

Creating New Futures: Thinking Differently to Build a Better World

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A Different Way of Thinking

- ❑ To address the massive injustices in our schools/communities and larger societies, we need to be accountable to our realities.
- ❑ However, the way we think (dominant thinking patterns) limit us in terms of actually creating a more just world.
- ❑ We need to develop more complex, interconnected, dynamic ways of thinking so we can become-otherwise.



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Presentation Overview

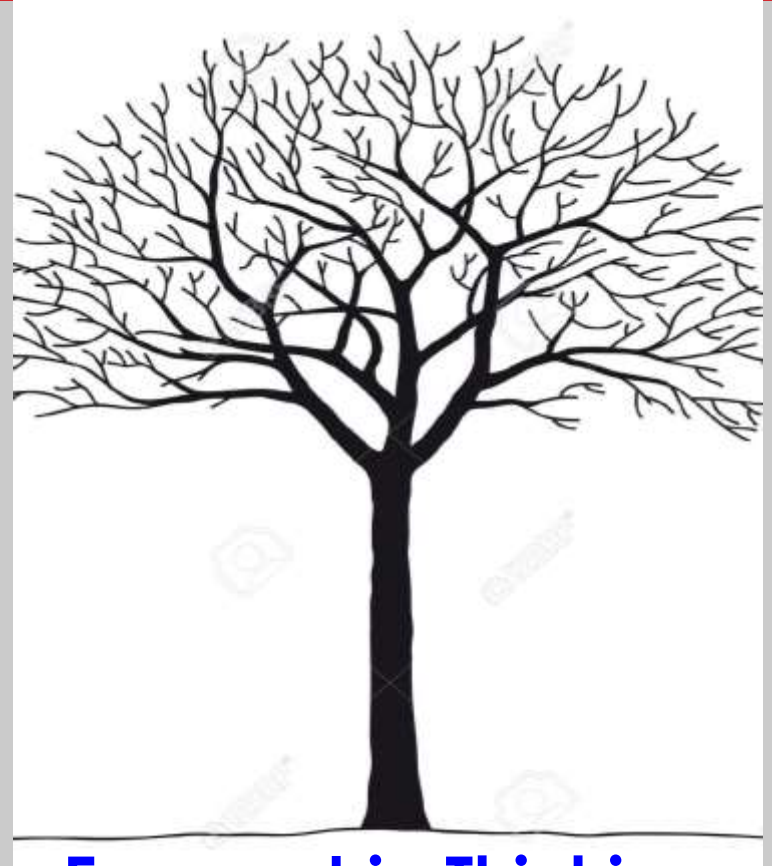
- Overview of dominant thinking and posthuman/rhizomatic thinking
- Putting theory to work: The parable of the three scholar-practitioners
- Exploring 3 key shifts in thinking: partner reading and dialogue activity



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Arborescent or Tree Thinking: “The oldest & weariest type of thought” (Deleuze & Guattari)

- ❑ “Arborescent” thinking (“Common sense”)
 - ❑ Essentialized, universal
 - ❑ Hierarchical, linear
 - ❑ Dichotomous/binary, either/or
 - ❑ Fixed, static
 - ❑ Reproduces itself
- ❑ Closes off different thinking; Reinforces the status quo
- ❑ Creates a sense of false objectivity, transcendence—“the voice from everywhere and nowhere”



Eurocentric Thinking



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Thinking Differently: From the tree to rhizome

- ❑ Posthuman, rhizomatic, or vital materialist thinking
- ❑ Consists of many heterogeneous elements, connected at many different points
- ❑ Each connection produces an expansion or differentiation
- ❑ Everything is all together (but different)
- ❑ Decentered
- ❑ Constantly changing; *vital*
- ❑ *Opens up new, previously unthought or unimagined possibilities*

