The Distinction between Morals and Ethics: Discourses of Sex that Reciprocate with Students’ Learning Needs within the Toronto District School Board and other Secular School Boards of Ontario

by

Jair Matrim

A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts
Department of Theory and Policy Studies
University of Toronto

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Abstract

By analyzing surveys, census data, policies and curriculum, it is demonstrated that the Toronto District School Board’s policies for equitable, anti-heterosexist, and anti-homophobic curriculum become stymied by how students and sex are routinely treated as subjects of moral control in curriculum. According to Gilles Deleuze's (1988) interpretation of Baruch Spinoza's (1632-1677) philosophical works, the distinction between morals and ethics is also the difference between slavery and freedom. Together with theoretical perspectives of sex and sexuality from Michel Foucault, Judith Butler and Gayle Rubin, the distinction between morals and ethics works to specify how particular discourses of sex can work to enslave or to empower students. Comprehension and circulation of the distinction between morals and ethics is proposed to increase the potential for curriculum to reciprocate with students’ individual learning needs, support the free and autonomous organization of desire, and promote the possibility of a democratic, inclusive, pluralistic, and secular society.
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Introduction

The Toronto District School Board (TDSB) is the largest school board in Canada and the fourth largest in North America. Its almost 600 secular\(^1\), public schools serve over 250,000 annually. The TDSB (2000) *Equity Foundation Statement & Commitments to Equity Policy Implementation (Equity Policy)*\(^2\) sought to create anti-heterosexist, anti-homophobic, and social equity policies that worked to include sex and gender minorities in the curriculum.\(^3\) The language used in the *Equity Policy* (2000) was distinct from other anti-discrimination discourses in the Canadian public service policies that preceded it. For example, antidiscrimination discourses pertaining to sexed and gendered minority groups not only named homophobia, but heterosexism as well. The *Equity Policy* (2000) did not advocate for formal equality, or equal opportunity either, as had so many anti-discrimination policies before it, but rather the TDSB used the word “equity” exclusively to propose a new type of approach to anti-discrimination work related to sexed and gendered minorities (Toronto District School Board, 2000). The TDSB’s use of the word “equity” in the policy, instead of “equality”, suggested that, regardless of students’ differences, the TDSB would support all students on an individual basis. This was thought to challenge the notion of one universalizing practice of school efficiency in which all students are only treated equally no matter their individual differences or disadvantages. However, given some of the related policies and empirical studies that have accumulated since the Equity Policy was invoked in 2000, it is unclear how much the *Equity Policy* has worked to produce social equity or anti-heterosexist and anti-homophobic curriculum.

The 2006 *TDSB Student Census*, (Yau, 2007), conducted just five years after the *Equity Policy* (2000) became part of TDSB policy. This census suggested an alarming absence of

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\(^1\) I use the word “secular” to remind that I am not responding to all situations of schooling in Toronto, Ontario, Canada- only the situation of public secular schools that are publically funded and attached to the prerogatives of constitutional discourses.

\(^2\) This is referred to as the *Equity Policy* (2000) for the remainder of the thesis.

\(^3\) I mean by sex and gender minorities: bisexual, queer and questioning, transsexual, androgynous, intersex, two-spirited, lesbian and gay identities and other organizations of self and/or identity. I am referring to the manner in which these social identities become minoritized as a sexed and gendered body differently from heterosexist expectations. When I do not refer to policies for sex and gender minorities, I often take the opportunity to remind the reader of how these particular differences become minoritized.
equity as well as of anti-heterosexist and anti-homophobic work in the curriculum. For example, of all Grade 9-12 students surveyed (n=69,179), 69% of students indicated that they “rarely/never” heard about the experiences and achievements of “lesbian, gay and transgendered” people in their curriculum and only 12% of students indicated that they were regularly taught about “lesbian, gay and transgendered” people in their curriculum (Yau, 2007). This question was also specifically omitted for Grade 7-8’s, although these grades also participated in the census study. The census finding appears to indicate that the TDSB perpetuates heterosexist discourses of sex by not making more representations of sexed and gendered differences become more visible in the curriculum even after the adoption of the Equity Policy (2000).

Similarly, two studies published in 2008, one conducted in the City of Toronto and the other throughout the Province of Ontario, found that discourses of sex in schools are not meeting students’ learning needs. The Toronto Teen Sex Survey: Improving Sexual Health Services for Diverse Toronto Youth (Flicker et al., 2009), and the Safe Schools Action Team Report on Gender-based Violence, Homophobia, Sexual Harassment, and Inappropriate Sexual Behaviour in Schools (Safe Schools Action Team, 2008) included an investigation of what students learn at school and what they would like to learn. Generally, both studies reported that students want to learn more about healthy relationships, sexual diversity, homophobia and gender-based harassment, and HIV/AIDS. Neither of these studies was limited to consulting with sex and gender minorities alone. In both studies, students indicated that they perceived negative discourses of sex in their school curriculum. Students complained about a curriculum that only seeks to highlight risk factors related to discourses of sex, such as unplanned biological reproduction, bodily changes in puberty, and sexually transmitted diseases. In both studies, students also indicated that discourses related to sex are rarely addressed, and in some cases, students reported not receiving any specific education related to sex in schools at all (Flicker et al., 2009; Safe Schools Action Team, 2008).

How can it be that TDSB schools are failing (~50%) to provide discourses of sex that work to meet the needs of students, or that are even adequate to the TDSB’s own stated policies to include sex and gender minorities? In order to closely examine how this failure works I outline these studies in greater detail in Chapter 1. I first situate these aforementioned census and surveys within the Ontario Provincial Curriculum, and then within specific policy discourses that target sex and gender minority students of the TDSB. I examine the provincial curriculum to
understand whether or not it is situated to meet students’ learning needs, and to make sense of the census and surveys. I also review the *Equity Policy* (2000) to determine its effectiveness in achieving greater equity for sex and gender minorities, and to examine how its commitments to anti-heterosexist work might be understood as enacted or not.

During my undergraduate studies, I learned of the *Equity Policy* (2000) at the TDSB and felt encouraged to research topics related to sex and education because the policy outlined a need for this type of critical work. Now, in 2011-12, the TDSB has a school space for sexed and gendered minority students called *The Triangle Program*. It also has an *Equitable and Inclusive Schools Team*, a *Gender-Based Violence Prevention Team*, a *Human Sexuality Program*, sex-positive conferences such as the *Converge* creativity conference. The TDSB also encourages gay-straight alliances in several schools, and gives schools the option to invite Planned Parenthood of Toronto to conduct workshops that address topics related to sexual health and healthy relationships. And of course, TDSB schools are characterized by the sex-positive actions of individual teachers and support workers everywhere and this is what leads schools to be a positive situation for many different students of all backgrounds and social situations. Even though many grassroots practices related to sex and sexuality are elective opportunities for principals, teachers, and students, both in groups and individually, initiatives for inclusion of sex and gender minorities have a strong legal sanction within the Board through the existence of *Equity Policy* (2000). Other related events affecting Canadian classrooms such as *Pink T-Shirt Day*, a student initiative organized by David Shepherd and Travis Price in Cambridge, Nova Scotia in 2007, has culminated into an annual social media campaign across Canada. The *It Gets Better* project, initiated in 2010 by media columnist Dan Savage and his partner Terry Miller, is a social media project on the popular website *www.youtube.com* that provides videos of celebrities and individual people responding to the occurrence of suicides and bullying among sexual minority youth. Hopefully, these have provided important moments for anti-homophobia work in the classroom but data after 2008 is presently unavailable.

At the TDSB, the *Equity Policy* (2000) has permitted the work of the sexed and gendered communities to go forward unimpeded by the interests of competing social interest groups, though the full impact of the *Equity Policy* (2000) in relation to anti-discrimination work for sexed and gendered minorities is not entirely clear at the present time, I focus upon the relative failure of the Board to work to meet the needs of its students between 2000, since the Equity Policy was enacted, and 2006, when the census data was collected (Yau, 2007). Given the
evident failure of schools to meet students’ learning needs with any consistency over these six years, and also given the limitations of the *Equity Policy* (2000) to more effectively work to include sexed and gendered minority groups, as evidenced by empirical data (Yau, 2007). I have explored how it might be possible to provide a useful and principled framework to intensify the possibility of meeting students’ learning needs in relation to discourses of sex in curriculum. I have also speculated about how to systemically prevent or decrease instances of heterosexism, rape, sexual assault and harassment, all forms of gender-based violence and marginalization, child abuse, homophobia, and bad feelings related to sexual conduct in ways that prevent these activities from becoming “necessary” and/or possible. In order to intervene in this complex situation, and put schools to work to deliberately enhance reciprocity in all social relations, there may need to be a new formulation, or a new *social contract* between students and schools, one that ensures that sex becomes conducted as a critical discourse in which all students are included, and in which all students have the opportunity for their learning needs to be satisfied by the curriculum.

My investigation in Chapter 1 leads me to a follow-up TDSB curriculum and policy instrument called *Rainbow and Triangles: Challenging Homophobia Curriculum: A Curriculum Document for Challenging Homophobia and Heterosexism in the K-6 Classroom* (Toronto District School Board & Elementary Teachers of Toronto, 2002) which the TDSB published only two years after the Equity Policy became formalized. *Rainbow and Triangles* (2002) outlines the struggles that sexed and gendered minority students endure, as evidenced by bullying, discrimination, and statistics that show higher than average rates of suicide. This resource states the TDSB’s goal is to intervene in response to incidents of homophobia and heterosexism, and offers several lesson plans as examples of how anti-discrimination practices might work. Additionally, *Rainbow and Triangles* contains a list of books, internet resources, and community agencies related to anti-discrimination work for sexed and gendered minority groups. Oddly, the document contains a note in Appendix A that states, “. . . anti-homophobia education is not sex education. It does not involve the explicit description or discussion of sexual activities” (Toronto District School Board & Elementary Teachers of Toronto, 2002, p. 92). The TDSB rereleased this resource in 2011 with the new title, *Challenging Homophobia and Heterosexism: A K-12 Curriculum Resource (Challenging Homophobia and Heterosexism)* (Toronto District School Board, 2011). The above quote also appears in the new document, though it now forms part of the *Introduction* rather than the *Appendix* as it did before.
The reader is invited to take this single excerpt from both editions of these curriculum resources as a significant clue to questioning how it can be that discourses of sex are not adequate to students’ learning needs and are failing to be practiced in accordance with policy aims for the inclusion of sexed and gendered minorities. The notion of separating sex acts from the identities of sexed and gendered minorities within the student body is only idealistic. This distinction between the acts and identities works to construct discourses of sex that are “explicit” and treats the acts of these sex and gender identities as if they necessitate authoritative control and censorship. Even though a “description or discussion” of heterosexual sex is necessary for understanding the reproduction of our species, this is not outlined as “explicit” in any curriculum resource of the TDSB. Challenging Homophobia and Heterosexism (Toronto District School Board, 2011) specifically treats the “description or discussion” of the sexual activities of sexed and gendered minorities as “explicit” and prohibitive for classroom discussion. If minoritized sexed and gendered identities continue to be subject to censorship in school spaces by how their sex is constituted as “explicit”, it hardly seems possible that the existence of sexed or gendered identities can be valued as a positive subject in school spaces. Could it be that by treating discourses of sex as requiring acts of censorship, schools repeatedly re/create the conditions in which these discourses must fail to meet students’ learning needs? Could it be that by treating discourses of sex as requiring censorship, schools cannot adequately address the inclusion of sexed and gendered minorities? The inability to meet students’ learning needs in relation to discourses of sex in school, perpetuating negative discourses of sex, and omitting the representation of sex and gender minorities from curriculum, are significant problems that require novel solutions. After defining the problems at stake, I provide an overview of various thinkers who organize discourses of sex into a critical framework for analysis, such as Michel Foucault (1990), Judith Butler (1990; 1993) and Gayle Rubin (1993). I borrow from these theoretical perspectives in Chapter 2 for an understanding of what “heterosexism” might mean in relationship to anti-discrimination policies such as the Equity Policy (2000), and how different understandings of an anti-heterosexist curriculum might affect or limit activity around the inclusion of sex and gender minorities. My tasks will shortly become directed towards mapping a synthesis of how discourses of sex work with the distinction of morals and ethics, but these scholars were specifically selected to help pluralize a view of some of the problems at stake in moral discourses of sex.
It was through studying Michel Foucault’s (1990) various works that I was exposed to the concept that social power is conducted\(^4\) in discourses\(^5\), which means that the ideas that we have about what is useful and important to our lives is also communicated in the things we do and act upon. The institutions we create in our communities conduct a particular discourse (a form of power) within the community through our individual actions. The legitimacy of the power to affect others authoritatively, is closely based upon what people consider good or bad, right and wrong and/or tolerable as a form of power in our society, and this has everything to do with what individual people think is true or untrue, useful or useless, legitimate or illegitimate, as a form of knowledge/power in our social relations. Foucault’s (1990) *History of Sexuality*, first published in 1978, is used as a main source. This text is most notable for pointing to how the “repressive hypothesis” of early sexual development models of psychoanalysis treated sex as if it has a fundamental character or attribute of its own, and reified how sex becomes constituted by how it has been put into speech as something to control. Foucault (1990) provides an analysis of how sex works as a discourse of power, and what Foucault means by this is that how we think and organize an idea of what sex might be becomes communicated, or conducted, from one person to another, in our complex social relationships. Foucault provides a critical basis for further inquiry in this thesis.

I cite Judith Butler (1990; 1993) for an understanding of sex and gender roles as a performative social act. Butler describes how gender categories become a compulsory social performance of heterosexuality, and also as a strategy for pleasure in social relations. Butler

\(^4\) Foucault (2007) explains that to “conduct is the activity of conducting (conduire), or conduction (la conduction) if you like, but it is equally the way in which one conducts oneself (se conduit) [sic], lets oneself be conducted (se laisse conduire)[should be se laisser conduire] , is conducted (est conduit), and finally, in which one behaves (se comporte) as an effect of a form of conduct (une conduite), as the action of conducting or of conduction (conduction)” (Foucault, 2007, p. 258). Power and knowledge are conducted in the discourses of our social relationships.

\(^5\) The word *discourse(s)* is used repeatedly in this thesis. Discourses, are always conducted, or communicated, from one person’s activity to another, as a form of power. This is not limited to acts of speech or language but rather all forms of communication in architecture and various forms of media and aesthetics. Moral discourses, ethical discourses, policy discourses, theological discourses, sexual diversity discourses, curriculum discourses and discourses of sex are terms that I use repetitively. Note that I do not say “sexual discourses”, which can sometimes confuse the reader into thinking that sex has its own intrinsic character such that it has a particular discourse that is native to it. I refer instead to what is normatively referred to as diverse forms of ‘sex and sexuality’ as *discourses of sex*, which suggests that there are disparate discourses that take sex as an object of power and control, and organize its distinctive domain, as sex, in our ideas and concepts. This can lead to difficult sentences at times, but these idiosyncratic choices are also necessary to describe the forthcoming complexity at stake in the distinction of morals and ethics and its connection to sex and sexuality.
views gender as a performance that becomes repeated and re-enacted, and appears as normal and natural under the guise that heterosexual sex is the origin of all sex. Resultantly, Butler offers a key analysis for understanding how heterosexist discourses work in relation to gendered categories.

Gayle Rubin (1993) also provides a view of heterosexist discourses, argues for the need for a new theory of sexual politics and provides elaborate descriptions of various moral hierarchies of sexual values. Rubin demonstrates how moral judgement and persecution only leads to further violence and erotic injustice in our social relations. I examine Rubin’s various hierarchies of moral value in order to complicate a perspective of how heterosexism might be seen to work, as well as to provide the reader with an overall account of the problems caused by moral discourses of sex. I also take some of the stated challenges within Rubin’s work very seriously and I attempt to resolve these issues; such as to create a theory of erotic justice that condemns the “barbarity of sexual persecution” (p. 9).

After researching academic works related to discourses of sex, I began to research how schools, which inevitably conduct discourses of sex upon students, might work to interrupt their own authoritative practices in relation to both students and discourses of sex. After detailing the problem of ineffective school policy and curriculum in Chapter 1, and looking at the stakes of heterosexist discourses of sex in Chapter 2, in Chapter 3 I specifically examine the situation of students in relation to discourses of sex in schools. I found the problem of student freedom in relation to discourses of sex to be difficult, because secular public schools are always in relationships of power over youth. Politically, youth are vulnerable, and economically they are dependent bodies in our society. For example, as students, they are not situated in schools to have much power to shape their own curriculum by systems of democratic participation except through the use of other related authorities such as parents and trustees. Since schools are situated to conduct the powers of the state, schools are not necessarily well-situated to meet students’ learning needs if the state does not also permit youth to be politically autonomous or economically independent, or if the state also has a contested discourse of sex that fails to meet

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6 School authority is described as a vaguely distributed group whose identity is largely unknown and unclear to school students. I see students as relatively powerful when they create political action in schools, but I am concerned with how students become situated as relatively powerless subjects of adult and state authorities such that their needs can be ignored.
the needs of its citizens. Considering the apparent condition that heterosexist discourses of exclusion remain prevalent, the widespread belief that students are developmentally vulnerable to discourses of sex, and that students are situated as relatively powerless subjects of social control, I argue in Chapter 3 that students are not particularly advantaged to challenge the educational system or participate in forms of social governance in ways that demand that their learning needs be met in relation to sex and sexuality. Since school authorities work to conduct power upon students (even if only to protect them), and since sex is taken as the subject of much moral preoccupation and danger in social discourses generally, school authorities also work implicitly to treat discourses of sex and their students as subjects of control. For example, teaching queer pedagogical theory, or frankly any sex education at all, might be too provocative and politically challenging in classrooms where children are politically and economically powerless, and signified as being developmentally vulnerable to discourses of sex, and if heterosexist silences and verbose acts of censorship continue to be standard practice anyway. These factors combine to create very difficult obstacles for imagining discourses of sex that can defy authority and subjugation, and yet are able to be conducted as free and autonomous relations for students to organize for themselves in these spaces. Since school authorities conduct discourses of sex inevitably, deliberately or not, it is only a matter of knowing what is worth learning in relation to sex, commensurate with the constitutional goals of Canadian society. In order to intervene in this complex situation, I hypothesize that there needs to be a new formulation, or a new social contract between students and schools, one that ensures that sex becomes conducted as a critical discourse in which all students are included, and in which all students have the opportunity for their learning needs to be satisfied by the curriculum.

This thesis is a philosophical attempt to solve a political and social problem. What I mean by “philosophical” is to develop a creative, critical, and artistic organization of ideas and concepts to bring a problem into view and resolve this problem. I have organized the first half of this thesis into three chapters in the following pattern. Chapters 1, 2 and 3, all take an approach to the topic that is informed from the understanding of the distinction between morals and ethics that I will later outline in Chapter 4, 5 and 6. I first organize three domains for this critical investigation that embody schools, sex, and students. I examine school policy in Chapter 1, discourses of sex in Chapter 2, and the situation of the student body in relation to the conduct of school authorities and discourses of sex in Chapter 3. I am looking for structures in discourse, and for ideas and concepts that might limit schools’ capacity to meet students’ learning needs in
relation to discourses of sex. In short, I am looking for how schools, sex and students are all affected by, or also situated within moral forms of discourse. Taking all three together is essential to this form of critique. This first analysis and framework over three chapters helps me outline some significant challenges in anti-discrimination policies related to discourses of sex. The first three chapters set the stage for the main thesis question which is, “How can schools conduct discourses of sex to support the free and autonomous organization of desire in student’s lives, and within the context of the on-going production of a secular, inclusive, pluralistic, and democratic society?” The answer is deceptively simple, and that is to stop subjecting sex and schools to moral control; however, theorizing the frameworks that are needed to understand this principle of critique, the necessity of this goal, and how this might actually become possible in school practices, is the difficult task that this thesis also seeks to accomplish.

At first I turned much of my research efforts towards the work of Michel Foucault (1990) because it was from Foucault’s work that I first learned to think of sex as a discourse of power. I describe Foucault’s concepts of the “repressive hypothesis” and “sexualis scientia” to situate heterosexism as a discourse of true sex, and critique how the Equity Policy (2000) uses the concept of heterosexism. I found Foucault’s (1990) multiple notions of power very difficult to apply to solve the riddle of how schools might work productively for social freedom, because it was not clear, at least in my reading, what discourses of sex work for freedom, and which other discourses might work only to reaffirm subjugation. Foucault’s critical approach appears to avoid affirming any form of authoritative power in relation to discourses of sex. Given how schools are situated to exercise power over students, I could not easily resolve my questions concerning a useful pedagogical intervention with discourses of sex from Foucault’s work alone. I was looking rather for a theory, or philosophy that would make what counts as good and bad discourses of sex more explicit to thought, and that could make good use of school authority in relation to discourses of sex in our society. I needed a theory that was going to outline a framework concerning how authority, power and control can be used in a positive way that reciprocates with the freedom and autonomy of each individual at the same time.

7 It appeared like a paradoxical situation in my thoughts at an earlier time because I was used to thinking about authority in a way as to always resist power, and as if it always consists of moral control, or controlling someone else in a negative or arbitrary way.
After more research, I encountered philosophical works by Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari in master’s course work for the preparation of this thesis. Deleuze and Guattari’s philosophical concepts of the “body without organs” (Deleuze & Guattari, L'Anti Oedipe, 1972) and the “plane of immanence” (Deleuze & Guattari, Mille Plateaux, 1980) appeared to have a phenomenal power to identify how particular concepts, and theoretical frameworks of thought, can turn against life and cause sadness everywhere. I could sense that their philosophy could offer a way to treat discourses of sex positively, and yet intervene in those forms of thought that produce sex as a subject of social control. These works, however, were extremely difficult and intricate texts, overflowing with rich philosophical considerations. I soon discovered Deleuze’s (1988) study on Baruch Spinoza’s works called Spinoza: Practical Philosophy and I became astounded by its sudden simplicity, dynamism and profundity. I had never seen a theory so efficiently connect the production of knowledge, to a production of desire, leading to an explanation of how people become bad, what that might mean, and how people become good, and what they might mean, or more precisely, that offered such a useful explanation for how good and bad ideas become conducted through people and into our social relationships. I use it to imagine discourses of sex that are useful for schools.

The 17th-century philosopher Baruch (or Benedictus) Spinoza is described by Deleuze, 1988) as one of the first thinkers in the historical record of Western philosophy to reject the mind/body dualism argued by his contemporary René Descartes. Spinoza (1996) conceived of a distinction between morals and ethics as the difference between a life of slavery and life of freedom, and he used this argument as the basis of his critique of Descartes’ philosophy. Deleuze (1988) has lauded Spinoza’s work as a “philosophy of life” (p. 17). In Spinoza: A Practical Philosophy, Deleuze (1988) provides an exegesis of Spinoza’s philosophical work, concentrating on the distinction between morals and ethics. I have found this distinction, as organized by Deleuze and Spinoza and in debate with Descartes, to be a productive and extremely comprehensive conceptual framework for understanding how sex becomes subject to social control. It is somewhat intimidating that I need to work with Spinoza’s philosophy, a philosopher whose works were censored during his lifetime, and a philosopher who was also, excommunicated by some major religious communities of his time and place, but Deleuze’s revival of this work gives me ample hope that there is much more use to be found with this specific distinction in critical theory. The theories that can be extrapolated from the distinction of morals and ethics, together with Michel Foucault (1990), Judith Butler (1990; 1993) and Gayle
Rubin (1993), finally reveals a very explicit and comprehensive theory of the production of desire as either good or bad for individual freedom and autonomy, and the quality of reciprocation in our complex social relations. The explanation of this distinction between morals and ethics can account for how desire, sexual or not, is produced and enacted in our social relationships.

