Dr. Seuss and Dangerous Citizenship

Keynote Address

6th Annual Equity & Social Justice Conference

Testing Our Limits:
Teaching and Learning with Conviction

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March 2, 2013
Too political for schools?
Yertle the Turtle by Dr. Seuss

YouTube video of story with quote context at 4:25
http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=9FFfbSWbLWw
A political message that students in British Columbia should be protected from?
“2(b) or not 2(b)”

BC teachers banned from wearing this t-shirt in school
“When Will They Learn” (BCTF TV commercial, 2009)
Also view YouTube:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vD_mi4_gSqY
When the BC government won’t learn how will BC’s kids?

Three years ago the BC government promised to solve the problems of overcrowded classes and lack of support for students with special needs. Unfortunately, the problems now are worse than ever.

10,000 OVERCROWDED CLASSES
Teachers are working hard to meet the needs of every student, but there are more than 10,000 overcrowded classes – classes where there are 30 or more students or four or more students with special needs.

SPECIAL NEEDS NEGLECTED
Thousands of BC students are still waiting for the government to deliver on its promise of more support for students with special needs – and far too many are still waiting to be assessed. This government neglect has a devastating impact on those students and affects every student in the classroom.

177 SCHOOLS CLOSED
Since 2001 BC has closed 177 schools – an unprecedented number. It’s simply shortsighted to close and sell off our public schools in the face of a temporary dip in enrolment. Hundreds of other schools are waiting for urgent safety improvements such as seismic upgrades, repair of leaky buildings and elimination of hazardous mould.

Why is the government shortchanging our kids? Students are our future – we should be investing in their education.

Kids matter
Teachers care
Get more facts at: WhenWillTheyLearn.ca
BCTF “WWLTL” Materials

May 12th
please remember
our kids when
you vote in the
provincial election.
Ask your local teachers about what needs to
be done to improve education in BC schools.

PLease VotE MAy 12

A message from BC’s teachers BCTF
BCTF “WWTL” Materials

10,000 OVERCROWDED CLASSES
When will they learn?

WhenWillTheyLearn.ca  Kids matter  Teachers care
Yes, citizenship—above all in a society like ours, of such authoritarian and racially, sexually, and class-based discriminatory traditions—is really an invention, a political production.

In this sense, one who suffers any [or all] of the discriminations...does not enjoy the full exercise of citizenship as a peaceful and recognized right. On the contrary, it is a right to be reached and whose conquest makes democracy grow substantively.

Citizenship implies freedom...Citizenship is not obtained by chance: It is a construction that, never finished, demands we fight for it. It demands commitment, political clarity, coherence, decision. For this reason a democratic education cannot be realized apart from an education of and for citizenship. (Freire, Teachers as Cultural Workers, 1998, p. 90)
Dangerous Citizenship

- Political (non)participation
- Critical awareness—*conscientization* (Freire); class consciousness (Marx)
- Intentional action—behaviors designed to instigate human connection, the true engagement with everyday life, meaningful experience, communication, and change.
Creative disruption of everyday life

Surveillance Camera Players: Using surveillance technology in ways that critique the process and technology of surveillance. What pedagogical inspirations might they provoke?

View video on YouTube: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RILTI8mxEnE
Creative disruption of everyday life

subRosa: a cyberfeminist cell of cultural workers combing, art, activism, and politics to critique effects of intersection of technologies and women’s bodies, lives, and work
Creative disruption of everyday life

**The Yes Men/The Yes Lab**: Impersonating corporate criminals to publicly humiliate them and giving journalist a reason to cover important issues. What pedagogical inspirations might they provoke?
Dangerous Citizenship

Dérive (Debord/Sl)

*Dérive*, literally “drifting”, implies mode of experimental behavior linked to the conditions of urban society.

Sl *psychogeography* referred to the study of the effects of the geographical environment on the emotions and behavior of individuals.

In a *dérive* one or more persons drop their usual motives for movement and action and let themselves be drawn by the attractions of the terrain and the encounters they find there.
Dangerous Citizenship

Détournement (Debord/SI)

• Détournement involves capturing various spectacular images and turning them around in a new presentation to subvert the authority of the sign and the significations it sets in order.

• In other words, détournement is a variation on a previous media work, in which the newly created one has a meaning that is antagonistic or antithetical to the original.
Dangerous Citizenship

Détournement examples

The spontaneous acts of revolt forming everywhere must find a tactic that takes into account the spectacle’s power of recuperation.

This tactic, systematized by the situationists, is DÉTOURNEMENT.

What’s that, Dad?
Adbusters
“Subvertisements”
Bored with school?

Well, school is boring. It's no secret that a lot of you feel that you are wasting your time here. You feel you are spending years commuting to the boredom of school to prepare yourselves for a life of dull, meaningless tasks.

But that's the way life is, and that's the way it has always been. You have a responsibility to society, though, and that's what counts. Your teachers and principals, and later your bosses know what's good for you. After all we're in power and you're not. You depend upon us for your survival, so you really shouldn't mind taking orders.

Remember, your diploma is your "passport to a good job." We are preparing you to take your rightful place in society as productive citizens. As responsible adults. Even if it's not much fun.

A lot of you are concerned where our society is going. But, remember, we're always one step ahead of you. We're making reforms every day. True, they don't make your lives any less dull and meaningless. But they do make you feel better about authority.

But some of you don't want to play our little game, thinking you are just participating in your own boredom. Some of you even feel you could run your own lives! How isn't that ridiculous?

So, to make these malcontents envious, and to insure your loyalty, we are offering a CASE RECORD of $20 and a button (shown here) to any student who presents an essay on "why I like being a student" to the Department of Education. An additional cash prize of $100 will be given to the pupil who best fits our definition of "good student" based on these essays. Our generosity shouldn't surprise you. After all, money is all we can give you.

Send or, better yet, deliver your essays to:

Arizona Department of Education
1525 W. Jefferson
Phoenix, AZ 85007

We're helping you help us.

For more information call 271-4301

Carolyn Warner
Superintendent
Bush spells out "War is Peace" policy

Friday, June 13, 2003 Posted: 12:29 AM EST (0520 GMT)

WASHINGTON (AP) -- Today President Bush revealed details of his "War is Peace" foreign policy initiative in a press conference today.

Putting the 'War is Peace' policy boldly into action, the Bush administration is strongly supporting Israeli hardliners in their attacks on Palestinian dissident groups.

The 'War is Peace' policy is part of a two pronged faith based 'Ignorance is Strength' initiative inaugurated by the Bush camp, the other being the successful domestic 'Slavery is Freedom' policy begun with the enactment of the Patriot Act and the creation of the Department of Homeland Security.

"We are re-writing history" President Bush told the assembled press today. "Who controls the past, controls the future: who controls the present controls the past," Bush continued. "Day by day and almost minute by minute the past will be brought up to date."

Frank Discussion’s détournement of CNN.com
Dérive—literally “drifting”, implies mode of experimental behavior linked to the conditions of urban society

Jasmine Revolution (Beijing, 2/20/2011)

View on YouTube: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DkBceA-WEmQ
Yertle the Turtle by Dr. Seuss
Mac the Turtle takes action (View from 6:34-8:00)