

EDCP Lecture Series 2013-2014

Ethical Engagements with Alterity hosted by William E. Doll, Jr. | Donna Trueit | William Pinar

The Meaning of Curriculum is a Complicated Conversation: The Purpose of Curriculum is to Render a Complicated Worldview

Peter P. Grimmert, University of British Columbia

Dec 13th | 12:00-2:00pm | Scarfe 1107

Note: A light lunch will be served at noon in Scarfe 1223

The lecture commences at 12:30 pm in Scarfe 1107

When we are caught off-guard or in our dark moments, we exhibit the secret thoughts that mark our ethical dealings with alterity. A complicated worldview implies we must possess an understanding of our dealings with the “Other” that runs deep in our “Being”, what Heidegger referred to as “*das Dasein*”.

I use the symbolism of water to represent such a worldview. Penelope (in Homer’s *Odyssey*) had to become as water when she enacted her scheme to ravel and unravel a shroud for her ailing father-in-law. Like water in a stream with a logjam, when problems seem intractable and insurmountable, a complicated worldview is a source of life that finds a way.

To illustrate my argument, I examine the lives of persons with a complicated worldview. David Rakoff, a self-described gay Jewish Canadian transplant to New York City, knew the world is tragic and full of injustices, against which we have to fight; but our weapons are to be *love, kindness, and beauty*. Nelson Mandela and Oliver Tambo, two South African resistance fighters, and Greg Boyle, a Los Angeles Catholic priest, also exhibit complicated worldviews that enable them, in their inured fight against ravaging injustice, to maintain a human kinship with the “Other”.

Peter P. Grimmert is Professor and Head of the Department of Curriculum and Pedagogy in the Faculty of Education at the University of British Columbia (UBC). A former Associate Dean at Simon Fraser University (SFU), he also served as Director of the Institute for Studies in Teacher Education at SFU, was appointed by the BC Cabinet as the BC Deans of Education appointment to the Council of the BC College of Teachers (the professional body that governed teaching and teacher education in the province) between 2007-2010. He has recently been involved in a five-year Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) -funded \$2.5 million Canada-wide study of the impact of public policy decisions on conditions of teaching and learning, completed a review of teacher education program accreditation for the province of Ontario, chaired the Academy of Finland’s expert panel adjudicating the Finnish social science research grants competition, and given keynote addresses at international conferences around the world.

In total, he has published 48 refereed journal articles, written 11 books and 39 chapters in books, and in May 2000, he received an honorary doctorate from the University of Tampere, Finland, in recognition of his outstanding merits as a researcher and educator in the areas of professional development and teacher education. His most recent (2012) book (written with Jon Young), *Teacher certification and the Professional Status of Teaching in North America: The New Battleground for Public Education* (Information Age Publishing) locates recent developments in teacher certification in North America within a broader, international policy context characterized as hegemonic neo-liberalism wherein economic rationalism has begun to trump professional judgment.

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