In some ways the distinction between morals and ethics is a most abbreviated guide to an extremely complex world of a philosophy, a critical distinction that aspires to create a critical capacity for thought, such that thought about what life is and is not works to create the possibility of a life of freedom. The distinction between morals and ethics is simply the difference between slavery and freedom, and this is its most basic premise. The difference between slavery and freedom can become disguised and enigmatic within the manifestation of ideas and concepts in the disparate discourses of our society. The distinction reveals two competing discourses because it helps to illuminate forms of power that depend upon our obedience, rather than our understanding. By making a distinction between our capacity to obey and/or to understand, the distinction between morals and ethics points to how our power to act in our lives can become augmented and diminished in our social relations. Furthermore, the distinction between morals and ethics can provide a framework for outlining a theory of social problems related to moral discourses of sex in our society. It can deepen an understanding about how educational policy and curriculum related to discourses of sex can become more useful for students’ individual lives and become based upon, or become reciprocal with, students’ individual learning needs.

Unlike moral values that act upon students and can only demand their obedience and enslavement, helping students understand how they are ruled, or also, how they can be free, helps students to better reorganize their own lives for their own tolerability. Moral discourses do not necessarily work to meet students’ learning needs at all, but rather they work to act upon students in ways that demand their obedience, enslavement, and negative discourses of sex, and make reciprocal social relationships a very particular challenge in our society. Morals reflect limited relations of reciprocity such as between ideas, or concepts that work to enslave thought, and cause a life of enslavement. Ethical principles are only more or less a critique of moral values but this understanding of the principle of reciprocity in all things works to better support production of freedom and autonomy for all individuals in social relations. Ethical principles of relating, critiquing, and understanding can help uncover how we are ruled in ways that are
sometimes disguised to thought, or that are not yet fully explicit in their overall consequences for social relations.

I employ the words reciprocate, reciprocal, and reciprocity to utilize a basic principle of correspondence between cause and effect in Deleuze’s (1988) reading of Spinoza’s works. Deleuze (1988) mentions “reciprocity” briefly in his treatment of Spinoza’s work when he defines an *essence* as “the essence of something with which it has a relation of reciprocity” (p. 64). Deleuze describes essences as “parts of power…all compatible with one another without limit, because all are included in the production of each one, but each one corresponds to a specific degree of power different from all the others” (p. 65). Essences can be imagined to be all the affective capacities that a body has to become affected and to become active-parts of its powers. As the most foundational explanation of my use of this word, reciprocity, Spinoza invokes an axiom of epistemological parallelism according to which the “knowledge of an effect involves the knowledge of its cause” (Deleuze, 1988, p. 88). This basic correspondence between cause and effect is necessary for any thought to be possible. If thought becomes subjected to something it does not really understand, or takes effect for cause, then there is no longer coherence with its various powers to persevere, and according to Deleuze (1988), freedom and autonomy and an individual capacity to reciprocate with others becomes limited in social relations (p. 88).

Deleuze (1988) describes Spinoza’s principles as relating to four or five iterations of a basic principle of correspondence or reciprocity between all things and that gives some shape to a philosophy of immanence. There is “one substance for all the attributes…one nature for all bodies, one nature for all individuals, [and] a nature that is itself an individual varying in an infinite number of ways” (p. 122). There are no ideals to which people are to become subjected in a philosophy of immanence, but rather only principles of interconnection that are necessary and practical from a particular point of view. This point of view is the affective capacity drawn from understanding the distinction of morals and ethics, and the very different forms of reciprocity that they each offer. The critical capacity offered by the distinction between morals and ethics is also comprehension of how correspondence works between cause and effect in the critical context is shaped by the situated confusion of extrinsic causes and reversal of cause and effect.

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8 Deleuze is purposely imprecise. There are hypothetically infinite arrangements of these principles but this critical context is shaped by the situated confusion of extrinsic causes and reversal of cause and effect.
thought to shape a life of freedom or enslavement. This correspondence between one thing and another is not an ideal, but rather, Deleuze (1988) demonstrates that correspondence between cause and effect in thought is actually necessary and practical for the possibility of reciprocity in social relations, as well as for the freedom, autonomy, and the capacity to organize a life we can tolerate for ourselves. I will discuss this further in chapter 4.

In a philosophy of immanence, there is the model of the body, and this is diametrically opposed to claims of transcendent and extrinsic causes concerning the body. For example, the works of Emmanuel Levinas (1969) ties together a notion of transcendent and extrinsic causes with a notion of reciprocity so that an individual is imagined to be subjected to the obligations posed by sheer existence of the other, and to the inescapable ‘alterity’ of this otherness, which is very interesting. The philosophy of immanence within Deleuze’s (1988) works on Spinoza, however, and the concept of reciprocity I’ve extracted from a notion of correspondence between cause and effect is alien to Levinas’ use of transcendent causes, (1969) and thus the notion of reciprocity that I will use is only specific to a life of understanding without obligation or obedience. On the other hand, Deleuze (1988) recognizes Nietzsche as a philosopher of immanence by directly citing his works. Deleuze and Spinoza are not entirely isolated in how they employ a notion of reciprocity and correspondence, but their usage is very specific to philosophers of immanence, or wherever a model of immanence is used.9

I also employ a notion of reciprocity in connection to the political discourses in which Toronto schools are situated to reflect the constitutional principles that seek to be ‘democratic, secular, pluralistic, and inclusive’.10 If Toronto schools are also expected to promote, or preserve the possibility of a “democratic, secular, pluralistic, and inclusive” society, and if reciprocal social relations are conducive to these forms of governance, then indeed, it is necessary and

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9 Many philosophers have some aspect of reciprocity, or equivalence, or immanence between thought and life, but their use of the concept of reciprocity may also be quite different. Reciprocity appears in ancient western philosophy in the works of Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and Epicurus, and with modern philosophers such as René Descartes, Immanuel Kant, Edmund Husserl. In the past century, major philosophers, Friedrich Nietzsche, Henri Bergson, Mikhail Bakhtin, Ludvig Wittgenstein, Simone De Beauvoir, Alain Badiou, Jean Baudrillard, and Emmanuel Levinas refer to some notion of reciprocity in their work.

10 I situate democracy, plurality, inclusion, and secularity as political ideals of the governing policies of the TDSB, in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. See 1.4 for more information regarding governance in the schools of Toronto, Ontario, Canada.
practical (not idealistic) for these schools to reciprocate to the learning needs of each and all students. The practice of ethics related to discourses of sex in education is based upon recognizing students’ desires as the basis of required pedagogical action.

The relationships between school authority and disparate students, between knowledge and the freedom to act, a discourse of sex and a body, policy and practice, and between one body and another, can all benefit from a framework of reciprocity so that either one is not necessarily imagined to be subjected to the other. The notions of reciprocity that I use appear in many different contexts, while always referring to some form of correspondence nonetheless. There is always correspondence between an idea and a life, but an individual body can become poisoned by extrinsic causes linked to moral and transcendent ideals, a reversal of cause and effect in thought, or by this body becoming acted upon in a way that diminishes its power to persevere. I take the notion of correspondence between cause and effect relations and connect it to forms of reciprocation between people in social relations, just as Deleuze (1988) interprets from Spinoza’s work on the distinction between morals and ethics. I further extend this notion of correspondence and reciprocity between “the concept and life” in the philosophy of immanence that Deleuze describes of Spinoza’s work, to also describe the interconnections between schools, discourses of sex, and students (Deleuze, 1988, p. 130).

Understanding the complexities and implications of the distinction between morals and ethics and the framework of social reciprocity that it can provide is difficult. There are so many ways that cause and effect in thought has become distorted, hidden, or enigmatic in a way that affects social relations between people, between schools and students, and between policies and practice. In relation to discourses of sex it is especially complex. This distinction is explained in Chapter 4, and Chapter 5 demonstrates an explicit distinction between good and bad discourses of sex with the framework that Deleuze provides to discuss morals and ethics. Chapter 6 applies the distinction between morals and ethics to propose a new, principled framework for discourses of sex that work to meet students’ learning needs and are worthy of the secular public schools of Toronto, the city with Canada’s largest pluralistic, inclusive, and democracy-seeking urban society.

The distinction between morals and ethics is a critical and affective capacity and this has discursively affected how I have created the methodological approach to this thesis. The following chart, also provided in the Appendix provides an overview of some of its consequences for thought.
Selected area of investigation alongside the distinction between morals and ethics from Deleuze’s (1988) summary of Spinoza’s life and works in *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, in order to solve the problem of a curriculum that seeks to be inclusive with discourses of sex but is not reciprocating with students’ learning needs. Adapted by Jair Matrim © 2012.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Toronto District School Board (TDSB)</th>
<th>Discourses of sex affecting Toronto society</th>
<th>Toronto students within the TDSB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Morals</strong></td>
<td><strong>Ethics</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited reciprocity(^{11})</td>
<td>Reciprocity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obedience</td>
<td>Understanding</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enslavement</td>
<td>Empowerment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being</td>
<td>Becoming</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjection</td>
<td>Autonomy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will power</td>
<td>Necessity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judgement of good and evil</td>
<td>Judgement of good and bad</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mind/Body</td>
<td>Body</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ego/Id/Superego</td>
<td>Self or body</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transcendent causes</td>
<td>Immanence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values</td>
<td>Principles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-secular</td>
<td>Secular</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exclusive</td>
<td>Inclusive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risks sad passions</td>
<td>Enables joyful activity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{11}\) Life can only have ‘reciprocity’ with concepts and ideas that affirm subjection, and this can be caused by a lack of correspondence between cause and effect in thought.
I select evidence that maps a very specific problem at stake, and then I use this selected evidence and other scholarly works to show how the problem can be resolved. The problems at stake are discourses of moral values surrounding the school, sex, and the student-child, and the solution to these problems necessitates a clarification of the principle of reciprocity in all pedagogical acts. In response to the complex issue of schools failing to meet students’ learning needs in relation to discourses of sex, I have chosen a methodology that supports the philosophical framework of my conclusion. The distinction of morals and ethics is my method of noticing what matters in the relationships between schools, discourses of sex, and individual students. I notice moral discourses in schools, concerning sex and sexuality, and the student body and I describe how they lead to a life of subjection and enslavement. For example, the statistical occurrence of teenage pregnancies is not something that is relevant to this research, but what students report as their learning needs related to teenage pregnancy is of paramount importance. Taking this example further, to overcome challenging situations involving teenage pregnancy in students’ lives, I would argue that schools must first create the pedagogical conditions for students’ individual learning needs to be taken seriously.

The final policy recommendations in Chapter 6 represents a cautious intervention to the production of a subversive discourse of sex in schools, without asserting a singular authoritative pedagogy, but it works to frame these moral and authoritative discourses as the on-going conflict of sex and sexuality in western society and in discourses of public schooling. A principle of reciprocity does not privilege moral laws above the learning needs of students and this method is the only way that multiple discourses of sex can exist in the same social space without privileging one type of moral value over another. The distinction between morals and ethics represents a capacity for critique, enables the situation that students’ desires are taken seriously in school curriculum, and thus, teaching and learning the distinction is also my foremost recommendation. It is demonstrated that making a distinction between morals and ethics makes power explicit, supports all stakeholders in education to reciprocate with students’ learning needs, supports the free and autonomous organization of desire in students' individual lives, and promotes the possibility of a democratic, inclusive, pluralistic, and secular society.
Chapter 1
A Prohibitive Curriculum that Excludes

1.1 The 2006 Student Census of the TDSB

In 2007, the Toronto District School Board reported on a 2006 Student Census, which included a question related to the representation of sex and gender minority groups in curriculum for Grade 9-12 students (Yau, 2007). The 2006 Student Census was given to Grade 7 and 8 students (n=36,261) as well but this specific question about the representation of sex and gender minorities in curriculum was omitted for these students. Of the remaining 69,179 Grade 9-12 students surveyed, only 12% of students indicated that they were often taught about “lesbian, gay and transgendered” people in curriculum by answering yes over no on the census form (Yau, 2007). 19% of students reported they “sometimes,” learned about the “experiences and/or achievements” of sex and gender minority groups while 69% of students indicated that they “rarely/never” heard about these experiences and achievements (Yau, 2007). Considering that sexed and gendered minority visibility greatly increased in western popular culture throughout the late 90’s, and reached a crescendo in Canada in 2005 when the Supreme Court of Canada awarded the right to same-sex marriage, it is interesting that only 69% of students rarely heard about sex and gender minorities in curriculum. Given popular entertainment with gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered protagonists, diverse Internet communities and widely accessible commercial pornography, a thriving sex and gendered community in Toronto, and large Pride festivities in Toronto for over a decade, perhaps the findings from the 2006 Student Census indicates that most students disproportionately learn about “lesbians, gay, and transgendered” people everywhere else but school.

The census finding that 69% “rarely/never” heard about the experiences and achievements of “lesbian, gay and transgendered” peoples might also suggest that heterosexist discourses of exclusion, particularly in Toronto’s urban schools, is suddenly more palpable for students, because of the increased visibility of sexual diversity everywhere else in our social discourses than ever before. I also realize that even if students were exposed to such information in the curriculum, they might not have noticed it or considered it to be particularly relevant. Perhaps too, the students perceived this census as an opportunity to send a signal to the Board about the need for the inclusion lesbian, gay, and transgendered people even if some activity is already
occurring. Perhaps these numbers are an insufficient indicator of inclusion of “lesbians, gay, and transgendered” peoples in curriculum. No matter what spin I can offer to understand the empirical findings of the 2006 Student Census, there is still the specific finding that TDSB schools continue to perpetuate heterosexist discourses by perpetuating the invisibility of any other form of sexual life in curriculum. Even the decision not to include 39,261 Grade 7 and 8 students is a notable exercise of power in the methodology of the census because of how it works to ignore these students, for nebulous reasons, if not also, with the presumption that not soliciting students could somehow protect them from undue harm, or perhaps also, protect the census from political controversy. I interpret this census to suggest that practices to include sex and gender minority representation in the curriculum, based in policy, are reaching a small group of students, rather than a majority of students. Other empirical evidence, however, suggests that students are simply caught up in negative and evasive discourses of sex in curriculum that work to ignore students’ individual learning needs regardless of whether they are minoritized individuals or not.

1.2 2009 Toronto Teen Sex Survey

The Toronto Teen Sex Survey: Improving Sexual Health Services for Diverse Toronto Youth (Flicker, et al., 2009) organized teenage peer-interviews, and indicated a strong interest among Toronto teens to learn more about sexual orientation, healthy relationships, and safe sex. The study conducted 90 youth-facilitated workshops in community-based settings, and collected 1,216 surveys from a diverse cross-section of youth; its main organizing group was Planned Parenthood of Toronto. Marginalized and minoritized youth were specifically targeted by the survey methodology, but these surveys were not limited to students who identify as a sex and gender minorities. The survey report determined that popular media, social agencies, families, and peer groups, but ironically, not schools, were teens' key sources of sexual information. 62% of Toronto youth reported they had received some “sexual health education” in their school curriculum (Flicker, et al., 2009, p. 24). Given this type of information however, it suggests that it is not only sex and gender minorities that are left out of the curriculum, but rather, deliberate conversations related to sex are avoided such that some students have never learned about sex in curriculum. While this survey suggests that 38% of respondents did not have sex education specifically at school, quite astonishingly, the report indicated that 8% of Toronto youth received no education about sex at all— from any source (Flicker, et al., 2009, p. 24). I contest this finding as it is stated because surely these 8% students learned something; that sex is not to be talked
about. The finding that 38% of respondents did not indicate significant exposure to discourses of sex in school curriculum could suggest that discourses of sex occur so infrequently in curriculum that 8% of students have never been involved in this curriculum, or perhaps also that discourses of sex were communicated either implicitly or explicitly, but it was so insufficient that students cannot recall its relevance in their lives. I take the finding that 8% of students reported that they never learned anything about sex anywhere, including in school, as further indication that there are significant groups of students whose learning needs are not becoming investigated, and prioritized in school spaces. For example, even though some sex education has been provided in some classrooms affecting 62% of Toronto youth to indicate this in the survey, youth who reported that they learned about sex in school also indicated that the sex education curriculum is often lacking in relation to their learning needs. The investigative team of the Toronto Teen Sex Survey offered this analysis in reference to survey evidence collected from youth researchers concerning curriculum.

“In general, Canadian youth lack comprehensive knowledge of the risks associated with unprotected sexual activity and the necessary skills required to ensure the protection of their sexual health. At the same time, youth complain about their sexual health education claiming it focuses too much on biology, offers too little too late, provides few opportunities for discussion, is often non-existent, and is seldom sex-positive in nature. Another concern is its relatively heavy focus on the risks and problems of adolescent sexuality to the exclusion of sexual desire and healthy sexual relationships. In addition, the ‘one-size-fits all’ approach to sexual health education fails to address factors that influence the sexual health needs and practices of diverse youth communities. The emphasis on vaginal intercourse as “real sex” limits the possibility for considering other forms of sexual pleasure and excludes the sexual experiences of sexually diverse youth. Cultural practices at odds with standard sexual health education are seldom addressed. Given all of these limitations, students have identified an urgent need for more effective sexual health education.” (Flicker, et al., 2009, p. 26)

Toronto Teen Sex Survey: Improving Sexual Health Services for Diverse Toronto Youth identified that discourses of sex are organized around biological reproduction, and the adolescent body as a subject of control; they do not work adequately to discuss healthy sexual relationships and non-heterosexual sex. In general however, and not specific to schools alone, the Toronto Teen Sex Survey determined that “there is a significant discrepancy between what youth are learning about and what they want to know” (Flicker, et al., 2009, p. 27). For example, the survey analysis identified that “healthy relationships, HIV/AIDS and sexual pleasure are the top three sexual health topics youth want to learn about” and that “healthy relationships were the only topic in the top three choices across all age groups. Sexually diverse youth also included sexual orientation in their priority list” (Flicker, et al., 2009, pp. 27, 29).
1.3 2008 Safe Schools Action Team report

The inability of curriculum to actually meet students’ needs with discourses of sex with any regular consistency is not specific to schools in Toronto or the Toronto District School Board at all, but rather, this situation occurs across the province. In 2008, the Ontario Ministry of Education produced a report entitled *Shaping a Culture of Respect in Our Schools: Promoting Safe and Healthy Relationships* (Safe Schools Action Team, 2008). The Safe Schools Action Team consulted with various stakeholders across the province, and sought to make contact “especially to students”, and determined that curriculum representing sex and gendered identities and curriculum related to sex is inadequate (Safe Schools Action Team, 2008). Here is an excerpt of the Safe Schools Action Team findings.

“During our consultations there was concern expressed about the health instruction currently being provided in many schools. Participants repeatedly told us that this part of the curriculum is not being implemented consistently across the province. In fact, many students told us they had very little time to discuss issues related to sexual health and healthy relationships, and in some cases students stated that they had not been exposed to any sexual health curriculum at all.

In particular, participants told us that the curriculum does not fully address issues of gender-based violence, homophobia, sexual harassment, and inappropriate sexual behaviour. They pointed out that these topics are not directly addressed in the Health and Physical Education (H & PE) curriculum and generally are not effectively integrated and reinforced in subjects across the curriculum. In many cases these topics are just “add ons” to an already full course schedule. We heard that this is because insufficient time is allocated to sexual health topics, and because teachers tend to avoid, or are uncomfortable discussing, a number of key issues.

Participants felt that education about topics such as healthy relationships and sexuality, gender stereotyping, and homophobia are introduced too late in the curriculum. This is a concern, as we heard that students are engaged in sexual activity at younger ages.” (Safe Schools Action Team, 2008, p. 11)

This report confirms that sexual discourses in Ontario school curriculum are not meeting students’ learning needs, such that students are noticing omissions, and exclusions of particular topics. Notice that students have identified their learning needs related to discourses of sex in schools. “Sexual health, healthy relationships... gender-based violence, homophobia, sexual harassment...inappropriate sexual behavior... [and] gender stereotyping” (Ibid) were all identified as deficit experiences in curriculum. It is difficult to distinguish this type of group-discussion research, from the discursive effects of the study-investigators, since investigators asked particular questions that organize what is, or is not, relevant for discussion and analysis to some degree. The analysis of the findings from these group discussions across the province, however, appears to correspond to the findings of peer-based interviews in the *Toronto Teen Sex Survey* (2009).

A desire to understand more about healthy sexual relationships, and homophobia, and a need for a more positive discourses of sex specifically appear in both the findings from the provincial
group-survey, and the Toronto survey. Curricula addressing homophobia, violence and sexual diversity are also highlighted in these studies as not adequate for students’ learning needs, and the 2006 Student Census also specifically indicated that students do not regularly learn of “lesbians, gays and transgendered” people. The Toronto Teen Sex Survey: Improving Sexual Health Services for Diverse Toronto Youth also identified that school curriculum is not teens’ main source of information about sex (Flicker, et al., 2009, p. 24). It would appear that students report learning about discourses of sex everywhere else, except from the official activities of school curriculum. I have also found it most informative that students identify healthy relationships as one of their foremost interests in both the Toronto Teen Sex Survey: Improving Sexual Health Services for Diverse Toronto Youth (2009) and in the Shaping a Culture of Respect in Our Schools: Promoting Safe and Healthy Relationships (Safe Schools Action Team, 2008, p. 11), because what can it possibly be about sex, and students, or also schools, that makes “healthy (sexual) relationships” such a mystery to students in Toronto and Ontario schools?

These studies suggest that schools are specifically organizing discourses of sex to limit what students can know, and not know. Discourses of sex in schools are less significant compared to what individual youth already report knowing about sex, and compared to other non-school discourses that work to teach youth about sex (Flicker, et al., 2009). Students did not specifically indicate schools as the preferred places to learn about discourses of sex but youth in Toronto indicated that they are more comfortable with a variety of professional and authoritative sources, and perhaps this is an area for further research (Flicker, et al., 2009). Students do not learn what they end up learning elsewhere but also, it’s more insidious than a mere situation of underserved students because school discourses teach, at the very least, that sex is to be a controlled discourse in school spaces. It is little wonder, therefore, that students have identified a specific need to know about how healthy sexual relationships work because if schools treat sex as a negative issue and work to conduct sex as a subject of moral control, healthy sexual relations may appear particularly mysterious and elusive to understand.

Schools work to conduct a discourse of sex, either to meet students’ learning needs or not, and despite whether students want to learn about discourses of sex at school or not, and thus, whether one agrees that sex should be deliberately talked about in school or not, silence is at least as instructive as verbosity. Whether schools are where students prefer to engage in discussions about sex is something that I hope that students could determine on their own. If, however, sex persists as a subject of censorship and prohibition in schools, this implies that
students are already situated in discourses of sex that are subject to moral control and students are systematically dissuaded from developing positive attitudes about sexual activity. What I also observe in the findings of these different surveys is that there is a general lack of reciprocity between what students need, and what schools are actually offering as part of their curriculum.

Students identified some of their learning needs in The Toronto Teen Sex Survey (Flicker, et al., 2009) and the Safe Schools Action Team (2008), and they have specifically identified how these needs are not being met. I have selected these studies because both surveyed students on the basis of their individual needs, and the methodology of each study sought to examine whether students’ learning needs are becoming addressed in curriculum or not. Since I am first attending to the question of how discourses of sex in curriculum can fail to be reciprocal to students’ learning needs, I have omitted the citation or use of studies that detail the noticed occurrences of sexual assault and rape, homophobia, gender-based violence, and the alleged prevalence sex and gender minorities in Toronto schools. Empirical approaches related to discourses of sex in schools that do not involve having students articulate their own needs in the research methodology, in my view, run the risk of becoming authoritarian about what is and what is not important to know about sex, and resultantly, they work to exercise power upon students about what is and what is not important to know about sex and students’ learning needs. I selected the 2006 Student Census (Yau, 2007) to demonstrate the gap between policy and practice for the representation of sex and gender minorities in curriculum anyway, because it also provides a good example of the problem that exists in how school-based research can work to exercise power upon students. By withholding the 2006 Student Census question concerning the representation of sex and gender minorities in curriculum for Grade 7 and Grade 8s, the research methodology of the census acted to replicate the anxieties that exist around issues of sex and sexuality (Yau, 2007). I used the findings of the 2006 Student Census (Yau, 2007) to demonstrate the potential gap between pedagogical outcomes for the representation of sex and gender minorities, and the language of the existing policies (Equity Policy, 2000).

