.

Lipman, P. (2013). *The new political economy of urban education: Neoliberalism, race, and the right to the city*. New York, NY: Taylor & Francis.

Lobosco, K., & Whiteside, L. (2016, October 25). In the age of Trump, there's a new school bully. Retrieved from http://money.cnn.com/2016/10/25/news/trump-rhetoric-school-bullying/

Martin, A.D., & Strom, K. J. (2015). Neoliberalism and the teaching of English Learners: Decentering the teacher and student subject. *The SoJo Journal: Educational Foundations and Social Justice Education, 1*(1), 23-44.

Mortimer, C. (2016). The chart that shows how many times Donald Trump interrupted Hillary Clinton. Retrieved from http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/us-elections/donald-trump-hillary-clinton-third-presidential-debate-how-many-times-interruptions-sexism-a7371286.html

New York Times. (2016). Who will be president? Retrieved from https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2016/upshot/presidential-polls-forecast.html?_r=0

Pearson, C. (2016, September 27). 16 real things Trump has said about women while running for president. Retrieved from http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/16-real-things-trump-has-said-about-women-while-for-running-for-president_us_57e14a5ae4b04a1497b6a29c

Polakow-Suransky, S. (2016). The ruthlessly effective branding of Europe's Far Right. Retrived from https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/nov/01/the-ruthlessly-effective-rebranding-of-europes-new-far-right

Sanger, D., & Shane, S. (2016). Russian hackers acted to aid Trump in election, U.S. says. Retrieved from https://www.nytimes.com/2016/12/09/us/obama-russia-election-hack.html

Semetsky, I. (2006). *Deleuze, education, and becoming*. Rotterdam, The Netherlands: Sense.

Signorile, M. (2017, January 16). Why education secretary nominee Betsy DeVos is a dangerous threat to LGBTQ equality. Retrieved from http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/why-education-secretary-nominee-betsy-devos-is-a-dangerous-threat-to-lgbtq-equality_us_587cdca2e4b0e58057ff862e

Smith, D. (2016). FBI covered up Russian influence on Trump's election win, Harry Reid claims. Retrieved from https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2016/dec/10/fbi-russia-trump-election-harry-reid-james-comey-wikileaks

Southern Poverty Law Center. (2016, November 28). The Trump effect: The impact of the 2016 presidential election on our nation's schools. Retrieved from https://www.splcenter.org/20161128/trump-effect-impact-2016-presidential-election-our-nations-schools

Southern Poverty Law Center (2017). Alternative right. Retrieved from https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/ideology/alternative-right

Stevenson, P. (2016). A brief history of the 'lock her up' chant by Trump supporters

against Clinton. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/wp/2016/11/22/a-brief-history-of-the-lock-her-up-chant-as-it-looks-like-trump-might-not-even-try/?utm_term=.d5057e38f5b0

St. Pierre, E. A. (2000). Poststructural feminism in education: An overview. *Qualitative Studies in Education, 13*(5), 477-515.

St. Pierre, E. A. (2001). Coming to theory: Finding Foucault and Deleuze. In K. Weiler (Ed.), *Reading, resisting, and revisioning male theorists in education and cultural studies* (pp. 141-164). New York, NY: Routledge.

St. Pierre, E. A. (2004). Deleuzian concepts for education: The subject undone. *Educational Philosophy and Theory, 36*(3), 283-296.

St. Pierre, E. A. (2011). Post qualitatitive research: The critique and the coming after. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (4th ed., pp. 611-625). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

St. Pierre, E. A., Jackson, A. Y., & Mazzei, L. A. (2016). New empiricisms and new materialisms: Conditions for new inquiry. *Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies, 16*(2), 99–110.

Strom, K. J. (2015). Teaching as assemblage: Negotiating learning and practice in the first year of teaching. *Journal of Teacher Education, 66*(4), 321-333.

Strom, K. J., & Martin, A. D. (2015). Deterritorializing neoliberal thought and practice in the classroom. In M. Abendroth & B. Porfilio (Eds.), *Understanding neoliberal rule in higher education: Educational fronts for local and global justice*. (Vol. 2, pp. 171-186). Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing.

Taylor, C., & Hughes, C. (Eds.). (2016). *Posthuman research practices in education*. New York, NY: Palgrave McMillan.

Vives, R. (2017). California 'sanctuary cities' vow to stand firm despite Trump threats of funding cutoff. Retrieved from http://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-california-sanctuary-cities-20170125-story.html

Wallace, K., & LaMotte, S. (2016, November 30). Harassment in schools skyrockets after election, teachers report. Retrieved from http://www.cnn.com/2016/11/29/health/school-survey-post-election-negative-incidents/

Wang, A. (2016). 'Post-truth' named 2016 word of the year by Oxford Dictionaries. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/amphtml/news/the-fix/wp/2016/11/16/post-truth-named-2016-word-of-the-year-by-oxford-dictionaries/

Washington Post. (2015). Full text: Donald Trump announces presidential bid. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-politics/wp/2015/06/16/full-text-donald-trump-announces-a-presidential-bid/?utm_term=.ee6586c7e8cc

Yuhas, A. (2016). Woman who accused Donald Trump of raping her at 13 drops lawsuit. Retrieved from https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2016/nov/04/donald-trump-teenage-rape-accusations-lawsuit-dropped