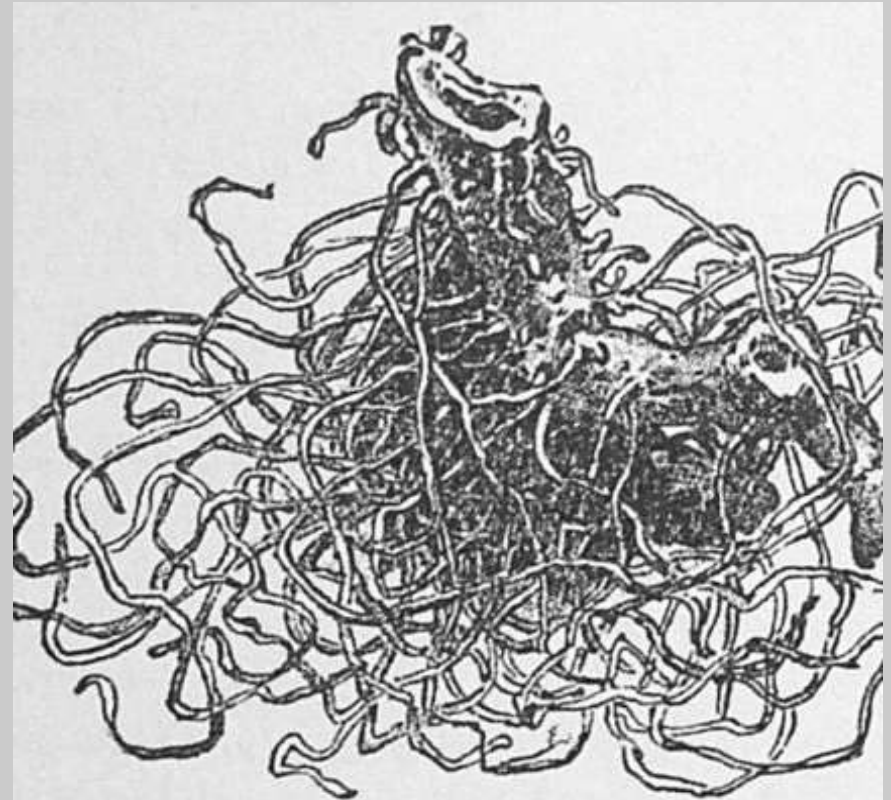


FIG. 165.
Dried Rhizome of *Caulophyllum thalictroides*
(small size).



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The Parable of the Three Scholar-Practitioners

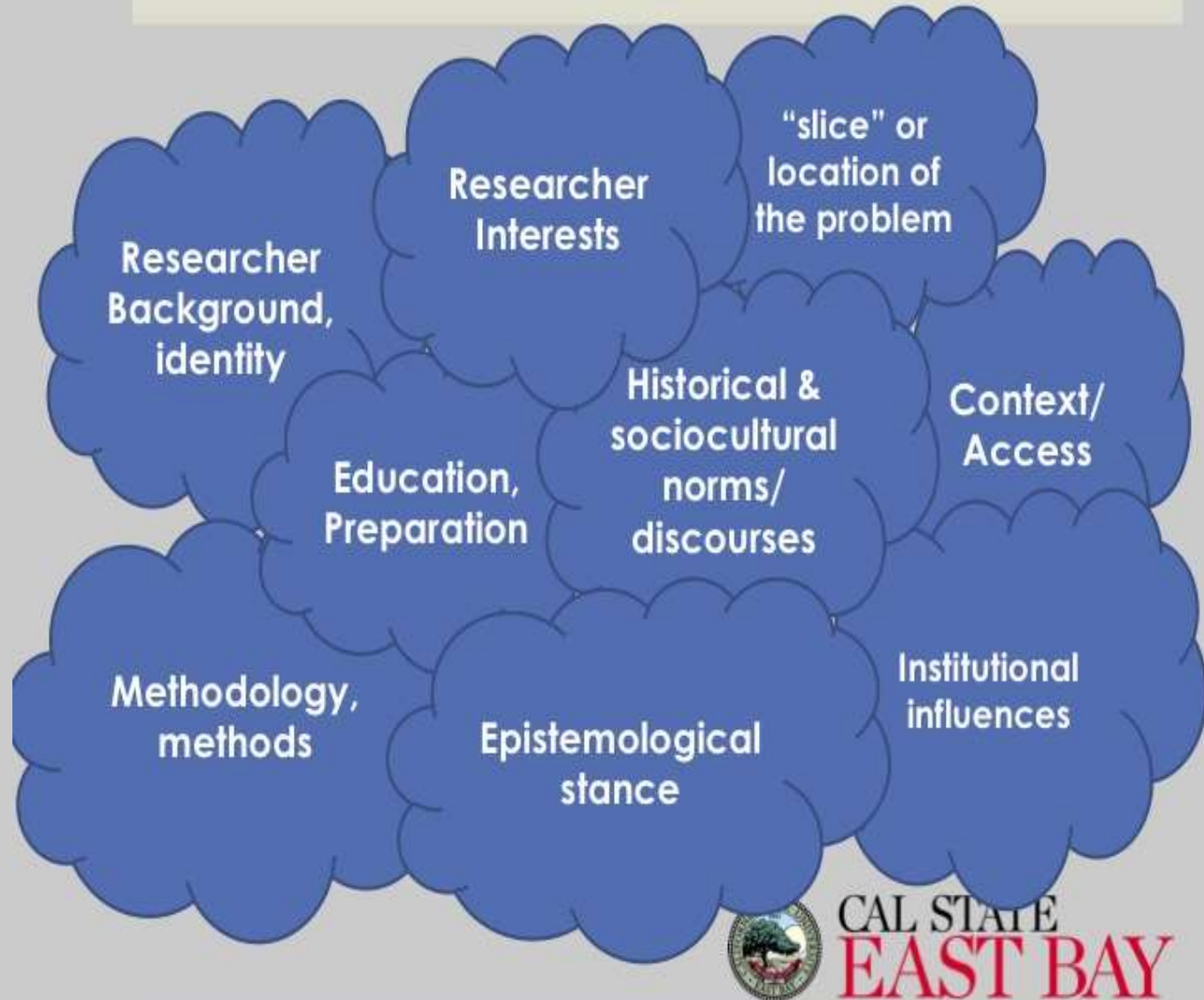
- There once were three scholar-practitioners who all were in their last year of an EdD program. They were also all interested in the same problem: disparities in academic achievement between students of color and their White peers. However, they all designed very different studies that constructed very different knowledge.
- At your tables, divide up the 3 readings as equally as possible.
- Read your narrative, and then work with a partner (or trio) who read the same one to answer the questions on the back.
- Share out and discuss across stories.