I am focused upon discourses that block reciprocation, between educational policy and school practices, and between students’ learning needs and discourses of sex in curriculum. Evidence that organizes data sets on the basis of students’ input, and uses students to shape the research questions is more useful for my purposes, and indeed, this is the only type of research that matches the principle of ethics that will be explained in Chapter 4, 5, and 6. I turn my attention now to how provincial curriculum might work to determine this situation for students.
1.4 Provincial curriculum

The governance of Toronto District School Board is formally organized into four tiers of legislative public governance including federal, provincial, municipal, and its own school board politics. As with any public institution in Canada, courts play a significant role in interpreting legislation and policies in federal, provincial, and civil courts of law. Toronto is the largest city in Canada, and the politics of Canada’s largest school board have been central to the changing civic rights discourses of the nation. The exercise of municipal, provincial, and federal law, and different forms of community governance, in a general manner, works to shape how knowledge is conducted in schools as a legitimate exercise of social power in Canadian society. Canadian secular public schools, as is natural given school board funding and the political apparatus of their governance, attempt to reflect the national consensus of citizenship in their curriculum. Canada, a “first world” nation, with an arguably mixed economy of free market capitalist, and socialist principles, and Toronto specifically, seek to present themselves as places where diversity is not only tolerated for consumption and labour, but where social diversity and the inclusion of all citizens is presented as the celebrated purpose of its national and secular identity.

The Toronto District School Board, and the body that preceded it (before Toronto formed an amalgamation of its suburbs), the Toronto Board of Education, has historical significance as an organization that has debated sexual discourses in schools for more than a century.\(^\text{12}\) Since Cristabelle Sethna’s (1995) doctoral dissertation provided a history of several distinct social circumstances in which sex education was realized differently as an urgent requirement for appropriate sexual development in children. Films, curriculum materials, conference notes, and public meetings were provided as Sethna’s (1995) key source materials. Sethna (1995) argued that sex instruction was heavily influenced by a late nineteenth century social purity movement that was racist, classicist, and paternalistic (p. 3). Though sex instruction was internationally conceived by feminist, medical, legal, educational, and religious discourses, “the child ignorant of sexual matters, the feeble minded child, and the juvenile delinquent” were frequently “classed, gendered, (and) racialized” and the main targets for securing the population against venereal disease (pp. 2, 5). Perhaps the most stable feature across this time period was the failure of sex to leave the private domain, in the context of it becoming a public education. Sexuality was viewed as a prolific force to be constrained from all sides, until heterosexual, monogamous, marriage, and hence only mothers and faithful fathers within private family relationships were beyond suspicion and imagined as exclusively capable to teach children about sex effectively. While sexual repression was not always viewed as a positive way to combat venereal disease, sexual knowledge was to be encoded by nature studies or inferences from scientific literature in order to be publicly appropriate. Sexual behaviour was always dubious, if not criminal, outside of heterosexual, monogamous, marriage. Most explicit perhaps, is that sex education for all of its ‘natural’ proscriptions, was not treated as a natural destiny, but rather naturalized by appropriate environments and lessons. The sex education debates in these fifty years, as interpreted by Sethna, reveals how there has been an adult preoccupation with how to manufacture a mythical ‘natural’ moral order from the production of individual heterosexual, monogamous, subjects, and for the purposes of insulating the traditional family structure.
several decades of civil rights movements, discourses related to sex have gone through many changes in our society. In schools, social changes have manifested in anti-discrimination and political civic rights discourses, HIV/AIDS and safe sex issues, and more recently safe schools and anti-bullying initiatives. The Toronto District School Board has its main curriculum developed by the Ministry of Education of the Province of Ontario, and this curriculum seeks to address sex in very particular ways.

In my research into the main documents of the Ontario Ministry of Education, I noticed that sexuality, healthy relationships, and homophobia, were sparsely mentioned throughout curricula. The organization of sex as a distinct subject topic appears scantily in other areas of provincial curriculum but it is mentioned most explicitly in Health and Physical Education. Grade 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 Health and Physical Education curricula offer the most explicit organization of sexual discourse in the curriculum (Ministry of Education and Training, 1998;1999). The Grades 5 to 8 curricula are organized under the title *Healthy Living, Growth and Development* (Ministry of Education and Training, 1998). The following are the relevant excerpts of the curriculum in relation to sex.

1.4.1.1 Grade 5

“Identify strategies to deal positively with stress and pressures that result from relationships with family and friends; identify factors (e.g., trust, honesty, caring) that enhance healthy relationships with friends, family, and peers; describe the secondary physical changes at puberty (e.g., growth of body hair, changes in body shape); describe the processes of menstruation and spermatogenesis; describe the increasing importance of personal hygiene following puberty.” (Ministry of Education and Training, 1998, p. 16)

1.4.1.2 Grade 6

“Relate the changes at puberty to the reproductive organs and their functions; apply a problem-solving/decision-making process to address issues related to friends, peers, and family relationships.” (Ministry of Education and Training, 1998, p. 17)

1.4.1.3 Grade 7

In the overall expectations, the Grade 7 curriculum is outlined as requiring teachers to “describe age-appropriate matters related to sexuality (e.g., the need to develop good interpersonal skills, such as the ability to communicate effectively with the opposite sex).” (Ministry of Education and Training, 1998, p. 18) Note above that there is an emphasis on opposite sex relationships rather than a diverse account of sexual diversity or gender as a socially and historically specific manifestation of identity. The curriculum continues to state...
“Explain the male and female reproductive systems as they relate to fertilization; distinguish between the facts and myths associated with menstruation, spermatogenesis, and fertilization; identify the methods of transmission and the symptoms of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), and ways to prevent them; use effective communication skills (e.g., refusal skills, active listening) to deal with various relationships and situations; explain the term abstinence as it applies to healthy sexuality; identify sources of support with regard to issues related to healthy sexuality (e.g., parents/guardians, doctors).” (Ministry of Education and Training, 1998, p.18)

1.4.1.4 Grade 8

“Explain the importance of abstinence as a positive choice for adolescents; identify symptoms, methods of transmission, prevention, and high-risk behaviours related to common STDs, HIV, and AIDS; identify methods used to prevent pregnancy; apply living skills (e.g., decision-making, assertiveness, and refusal skills) in making informed decisions, and analyse the consequences of engaging in sexual activities and using drugs; identify sources of support (e.g., parents/guardians, doctors) related to healthy sexuality issues.” (Ministry of Education and Training, 1998, p. 19)

1.4.1.5 Grade 9

In Grade 9, the provincial curriculum continues to address sexuality in the section of the curriculum called Healthy Growth and Sexuality. (Ministry of Education and Training, 1999)

“By the end of the course, students will: identify the developmental stages of sexuality throughout life; describe the factors that lead to responsible sexual relationships; describe the relative effectiveness of methods of preventing pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases (e.g., abstinence, condoms, oral contraceptives); demonstrate understanding of how to use decision-making and assertiveness skills effectively to promote healthy sexuality (e.g., healthy human relationships, avoiding unwanted pregnancies and STDs such as HIV/AIDS); demonstrate understanding of the pressures on teens to be sexually active; identify community support services related to sexual health concerns.” (Ministry of Education and Training, 1999, p. 10)

As evidenced by the Grade 7 curriculum, the curriculum stresses the opposite sex in terms of “healthy relationships”, but sexual diversity, homophobia and heterosexism are not named in the Grades 1-8 curriculum or the Grade 9 curriculum material, even when sex is deliberately referenced in the curriculum (Ministry of Education and Training, 1998:1999). There is not one reference to the existence of “lesbian, gay and transgendered” students or citizens in our society. The Equity Policy (2000) was indeed published after each of these curriculum documents, and no doubt, its provisions were urgent in relation to this lacking provincial curriculum. In the provincial curriculum, sex is generally treated as a risk factor, requiring abstinence, and condom use, to avoid sexually transmitted diseases and it is not addressed within a context in which it is seen to have the power to affirm students’ desires. Note that teachers are also expected to
address “healthy sexuality” expectations…after teachers have developed rapport with their students” but it is not clear if this is to restrain the teacher from psychologically harming students, or for the teacher to assess what the students are interested in learning, or just to restrain the teacher from talking about sex in a manner that invites political controversy, or perhaps all the above. (Ministry of Education and Training, 1998, p. 10). I provided evidence in section 1.3 that demonstrated how this curriculum fails to reciprocate with students’ learning needs across the province. I will now address how the Toronto District School Board/Toronto Board of Education has attempted to develop distinct curriculum and policy to address the deficits of the provincial education, and social circumstances generally, to meet students’ learning needs.

1.5 How the Equity Policy (2000) is different from other policy documents.

Tim McCaskell (2005), an employee of the TDSB, straddling job duties in policy creation, community development, and coordinating anti-discrimination activities, documented his experiences in Race to Equity: Disrupting Educational Inequality (2005). His history is a guide to recent developments in anti-discrimination policy at the TDSB; in it he describes how many government policies have addressed the inclusion of sex and gender minorities and shaped the Board's activities. For example, there is the federal Charter of Rights and Freedoms which passed legislature in 1982, countless decisions by the Supreme Court of Canada, and The Employment Equity Act of 1986 (McCaskell, 2005). Provincially, there is the provincial Ontario Human Rights Code (Ontario, 1986), the Ontario Ministry of Education (1993) had an Antiracism and Ethnocultural Equity in School Boards policy, and there is also the Violence-Free Schools policy (Ontario Ministry of Education, 1994). The city of Toronto also developed an employment policy that included gays and lesbians, even before the federal Charter of Rights and Freedoms in 1982, and the city also has an Employment Equity Policy Statement, (City of Toronto, 2000) that includes sex and gender minorities. All of these various laws and policies have all worked to affect and, in some cases, have been affected by individual actors within Toronto school board politics.

While formal equality was the language of anti-discrimination policies in legislation and in the court rooms of Canada before the early 1980's, a notion of equity was conceived in policy
in the *Royal Commission Report of Equality in Employment* in 1984 led by Judge Rosalie Abella (Abella & Canada, 1985). The term equity was first coined in relation to anti-discrimination policies as an intervention into the allegedly failing language of equality to address universalizing practices of exclusion in public institutions and in employment law in Canada. McCaskell's (2005) testament of his experiences at the TDSB, mentioned earlier, reports that *Vision 2001*, proposed by educational consultant Bill Minors (1990), or as McCaskell calls it, the “Minors' Report” (p. 140), jump-started the increasing use of the language of equity in relation to the anti-discrimination efforts towards minoritized groups at the TDSB. McCaskell (2005) describes the use of the term equity as a turning point in the discourse of anti-discrimination strategies.

“...“Vision 2001” appears to have been both bravely utopian and touchingly naive, ...The paper also reflected the increasing use of the term “equity” to describe the work we were doing....The notion of equity brought together the parallel struggles of different marginalized groups, and reiterated the need for affirmative action. Equity was not the same as equality. It was not just about treating everyone the same. It was about giving different groups what they needed to level the playing field. Equity would be measured by results- when factors such as race, gender, and cultural background were no longer correlated with differences in success” (140)

The Minors’ (1990) report also pointed to how basic equality and representation issues were still not being addressed effectively, despite innumerable policies at the board that sought to address discrimination, as it provided evidence that women and black students were still subject to social bias in both employment and curriculum. Minors (1990) also pointed to the role of the *Equal Opportunity Office*, with one affirmative action advisor for women, and a *Race Relations* advisor, as needing to expand to include other minoritized groups. McCaskell (2005) indicates that the approach of addressing anti-discrimination issues as necessitating the intervention of social equity policies changed the discourse of anti-discrimination issues at the board. The *Equity Policy* (2000) appeared to resolve fifteen years of policy debates over the distinction between formal equality and substantive equality, and the difference between equality and equity, and the limits of inclusion for sex and gender minorities in Canadian society. The *Equity Policy* (2000) appears to be the culminating result of such changes in anti-discrimination discourse at the Board. The history that I seek to organize is not based upon this exceptionality of the policy alone, though this is interesting, but rather I look to how the TDSB’s *Equity Policy* (2000) worked to treat sex as a discourse that can meet students’ learning needs or not.

I have already presented the outcomes of the *Equity Policy* (2000), in terms of a lacking representation of sex and gender minorities, and a curriculum that appears to be inattentive to
students’ individual learning needs. I will analyze the paradigm shift that the *Equity Policy* (2000) sought to present for the inclusion of sexed and gendered minorities, and then I will establish an argument for why this has not become even more effective for sex and gender minorities at the Board. I now cite the policy at length in order to demonstrate a few unique aspects of this policy intervention at the TDSB.

“The Toronto District School Board values the contribution of all members of our diverse community of students, staff, parents, and community groups to our mission and goals. We believe that equity of opportunity, and equity of access to our programs, services, and resources are critical to the achievement of successful outcomes for all those whom we serve, and for those who serve our school system. The Board recognizes however, that certain groups in our society are treated inequitably because of individual and systemic biases related to race, colour, culture, ethnicity, linguistic origin, disability, socio-economic class, age, ancestry, nationality, place of origin, religion, faith, sex, gender, sexual orientation, family status, and marital status. Similar biases have also impacted on Canada’s aboriginal population. We also acknowledge that such biases exist within our school system.” (Toronto District School Board, 2000)

To define its commitment to equity, the *Equity Policy* (2000) readily acknowledges that the Board is permeable to “individual and systemic biases” related to notions of social difference that exist in society. Note also the distinct language of “sex, gender, [and] sexual orientation” as the sites of social difference, which seeks to include all sex and gender minorities who are subject to social bias. Equity is further defined in the following paragraph.

“The Board further recognizes that such inequitable treatment leads to educational, social, and career outcomes that do not accurately reflect the abilities, experiences, and contributions of our students, our employees, and our parent and community partners. This inequitable treatment limits their future success and prevents them from making a full contribution to society.” (Toronto District School Board, 2000)

“Inequitable treatment” is cited as the cause of a deficit in “educational, social and career outcomes” that prevents students, subject to social bias, from reaching their full potential. Notably, the language of the *Equity Policy* (2000) departs sharply from the logic of meritocracy where the merits of the individual, and individual choice, are evaluated against universalizing standards of what counts as achievement. It is not individual differences and choices that determine educational outcomes, according to the assertions of the *Equity Policy* (2000), but rather the way particular bodies become subject to “inequitable treatment” that determine “educational, social and career outcomes”. In this way, the policy situates the success of each student to be in direct relation to the quality of equitable treatment in educational practices, and not as a deficit that belongs to the student’s capacity to act.
“The Toronto District School Board has approved an Equity Policy (2000) Statement which requires that ideals related to anti-homophobia and sexual orientation equity be reflected in all aspects of organizational structures, policies, guidelines, procedures, classroom practices, day-to-day operations, and communication practices. The Toronto District School Board policies, guidelines, and practices shall ensure that the needs and safety of all students, employees, trustees, parents, volunteers, visitors, permit-holders, contractors, and partners are addressed. These shall reflect the diverse viewpoints, needs, and aspirations of members of these communities, particularly those of groups whose voices traditionally and systemically have been marginalized and excluded on the basis of their sexual orientation. This includes lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, two-spirited, transsexual, and transgender people and their families.” (Toronto District School Board, 2000)

The policy also explicitly addresses the sex and gender minorities that it seeks to protect, by taking the representational strategies of community politics seriously. “Lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, two spirited, transsexual and transgender people and their families”, are listed as the identities of sexual difference. The Equity Policy (2000) also suggested specific strategies for curriculum development.

“3.4. Curriculum
Curriculum is defined as the total learning environment, including physical environment, learning materials, pedagogical practices, assessment instruments, and co-curricular and extra-curricular activities. A curriculum that strives for sexual orientation equity provides a balance of perspectives. The Toronto District School Board acknowledges that inequities have existed in the curriculum; therefore, the Board is committed to enabling all lesbian and gay students, and students who identify themselves on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity, to see themselves reflected in the curriculum. The Board is further committed to providing each student with the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviours needed to live in a complex and diverse world by:

• 3.4.1. ensuring that the principles and practices of anti-homophobia and equity on the basis of sexual orientation permeate the curriculum in all subject areas;
• 3.4.2. examining and challenging homophobic and heterosexist curriculum in order to ensure inclusivity;
• 3.4.3. developing a process to determine whether discriminatory biases related to sexual orientation and gender identity are present in existing learning materials, programs, or practices;
• 3.4.4. ensuring the review and/or modification of materials that promote stereotyping; the review and modification of programs that promote stereotyping, discrimination, homophobia, or heterosexism; and the removal of materials or programs that promote hatred or violence against gays, lesbians, or other people who identify themselves on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity;
• 3.4.5. providing adequate resources and training to assist all staff in becoming agents of change; to use curriculum effectively in order to promote critical thinking; and to challenge homophobia and heterosexism;
• 3.4.6. ensuring that classrooms, resource centres, school libraries, audio-visual collections, and computer software contain appropriate materials and resources that accurately reflect the range of Canada’s lesbian and gay communities, and other communities who identify themselves on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity;
• 3.4.7. developing guidelines to ensure that displays and visual representation in all schools and workplaces of the Toronto District School Board reflect the cultural heritage and include the contributions of the lesbian and gay communities, and other communities who identify themselves on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity;
• 3.4.8. supporting student leadership programs in anti-homophobia education and equity;
• 3.4.9. developing and providing both academic and service programs and supports in all curriculum areas to meet the needs of underachieving lesbian and gay students and other students facing discrimination because of their own or their family members’ sexual orientation or gender identity, including programs to encourage all students to have high expectations and to consider non-traditional gender roles and work;
  o 3.4.9.1. ensuring that the contributions to Canadian and world history and historiography from gay and lesbian communities and other communities who identify themselves on the
basis of sexual orientation or gender identity are included accurately in all aspects of the curriculum;
- 3.4.9.2. ensuring that curriculum materials and learning resources are allocated to challenge hate groups and hate propaganda against the lesbian and gay communities, and other communities who identify themselves on the basis of sexual orientation, gender, and/or any other social identity.” (Toronto District School Board, 2000)

‘Heterosexism’ was also mentioned seven times throughout Antihomophobia, Sexual Orientation, and Equity within the Equity Policy (2000) and it marks the first time that a commitment to identify and eliminate heterosexism has been incorporated into the policies of a Canadian public institution. While this entire subsection is not cited, the following excerpts demonstrate the language of the policy in addressing heterosexism, and/or heterosexist bias.

“Board Policies, Guidelines and Practices
The Board shall provide an appropriate mechanism to ensure accountability for achieving these goals by....3.1.2. identifying and eliminating homophobic and heterosexist biases and barriers in Board policies, guidelines, day-to-day operations, protocol, and practices.” (Toronto District School Board, 2000)

“Guidance
The Board shall respond effectively to the needs of lesbian and gay and other students who identify themselves on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity by...3.7.4.1. working with lesbian and gay students, other students who identify themselves on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity, and their families to identify career options that historically have excluded them and help them to choose academic paths that will allow them to reach their full potential and succeed in a traditionally heterosexist society.” (Toronto District School Board, 2000)

“Staff Development
“The Toronto District School Board is committed to on-going staff development in antihomophobia and sexual orientation equity for trustees and Board staff and will assist them to acquire the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviours to identify and eliminate homophobic and heterosexist practices by...3.9.5. training and empowering employees to deal effectively and confidently with issues of homophobia and heterosexism.” (Toronto District School Board, 2000)

I find the concept of ‘equity’ helpful for a critical practice of social justice in education for the inclusion of minoritized social identities. The Equity Policy (2000) did not however address the circumstances in which sex is a prohibited discourse, nor did it privilege the relevance of students’ learning needs in relation to discourses of sex in school spaces. The Equity Policy (2000) mainly works to address the need for the representation of sexed and gendered minorities in curriculum. As I have pointed out however, sex and gender minorities are rarely represented in curriculum (Yau, 2007) and students’ learning needs are not being met in relation to discourses of sex no matter their sex or gender identity (Safe Schools Action Team, 2008; Flicker, et al., 2009). By taking the findings of all of these studies together, the under-representation of sex and gender minorities in public schools appears to occur alongside the
situation that many, if not all, students’ learning needs related to discourses of sex are not being met and are not investigated or prioritized in curriculum practices or even considered noteworthy in the language of anti-discrimination policies. The failure to represent sex and gender minorities in the curriculum of the TDSB is therefore not only connected to how sex and gender minorities are realized to exist or not with rights language in equity policies, but also to how discourses of sex are realized as necessary or not in public schooling, and how students’ learning needs are realized as relevant or not in relation to discourses of sex in curriculum.

I will not linger on the shift from equality to equity in relation to the representation of sex and gender minorities in the discourses of sex in public schooling any further, although I have demonstrated how the concept of equity is situated in Canadian public policy, and I have pointed to the irony of a long-awaited inclusive policy for sex and gender minorities that has, in some measurable ways, failed to change curriculum. I examine the shift in policy language from anti-homophobia to anti-heterosexism in the Equity Policy (2000) instead, since this analysis will begin to uncover the kind of attitudes and perspectives that I think prevent, and block the representation of sex and gender minorities from occurring very often in curriculum.

The Equity Policy (2000) was also not only seeking to redress violent acts of homophobia, but the term heterosexism was used. Heterosexism remains undefined in the policy but it is the first time the concept appears in discrimination policy at the TDSB, or in any policy bearing on the operation of the TDSB. The former Equity Policy (2000) outlined a commitment to social equity that worked to challenge homophobia and heterosexism together, and by naming heterosexism specifically, the policy is quite distinct. Even though it is not defined in the document, it is significant to how I will begin to assess the outcomes, and limitations of this policy in practice in Chapter 2. Could it be that what counts as the representation of sex and gender minorities in school curriculum is still feared, misunderstood, or perhaps also ignored, since discourses of sex are still maintained as a moral and prohibitive subject?

1.6 Challenging homophobia and heterosexism in curriculum at the TDSB

There is one final document, or rather two documents, issued twice, that I would like to address before I begin to introduce how a critical view of heterosexism can provide a framework to intensify discourses of sex that work to be reciprocal to students’ learning needs. A follow-up curriculum and policy called Rainbow and Triangles: Challenging Homophobia Curriculum: A
Curriculum Document for Challenging Homophobia and Heterosexism in the K-6 Classroom was published by the TDSB in 2002 as a resource. This document outlines the struggles that sex gender minorities experience from discrimination and prejudice, as evidenced by bullying, discrimination and suicide statistics. The resource outlines its goals to intervene in homophobia and heterosexism, and provides a number of examples of anti-discrimination lesson plan in curriculum. I will be focusing my analysis on the note in the Appendix (Appendix A) that claims, “Anti homophobia education is not sex education. It does not involve the explicit description or discussion of sexual activities” (Toronto District School Board & Elementary Teachers of Toronto, 2002, p. 92). The document was updated in 2011 and this new release was entitled Challenging Homophobia and Heterosexism: A K-12 Curriculum Resource. Besides the obvious expansion to include higher grades, the notes from the Appendix A in the 2002 document, can now be found in the central introduction of the updated and revised curriculum resource (Toronto District School Board, 2011, p. 3). Here is a full excerpt that states the purpose of the updated 2011 document, which was also, partially produced from Appendix A of the 2002 document.

“Anti-Homophobia Education: An Overview

Parents/guardians/caregivers and community members often express concerns about engaging in anti-homophobia education with students, especially young children. Some of these concerns are based on misinformation. Here are a few questions and responses that you, as educators, might find useful when dealing with your own issues and concerns or those of your parent/guardian/ caregiver communities concerning anti-homophobia education.

For further information, please also visit: http://www.galebc.org/homophobia myths.pdf

What Does Anti-Homophobia Education Look Like?

Anti-homophobia education is no different from education to combat harassment and discrimination related to race, religion, gender, disability, or class. People will only be treated with respect if the biases, stereotypes, prejudices, myths, and negative ideas about them are dispelled.

Furthermore, students, teachers, and administrators must have first-hand information and understanding of the experiences of groups that have been underserved, misrepresented, and discriminated against. All this requires education, which in the context of addressing homophobia and heterosexism means anti-homophobia education.

For example, in the younger grades, when students are discussing or reading about different kinds of family arrangements, a storybook that portrays same-sex families may be included. Later, when students are learning about common stereotypes and misconceptions about a variety of minority groups, discussion about common stereotypes and misconceptions about LGBTQ people may take place.

By senior public school, when name calling and teasing connected to difference is often a problem, anti-homophobia education may involve reading or hearing a story about how it feels to be teased or treated badly because a young person or her/his parents/guardians/caregivers are LGBTQ.
Sometimes, usually at middle school or high school level, a panel of LGBTQ youth from different cultural backgrounds might be invited to a class to describe how they feel about their lives and answer students’ questions.

As they get older, students may study the contributions of LGBTQ people to society in a variety of fields, just as they study the contributions of other groups.

**What Anti-Homophobia Education Is NOT!**

Anti-homophobia education is *not* sex education. It does not involve the explicit description or discussion of sexual activities.

Anti-homophobia education does *not* “corrupt” children by introducing topics beyond their understanding. It is age-appropriate, usually conducted as part of material about other equity-seeking groups, and conforms to provincial education guidelines for different age levels.

Anti-homophobia education does *not* encourage children to become lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, two-spirited, or queer. Sexual orientation (whether one is or will be attracted to people of the same or opposite sex) is deep-seated and personal, and cannot be changed or influenced by reading a book or hearing a presentation.

Anti-homophobia education does *not* teach children that their parents'/guardians'/caregivers’ religious values are wrong. We live in a very diverse society. From a very young age, children learn that different religions and different families believe in different things. For example, learning that different groups have different dietary rules does not teach children that the diet required by their parents/guardians/caregivers or their religion is wrong.

**What Are The Goals Of Anti-Homophobia Education?**

Anti-homophobia education is about respect of difference and recognition of the human rights guaranteed by the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, and the TDSB *Human Rights Policy* to LGBTQ people and communities. It is no different from education about the human rights of other equity-seeking groups.

It is education that helps prepare all young people to grow up as productive and constructive citizens in the diverse society of the City of Toronto. As such, it allows the TDSB to meet its Mission Statement in providing a context where students “acquire the knowledge, skills, and values to become responsible members of a democratic society.”

Moreover, it is about addressing the underlying causes of homophobic and heterosexist bullying, harassment, and discrimination that are part of gender-based violence. It acknowledges the need to both react to and intervene whenever there are actions taken that impact negatively on the culture of the school, as well as work proactively to ensure that students, staff, and administrators gain an understanding of the associated biases, stereotypes, and prejudices that underpin these actions.” (Toronto District School Board, 2011, pp. 3,4)

**1.6.1 Sex negativity as an ongoing problem for educational policy.**

Note that the *Challenging Homophobia and Heterosexism: A K-12 Curriculum Resource* (2011) document specifically identified the TDSB mission statement, which requires that students “acquire the knowledge, skills, and values to become responsible members of a democratic society”. The resource also situated its own capacity to act in curriculum within federal and provincial laws pertaining to human and civil rights for sex and gender minorities. Also, the policy outlines that it is committed to ensuring “that students, staff, and administrators
gain an understanding of the associated biases, stereotypes, and prejudices that underpin these actions” (Toronto District School Board, 2011, pp. 3,4). Oddly however, and what I find entirely contradictory to these goals, is the specific note that “Anti homophobia education is not sex education. It does not involve the explicit description or discussion of sexual activities” (Toronto District School Board, 2011, p. 3). This single sentence raises a number of difficult questions about the merits of anti-homophobia education while also selectively treating non-heterosexual sex as potentially “explicit” and thus also, worthy of censorship by school authorities. Anti-homophobia education is discussed as if it hinges entirely on the notion of sexed and gendered identity alone, and has nothing to do with, for example, the performances and activities of minoritized sexed and gendered identities. So, the Challenging Homophobia and Heterosexism: A K-12 Curriculum Resource has some very bizarre statements about how anti-homophobia education is supposed to work even while it treats discourses of sex as negative and prohibited in curriculum.

In the Challenging Homophobia and Heterosexism: A K-12 Curriculum Resource the sex acts of sexed and gendered minorities are specifically organized as something that is worthy of censorship but there is no understanding communicated of how “descriptions or discussions” of heterosexual “activities” may otherwise be privileged to appear as normal, celebrated and naturalized in the curriculum of, for example, gym and science classes (Toronto District School Board, 2011, p.3). This sentence in Challenging Homophobia and Heterosexism: A K-12 Curriculum Resource claims to seek the inclusion of sexed and gendered minorities, but it does not quite anticipate how these sexed and gendered social identifications may be linked to social and political activities that may challenge heteronormative assumptions and that can be interpreted as sexual or “explicit” from other social positions. I suspect however that the logic that separates “anti-homophobia” identity from an “explicit description or discussion of sexual activities” is very strategic to the forms of control at stake in this rhetoric. The formulation here is perhaps only to control activities related to sex so that no one has to fear that children are becoming incited to sexual activity, or becoming “brainwashed” but this requires the pretention, ultimately, that sexed and gendered identity is somehow different from actually dealing with the “activities” that ground this difference as worth minoritizing, and subjecting to control. The imagined separation of sexual identity from “descriptions and discussions” of sex acts, treats sexual “descriptions and discussions” as a negative subject that must be compartmentalized. If one follows the logic that forms a hierarchy between identity, desire, and action just a little
further in this example, sexual identity is treated as something different from “descriptions or discussions” of sexual activities, such that sex and gender identity is articulated as a minoritized “being”. Furthermore, this form of identity is separated from its power of acting in “descriptions or discussions” of its activities, precisely by how it has also been constituted as “explicit”. The oversight that “descriptions or discussions” of homosexuality can also be taken as “explicit” such that they need to be censored, only illustrates the momentous challenge at stake in attempting to overcome heterosexist discourses and articulating a positive view of sex and sexuality in policy at the same time. Could it be that a focus on the inclusion of sex and gender minorities in the Challenging Homophobia and Heterosexism: A K-12 Curriculum Resource has come at the expense of treating, or maintaining, discourses of sex with prohibitive silences, and incidentally, negativity as well?

During the time of writing this thesis, the Challenging Homophobia and Heterosexism: A K-12 Curriculum Resource has been taken as a subject of political controversy during the Ontario Provincial election of fall 2011. How this curriculum has worked, or not, for sex and gender minorities, or to create a more positive discourse of sex, has become the focus of a political conflict. The Ontario Provincial Liberal Party under the leadership of Dalton McGuinty had sought to introduce a new sex education curriculum in 2010, but concerned parents, and faith groups linked to publicly funded Catholic Schools in the province, quickly opposed these measures, and the Ontario Liberals withdrew the recommendations. The Ontario Progressive Conservatives released a flyer during the 2011 election campaign that claimed that the Challenging Homophobia and Heterosexism: A K-12 Curriculum Resource had gone too far. “Crossdressing for six year olds”, reclaiming Valentine’s day with a “kissing booth”, reading “some traditional folk tales and fairy tales with the class” and having “students write their own ‘gender-bending’ versions” for these traditional fairy tales, were all considered by the political flyer to be interfering with students’ otherwise ‘normal’ development, and it also noted that this learning would occur without the consent of parents.13

The current representation of sex and gender minorities in curriculum, or over-turning the dominant order of heterosexist discourses in schools is unevenly practiced, at best, so even

13 The curriculum recommends that schools are “not to inform parents” when discourses of sex are involved in class (Canadian Press, 2011). Not informing parents was likely an attempt by the writers of the resource document to exclude sex from becoming cast as a moral issue every time it is discussed in schools. Otherwise, the curriculum resource is publicly accessible online.
though the Conservative political flyer has suggested that this curriculum is being taught to politically and sexually radicalize students, this can only be based upon the faulty hypothesis that it is taught at all. Since I am focusing strictly on the problems I find in these policies and lesson plans, I find myself connecting with some of the critique levelled at the contents of the *Challenging Homophobia and Heterosexism: A K-12 Curriculum Resource*, because it is not clear that these lesson plans are particularly useful or required to intervene in heterosexist discourses.

For example, the Valentine’s Day kissing booth is one of the most “explicit” discourses of sex in the *Challenging Homophobia and Heterosexism: A K-12 Curriculum Resource*, and this idea is somewhat contrary to its own befuddling position to not address sex in an explicit manner in the introduction of the same document (Toronto District School Board, 2011, p. 143). I quote one of the more troublesome ideas in this curriculum for further analysis.

“Love is for Everyone: Valentine’s Day – February 14th

Reclaim Valentine’s Day and celebrate sexual diversity. Challenge your school to create an inclusive Valentine’s Day.

• **Kissing Booth**

  Set up a tent or other structure, in a central place, that students and staff can enter. Decorate with cherubs and hearts. Put together a slide show of anti-homophobic messages and have it run on a continuous loop on a wall nearby. Before entering the Kissing Booth students and staff must complete a short 10-15 question school climate survey. In the booth, students and staff are greeted by students who place a stamp of a kiss on their cheek and a few chocolate kisses in their hand. Extend the Kissing Booth activity by informing all home form teachers of the event, ask them to announce it and provide discussion questions for the day after. Publicize the results of the climate survey that kissing booth participants filled out.” (TDSB, 2011, p. 142)

It appears that this booth is not actually for kissing at all in this example, but rather kissing occurs by a symbolic performance of kissing- a “stamp of a kiss” that includes everyone. Nonetheless, the organization of the booth or tent coupled with the suggestion that this is where kissing occurs is problematic simply because of the communication that kissing should be necessarily confined to a compartmentalized booth or tent teaches that sex is to be subject to prohibition and control. That no one actually gets a kiss only emphasizes how prohibitive and dangerous kissing can become in these spaces. Even if the most central classroom in a school were reserved for kissing, it would communicate the same negative discourse of sex. The Valentine’s Day kissing booth idea is an explicit organization of sex because of how it constructs a zone in the classroom or school that is thought to contain kissing, and also where kissing is treated as requiring containment in a booth or tent. It treats kissing as explicit and as necessarily sexual by how the tent or booth works to compartmentalize the activity, rather than as, for
example, a way to express various forms of intimacy, or as necessary for helping children to ingest food. It may appear progressive to make a space in schools where more positive representations of sexed and gendered minorities can occur, but to deliberately solicit kissing, or sex and gender representation, in an enclosed space, also works to incite the organization of intimacy as a subversive act that requires compartmentalization. The kissing booth, by the nature of its enclosed boundaries, treats kissing as a secret temptation to be hidden from others, exercises a notion of sex as if it is necessarily private and naughty, and it also intensifies the production of discourses of sex as a subversive act. It works to deliberately incite the development of sexuality around kissing by organizing kissing as a prohibited and tightly scripted activity, and it will likely succeed in this specific exercise, particularly because kisses are not being actually shared anyway.

Sex remains subject to control, and it is specifically thought to require this intervention of the kissing booth to overcome this condition, but how sex comes to be subject to control is only slightly modified in this example of the kissing booth. The boundaries of the compartmentalized space, sanctioned by authorities for an activity marked as “sexual”, kissing, is just another form of inscribing desire. Minoritized youth may indeed find some freedom from heterosexist privilege in this kissing booth, but at the same time, the public/private boundary where kissing is treated as prohibitive and titillating deploys negative discourses of sex yet again. The Valentine’s Day Kissing Booth may be better viewed as introduction to the strategies of exercising affection in private spaces that have been designed to intensify sex, rather than freeing discourses of sex from the boundaries that make it a subject of moral control.

On the other hand, if this kissing booth were an idea initiated from students, this would work to support their initiatives for safe and inclusive space, and this could work to allow them to express their own desires. The kissing booth could also become students’ own safe space—perhaps safe from the gaze of authorities and envious and jealous peers. If it were initiated by students themselves, it fulfills a need, and it would be necessary.

This analysis is not meant to condemn creative attempts to overturn heterosexism, but rather I want to point out that sexed and gendered representation is linked to treating discourses of sex positively, and compartmentalizing the representation of sex and gender minorities, as an identity, or as a sexual behaviour that is only sanctioned in tents or booths is somewhat counterproductive to these aims. Furthermore, investigating, assessing, and responding to students’ learning needs are not consistently treated as important aspects of curriculum
development in relation to discourses of sex. Rather the *Challenging Homophobia and Heterosexism: A K-12 Curriculum Resource* claims that all students are to be included, but then fails to account for how curriculum can investigate and satisfy students’ learning needs. Treating sex and students as if they deserve social control in schools is a constant problem that is not easily avoided given the way in which sex and students are treated as subjects of social control throughout our society. A challenge for policy and curriculum development in education in relation to discourses of sex is to organize the curriculum to meet students’ learning needs without treating sex, or students, as a subject of moral control.

Exposing relationships of power in discourses of sex, and making these relationships, between thought and life, and between each other in our social relationship, is very useful for creating the conditions in which students’ learning needs can be taken seriously, and there are indeed many lesson plans suggested in the *Challenging Homophobia and Heterosexism: A K-12 Curriculum Resource* that appear to provide an excellent example of how discourses of sex, such as sex and gender identities, can be further investigated. Generally however, I argue that what does, and does not interfere with the presumably ‘normal’ development of sexuality for students will never become more obvious until students’ learning needs are taken seriously as the basis of needed social change. Students’ learning needs are all different according to their individual situation, but how to make schools become reflexive enough to meet all students’ learning needs in relation to disparate discourses of sex is the problem at stake. The problem of not meeting students’ learning needs in relation to discourses of sex in school, the problem of negative discourses of sex in curriculum, and the problem of infrequent representations of sex and gender diversity in curriculum remain significant problems that require novel solutions.

I have hypothesized that there can be a way to come to a common agreement with all disparate social interest groups about how to meet all students’ learning needs relative to a discourse of sex in schools. Considering how interrupting negative, absent, and exclusionary discourses of sex in schools have continually become the substance of political controversy in Toronto, Ontario for over a century, preventing few substantive changes from occurring recently at the political level, and considering the apparent failure of *Equity Policy* (2000), and the failure of the first release of the *Rainbow and Triangles: Challenging Homophobia Curriculum: A Curriculum Document for Challenging Homophobia and Heterosexism in the K-6 Classroom* to result in a more effective discourses of sex that meet students’ learning needs and includes
representation of sex and gender minorities in curriculum, I have turned to philosophy for solutions.

Even at the Toronto District School Board, possibly the most diverse city in the world, with the largest and arguably most influential sex and gender minority political constituency in Canada, outfitted with an *Equity Policy* (2000) that seeks to combat heterosexism and homophobia, and with curriculum tailored for inclusion of “lesbian, gay and transgendered” identities, TDSB schools are still not producing a discourse of sex that works to reciprocate with students’ learning needs, and are not treating students’ capacities to voice their desires as the basis of further social justice work. The TDSB, however, is apparently limited in its ability, or perhaps incapable of producing discourses of sex in relation to students’ learning needs. Even its own policies, such as the *Equity Policy* (2000) are not correlative to its actual practices since only 12% of students report a regularly occurring visibility of “lesbian, gay, and transgendered” representation in curriculum (Yau, 2007). How are school authorities, discourses of sex, and students, situated against each other to produce the curriculum that fails to be reciprocal to the learning needs of students? Moreover, what frameworks are needed to understand how each, school curriculum, discourses of sex, and students, can be situated to become parallel modes of action to increase anti-heterosexual work, encourage positive discourses of sex, and reduce exclusionary practices?

I realize that given the profound confusion produced by dominant discourses of sex, it may be very difficult to imagine a discourse of sex that can work to reciprocate with students’ learning needs. It seems first necessary to establish what counts as an adequate discourse of sex, such that it could ever be imagined meet students’ learning needs at all and this will take several more chapters to explain. For indeed, if discourses of sex appear bad and prohibitive to policy developers and educators, if not also our society in general, there must also be a reason, and whether these discourses of sex are useful or not, as they are, must be made explicit. Otherwise the problems that they create cannot be overcome.

Now I will turn to the contributions of Michel Foucault (1990), Gayle Rubin (1993), and Judith Butler (1990:1993) in Chapter 2. These are scholars who treat sex as a historically and culturally specific discourse in feminist, queer, and post-structural philosophies. In Chapter 2, I am primarily seeking to situate discourses of sex in social discourses, generally, and to investigate what counts as “heterosexism”, and what counts as “sexually explicit”. Towards the end of Chapter 2, I will revisit the *Challenging Homophobia and Heterosexism: A K-12*
Curriculum Resource for a quick critique of how it deals with anti-heterosexist initiatives. Afterward in Chapter 3, I focus on the tension between the significance of the vulnerable child, and the role of authority, and I examine how students are situated in contested identity politics of sex and gendered identities, such that their bodies become constituted as needing authoritative protection from discourses of sex in schools that are thought to disturb their otherwise “normal” development. Eventually I will introduce an interpretation and synthesis of how sex works with another philosophical tool, found in the Deleuzian-Spinozist distinction between morals and ethics, which I detail in Chapter 4, 5 and 6. As a result of this analysis, an explicit and critical framework will emerge that will uncover some of the barriers that prevent sexed and gendered students from becoming fully included in secular public school curriculum. Finally, with this framework and analysis at work, I will propose the distinction between morals and ethics as having the critical power to systemically increase the potential for schools to reciprocate with students’ learning needs with adequate discourses of sex in curriculum.

2 Understanding discourses of a true sex and heterosexism

Describing sex as a discourse and how it works in its social, cultural and historical context is very challenging. It is not easy to describe a preferred discourse of sex, or one that is ironically, and perhaps inevitably, conducted by school authorities, and with students who are often signified as vulnerable to discourses of sex and exploitation. What discourses of sex are worthy of teaching in Canadian society and in Toronto, or rather also, what discourses are not worth teaching in schools? The issue of freedom and autonomy and in the context of a society that strives to be democratic, secular, plural and inclusive cannot be taken up so quickly without first explaining what is meant by talking of sex in this way. Sex is treated as a discourse in this thesis, but it is not always clear however what discourses of sex work for social freedom and which others might work to enslave people and cause harm to our society, and/or which discourses would be useful for secular schools in democratic societies.

With various theorists of discourses of sex, Michel Foucault (1990), Judith Butler (1990:1993) and Gayle Rubin (1993), I describe sex as a historically and socially specific discourse in western society. I discuss this theory to provide an introduction to new readers about how discourses of sex can be critiqued as either good or bad for our social relations. This
will provide an overview about how various thinkers have created theoretical frameworks by which the cause-and-effect relationships of discourses of sex can be brought into view. I will apply these perspectives to understand how different interpretations of anti-heterosexist curriculum policy produce different results in curricular practice.

In chapter 3, I more fully examine the special political situation of the child in relation to discourses of sex. Then, in chapter 4, I fully explain the Deleuzian-Spinozist distinction between morals and ethics as a philosophy of action, such that a more explicit view of what counts as good and bad sex will be established in Chapter 5. I will then use this new framework in my conclusion to develop a theory of action and reciprocity in relation to discourses of sex, the student body, and school policies in Chapter 6.

2.1 Heterosexism as a species of “scientia sexualis”

The philosophical works of Michel Foucault informs my approach to view sex as a discourse, and to view how discourses of sex become exercised, or as Foucault terms this, conducted, within institutional spaces. The idea that discourses can be conducted, for Foucault, is a way of treating how social power, through ideas and concepts, moves through all forms of social communication. Specific to Foucault’s (1990) work in *History of Sexuality*, is a theory of sexuality, as it has become deployed as a discourse of moral control in western histories. Foucault (1990) argues that modern western societies have “pursued the task of producing true discourses concerning sex” and calls this “scientia sexualis” (p. 67). To speak of heterosexist discourses is to also to refer to an overall moral assemblage in which sex is always dangerous. Foucault’s concept of “scientia sexualis” is a central aspect of my critique of how anti-heterosexist work is realized in curriculum policy (Foucault, 1990, p. 67). “Scientia sexualis” refers to all totalizing, fundamental and universalizing truths of sex, where sex is presumed to be a knowable and predictive science, and where its deterministic aims are rooted in gendered roles for the purpose of reproduction. “Scientia sexualis” is not limited to merely affirming heterosexist discourses, but it is a concept that attempts to explain all of existence as a natural order of fundamental properties that are thought to belong to all things. “Scientia sexualis” treats discourses of sex as if sex has a natural truth of its own and as if we are all subjects of this natural order of truth (Foucault, 1990). Foucault distinguishes “scientia sexualis” from the pursuit of an erotic-art-of-life or “ars erotica” where pleasure is truth, “evaluated in terms of its
intensity, its specific quality, its duration, its reverberations...” (p. 57). If we consider that heterosexist discourses depend upon deterministic aims, universalizing truths of nature, and a singular and stable identity based on heterosexual desires, we can say that heterosexism is co-extensive to other moral forms of conceptual life such as those that find expression through the subjected life of “scientia sexualis”. It is within this ‘scientificicity’ of sex, and the general pervasiveness of discourses of sex as a scientific fact of life, that heterosexism can exist as an adequate discourse of “truth”, and where even sex and gender minority rights can establish political legitimacy. When I write of a truth of sex I am referring to the overall moral assemblage of concepts and ideas that treat sex as something with a truth. As an uncanny example of the entrenchment of these scientific forms of “truth” of sex, it has been possible to argue that sexual diversity is a result of biological or genetic diversity. The problem of these scientific discoveries is that scientific discourses often treat sex, not as something historically and socially situated in complex practices and various discourses of the body, but as something to be known, controlled, and subjected to, various discourses of a natural law, such that some bodies are viewed as more natural, or cohering to a true discourse of sex. This science becomes a problem when, on the basis of belonging to a natural order of truth, some people are more politically legitimate than others in law. I turn to queer and gender theorists who have organized various frameworks to recognize heterosexist discourses, or the status quo of western sexual relationships. How does heterosexism, the dominant contemporary expression of “scientia sexualis,” work?