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A Research Assemblage

- Research as collectively produced by an assemblage
- Distributed agency
- Human and non-human
- Mapping out interactions, influences, power relations



We are arguing for a different type of worldview with significant shifts:

- ▣ From dualism (separation) to **monism** (all together, but different)
- ▣ From *isolated, autonomous (human) individuals* to **multiplicities or assemblages of human-nonhuman elements with distributed agency**
- ▣ From *objective, neutral, universal* → to **accountable, political, situated**



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Key Shifts for Thinking Differently

- ▣ Read the three paragraphs describing these key shifts.
- ▣ If you have a good handle on the ideas, move on to the questions and answer at least one.
 - ▣ *Work with your program team if you are near each other.*
- ▣ After reading, if you need more time to dialogue and discuss the concepts themselves, find a partner at your table or nearby.
 - ▣ *What are your key takeaways? What do you still have questions about?*
- ▣ Share out at your table.



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Entrypoints for thinking differently

- ▣ This way of thinking entails some radical shifts
- ▣ But there ARE entrypoints from common practices in CPED
 - ▣ *Action research, participatory forms of research*
 - ▣ *Autoethnography and intimate scholarship*
 - ▣ *Social Constructivist and sociocultural forms of learning*
 - ▣ *“Practitioner-scholar”*



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Connections to Practice

- ❑ Can help develop systems perspectives
 - ❑ Organizations as systems with multiple components that interact
 - ❑ Systems that perpetuate inequalities
- ❑ A more nuanced view of self/identity
- ❑ Developing value for difference, plurality of culture, language, knowledge/ways of knowing
- ❑ Solidarity, critical mass, movement-building



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Being Courageous, Strategic, and leveraging our privilege & connections

- ▣ Attending to our situated power relations to be strategic about what we do
 - ▣ *Fighting for change always comes with cost*
 - ▣ *What are we able to do in our contexts? Where do we have agency?*
 - ▣ *Those of us who are privileged- how can you leverage your privilege to be political?*
- ▣ Leveraging CPED as a space of possibilities for connections and expansions



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Connecting and Expanding... Even Through Walls



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Key References & Further Reading

- Braidotti, R. (2013) *The Posthuman*. Polity.
- Barad, K. (2007). *Meeting the Universe Halfway*. Duke University Press.
- Deleuze, G. & Guattari, F. (1987). *A Thousand Plateaus*. University of Minnesota Press.
- Strom, K. (2015). Teaching as Assemblage. *The Journal of Teacher Education*, 66(4), 321-333.
- Strom, K. & Martin, A. (2017). Thinking with theory in an era of Trump. *Issues in Teacher Education*, 26(3), 3-22.



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FILM SCREENING TONIGHT, 6PM



Movie Screening & Critical Dialog: **Fruitvale Station (2013)** in our **Current Political Moment**

Central Questions:

What and who does Oscar Grant represent? How is his story relevant to our work today?

Who gets to be humanized and allowed redemption?

What are the implications on us to cultivate the critical, humanizing, & capacity building conditions to counter the themes brought up in Fruitvale Station?