Michel Foucault's *History of Sexuality* (originally published in 1978), is one of the most cited texts in queer studies, offers a view of sex in terms of how it has been “put into discourse” by authoritative discourses of a true sex (Foucault, 1990, p.11). Foucault (1990) provides a rough sketch of a western history of discourses of sex, and discusses how a history of sex can be constructed from precisely how it has become subject to control. The *History of Sexuality* is not a full history of how sex was put into discourse in the west, but rather a critique of how it has come to be that, in modernity, we could speak of a sex as something that needs to be liberated and as something ahistorical and prediscursive.14

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14 The use of ‘prediscursive’ means that sex was treated as based within an order of extrinsic conditions, rather than the events constructed in thought by the effects of socially and historically specific discourses.
2.1.1 How “sex” works

Foucault (1990) points out that when we speak of “sex”; we have already deployed the imagined boundaries of this concept and segregated it from existence as if it has its own truth. Foucault does not investigate sex as a reproductive capacity as if it were only determined by its reproductive aims. Foucault instead examines how specific forms of pleasure have been deployed as a discourse in order to control people through various transcendent ideals of its allegedly intrinsic purpose and necessity. 'Sex', for Foucault, however, does not have a cause for its distinction in thought, without also involving an organization of its boundaries as a subject of truth with specific objects and practices. It is hard to know therefore what really can count or not as a production of pleasure that is organized under the significance of the word “sex” with any specificity. Any concept of a “sex” therefore, is itself a quagmire for principles of freedom and autonomy; because the concept of a “sex” is historically deployed in situated social discourses as a subject of power, rather than as, for example, a pleasure that is not subject to the utility of its signification as a “sex” in discourse (Foucault, 1990). This paradoxical and loose meaning attached to the significance, and multi-varied meaning of “sex” suggests that the word “sex” can be used in a variety of opposing ways. Sex can refer to reproduction, the law of order, of nature or God, and/or it can be only a capacity for pleasure. Foucault (1990) is most famous for arguing that the organization of sex as a social prohibition is symptomatic of how it has been subjected to a notion of moral value in the historical record of western societies. I will now describe how Foucault creates a view of sex, and I will proceed to examine his perspectives in the context of situating heterosexism as a discourse of a true sex\(^\text{15}\).

2.1.2 The denunciation of the repressive hypothesis

Foucault (1990) points out that it is ironic to view sex as a discourse requiring any liberation, if its possibility in thought is also constituted by its prohibitions. Foucault suggests a methodology for a theoretical critique of how sex can be examined under these strange conditions...

\(^{15}\) I refer to discourses of a true sex throughout this thesis. It implies that there is a discourse that treats sex as if it possesses its own truth, or is a subject of some greater truth. Foucault (1990) argues that there is a “truth of sex” that becomes produced in various discourses that take sex as an object of cause (p. 57).
“to account for the fact that it is spoken about, to discover who does the speaking, the positions and viewpoints from which they speak, the institutions which prompt people to speak about it and which store and distribute the things that are said” (Foucault, p. 11).
Locating, what Foucault calls “polymorphous techniques of power” is not about uncovering an essential truth about sex, but rather, creating a view of how sex has been brought into possibility by a “will to knowledge” (p. 11, 12).

In particular, Foucault sought to critique the notion that sex was repressed, which was a popular theme in Freudian theories of a tripartite self: the id, ego, and superego. Foucault argued that sex has no “being” or no substance of its own by which it could be repressed. In a stunning reversal of early 20th century common sense, Foucault argues that sex has an attributed character because of how it has been taken as the pleasure that warrants moral, and thus also, authoritative controls and interventions. These discourses of repression, control and authority, Foucault claims, have spread a particular type of sexual discourse throughout the modern west as “polymorphous technique(s) of power” and these discourses have incited an intensification of pleasure from its prohibitive domain in discourse. In other words, it is precisely because discourses of sex are treated as dangerous and subject to prohibition, that it also pleasurable (p. 11).

2.1.3 Pastoral power

Western Judeo-Christian theologies organized sex as something to be compelled into discourse by shame and confession. Foucault (1990) characterizes this power as “pastoral” (p. 18). Western religions treated desire as damming evidence of our lacking character as moral creatures. Catholic scripture and other Christian groups, for example, through the doctrinal accounts of Paul, Ambrose, Jerome, and Augustine, arguably the dominant religious discourse throughout western society during the pre-modern period, specified that desire for God’s gift of immortality could only be achieved by obedience to God’s laws (Murray, 1996, p. xv). For example, Paul argued that marriage between a man and a woman, and for the purposes of reproduction, was considered to be the exclusive extension of God's holy grounds on Earth, and the only redemptive function of desires for bodily gratification (Corinthians 1:7, New
Augustine argued that all deviating behaviour from working to ensure the immortality of the soul was to be confessed so that bodies could be correctly judged and disciplined according to God's perfected order (Chadwick, 2008). These religious discourses gave voice to the form of life in the west, now called sex and sexuality. Discourses of pastoral power through the west, Foucault argues, treated sexual matters as the “disquieting enigma” that demanded to be uncovered and laid bare for absolution in confession (Foucault, 1990, 35). Sex became something for which individuals were to be held to account for, both implicating them, and also imposing upon them the “task of recounting his own sex” and their own inner truth (Foucault, 1990, 34). Sex was made an object of secrecy, which was “difficult, necessary, dangerous and precious to divulge” (Foucault, 1990, 35). In as much as sex was deemed to be natural or unnatural, as holy or unholy, as moral or immoral, as good or evil, desires implicated the western subject in a moral relationship to God's law as either earning God’s grace for immortal life, or condemned to judgement and suffering.

2.1.4 The modern problem of a subversive sex

Foucault (1990) argues that during the rise of secular state societies in the Enlightenment era, a scientific account of ‘nature’, rather than God, became a subject of truth. Foucault argues that the western Christian church played a vital role in proliferating speech about sex as something that implicated the soul, produced guilt, and needed to be confessed for a clear

16 “1 Now for the matters you wrote about: “It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman.” 2 But since sexual immorality is occurring, each man should have sexual relations with his own wife, and each woman with her own husband. 3 The husband should fulfil his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband. 4 The wife does not have authority over her own body but yields it to her husband. In the same way, the husband does not have authority over his own body but yields it to his wife. 5 Do not deprive each other except perhaps by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control. 6 I say this as a concession, not as a command. 7 I wish that all of you were as I am. But each of you has your own gift from God; one has this gift, another has that. 8 Now to the unmarried and the widows I say: It is good for them to stay unmarried, as I do. 9 But if they cannot control themselves, they should marry, for it is better to marry than to burn with passion. 10 To the married I give this command (not I, but the Lord): A wife must not separate from her husband. 11 But if she does, she must remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband. And a husband must not divorce his wife. 12 To the rest I say this (I, not the Lord): If any brother has a wife who is not a believer and she is willing to live with him, he must not divorce her. 13 And if a woman has a husband who is not a believer and he is willing to live with her, she must not divorce him. 14 For the unbelieving husband has been sanctified through his wife, and the unbelieving wife has been sanctified through her believing husband. Otherwise your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy.” (Corinthians 1:7, New International Version)
conscience. These practices of pastoral power continued, but in the new modernity of secular states, sex also began to be treated as an order of truth on the psychoanalyst’s couch and in the state courtroom (Foucault, 1990). New scientific laws about what was natural and not natural replaced the dynamic of what was natural to God or not natural to God with new forms of freedom, and new forms of subjection (Foucault, 1990). Sexuality increasingly became a political secret; an essential truth of individuality which could be precious and dangerous to divulge for fear of legal repercussions, and with the imagined repression of latency in the early 20th century, this was also an inner-secret that it was not only “what the subject wished to hide, but what was hidden from himself”, and thus, could only be teased out in therapeutic interventions (Foucault, 1990, 66). In every moment that individuals did not conduct sexual pleasure for the purposes of reproduction in matrimony, individuals were incited to judge their individual desire as a moral indicator that implicated their whole existence according to discourses of the true order of nature (Foucault, 1990). Different from a divided self, of ego, id, and superego, that had the power to create sex repression as psychoanalysis had emphasized at the turn of the 20th century, Foucault argues that “what distinguishes these last three centuries is the...whole network of varying, specific, and coercive transpositions into discourse” (p. 34). Foucault argues that a repressive hypothesis in psychoanalytic discourses, which presumes that sexuality can be repressed and can be liberated from prohibition, fails to account for how prohibition has become a very “basic and constitutive element” of sex (p.12).

Foucault (1990) describes two distinctive regimes by which western discourses governed their conceptions of a natural and moral sex, “the law of marriage and the order of desires” (p. 39, 40). Foucault argues that multiple discourses of sex were produced in “an explosion of distinct discursivities which took form in demography, biology, medicine, psychiatry, psychology, ethics, pedagogy, and political criticism” (p. 33). Discourses of authoritative truth, such as those about the exercise of law, religion and science, took sex as their subject. These multi-disciplinary discourses of a true sex presumed that a natural proclivity for reproduction was the deterministic aim of gendered differences. Moreover, after Freud’s influence over much of western thought, discourses of a true sex presumed the existence of a polymorphous sexual identity, one that became repressed through a drama of loss in social and familial relations.

Foucault (1990) argues that categories of desire emerged as a discursive form of power that tied naming practices to the body's pleasures and worked to determine what counted as sexual feeling and sexual identity (p.34). Emphasizing this, Foucault commented on the distinction of a
homosexual and heterosexual, as a paradigm shift that subjected bodies on the basis of their sexual desires; “The sodomite had been a temporary aberration; the homosexual was now a species” (p. 43). The presumption of a truth about sex made relationships individual: “susceptible to pathological processes, and hence one calling for therapeutic or normalizing interventions; a field of meanings to decipher; the site of processes concealed by specific mechanisms; a focus of indefinite causal relationships; and an obscure speech that had to be ferreted out and listened to” (Foucault, 1990, 68). If one desired more or other than reproduction, or something different than one’s gendered expectations to desire reproductive acts, these desires were immediately suspicious, needing to be explained, rooted out, and extinguished.

2.1.5 The ubiquitous production of the pervert

Foucault (1990) describes the discursive outcome of these thought-events of a “truth of sex” as a type of entanglement where pleasure, as a site of social control, perpetually chases the form of power that, likewise, through its prohibitions and chastisements, informs the pleasure. “The medical examination, the psychiatric investigation, the pedagogical report, and family control may have the over-all and apparent objective of saying no to all wayward or unproductive sexualities, but the fact is that they function as mechanisms with a double impetus...perpetual spirals of power and pleasure” (Foucault, 1990, p. 45).

Sex became a strategy for pleasure within discourses of prohibition. Far from moral laws working to end immoral sexual behaviour, Foucault (1990) argues that these technologies of power actually produced strategies for pleasure in all directions along an axis of hierarchical prohibition. “It (law) did not set boundaries for sexuality; it extended the various forms of sexuality, pursuing them according to lines of indefinite penetration” (Foucault, 1990, p. 47). When sex became a dirty word, endless discourses of prohibition worked to incite particular relationships. “Spirals of power and pleasure” for Foucault (1990) are those titillating games of denial, censorship, authority, evasions, confrontation, surveillance, and articulation that worked to conduct sex as a strategy of resistance (p. 45). Thus one also can feel liberated from the law while enjoying sexual pleasure outside the bounds of a “truth of sex”, even though these pleasures are also circumscribed by how sex has been treated as prohibition.
The interruption, surveillance and censoring of sexual pleasure, new specifications of sex and gender identities in the 19th century, elaborate regimes of authoritative sexual interventions in institutions, the saturation of sexual discourses through policing and surveillance of immoral sexual conduct, all worked to “give rise to a whole perverse outbreak and a long pathology of the sexual instinct” and also “produced and determined the sexual mosaic” (Foucault, 1990, p. 47). Sex was “extracted...solidified...drawn out, revealed, isolated, intensified, incorporated” by the conduction of a moral order of truth in authoritative discourses (Foucault, 1990, p. 48). Thus, Foucault argues that all modern western sexualities are necessarily perverse. Perversions for Foucault are not displaced sexual feelings that would otherwise be “natural” but rather...

“The implantation of multiple perversions is an instrument-effect: it is through the isolation, intensification, and consolidation of peripheral sexualities that the relationships of power to sex and pleasure branched out and multiplied, measured the body, and penetrated modes of conduct. And accompanying this encroachment of powers, scattered sexualities rigidified, became stuck to an age, a place, a type of practice” (p. 48).

It is not that sex has a “being” of natural heterosexual genders, of man and women, or of sexual identities such as gay and lesbian, such that this could be resisted, repressed and displaced upon individuals, and nor is it a drama of loss between ego, id and superego. All this resistance, repression and displacement can happen, according to Foucault, but it happens most often when the self is divided up into little parts with some ruling over others and when a discourse of sex is treated as the naturalized and true grounds of reality. The presence of “beings” affected by the discourse of a natural order of sexual difference certainly exist everywhere in our society, but the basis of this identity for Foucault, is politically strategic and only necessary for the forms of social and cultural life in which one is situated. Foucault (1990) is arguing that sex becomes the very thing that its social relationships merit within their historical, cultural, social, situation and these political identities of a natural order of human difference are inscribed by these relations: “perversity” is an outcome of this situation. Given that sex is produced as an order of truth in theology, science and law, sex becomes the expression of liberation from these tyrannical laws, while even, at the same time, becoming productively circumscribed, incited, and intensified by these moral prohibitions. In as much as sex is articulated by a moral prohibition of sex in the social discourses of western society, it is necessarily perverse, and this is its joy. Foucault (1990) does not claim the west to be perverse to condemn these bodies, but rather Foucault points to how prohibitive moral discourses of sex corresponds to the discursive production of
these desires as a strategy of power. In other words becoming perverse has become necessarily strategic considering how sex is treated as a discourse of moral control and according to how one is affected and situated by these discourses of social control. According to Foucault (1990), desires become discursively affected by how sex is deployed as a prohibitive discourse, and this makes sex a necessarily perverse organization of pleasure.

Foucault (1990) organizes a historical view of western discourses of sex that determines that prohibitive discourses of sex produce sexualities by how they work to discursively affect what counts as sex. It is therefore possible to hypothesize from Foucault’s framework that even if schools attempt to make sex disappear in curriculum, this will also have discursive effects that are productive in their own way. The effects of treating sex as a discourse of moral control in schools will variably privilege some students more than others depending on how their desires are situated as more or less prohibited within an order of true sex. Furthermore, the effect of treating sex as a discourse of moral control in schools will also work to discursively affect all students to treat themselves, and specifically their sexual feelings, as something requiring some type of control-from self or from society. This is a danger I will address again in Chapter 5.

2.2 Judith Butler’s heterosexist matrix

There are other ways to examine heterosexism and the multi-headed value-structures that emerge when sex is treated as if it has an order of truth, such as subjection to a notion of God’s laws and natural laws. Judith Butler (1990), places the contestation of a naturalized gender and sex at the center of how heterosexism might be seen to work as a compulsory performance of social power. Butler's (1990) *Gender Trouble* argues that sex and gender are not expressive of a prediscursive natural order, but rather they are binary performative roles of power, determined by a compulsory order of heterosexist norms-the heterosexual matrix (p. 7). Butler credits the “heterosexual matrix” to Monique Wittig's notion of a “heterosexual contract” and Adrienne Rich's notion of a “compulsory heterosexuality”, and characterizes it in her footnotes as…

“…a hegemonic discursive/epistemic model of gender intelligibility that assumes that for bodies to cohere and make sense there must be a stable sex expressed through a stable gender (masculine expresses male, feminine expresses female) that is oppositionally and hierarchically defined through the compulsory practice of heterosexuality”. (p. 208)

Butler’s (1990) work is particularly helpful for viewing how gender may not be natural, or an original attribute of a natural order of identity, but rather, in her analysis, gender and sex identities are viewed as discursive effects of compulsory performances of heterosexual identity.
For Butler, gender is a form of becoming, a type of doing, and a performance that seeks recognition, and gender is not the performance of an original nature or inner identity though it can often appear to be. Gender, for Butler, is not a true or false performance of an inner identity, but is “produced as the truth effects of a discourse of primary and stable identity” (Butler, 1990, 186). The presumption of primary, singular, and stable gender identity, for Butler (1990), is neither a choice, nor a fabrication, nor is it ever entirely successful in its social performances. Butler (1990) argues that when heterosexuality is treated as the only normal natural origin of sex this works to compel the construction of natural categories of gender in social discourses; the construction of gender is an effect of discourses of compulsory heterosexuality.

“...gender is not to culture as sex is to nature; gender is also the discursive/cultural means by which “sexed nature” or “a natural sex” is produced and established as “prediscursive”, prior to culture, a politically neutral surface on which culture acts”. (Butler, 1990, p. 10)

Thus Butler (1990) considers that gender and sex are both socially constructed distinctions that sustain discourses of a true, original and natural sex, and are subject to compulsory norms of heterosexual desire:

“Butlers cannot be said to have a signifiable existence prior to the mark of gender; the question then emerges: To what extent does the body come into being and through the mark of gender? How we can conceive of the body as more than a “passive medium or instrument awaiting the enlivening capacity of a distinctly immaterial will?” (Butler, 1990, p. 12).

Butler argues that the “body” does not await inscription, but rather re-enacts its “regulatory fiction” and maintains itself as a “postulation of a true gender identity” in heterosexist discourses (p. 192).

In her follow-up essay, *Imitation and Gender Insouthernation*, Butler (1993) focuses explicitly on the condition of the “I” claiming a gender, as it is staked out by the obligatory categories of the heterosexual matrix:

“...The very categories of sex, of sexual identity, of gender are produced or maintained in the effects of this compulsory performance, effects which are disingenuously renamed as causes, origins, disingenuously lined up within a causal or expressive sequence that the heterosexual norm produces to legitimate itself as the origin of all sex”. (p. 318)

Butler (1993) argues, “those ontologically consolidated phantasms of man and woman are the theatrically produced effects that posture as grounds, origins, and the normative measure of the real” (p. 313). What might feel like “the origin, the inner, the true, and the real” is always an “effect of drag” for “compulsory heterosexuality” (Butler, 1990, p. 318). How do we expose this
drag, and how can we rework its effects for our own individual needs rather than the sex and gender ideologies connected to heteronormativity? Butler (1990) identified that separating performances of gendered identity and sexual desire from universalizing categories, denaturalizing sex and gender identifications, and revealing the implicit strategy at play in gendered performances, have all been useful challenges to the dominant order of compulsory gendered performances of heterosexuality in sex and gender minority communities (Butler, 1990, p. 203).

2.3 Rubin’s critique of a true sex

Heterosexism is not limited to categories of sex and gender only, but it also concerns other related hierarchies of moral value that otherwise organize sex as something to police and turn into a subject of social control. Gayle Rubin’s (1993) essay *Thinking Sex: Notes for a Radical Theory of Politics of Sexuality*, first published in 1984, conceptualizes five different moral hierarchies as tools to articulate the power at stake in western notions of sex and sexuality (Rubin, 1993, p. 11). These categories can help create a view of heterosexism, but Rubin’s moral hierarchies also provide a view of the overall moral assemblage by which sex has been put into discourse, and of that which Foucault calls “scientia sexualis.” The most important aspect of Rubin's (1993) distinctions of hierarchical discourses of sex, and one which ties them altogether, is sex negativity; the recognition of specific historical and cultural trends that treat sex suspiciously or inherently sinful. Rubin discusses sex negativity, and identifies its multiple variations, in close relation to Foucault’s (1990) *History of Sexuality* (p. 11). This negativity attributed to sex, works in all of the following hierarchies, and expresses itself as “sexual essentialism”. Rubin first uses the term “sex essentialism” to point out that sex is often treated as a “natural force that exists prior to social life and shapes institutions” and that sex is also treated as if it were an “eternally unchanging” force in life (Rubin, 1993, p. 9).

Second of Rubin's (1993) distinctions, is the “fallacy of misplaced scale”, which refers to how sex acts can be burdened with an “excess of significance” (p. 11). Rubin (1993) references Susan Sontag who commented, “on sexual behaviour as the root of virtue, everything pertaining to sex has been a ‘special case’ in our culture” (p. 11). I take this quote to illustrate that sexual acts have become burdened with an excess of signification because they have been taken to implicate desire, organized as sexual, as an individual subject-relation of “virtue”. Nonetheless, I think Rubin’s analysis that sex acts are burdened with signification such that even small
differences in the established order of a true sex “are often experienced as cosmic threats” helps point to some of the anxieties that might be preventing a more adequate discourse of sex in schools (p. 11). For example, what might seem as the most normative request for representation of sex and gender identities still did not become widely practiced (Equity Policy, 2000). If the mere mention of the existence of sex and gender minorities, much less “queer pedagogy”, is recognized as having the power to challenge the authoritative order that is otherwise thought to protect students, perhaps these discourses are overburdened with an “excess of signification” by how they might implicate teachers as social provocateurs or over-determine the threat that discourses of sexual diversity may represent to the production of heterosexual desire.

Third, Rubin discusses a hierarchical valuation of sex acts that indicate positivity or negativity in relation to sex (1993, p. 11). For example, heterosexual monogamous marriage is more sanctified than any other manifestation of sexual desire and particular sex acts can be analyzed as more or less bad or good, depending upon whether they are closer to, or further away from this moral ideal. The moral presumption is that the closer one is to monogamous, heterosexual, reproductive sex, the closer one is to goodness. It’s easy to understand that homosexuality is not as morally accepted as heterosexuality because of its historical struggle for marriage rights from the state, for example, and this concept of hierarchal valuation of sex acts is quite useful for situating how this prejudice is situated in a particular order of power and privilege. The frailty of the moral logic that is specified by the idea of a hierarchal valuation of sex acts is in attempting to situate acts that involve more than one hierarchy of moral sexual values as either good or evil. For example, an S/M act might be slightly redeemed in this model if this was exercised alongside, for example, a marriage license. Sex might be slightly redeemed on these various moral scales if it were conducted between different genders and sanctified by marriage, but it would be more of a serious betrayal of ‘morality’, if sex were to happen in the context of sex work, between the same genders, and outside of marriage.

Fourth, is the domino theory of sexual peril, which is closely related to the third hierarchical evaluation of sex-acts. In this hierarchical valuation, sex acts are signified as either good or bad; good sex is “sanctifiable, safe, healthy, mature, legal, or politically correct” (Rubin, 1993, p. 14). Sex is always presumed under negative auspices if it is not heterosexual, but to what extent sex is considered good or bad, has more to do with moral evaluations that politicize sex rather than the extent of mutual and reciprocal organizations of pleasure. Rubin (1993) argues that heterosexual sex is described in “religious, psychological, feminist, or socialist” discourses as “exhibiting the
full range of human experience” whereas “promiscuous homosexuality, sadomasochism, fetishism, transsexuality, and cross-generational encounters” often are signified as being devoid of the same range of human feeling as heterosexual sex (p. 15). The social danger allegedly represented by diverse sexual practices is a lack of social ideological purity, mental health problems, sex addiction, and a lack of reciprocity with sexual pleasure, sexually transmitted diseases, and even the end of civilization!

2.4 The problem of a “benign sexual variation”

Rubin’s (1993) fifth notion, the lack of a concept of benign sexual variation points to “variation” as a “fundamental property of all life…”, such that no matter how sex is related to “single standard”, it will always be varied and cannot be expected to conform (p. 15). Rubin writes, “it is difficult to develop a pluralistic sexual ethics without a concept of benign sexual variation” (p. 15). This idea of a needed theory for a benign sexuality fascinates me, because it points to how desire is immanent within its modes of production, and sex does not have primary cause from, for example, the deterministic connection of its pleasures to the reproduction of the species. Desire is treated as becoming immanent to its mode of production in the concept of benign variation, as the idea of a concept of benign sexual variation does not care if desires, organized as sex, are reflective of a “true sex”. There is no judgement of desire in this model and that’s why it is so interesting. The concept of benign variation treats sexual desire as if it is necessary for individuals in their specific circumstances. Indeed, for what use is it to judge someone’s desires, organized as sexual, as a reflection of their character, if sex is only a strategy that one finds oneself in to create pleasure and joy wherever one can? However, I also have some difficulty conceptualizing a theory of benign sexuality.

First, Rubin’s (1993) theory of “benign sexual variation” can be easily misunderstood to embrace all forms of sex whether they are reciprocal or not. A benign theory of sexual variation is only as useful therefore, inasmuch as it also denounces rape, abuse, coercion, and a general un-reciprocity between freedom and sexuality. Indeed, Rubin affirms this qualification, by writing that...

“A radical theory of sex must identify, describe, explain, and denounce erotic injustice and sexual oppression. Such a theory needs refined conceptual tools which can grasp the subject and hold it in view. It requires a convincing critical language that can convey the barbarity of sexual persecution.” (p. 9)
So, though I am wary of the usage of “benign”, I appreciate Rubin’s overall intention to “convey the barbarity of sexual persecution” and to counter these forces with a theoretical intervention (p. 9).

Second, it seems to me that a “benign theory of sexual variation” must be deliberately situated in a critical account of how the body can become positioned to conduct itself in a manner that spreads moral affect, subjecting others to causes other than what is intrinsic to their freedom, and ultimately, works to risk the production of erotic injustice in its social relationships. In my view, the ideas that work through, or in, or affect individuals to have desires, and sadly lead them to conduct the “barbarity of sexual persecution”, as Rubin (1993) has indicated elsewhere in this text, are therefore not benign in their modes of production, or in social relationships because these ideas of persecution work through people to become harmful to themselves and others (p. 9). I want to keep the idea that sex is immanent to its modes of production, and this is why Rubin’s idea of a benign variation of sexual difference is so useful, but I cannot also say that those discourses of moral control over people, and their effects in our society and throughout our social relations, are also benign.

The fantastic conclusion that remains nonetheless from Rubin’s (1993) text is that rape, sexual assault, homophobia and all other forms of persecution, related to these forms of life organized as sex, are all behaviours that belong to our society because of the manner in which sex is treated as a subject of persecution, and different forms of moral control. It is possible therefore to continue to tease out which discourses lead to the ongoing recurrence of violence and resistance to social change, and which discourses lead to greater freedom, democracy, and inclusive social relationships with each other- such that there can be a way to conduct a discourse of sex usefully in schools, something which is communicated whether anyone wants to communicate it or not, and follow each theoretical implication. I will revisit this discussion of a new and explicit structure of understanding the good and bad of discourses of sex with the distinction between morals and ethics from Deleuze’s reading of Spinoza’s life work in Chapter 4 and 5. For now, I still have more to account for in terms of the overall interrelationship between the discourses of Toronto schools, discourses of sex, and students.
2.5 Revisiting the problem of failing curriculum policy with multiple views of heterosexism.

I have thus far selected ideas from Foucault (1990), Butler (1990; 1993) and Rubin (1993) in this chapter to demonstrate how sex is taken as a discourse for investigation and analysis. I have also borrowed from these works to examine how each thinker sought to articulate forms of hierarchy between moral values, ultimately shaping a view of what counts as heterosexist discourses as well. Butler (1990:1993) examined sex and gender categories in the context of these becoming strategic social performances, rooted in compulsory performances of heterosexuality, and repeated and reiterated in social performances as normal and natural. Butler offers a particular understanding of how anti-heterosexist discourses work. Rubin’s (1993) descriptions of many different corollaries of moral hierarchies pertaining to a single ideal of sex, such as sex negativity, are another view of heterosexist discourses. All these thinkers treat heterosexism as merely one incantation of a true sex and Foucault’s term “scientia sexualis” refers to all these orders of truth that take sex as a cause, rather than as an effect.

A problem of using the term heterosexism, however, is that it can also be understood in a very superficial way. Heterosexist discourses may simply be realized as discourses which privilege the act of reproduction as a single ideal of sex. A more superficial account of what counts as heterosexist discourses would only explain the dominant order of sex and gender that privileges heterosexual sex in contemporary circumstances and not the entire moral apparatus in which heterosexist discourses become possible and are seen as adequate. If the representation of sexed and gendered students are thought to be the only necessary intervention to counteract heterosexist discourses in school curriculum, and not for example, the condition in which heterosexual privilege is justified and legitimated by treating sex as a subject of moral control, then indeed moral hierarchies that subject discourses of sex to moral control remain invisible and unaddressed. If schools routinely treat sex and students as subjects of moral control, positive discourses of sex in schools cannot occur, and the representation of sex and gender minorities in curriculum cannot adequately work either. I think if anti-heterosexist policy is based upon the representation of sexed and gendered identities in curriculum but purposely avoids creating more positive discourses of sex in curriculum, this might help explain how TDSB schools are failing to produce a curriculum that includes “lesbian, gay and transgendered” identities in curriculum, even while it allegedly seeks to be inclusive of these students with an anti-homophobia and anti-heterosexist curriculum in policy discourses. Discourses of sex are still being maintained as a
subject of moral control in schools, and therefore, this appears to inhibit all action related to the inclusive representation of sexed and gendered minorities.

The content of the *Equity Policy* (2000), where heterosexism is named, is clearly in relation to the representation of sexed and gendered identities in curriculum. It has a limited scope to address all the circumstances in which heterosexism works as an order of a true sex, and in which sex becomes subject to moral control. It mentions nothing about providing positive discourses of sex, nor is it related to sexual health or understanding healthy relationships. The *Equity Policy* (2000), a policy that earnestly attempted to reach for inclusive language, does not account for how schools maintain a negative discourse of sex in curriculum. The *Rainbow and Triangles: Challenging Homophobia Curriculum: A Curriculum Document for Challenging Homophobia and Heterosexism in the K-6 Classroom* (2002) and *Challenging Homophobia and Heterosexism: A K-12 Curriculum Resource* (2011) do not break free from the limited policy language of the *Equity Policy* (2000), and as discussed in Chapter 1, the resource treats the development of anti-homophobic and anti-heterosexist curriculum as if it could somehow occur even while also treating discourses of sex as too “explicit”. By attempting to address the representation of sex and gender identities, without addressing the moral discourses that take sex as a subject of control and make these bodies “explicit”, these policy approaches fail to examine how the acts of these identities become minoritized through heterosexist silences, and how discourses of sex become “explicit” within a heterosexist and moral context. Anti-heterosexist and anti-homophobia curriculum at the TDSB has only been realized in relation to the representation of sex and gender categories, and its policies are scarce because it does not address the overall moral hierarchies in which heterosexist discourses operate as a situated order of “scientia sexualis”.

I have one last site, or domain to attend to and that is the student body. Its necessity in this discussion is very closely related to the critique of the *Rainbow and Triangles: Challenging Homophobia Curriculum: A Curriculum Document for Challenging Homophobia and Heterosexism in the K-6 Classroom* (2002) and *Challenging Homophobia and Heterosexism: A K-12 Curriculum Resource* (2011) when it specified that “anti-homophobia education is not sex education. It does not involve the explicit description or discussion of sexual activities.” (Toronto District School Board & Elementary Teachers of Toronto, 2002, p. 3) The last remaining problem that I will address before introducing a new theory, and perhaps the most difficult because of its political and structural organization in our society, is how students,
minors, or children, are situated in relation to heterosexist discourses in school spaces such that a “description of discussion of sexual activities” can be specifically identified as “explicit” and potentially harmful or disruptive for them.

3 Student bodies; sexed and sentimentalized

One way to intervene in heterosexism, implicit in the scope of problems I have already outlined pertaining to a potential misunderstanding of what counts as heterosexist discourses in Chapter 2, is perhaps more obvious to the reader by now and that is to keep a discourse of sex from becoming a subject of moral control in schools. There are, however, many authoritative, discursive, and political dynamics that continue to subject sex, and students, and indeed all of life and thought to control that need to be considered in order for action to become possible. Schools and what they do and do not do, in theory and practice, and to the notice of students, is of course very relevant and Chapter 1 sought to outline the problem of not meeting students’ learning needs in relation to discourses of sex. A discourse of sex is a very tricky subject, and I have taken some care to organize how sex works as a discourse, but sex as a subject of social control, is only part of the overall problem between students and schools. How the student is situated as a subject of moral control in schools is also very significant. To further understand how TDSB schools could fail to produce a discourse of sex that works for students’ learning needs, I now examine how students are situated in contested identity politics of sex and gendered identities, such that their bodies become constituted as needing authoritative protection from discourses of sex in schools that are thought to disturb their otherwise “normal” development.

The student body is thought to be developmentally vulnerable to discourses of sex and since it is also treated as a site of contested identity politics, students may not at first appear to be politically favourable for any social intervention related to discourses of sex. Not only are schools treating sex as a subject of moral control, but also students are regularly expected to be subject to social control of some form of the other, with or without moral forms of law, in school spaces. A theory of student freedom in relation to the discourses of sex in school curriculum is not without its ironies because indeed, students are always situated to control, as minors under the law, and as relatively powerless economic and political dependents of adult protection in Canada.
In conceptualizing this problem I have been influenced by American historian, Viviana Zelizer (1994). Zelizer describes the phenomena of the “transformation of the economic and sentimental value of children” (p. 3) in the United States, by interrogating turn-of-the-century journalistic sources, civic documents, judicial cases, accident reports, census reports, social services reports, and other historical records of civic society in a book titled *Pricing the Priceless Child*. Zelizer explained that “The success of the industrial capital…required a skilled, educated labour force” and that social changes from this economic shift impacted the value of the child (p. 8). Zelizer identified other complicating factors that worked to facilitate the changing value of the child, including weakened “instrumental ties” (p. 8) in families, “the specialization of women into expert full-time motherhood” (p. 10), increasing competition for employment for adults, a progressive reformer interest to remove the child from family influences for the sake of class and citizenship projects, and falling birth and mortality rates. Zelizer’s main thesis was to demonstrate that while the child’s practical value was diminished, their sentimentalized value began to be regarded as a ‘priceless’ investment that only judicial, insurance, and adoption practices could price. I am influenced by Zelizer’s (1994) historical examination of how the child became sentimentalized as a priceless body, and I have cited it because it helps me provide a basis from which to imagine how the Canadian child is presently situated as a sentimentalized body, a body that is particularly understood to be vulnerable, and requiring protection from potentially exploitive forms of economic and political life, that are also reflected and culminated within discourses of sex in Canadian society and the globalized west.

Situated as “children”, Canadian students are often figured as politically innocent, and pliant, and/or, as sentimentalized subjects on the basis that they are innocent of the subversive discourses of a prohibited sex, or ‘heterosexism’. In public schooling, children are treated as naturalized subjects of heterosexist values, therefore any discourses of sex can therefore be seen to interfere in the otherwise “natural” development of children just on the account that they exist in school to be instrumental in the first place. Child-students have little means to organize how they are ruled, and their developmental needs, if not also the recognition of their developmental needs, are hijacked by presumptive and heterosexist discourses of sex that are thought to protect them from exploitation, and instead only work to make sex a subject of much danger. These practices work to produce children’s bodies as the sentimentalized subjects of sexual innocence and vulnerability on one hand, and on the other, launch the whole mosaic of prohibited pleasure in our society anyway. Heterosexist discourses that presume children need to be protected from
discourses of sex do not take into account that this teaches values about sex and sexuality to children anyway, and this situates children precariously in heterosexist discourses because their individual needs are relatively ignored compared to the communication of this moral prerogative. This situation of selective silences and prohibitions has only even been destined to increase the probability of an overall economy of sexual exploitation and persecution.

Now with the advent of sex and gender minority rights in educational policy at the TDSB, the transgendered, bi, lesbian, and gay, minoritized sex and gendered body, are all allegedly included in the curriculum along with the heterosexual body, one expects some progress to be busily occurring in curriculum, but as I argued in Chapter 1 and 2 thus far, adequate representation of minoritized groups also fail to become possible because sex is still being maintained as the subject of much prohibition and authoritative control - as a heterosexist and moral discourse.

3.1 Queer identity and theory in pedagogy

David Ruffolo (2006), an OISE/UT graduate, in Reading Students as Queer: Disrupting (Hetero) Normativity for an Equitable Future, argues that reading every student as queer could develop revolutionary identities and strategically undermine binary notions of identity. Ruffolo observes that “add[ing] identities to the already exclusionary pot will not lead to an equitable future” (Rufollo, 2006) so he proposes the assumption of “queer” student identity in education because it troubles the notion of “identity” and displaces normative practices and assumptions through identificatory practices in order to appreciate a mobile and fluid sense of self. “Queer”, Ruffolo suggests, is the category of disidentification- a representation that fails to contain anything except for an identity of strategic resistance. Ruffolo stresses that “queer” is not adding to identity categories; “Classroom participants and culture are resistant to difference through the interrogation of “identity” assumptions… maintained through the intersections of the various isms that circulate in and around the academy” (Rufollo, 2006). I think Rufollo takes queer pedagogy to its literal conclusion, and that is, ultimately, for “queer” identity to be a strategic and necessary sense of individual freedom to free the student body from heterosexist control. I think this is very interesting for university and higher education as Rufollo has argued, but I don’t think this could translate well to the political situation of the child-student in publicly funded schools. There are several challenges in taking this approach, of assuming students’ are queer that might alienate those people situated firmly within heterosexist discourses. Specifying
the oblique meaning of queer identity at the same time is quite a challenge. I have considered a few approaches where even “queer” can enter into pedagogy safely for all students but I argue that this cannot happen on the basis of assumptions held by authorities.

“Lesbian, gay, and transgendered” people are barely mentioned in curriculum as it is, even though these identities have been approved in discourses of the state and in schools for decades, so how can “queer”, likely even more threatening and misunderstood within heterosexist discourses anyway, be considered more adequate for action in these spaces? Isn’t it just as likely that the moment the word “queer” appears in curriculum, there will be a political panic that students’ sexualities are ‘suddenly’ becoming hijacked by a politics of resistance against a sexual order? Given what I’ve demonstrated regarding the previous, and possibly still existent failure for sex and gender minorities to be represented more often in TDSB curriculum, I think that assuming students are “queer”, or that queer is articulated as an achievement in school discourses of sex, greater than any other organization of discourses of sex, might be too impractical, and provocative as an intervention to heterosexist discourses in schools (Equity Policy 2000; Yau, 2007).

The queer body is an extremely complex concept of a non-identity in theory, which could (hypothetically) work to challenge all subject relationships of a moral discourse of sex such that sex is not subject to moral control. ‘Queer’ is a practical theoretical construction of identity based upon the political refusal to identify within a moral order of sexed and gendered identities.17 This is a positive, if not, the only possible strategy of self-identification for some

17 Fadi Abou-Rihan (1997) examines Deleuze and Félix Guattari’s work in its interconnection to queer issues in the text Queer Sties: Tools, Terrains, Theories. For Abou-Rihan, “the problematic for those of us working in the field of queer theory becomes one of establishing...lateral relays between...theory and sexuality without ground, justifying, or extrapolating one in, through, or from the other” (Abou-Rihan, 1997, pp. 506, 507). Having little interest to “encapsulate, confine, or determine” (Abou-Rihan, 1997, p. 502) the extent of Deleuze and Guattari’s work, Abou-Rihan posits instead that their “text is a tool box” (p. 502) for queer theory. While mildly critiquing Deleuze for occasionally reterritorializing philosophy with his phallus, active masculinity and reproductive potential of sex, Abou-Rihan (1997) argues that along with understanding our own “sexual proclivities”, queer theory seeks to address “the complex connections between the “theory” and the “queer” body” (p. 507). In order to perform queer theory it also must be queered, Abou-Rihan stresses. The very term ‘queer’ in the hopeful usage, is a “pervasive specificity that is antithetical to the oppositional logic of the “abnormal”, the innocuously “odd”, the medically “pathological”, or the socially acceptable “alternative”” (Abou-Rihan, 1997, p. 507). ‘Queer theory’ may refer to a shifting set of tools to be used in conjunction with “feminist criticism, philosophy, history, psychoanalysis, medicine, and literary and cultural studies” that also shifts away from “the customary archaeological model of knowledge as an endless pursuit of depths, precedents, fixed itineraries, and hierarchal truths to a geographical or topological one emphasizing surfaces, movements, disguises, production, and play” (Abou-Rihan, 1997, pp. 502, 507). Citing Nietzsche’s definition of performances as “the delight in simulation exploding as a power that pushes aside one’s so-called ‘character’, flooding it and at times extinguishing it; the inner craving for a role and a mask,
people, but given the prevalent paranoia of heterosexist discourses of sex, and given that queer is a fraught concept of the body and is connected to subversive politics, its politics may have some practical limitations in pedagogical communications where youth are seen to require protection from discourses of a subversive sex. Politics can change, but the politics that center upon the child in relation to discourses of sex are particularly dense and I think queer is too oppositional to authority, and too problematic a word to ever become fully reclaimed—this is its power after all!

“Queer” is also being reclaimed as an identity of political action, has spawned community alliances related to political action rather than sexed and gendered identifications, and there is a queer theory in good pedagogy, but “queer” is still recognized as a derogatory term. Even though the idea of the queer body can work to subvert the law of gender and sex, and this is useful in theory, since we do not fully know what the body can do or become when it is not subjected to moral discourses, the queer body remains situated in its political relationships as an identity of subversive politics. Queer is also easily perceived as an identification of “being” by those without such theoretical shibboleths, and as something that is necessarily subversive and perhaps also, just plain dangerous. So queer may be an extremely complex theoretical position, but since the term is also situated as an identity within politics that are necessarily subversive, it is not particularly intelligible and/or tolerable within heterosexist frameworks of understanding. Within the interplay of a theoretical refusal of identity on one hand, and a political identity of resistance in social politics on the other hand, the queer body may be too fraught a term for the anxieties connected between children and heterosexist discourses of sex.\footnote{I reviewed the edited book Queer Theory in Education (Pinar, 1998) in preparation for this thesis. I chose not to use the word “queer” to outline a pedagogical theory of discourses of sex for public schools. I think queer, as a theory of subversive identity, makes this same body resistant to any practice in which authority is assumed to be a necessary practice such as in educational spaces— or rather also, where institutional powers are conducted upon individual bodies. Thus, if authorities take “queer” as their subject, I cannot affirm the possibility of the queer body as any more necessary than any other situation of subjection caused by this authoritative exercise. It really is just another “identity” to be included, and it does not actually have a critical capacity of its own if it is sanctioned by authorities who also seek to prohibit sexual expression anyway. Nonetheless, this approach is oriented strategically to the fundamental situation in which prejudice and fear of the queer body is consistently possible.}

for appearance”, Abou-Rihan proposes that queer is performative of sexuality in the same way that queer theory can be performative of different theories and canons as a type of drag (Abou-Rihan, 1997, p. 508). Queer theories are both dressed and undressed in various theoretical tools to produce titillating possibilities for what counts as erotic.
There is also no theoretical or practical basis in which the “queer” is a more profound social accomplishment, worthy of authoritative expectations in schools, than any other social situation where desire is expressed as a political identity. It is however an extremely difficult construction of identity to understand, so perhaps understanding it is an achievement in its own right. According to Foucault we are all perverse, so everyone utilizes the tactics and strategies of the theoretical queer body, but only on the condition that sex is treated with negativity and social control and requires resistance against subjection. For the child who is potentially innocent of even having a capacity to understand that its sex is something that has become a subject of moral control, and thus, appears to deserve secrecy, shame and prohibition, queer no longer has an oppressive political situation in which it becomes intelligible and necessary.

If every students learning needs’ are to be taken seriously as the basis of an inclusive and equitable education, changing from heterosexist assumptions to assumption of queer identity does little to empower students. Assuming all students have the capacity to be/become “queer” also does little to transform the conditions in which sex is treated as discourses of a “true sex”- as if “sex” has a prediscursive truth of its own. Queer cannot exist without moral discourses of sex to resist against, and it has no identity of its own outside of its acts of political resistance against discourses of a “true sex”. So even if “queer” manages to avoid becoming a fixed identity of a particular order of truth, and is actually understood in its theoretical complexity in curriculum, queer theory cannot be said to act to resist how sex is subject to moral control in pedagogy. If queer theory is also taken to further legitimate authoritative assumptions concerning students, this only affirms the power of authorities and does little to empower students.

Identity categories and theoretical constructs for non-identity, such as queer, are not suitable for the purposes to intervene in a practical and accessible manner for all stakeholders in education considering that even the “normative” representation of “lesbian, gay, and transgendered” people in curriculum are not even reaching the majority of students. If schools organize what counts as sexually “explicit” already, then the queer body can only present a greater threat. I think ‘queer’ will always appear as “brainwashing” even though it is only difficult to understand, and perhaps also, necessarily inconsistent as well-queer is not anymore
brainwashing than any other situation in which authorities assume something about students. I don’t think the word “queer” will make it in the front door of schools with students also being considered vulnerable to discourses of sex in heterosexist conditions.

I think “queer”, as a call sign identity for radical sexual politics has a place in curriculum, as do those who identify as “queer” exist, but “queer” may also be limited to become acted upon in curriculum by authorities, because it is necessarily ‘unintelligible’ and this can be perceived as potentially oppositional to the good use of authority in school spaces. If schools do teach about the great complexity surrounding queer identity, however, this will teach that sex and authority related to sex is contestable and this is incredibly useful to make sex more explicit in curriculum. There might be a way to address all of these issues related to the freedom and autonomy of every individual in a way that can be comprehensive and active and less arbitrary in effect- the distinction of morals and ethics.

I am concerned with building a practical, and critical communication strategy that intervenes across all relationships of moral subjection-between discourses of a moral sex and the citizen, schools and students, between diverse students and a democratic society, between thought and life in heterosexist discourses- such that students can have a discourse of sex in schools that is reciprocal to their needs. I have tried to find a way through naming and critiquing heterosexist acts of censorship that cause the limited representation of sex and gendered minorities in curriculum, and that also cause discourses of sex to not meet students’ learning needs, such that schools can become reflexive to students’ learning needs and organize curriculum on the basis of this principle. I am concerned that the theoretical queer body, and its use as a political identity, cannot work to intervene in heterosexist discourses, if “queer” is not adequately understood in relation to the subject-relationships that heterosexist discourses work to inscribe. Closely related to the view of the situation of “queer” becoming too politically and theoretically complex and incendiary for schools to handle appropriately is the complex status of the student as a child, or minor under the law in Toronto, Canada.

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19 Cris Mayo (2006) in Pushing the Limits of Liberalism: Queerness, Children and the Future, looks to understand how American “liberal theory and the liberal states” have failed to provide more support for “queer possibilities” and looks to bolster support for queer youth (p. 487). Mayo examines how liberal theories struggle to deal with sexual affect among queer youth and have failed to place “sexuality at the center” of social change in public education (p. 475). Mayo argues that the presents of queer-identified youth challenge a particular order that assumes that children have no agency around issues pertaining to sex and sexuality.
3.2 Students as economic and political subjects of school authority

Secular public schools in Toronto, Canada, indeed all schools, and even those that claim a neutral secularity are always conducting power over students through meritocratic practices of assessment and evaluation, if not also through the exercise of particular forms of control and law that are sanctioned by the society as a legitimate act of authority. TDSB students are consistently produced as subjects of social control in Toronto, Canada. Furthermore, secular public schools gain their legitimacy to be authoritative by working to conduct the values of the Canadian state in pedagogy, such as the Charter of Rights and Freedoms (Government of Canada 1982) and provincial human rights policies (Ontario, 1986).

Students, as minors under the law, and as children, though they can remain subjects of consumption in the Canadian economy, are situated as nearly powerless and dependent on adults for their political voice. Labour laws are quite different across Canada, but generally, there are few jobs for students or minors, and as a group they have little access to economic or political autonomy in law. Students of public schools have little power to opt out of education without adult intervention, cannot vote or acquire taxable earnings from labour, cannot work in certain situations without parental permission, and cannot emancipate themselves from parental or state guardianship. Students of public schools have little autonomy and freedom to organize their own education, but they are able, however, to express their freedom and autonomy when it comes to resisting how authority works in their lives and of course, this resistance may or may not be considered legitimate by authorities charged with their care.

The main point here is that secular public schools in Toronto consistently exercise power over their students, and students have relatively little political power over how authority is exercised upon them and this represents a problem for how students learn about sex in a manner that is helpful for their freedom and autonomy. This situation of the relatively powerless student in relation to authoritative schooling is typical and this structure is also useful to protect children who cannot yet advocate for themselves, but this structured relationship between students and their schools remains a problem for imagining how Canadian students can become situated to demand a curriculum that works to become reciprocal to their needs.

Along with the political structure in which students are situated, a parallel problem at stake is that the students are situated in heterosexist discourses as bodies that need protection from discourses of sex, and because of this, their freedom and autonomy to organize their own lives becomes limited, and their development (organized as “sexual”) is left ‘allegedly’ incapacitated
in relation to discourses of sex, or rather also ignored. If schools are situated to conduct authority in relation to discourses of sex, discourses which also treat students as heterosexual subjects, then indeed it is difficult to imagine how a discourse of sex can work in these spaces to free the student body and reciprocate with students’ desires instead of acting out authoritative ideals, such as heterosexist discourses, upon them. The ways in which children are treated as subjects of social control, and thought to require protection from discourses of sex, must become reorganized if students are also to become situated to help schools serve their actual interests in relation to discourses of sex.

3.3 A paradox of powers between sex, students, and schools

If the reader accepts the premise that schools can remain somehow useful\textsuperscript{20} to the production of a democratic society in Canada, the essential matter here is not just the economic and political structure of the situation that systematically ignores students’ learning needs, but rather the forms of thought that permit these relations to appear as adequate or a socially-just form of life. If heterosexist discourses are exclusionary, and the governing discourses are unfavourable for social change because sex and students are stubbornly treated as subjects of social control in politics, and students’ ‘innocence’ is particularly sentimentalized in this condition, it is difficult to envision an alternative model, or framework that will be more active to interrupt heterosexist discourses. How can schools work to reciprocate with students’ learning needs, and how can pedagogy be adjusted to produce a more inclusive society?

Conducting a discourse of sex in curriculum, while always authoritative in Canada because students, as minors under the law, have so little power to organize how they are ruled, does not necessarily have to conduct authoritative discourses of sex in content and organization. Educational authorities can also work to privilege students’ desires as the grounds for all social action related to discourses of sex in schools so that there is greater reciprocity between students and schools. The power that authorities have to organize sex as a subject of social control, to allegedly protect youth, could be exposed through pedagogical action. Generally, I think the conduct of authoritative power over what constitutes sex, and the perpetuation of heterosexist discourses, can be at least somewhat interrupted, or mitigated, if students’ learning needs are

\textsuperscript{20} To persevere and intensify the possibility of reciprocal social relations.
taken seriously in schools and investigated and curriculum is reformed on a reflexive and local basis.

The organization of social boundaries, schools, the exercise of law and authority, can remain useful forms of social power for a society that seeks to become more democratic, but only if the conduct of authority, and all the moral discourses that attach to these acts of authority, are reciprocal to principle of the inviolability of the freedom and autonomy of each individual citizen—a principle of reciprocity. There may continue to be the irony that students have little power to organize their lives in authoritative spaces such as schools, but on the other hand, if the privilege granted to educational authorities is thought to be exclusively legitimate on the condition that it is actually serving students’ learning needs, then this might be a solution to the situation in which sex is constantly treated as a negative and prohibited discourse. Professionally accredited adults actually serving students in schools is hardly a novel idea for educational theory, but perhaps in relation to discourses of sex this principle only needs to be made more explicit because of the special status that “sex” and “sexuality” have as a prohibited and dangerous, inciting and titillating subject in relation to vulnerable and sentimentalized students (Foucault, 1990; Zelizer, 1994). Now, the outstanding question is what principles or what frameworks are needed to reciprocate with students’ learning needs, and how would these discourses practically work to intervene in this complex situation?

What is needed is a cautious intervention to the production of a subversive notion of sex in schools, and one that works to ‘transcend’ the political controversies of adults, and works to empower students directly by guiding authorities to respond to students’ learning needs and organize spaces for their own political autonomy and perseverance. “How can schools conduct discourses of sex to support the free and autonomous organization of desire in students’ lives, and within the context of the on-going production of a secular, inclusive, pluralistic, and democratic society?” is the main thesis question, but in consideration of the argument thus far, it is equally a question of how to free sex from the discourses that make it possible as a subject, and paradoxically, how can discourses of sex be strategically conducted in schools to interrupt heterosexism and meet students’ individual learning needs? The paradox I refer to here is the questionable need for sex to be produced as a subject in discourses of school at all, if students are also actually free to organize these discourses for themselves, and schools remain authoritative. If sex needs no authoritative speech, then how can schools, situated to conduct authority in relation to students, ever become reciprocal to students’ learning needs at the same time that it
works to conduct authority in relation to discourses of sex? If schools are going to conduct a discourse of sex anyway, it is useful to create pedagogical frameworks for discourses of sex in curriculum that will create the least harm and meets all students’ learning needs, the most.

After several years of searching for some insight that would tie together all of these theories surrounding discourses of sex, school authority, and vulnerable students, and propose a solution for substantive change, I think a principle of reciprocity within the distinction of morals and ethics best works to substantively impact both theory and practice in education all at the same time. Deleuze’s (1988) text on Spinoza’s work, *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, and the distinction between morals and ethics, refers to the differences between slavery and freedom, or also between a life of subjection and freedom. Discourses of sex can be viewed in this framework as producing a life of subjection or freedom. Even though arguably, discourses of sex have become possible because of how “sex” has been taken as an object of moral control, the distinction between morals and ethics can clearly identify those discourses that are more or less helpful to imagine a discourse of sex that would work to reciprocate with students’ learning needs, and support the production of a democratic, secular, plural and inclusive society. With this distinction and the principle of reciprocity that it implies, there is a way in which to organize a critical discourse of student differences, such that the intensification of reciprocal discourses of sex can emerge in school spaces and spread throughout our social relations.

The distinction can work to outline a theory of how a moral discourse of sex risks the production of violence in society and turns the body into a subject of judgement, just as it also outlines an ethics of freedom and autonomy as well. The distinction can point to how safe sex education, and other education that students want, can become more effective in shaping outcomes for these students. The distinction between morals and ethics is a backdoor way to discuss issues of sexuality without necessarily breaching the heterosexist barrier of what constitutes an “explicit” discourse of sex, because it works busily to expose this barrier--it does not organize sex as a subject and rather, it works to expose how sex becomes subjected to discourses of truth and moral control. The distinction of moral and ethics is the critical tool needed to prepare any classroom for frank discussions of sexuality. As the most basic philosophical distinction, and as the most complex philosophical distinction in terms of depth, its amplitude for action in schools is only a matter of variation from body to body, classroom to classroom.
Chapter 4 turns to explaining the distinction between morals and ethics. Chapter 5 will outline an explicit theory of good and bad discourses of sex, and in Chapter 6 the principle of reciprocity as described within the distinction between morals and ethics, will be put to organize a practice of reciprocity between discourses of sex, school authority, and students learning needs.

4 The Distinction between Morals and Ethics

A full explanation of the distinction between morals and ethics has incredible depth and is an extremely complex discussion that challenges many fundamental concepts of modern western discourses. It is not merely theoretical and it is an actual distinction in the capacity to act depending on how one has been affected. I will first describe at length its nuanced implications by providing a detailed reiteration of Deleuze’s (1988) text, *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*. Deleuze provides a summary and interpretation of Spinoza’s critique of western religious discourses as a post-structural philosophy for contemporary discourses of social freedom and revolutionary action. I discuss the distinction between morals and ethics with a close reading of Deleuze’s text in order to later imagine how reciprocal discourses of sex are constituted in thought, and to understand how these constructions might bear upon school discourses of sex in relation to students.

The 17th-century philosopher Baruch Spinoza (as cited in Deleuze, 1988) was one of the first thinkers in the historical record of Western philosophy to reject the mind/body dualism argued by René Descartes (1637, 1644). Spinoza (1996) conceived of the distinction between morals and ethics as the difference between a life of slavery and a life of freedom, and he used this argument as the basis of his critique of Descartes’ overall approach to philosophy. Gilles Deleuze (1988) has lauded Spinoza’s work as a “philosophy of life” (p. 17), and his 1988 work, *Spinoza: A Practical Philosophy* provides an exegesis of Spinoza’s philosophical work that concentrates on the distinction between morals and ethics.

I have decided to take up and interpret two discussions from Deleuze’s (1988) analysis of the difference between morals and ethics. I have selected these arguments to demonstrate how this distinction can work to produce a life of freedom, and to situate the distinction between morals and ethics within the original historical context of Spinoza’s criticism of Descartes. Deleuze (1988) describes Spinoza’s critique of Descartes’ philosophy and demonstrates how the idea of God works to render as cogent two contradictory accounts of the parallelism of mind and
body. Familiarity with the parallelism of mind and body and with the deterministic relationships that exist between their attributions in thought will articulate a principle of reciprocity between how one has become affected and how one becomes able to act. This can be called a philosophy of immanence because in this model there is nothing ruling existence from beyond existence such that life needs to be subjected to something else. This is not necessarily true for every reader, but this philosophy suggests that when we are subjected and enslaved to what we do not understand, we necessarily resist and fight against this transcendent force even if we are also ultimately working against ourselves and everyone else. Resultantly, with the distinction of mind and body thoroughly critiqued I will begin to use Spinoza’s model of the body, with nothing to rule it, as the basis of a new critique. What finally emerges is a refreshed take on how the organization of sex in discourse as a concept in thought, life, and in the conduct of our social institutions can make discourses of sex good and/or bad for individual people and in our social relations. It is however a difficult and complex journey. Though it may at first appear far from our discussion of school board policy about sex education, this following critique of parallelism between mind and body will unrest some of the most basic concepts that makes thinking about sex as a form of freedom and revolution so difficult. At stake in this discussion is a principle of reciprocity between thought and life and this takes shape with a model of the body. With a new model of the body, as articulated by Deleuze’s interpretation of Spinoza’s Ethics, I proceed to critique social discourses that would work to subject discourses of sex and students to moral control and to rob students of their freedom and autonomy in Chapter 5 and 6.

Deleuze (1996) also explored the distinction between morals and ethics in Spinoza’s texts, Ethics (1996) and Tractatus Theologico-Politicus (1670), and consolidates Spinoza’s philosophy as a triple devaluation of “consciousness,” “values,” and “sad passions” (Deleuze, pp. 17, 26) analogous to the theological discourses of Spinoza’s era. I review these two main discussions in detail in order to make the stakes of the distinction between morals and ethics more explicit to the reader. Furthermore, this specific framework will provide a useful foundation for the forthcoming chapters where I address how western discourses of sex create the production of bad passions and bad relationships, and an outline of potential solutions to this problem in terms of a principle for reciprocity for school curriculum.
4.1 Parallelism: A Spinozist-Deleuzian critique of Descartes

Spinoza begins his philosophical conversation with Rene Descartes (CSM, 1984) who famously divided body from mind or spirit. Descartes argued that the mind, spirit, or soul is a nonphysical, finite substance; that the body is a purely physical, unthinking substance; and that God is an infinite and perfect substance that contains all possible attributes of existence. The following excerpts from Descartes’ various works further outline his analysis of a relationship between human life and God:

By the word “God” I understand a substance that is infinite, eternal, immutable, independent, supremely intelligent, supremely powerful, and which created both myself and everything else (if anything else there be) that exists. (CSM 1984, p. 31)

By “God” I mean the very being the idea of whom is within me, that is, the possessor of all the perfections which I cannot grasp, but can somehow reach in my thought, who is subject to no defects whatsoever. (CSM, 1984, p. 35)

[O]n the one hand I have a clear and distinct idea of myself, in so far as I am simply a thinking, non-extended thing [that is, a mind], and on the other hand I have a distinct idea of body, in so far as this is simply an extended, non-thinking thing. And accordingly, it is certain that I am really distinct from my body, and can exist without it. (CSM, 1984, p. 54)

For there you said that the body and the soul, in relation to the whole human being, are incomplete substances; and it follows from their being incomplete that what they constitute is a being through itself. (CSMK, 1988, p. 200)

Lastly, as regards the soul and the body together, we have only the notion of their union, on which depends our notion of the soul’s power to move the body, and the body’s power to act on the soul and cause its sensations and passions. (CSMK, 1988, p. 218)

In Descartes’ (1984) philosophy, the correspondence of mind and body produces the effect of finite being; and this finite being is imperfect compared to God. While intrinsically lacking God’s perfection, the finite being is also, at the same time, subject to the ideal of God’s perfection. This idea of becoming ‘subject to the ideal of God’ means not only that the finite being becomes a distinct subject, individualized and unique, but also that it is enslaved to a form of perfection that it is always lacking. Inferring from Spinoza’s critique of Descartes, Deleuze (1988) indicated that Cartesians would:

“. . . deny real causality between the body and the mind and yet still maintain an ideal or occasional causality; one can affirm an ideal correspondence between the two, according to which, as tradition has it, a passion of the soul corresponds to an action of the body, and vice versa; one can affirm an identity or order between the two (mind/body) without their having the same “dignity” or “perfection” when compared to the powers of an infinite God.” (p. 87)
Descartes’ followers, known as Cartesians, can have an “occasional” affirmation of an identity of order between mind and body, since there is a lingering ideal of a perfected correspondence of mind and body for finite being, even if this ideal of correspondence necessarily falls short of achieving God’s infinite perfection (Deleuze, 1988, p. 87). This form of subjection to God’s perfection is nonetheless a central problem that Spinoza found in Descartes’ philosophy and found necessary to resolve.

To explain an identity of order between mind and body, Deleuze (1988) pointed to two accounts of parallelism, epistemological and ontological, which were developed in the works of 17th-century mathematician and philosopher Gottfried Leibniz (p. 87). These two accounts of parallelism specify different relationships between mind and body, how the attribution of mind and body work in relation to the mode of their essence, and how an effort to achieve a perfected synthesis between mind and body can be denied and affirmed for finite being. In discussion of sex and sexuality, often it is thought that sex is to be subject to control, and that the mind must control the body with adequate ideas. Discourses that treat sex as something to control in western societies tend to organize the mind and body as different substances. Both parallelisms between mind and body have a principle of reciprocity, but also, both parallelisms have a principle of subjection, and both will be shown to be inadequate for thought. This re-explanation from Deleuze’s work is the most complex task in this thesis, but without a full explanation of the failed distinction between mind and body, the dominion of mind and body in thought will act to passionately resist a complete understanding of this work. Epistemological and ontological parallelisms are two descriptions that demonstrate how the ideas of mind and body reciprocate with the forces of their existence as ideas in thought.  

4.1.1 Epistemological parallelism

For Descartes, the order of identity between mind (or spirit and soul) and body is that the mind has the power to move the body, and the body has the power to act on the soul and cause its sensations and passions (CSMK, 1984, p. 218). The identity of an order between mind and body, and the perfected correspondence between the two, can be affirmed on the condition that

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21 There is the geographic location of the skull on a map of a body, the location of the brain, but how may the operations there be attributed to have a force different from the body in which it is always a part?
the ideal of God’s perfection is partially and idealistically attributed to the power of a mind to control a body. Through comprehension of God’s plan and by understanding a God’s singular perfection in the attribute of thought called mind, the condition of the body, a force irrevocably beyond the comprehension of the mind, is thought to be better tolerated and a greater synthesis between mind and body can be achieved. The labour of understanding and acquiring knowledge of God’s perfection therefore sponsors God’s grace.

Deleuze (1988) argued that Spinoza invoked epistemological parallelism as an “axiom according to which the knowledge of an effect involves the knowledge of its cause” (p. 88). For example, the mind does not know that “we are”; rather, the mind only has “the idea of what happens to our body, the idea of our body’s affections, and it is only through such ideas that we know immediately our body and others, our mind and others” (Ethics II, 12–31, as cited in Deleuze, 1988, p. 87). The mind “is therefore the idea of the corresponding body” and there is “correspondence between the affections of the body and the ideas of the mind, a correspondence by which ideas represent these affections” (Deleuze, 1988, p. 87). This notion that there should be some correspondence between an object and the idea of an object in thought is the most basic expression of a principle of reciprocity. There is a basic relationship of an idea to its object, and in the case of a general epistemological relationship between mind and body, there also must be a cause for how the attributions of mind and body are distinct. There must be a cause for the effect of mind, and a different cause for the effect of the body, in the attribute of thought (called mind) in order for mind and body to actually be coherently different from each other (p. 88). Deleuze argues with the example of epistemological parallelism that the only cause that separates thought-in-the-mind from the actions-of-the-body is an idealistic power attributed to the mind to control the body, and to be separate from it. This idealistic power attributed to mind to control the body is not reciprocal at all.

Deleuze (1988) points out that Spinoza invoked an axiom of epistemological parallelism not to affirm an identity of an order between mind and body but rather to propose an identity of “connection . . . an equal valence, an equality of principle, between extension and thought, and between what occurs in one and the other” (Deleuze, 1988, p. 88). “Extension” is the surface therefore of where thought occurs. “What must be ruled out,” Deleuze argued, “is any real action” between the attributes, since each attribute is “conceived through itself” and has entirely different properties (Deleuze, 1988, p. 87). Mind and body always correspond to each other because “God, as a single substance possessing all the attributes, does not produce anything
without producing it in each attribute according to one and the same order” (Deleuze, 1988, p. 87). The critique of epistemological parallelism between mind and body that Deleuze used to create a new perspective on Spinoza’s work leads to another construct for considering the parallelism between mind and body, namely, ontological parallelism.

4.1.2 Ontological parallelism

Deleuze (1988) explained how the axiom of the epistemological parallelism of mind and body leads to another critical perspective, a view of the ontological parallelism of mind and body. Deleuze (1988) wrote that Spinoza had:

“. . . demonstrated that to every idea there corresponds something (since nothing could be known without a cause that brings it into being) and to each thing there corresponds an idea (since God forms an idea of his essence and of all that follows from it). But this parallelism between idea and object only implies the correspondence, the equivalence, and the identity between a mode of thinking and a different mode considered under a specific attribute (in our case, extension as the only other attribute that we know: thus the mind is the idea of the body and nothing else).” (p. 88)

Whereas epistemological parallelism demonstrates that the ideal of perfected correspondence between mind and body can be affirmed, ontological parallelism brings to the fore an identity of an order between mind and body in which the ideal of its perfected correspondence can be denied.22 This is so because, in ontological parallelism, “no attribute is superior to another, none is reserved for the creator, none is relegated to the created beings and to their imperfection” (Deleuze, 1988, p. 88). There is no hierarchical order of mind over body because the mind can only be a result of the affections of the body, and so there is an inevitable correspondence between what happens in one and in the other and never an ideal and perfected correspondence. Deleuze (1988) described this form of correspondence as “founded on the equality of all the attributes as forms of essences and forces of existence (including thought)” (Deleuze, 1988, p. 89). In the ontological parallelism of mind and body, the ideal of God’s

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22 Note that the ideal of “perfected correspondence” is at least worth striving for in the example of the epistemological parallelism of mind and body, but it is not possible, except by divine intervention in ontological parallelism. The words “perfected” and “ideal” are central to understanding the focus of this explanation. There is indeed correspondence between mind and body in ontological parallelism, but it is never ideal or perfected except by God. The finite being in the ontological parallelism is perfectly imperfect- all according to God’s order. There is no possible correspondence between mind and body in epistemological parallelism, because mind and body have an idealistic cause of difference, and yet the epistemological parallelism affirms the synthesis of mind and body as a perfected, even attainable, ideal.
perfection belongs to God alone, and there are no attributes, such as mind, that work to privilege finite being in relation to God.

In ontological parallelism, the finite being registers the correspondence of mind and body as the product of God’s will, not something of its own creation. Finite being is therefore powerless to realize any perfection of correspondence, unless it is subjected to supernatural conditions of transcendent intervention by God’s divine will. The finite being of ontological parallelism can never consider that the ideal of perfected correspondence between mind and body is caused by its own sovereignty, but rather this notion of perfected synthesis is attributed to God’s will alone.

Although tempting, it is often far too simplistic to attempt to connect these critiques to religions, or sects and denominations as both epistemological and ontological parallelism often occur at the same time in thought, mystifying the order of cause and effect that they represent between mind and body.

4.1.3 A transferred notion of unity

The ideal of the perfected correspondence between mind and body can be denied in ontological parallelism, and it can be affirmed in epistemological parallelism, and what ties these two accounts together is that they both work to affirm that finite being is subject to the perfection of a transcendent God. Although the ontological and epistemological parallelisms of mind and body lead to both denial and affirmation of the order and connection of the identity of mind and body, and expose a contradiction in how the attributes of mind and body work in thought, these different accounts of parallelism can also work together in thought. Deleuze (1988) argued that epistemological and ontological parallelism can work together to “transfer a notion of unity from the latter to the former” because the “attribute of thought” (mind) is privileged to produce both consistent and contradictory accounts of thought, in terms of causes and effects, at the same time (p. 87). First, the attribute of thought (mind) has the capacity to extrapolate ideas on the body, what Deleuze called a privilege of the “multiplication of ideas.” Second are the phenomena of two different incantations in each parallelism: of God and of finite being so the notion of “the idea that constitutes consciousness” is repeated and redoubled in both parallelisms. For example, in epistemological parallelism, “consciousness” represents an object that “has a formal being itself under the attribute of thought,” which therefore also invokes ontological parallelism since this being must also be the “object of another idea that represents it, to infinity” (Deleuze, 1988,
Deleuze (1988) identified a third privilege of the attribute of thought, as comprehension—namely, that consciousness will represent comprehension as the substance of its existence, “although the idea [consciousness] is only a mode of this substance [of thinking, of acting] under the attribute of thought [mind]” (p. 89). We can see this third privilege in the ontological parallelism as the mind purporting to have an adequate notion of a transcendent God even if it should suffer its imperfection all the time, it is all part of God’s plan. The third privilege in the epistemological parallelism is the mind having the power to control its body for achieving God’s perfection, although this is always limited in possibility and can only be idealistic.

Explaining how contradictory parallelisms can work together in thought is a crucial but difficult part of Deleuze’s insight into Spinoza’s work. It works to explain the enigma at stake in the attributions of mind and body as distinct entities and it also explains why the division of mind and body can be so confusing. The “being” that is thought to be mind and body united at once, is also a concept in thought, and the privilege associated with this transcendent entity and its alleged powers can lead to much confusion. To discuss how these, mind and body, can work together so well as to hide how they subject thought to idealistic causes, I have elected to explain how thought forms a notion of God, or a transcendent ideal, in both parallelisms.

To have an adequate notion of God in the thoughts of finite being in the example of epistemological parallelism is to apprehend a universal cause of existence in all things, and exercise discipline over its body in relation to these idealistic causes. God judges the finite being of epistemological parallelism of mind and body for its lack of knowledge, relative to the transcendent order of God’s universal causes. If a finite being suffers it is because it does not accurately comprehend God’s plan in mind, such that it can control its body with greater synthesis to God’s perfection. A greater synthesis between mind and body is achieved by comprehension of God’s perfection in mind, for the purposes of controlling and making the body obey.

A slightly different perception of God appears in ontological parallelism. The finite being registers its parts of mind and body as dis-unified but also, already perfected in their disunity, and always part of God’s overall plan anyway. The finite being registers God’s will as the affective product of the quality of correspondence between mind and body. So if you’re conflicted, God wills it. If you’re happy, God wills it. Nothing about “finite being” is truly sovereign, and yet it is judged nonetheless as an overall agent of God’s plan. God is necessarily mysterious, and can never be accomplished by finite being, in mind or body, and yet God is
always expressed in mind and body through their imperfections given by God anyway. Even the sovereign will of the finite being is simply a product of God, whose revelations are reserved for prophecy alone. The finite being of ontological parallelism is judged by God through the quality of its correspondence of mind and body, and it can obey only by serendipity, or perhaps also by obedience to a prophet of God, and/or its doctrinal texts, as many traditions have claimed. Though whether one submits to God or not is also part of what God knows to be true. In ontological parallelism, the finite being can never achieve the perfection of God and never has this need. The only solace for the finite being who suffers a life of God’s judgment, is that it is never sovereign enough to attribute its good or bad relations to itself and it externalizes all of its suffering as part of God’s plan for its existence. In ontological parallelism, it can only accept its fate as a subject to God’s perfection, and in which it is a hapless, powerless agent with a vain notion of sovereignty.

When these two contradictory accounts of parallelism mix, not only can finite being be affirmed, either by denying or accepting the ideal of perfected correspondence of mind and body, but thought necessarily utilizes transcendent ideas that refer to the “complex status of the God” as that which “objectively comprehends substance and the attributes, but must be formed as a mode under the attribute of thought” (Deleuze, 1988, p. 89). As a consequence, comprehension of God is most important in epistemological parallelism and yet nearly impossible, except perhaps by prophecy alone, in ontological parallelism. Finite being is defined as lacking the perfection of God in both parallelisms; through the idealistic comprehension of God in the mind for the purpose of controlling the body in epistemological parallelism, or through the more absolute condition of subjection of life to a transcendent God in the ontological model. Either way, finite being is subject to God, because it is irrevocably subject to lacking God’s perfection in either parallelism. In ontological parallelism all of existence is imperfect, you either part of God’s plan or your also part of the problems God has also created in the world, and only God is perfect, and in epistemological parallelism, existence is perfected already but the mind lacks the knowledge of God to adequately comprehend the body and stop the suffering of its condition as a finite being. The transfer of unity from ontological parallelism to epistemological parallelism, Deleuze (1988) argued, therefore depends upon the notion of God, since “it alone authorizes the transfer of unity [God’s perfection] from the substance [ontological] to the modes [epistemological]” (p. 90).
The resulting conclusion for the contradictory parallelisms of mind and body is that “one and the same modification is expressed by one mode under each attribute, each forming an individual together with the idea that represents it under the attribute of thought” (Deleuze, 1988, p. 90). Spinoza, Deleuze (1988) said, wanted to make clear that “the essences of the modes have a cause through which they must be conceived; hence there is an idea that expresses the essence of the body and that makes us conceive this essence through its cause” (p. 91). The attributes of mind and body in these two accounts of parallelism are therefore demonstrated to be contradictory, and the paradox of simultaneously affirming and denying the order of mind and body disguises the transcendent forms of power at stake in Descartes’ philosophy. Thus, it would not be a matter of privileging one interpretation of parallelism over the other, but rather of understanding the connection and transfer of unity from the epistemological to the ontological and the manner in which thought can become confounded by transcendent causes in either parallelism of mind and body, and entirely supplanting these contradictory and complimentary distinctions of mind and body with an entirely new account of existence. Ontological parallelism and epistemological parallelism produce real effects. Real beings are affected by ideas linked to extrinsic and transcendent causes, and these beings can be affirmed by both the affirmation and the denial of an ideal of perfected correspondence between mind and body, even if they can never have the dignity of God’s perfection and an existence beyond the judgment of God. It is therefore not clear what role a life of freedom can play in Descartes’ philosophy, given a God who makes life imperfect and intolerable, and simultaneously judges life for its failures to constitute God’s glory.

It might appear that this may not be a “pluralistic” philosophy for Canadian society because it may appear to be too critical of the existence of a transcendent God, referring to the people who revere this as enslaved, and not free, but this is precisely the situation of individuals who are tested in judgment by a transcendent God and this situation is not always explicit for people who are not. I want to completely affirm the inclusion of all students, and the existence of a transcendent God in the lives of many students. Please keep in mind that the existence of Gods, or a God, and Goddesses, and so on, is not determined here. What Spinoza and Deleuze are specifically arguing is that people must obey something extrinsic to themselves through the illusion of the difference between mind (spirit, soul) and body because this division is idealistic and consequentially it works to enslave the body to the illusions that also, paradoxically, make it possible. It is enigmatic and difficult. If one finds God, as a transcendent ideal, necessary, then
one acknowledges oneself as broken against God’s perfection, and perhaps healing is necessary from having suffered some judgment of some kind, or perhaps it is necessary to treat life as a test and a gift at the same time, but there is no way out of the subject relation to God’s perfection and one is to some degree enslaved if one cannot also reconcile how a transcendent God has become absolutely necessary.23 Spinoza’s God is immanent, that is, synonymous with a life of freedom and autonomy that is individual to his existence, where all life is immanent and cause and effect are understood as necessarily reciprocal to each other. On the other hand, one doesn’t have to take Spinoza or Deleuze too literally. One can also know how a transcendent God becomes necessary by developing a capacity for philosophical critique, and/or paradoxically, by understanding why enslavement has become absolutely necessary for existence. I discount only the enigma at stake in using such ideas to explain such phenomena if they actually do exist. The problem Spinoza and Deleuze are pointing to is the whole problem of how free we are as individuals to shape our lives and between each other in our social relationships and how we should agree to be ruled, and/or how we are free.

The problem of Descartes’ philosophy is not only how the correspondence of mind and body can be both denied and affirmed, without the dignity of perfected correspondence for finite being compared to God, but also how one can have any freedom while living in such confusion about how one can become subjected to extrinsic causes. The extent of freedom that a finite being can experience in relation to God, or knowledge, is unclear, and this is precisely the problem that Deleuze found so exciting about Spinoza’s critique of Descartes. How does a life of freedom and autonomy work, and moreover, what model of philosophy would reflect the utility of desire, without necessitating the judgment of a notion some God(s), or the lack of freedom that this insinuates?

23 I am considering that individuals suffering from actual enslavement, from addictions that no longer feel reciprocal, and for those ‘othered’ in their own thoughts, freedom and autonomy appear to be extrinsic to the apparent cause of their ‘actual’ existence as slaves. “Freedom” could, for the body explicitly marked as a ‘slave’ in social relations, become treated as a transcendent force, and “extrinsic” to God’s apparent plan in existence. This creates a very enigmatic set of conflations that are ultimately explained by the critique of parallelisms. The slave is still part of God’s perfection in existence; part of God’s tests, and is somehow still loved and made to suffer anyway. The contradiction and irony of this unfair situation of judgement and suffering, even though God’s perfection is allegedly immanent, is still intact.
4.2 A pure ontology of the body

Spinoza determined that thought is an effect of causes that produce a life, but the causes of these effects in thought can also be inadequate and confused, and can work to turn thought against a life of freedom. For example, one needs only employ the discourse of the division of mind and body to find oneself seduced by the enslavement of a transcendent cause of God. Whether one explicitly believes in a transcendent God or not, the order of an identity between mind and body will create the possibility for thought to become confused and enslaved. As a solution to the problems discovered in the sequence of affirmations and denials on the order of identity between mind and body, Deleuze (1988) lauded Spinoza for having developed a new philosophical system that works to affirm existence.

In keeping with the axiom of epistemological parallelism, and by demonstrating the transfer of unity authorizing a shift from epistemology to ontology, Deleuze (1988) interprets Spinoza as constructing a new philosophy: a pure ontology, which uses the body as a model, with nothing to rule it and nothing by which it is turned into a subject that lacks perfection, and is made available to judgments of hierarchical value (p. 17). Deleuze (1988) summarizes Spinoza’s theories of the body as heralding “the oneness of substance, the univocity of attributes, immanence, universal necessity [and] parallelism” which are posited as an alternative relation to knowledge than that offered by moral values (p. 28). The body is singular, of infinite substance, and subject to nothing for Spinoza and Deleuze; thus, its nature, absent of any specific cause or origin, can be free. This is a model of the body that is a model of immanence. and therefore this body, a body with an ethical capacity, can only connect with things are in reciprocity with its capacity to act. Without the lingering ideal of transcendent cause to take life and make it subject to some pre-discursive truth, Spinoza’s model of the body proposes a condition where the possibility of thought also offers the possibility of a life of freedom.

The forms of hierarchy that are represented by a transcendent God (or another ideal that judges life) and the order of mind and body are endemic to those forms of knowledge that Spinoza calls a morality. Spinoza’s model of the body, on the other hand, is characterized by how it is in reciprocity with the ideas that lead it to activity. The body, with no extrinsic or transcendent cause to rule over it, is the basis of ethics. The distinction between morals and ethics illuminates the degree of freedom that is possible for a body to organize particular relations with ideas and concepts that either subject or empower them.
4.3 A triple denunciation of transcendent concepts

The distinction between morals and ethics in Spinoza’s philosophy is explained by Deleuze (1988) as a “triple denunciation” of “consciousness,” “values”, such as good and evil, and “sad passions.” This “triple denunciation” establishes a view of how moral and ethical forms of knowledge work to shape desire, and it demonstrates how autonomy becomes limited or increased by these particular relations of knowledge (Deleuze, 1988, p. 17). Even transcendent ideals have a principle of reciprocity between causes and effects, but it is only because an idea of subjection in thought is reciprocal to subjection in life. The substance of the distinction between morals and ethics can also be summarized as the absence or presence of ideals or concepts that refer to transcendent and extrinsic causes. These following discussions form a set of assemblages that relate to the distinction between morals and ethics and its consequences for a life.

4.3.1 Spinoza’s rejection of “consciousness”

From his reading of Spinoza’s (1996) Ethics, Deleuze (1988) argued: “[because] the body surpasses the knowledge we have of it, and . . . thought, likewise, surpasses the consciousness we have of it,” consciousness can only register the effects of its ideas as they relate to each other; and these relations “know nothing of causes” (pp. 18,19). Consciousness, or in equivalent terms, being, is an effect of thinking rather than the origin of thinking. For Deleuze, consciousness is mistakenly treated as causing thought such that it becomes the “object of another idea that represents it. But it is not a property of the Whole or of any specific whole; it has only informational value, and what is more, the information is necessarily confused and distorted” (Deleuze, 1988, p. 21). One cannot own a consciousness, but rather their “consciousness” happens to them in as much as thought considers this ideal to have a substance of its own that affects thought. As Deleuze (1988) explains it, “consciousness is not a moral property of the subject . . . [consciousness] is secondary in relation to the idea of which it is the consciousness,” but “the relation of consciousness to the idea which is consciousness is the same as the relation of the idea to the object of which it is knowledge” (p. 59).

The “order of causes” between thought and consciousness is not determined by a transcendent “nature” of consciousness for Deleuze (1988) or Spinoza (1996); rather, the “order of causes is . . . an order of composition and decomposition of relations, which infinitely affects all of nature” (Deleuze, p. 19). Deleuze (1988) pointed out that “when a body ‘encounters’
another body or another idea, it happens that the two relations sometimes combine to form a more powerful whole, and sometimes one decomposes the other, destroying its cohesion of parts” (p. 19). These compositions and decompositions produce a degree of power in the body to act in its relations with active or passionate affections. Deleuze (1988) wrote: “we experience joy when a body encounters ours and enters into composition with it, and sadness when, on the contrary, a body or any idea threatens our own coherence” (p. 19). Furthermore, Deleuze (1988) wrote, “the object that agrees with my nature determines me to form a superior totality that includes us, the object and myself” (p. 21). Consciousness, in Deleuze’s (1988) summary, registers the “awareness of the passage from these less potent totalities to more potent ones and vice versa” (p. 21). Deleuze (1988) concluded that the body has no whole or total consciousness, because its dynamic capacities to act and to become affected form its substance.

When consciousness is presumed to cause thought, this implies that consciousness is a being from which thought emanates. Deleuze (1988) described Nietzsche as “strictly Spinozan” in writing that “consciousness usually only appears when a whole wants to subordinate itself to a superior whole” (Nietzsche, 1911, p. 2-227, as cited in Deleuze, 1988, pp. 21, 22). The problem of a notion of consciousness for a life where thought can be free is that a notion of consciousness subjects thought to its cause. The effect of a notion of consciousness limits the autonomy of the body by causing the body to desire its own subjection to a representation of a truth in its thoughts even though this is also beyond its capacity to understand. In other words, thought becomes subjected to truth of a “consciousness” that is extrinsic to its nature, and yet “consciousness” is only another idea within the body’s capacity for thought. Since “consciousness” can be taken as the cause of the thoughts at the same time that it can be represented by a capacity for thinking, consciousness is replete with “inadequate ideas . . . ideas that are mutilated and truncated” (Deleuze, 1988, p. 60).

Deleuze (1988) organized Spinoza’s devaluation of consciousness as specifically being mutually contingent with three additional illusions: finality, free decrees, and theology (p. 20). Collectively, these illusions refer to reversing the registration of consciousness as the cause of thought, devaluing a notion of sovereignty and the idealism of a universal order of truth. Together these illusions form a powerful enigma that appears to make “consciousness” a constituent subject of a transcendent hierarchy of moral judgment. (Deleuze, 1988). Spinoza’s critique of morals, Deleuze (1988) argued, “consists precisely in denouncing all that separates us
from life, all these transcendent values that are turned against life, these values that are tied to the conditions and illusions of consciousness.” (p. 26)

4.3.1.1 A reversal of cause and effect: the illusion of finality.

The illusion of finality is “the effect of a body on our body as the final cause of its own actions” (Deleuze, 1988, p. 20). If a notion of consciousness is treated as an object and as an effect of transcendent discourses, consciousness will be treated as the “moral property of the subject” (Deleuze, 1988, p. 60). Note that the opposition between unconsciousness and consciousness is not the focus of this critique but rather how consciousness becomes represented within thinking as the property of some other extrinsic force (Deleuze, 1988). Whether it is the being of a mind/body duality, a being of “consciousness” that is thought affect the power of thinking, perhaps also thought to be characterized by gendered differences, racialization, ability, or some particular enslavement under a transcendent law, nature, or God, these all risk instantiating a hierarchical order of eternally and universal conditions for existence in thought. By taking the effect of thought as the cause of thought, the notion of consciousness becomes subjected to a transcendent ideal because it is treated as the objective cause of existence.

To explain this further, René Descartes’ famous phrase, “Cogito ergo sum” (I think, therefore I am), can be denounced. Descartes wrote:

But I have convinced myself that there is absolutely nothing in the world, no sky, no earth, no minds, no bodies. Does it now follow that I too do not exist? No. If I convinced myself of something [or thought anything at all] then I certainly existed. But there is a deceiver of supreme power and cunning who is deliberately and constantly deceiving me. In that case I too undoubtedly exist, if he is deceiving me; and let him deceive me as much as he can, he will never bring it about that I am nothing so long as I think that I am something. So, after considering everything very thoroughly, I must finally conclude that the proposition, I am, I exist, is necessarily true whenever it is put forward by me or conceived in my mind. (Adam & Tannery, Vol. 7, p. 25)

The attribution of cause, without a distinction in the relation between “I” and “thinking”, is to be noted, as is Descartes’ following hesitation:

And yet may it not perhaps be the case that these very things which I am supposing to be nothing [e.g., “that structure of limbs which is called a human body”], because they are unknown to me, are in reality identical with the “I” of which I am aware? I do not know, and for the moment I shall not argue the point, since I can make judgments only about things which are known to me. (Cottingham, 1996)

Descartes considered that “I” is accounted for in thought as being self-evident, but hesitates to make the same claim in relation to the body and even retreats to intuition rather than the logic of cause and effect. “When someone says, “I am thinking, therefore I am, or I exist,” he does not deduce existence from thought by means of a syllogism, but recognizes it as something self-
evident by a simple intuition of the mind” (Adam & Tannery, 1983, Vol. 7, p. 140). The “I” that finds a reciprocal affirmation in the power of “thinking” does not take into account that the “thinking” and the “I am” are one and the same limit of equivalence and thus neither can be said to exist in causation such as to affirm existence. Similarly, the illusion of finality assumes a universalizing ideal reversing the registration of thought as a property of some prediscursive cause: that “consciousness” causes the actions and thoughts of individuals.

The illusion of finality sets a limit to the autonomy of a body because thought is bent to affirm “consciousness,” as if it were the objective cause of an objective truth of existence. In this way the objective account of the powers of ‘consciousness’ will subject the body to an ideal of itself- as a gender, a sex, a race, a class, as bad or good, old soul, and so on. Spinoza’s (1996) model of the body with no ideals to enslave it, there is a dynamic experience of desire and not a stable, unchanging attribute of consciousness as desire, because thought can also change in relation to other bodies and other ideas. As long as consciousness is seen to cause thinking, desire becomes rigidly fixed upon affirming its subjection to its own ideals of itself (Deleuze, 1988).

The critique of consciousness is the same form of critique in which sex was earlier critiqued as an effect rather than a cause because when sex is thought to have its own cause it is taken as something in relation to transcendent values and extrinsic causalities. Wherever an objective notion of being exists in thought, this treats thought as a cause of something else. The notion of “being” in how consciousness becomes treated as the origin of thought, and moral sensibility, creates a transcendent relation between thought and life that turns existence into slavery (Deleuze, 1988). For Deleuze (1988), such ideas of consciousness and “being” are “inadequate ideas,” because they act

\[ \ldots \text{like a consequence without its premises (II, 28, dem.). It is separated from, deprived of its two—formal and material—premises, since it is not formally explained by our power of comprehending, does not materially express its own cause, and remains attached to an order of fortuitous encounters, instead of attaining the concatenation of ideas. (p. 75)} \]

4.3.1.2 A devaluation of sovereignty: the illusion of free decrees.

The second of the three illusions, the illusion of free decrees, refers to the presumption of volitional sovereignty. Deleuze (1988) wrote that “will cannot be called a free cause.” (p. 69) According to Deleuze (1988), will is a part of the illusion of a moral order of truth that works to judge and control life and there is no extraneous motive force in the body other than the ideas
that compose its existence. Desire can be altered, but only in as much as knowledge is also altered in a body and this can be done only by necessity, given the terms of its existence, rather than by sovereign choice. Here Deleuze (1988) was tying in how Spinoza (1996), in the *Ethics*, made an effort to break the conceptual link between will and freedom (p. 69). He said that, for Spinoza, “freedom is a fundamental illusion of consciousness to the extent that the latter is blind to causes, imagines possibilities and contingencies, and believes in the wilful action of the mind on the body” (Deleuze, 1988, p. 70).

It is not willpower that produces good relationships, but rather, the necessity for the body to act in its relationships according to the affects produced by the knowledge that makes it possible to exist (Deleuze, 1988, p. 93). The body comes into relation to what it can be in relation with by necessity, so it can only, joyfully, add its powers with those things that can further its possibility (Deleuze, 1988, p. 93). The body cannot run from learning, cannot stop desiring and knowing, and thus is not free to be an exception to its terms of existence. Deleuze wrote: “what defines freedom is an ‘interior’ and a ‘self’ that is determined by necessity” (p. 70). Thus, Deleuze (1988) and Spinoza (1996) both define freedom as coming into “possession of [a] power of acting” where adequate ideas produce “active affects,” increasing the capacity of the body to enter into new relations and develop new affects (Deleuze, 1988, p. 70).

Sovereign choice, therefore, follows from an illusion of consciousness because choice is always determined by necessity and the modes of relations in any given body at any given time (Deleuze, 1988). There is no “being” that makes choice; rather, what is normatively referred to as a *choice* is related to the idea that one person or a group is potentially capable to act as an individuated point of action. The substance of a notion of choice is from the necessity of this body to act from how it has been affected. Any hypothesized trace of sovereignty, or a “being”, that makes decisions for the mind, can always be mapped back to its historicity in the body as another necessary event of the body in relationship to these ideas. This is probably the most difficult aspect of the theory, as the idea that people make choices is very much a part of the political discourses of our society, and we rely upon such notions of will in western discourses as the basis for accepting social responsibility for our own individual capacity to act. “Beings” affected by moral forms of discourse narrativize a value to act, or not, under the impression that their decisions necessarily embody a subject of “free will”. If one develops a capacity to think with the distinction between morals and ethics, this body will narrate its capacity to act as becoming necessary given how it has been affected to act. In my view, the notion of willpower
does not express the power of a body as measured by its activity, only its passions. The alternative way to conceive of free will, is that one has a capacity to act, and a threshold for acting, or an agency, or an affective capacity to act, based upon how one has been affected. There is no un-situated “free” choice because we are created in our interrelationships with everything else. There is only what must be, in terms of intensity and variation, given how everything else has been affected.

4.3.1.3 The illusion of a theology

The illusions of finality and free decrees are intimately tied to a third illusion: the illusion of theological truth. Deleuze (1988) argued that a notion of consciousness cannot consistently be explained as the master of its own destiny, or be the original cause of its own actions; it cannot be fully sovereign, free, and unitary; and it can no longer explain its inconsistency of consciousness, purpose, and affects (capacities of power and desire). In these inevitable outcomes, “consciousness” finally determines that its labour is to suffer for the purposes of God “in order to prepare for man a world commensurate with His glory and His punishments” (Deleuze, 1988, p. 20). This is the illusion of theology: consciousness will condemn itself to judgment by seeking redemption for its apparent lack of volitional sovereignty, yet will go on to explain that suffering as an inevitable mode of being God’s subject. This representation of God is never considered at fault for any perceived lack of synthesis between mind and body in the mind/body subject-being (because God is always perfected); rather, by lacking this infinite truth, the being suffers a lack of merits in relation to God. When finite being has proved itself to be out of control, it presumes that God makes it suffer life as a test of faith (Deleuze, 1988).

In Deleuze’s (1988) explication of Spinoza’s philosophy, the creation of a notion of freedom and ultimate truth, and the reversal of causation of an illusion of consciousness, are all interconnected forms of hierarchical truth that judge life. They work to condemn the body to servitude. The endowment of sovereignty from an all-knowing God that simultaneously condemns its subjects to overcome the powerlessness of their conceptual life, is an ironic task, because the subject-being is doomed to be inadequate, and doomed to keep suffering this inadequacy as it defers its freedom of thought to the representation of an infinite being of singular truth, to which it is always subject, and by which it is always judged.
Deleuze (1988) argued that without notions of sovereignty and of theology, and without reversing the registration of the effect of consciousness as a cause, there can be no guilt or judgment, or lack thereof, by which the body must inevitably suffer. Again, consciousness does not delude itself because it becomes real-onto-itself, but rather the illusion of consciousness deludes the capacities for thought to become a life of freedom. A moral truth, characterized by transcentdent principles, refers to any idea that will subject the body to truth, and yet at the same time, it is also a mode of relating to ideas that that will be logically consistent with its illogical premises. If one takes the notion of original sin as truth, for example, it is perfectly consistent that one also would perceive oneself as necessarily subject to truth, and as a broken body, or perhaps also in a broken existence, and in which it can only desire God’s redemption to have salvation. Deleuze (1988) argues from Spinoza’s text, however, that wherever there is hierarchy under a transcendent God, the body can never be free.

4.3.2 Spinoza’s rejection of “values” and “beings” of good and evil

The triple illusion of consciousness works in tandem with two other main denunciations in Spinoza’s work (Deleuze, 1988). Along with the triple illusions of consciousness, Spinoza’s Ethics proposes a denunciation of the moral categories of good and evil (Deleuze, 1988): “The illusion of values is indistinguishable from the illusion of consciousness” (p. 23). The difference between good and evil is a moral evaluation of life because it involves transcendent forms of criteria (Deleuze, 1988, p. 23).

Spinoza sought to replace the dichotomy of the values of good and evil with an ethic of good and bad relations (Deleuze, 1988). Deleuze (1988) used the story of human creation in the book of Genesis as an example of what Spinoza (1677) meant by replacing good and evil with notions of good and bad. God indicated what was poisonous in the Garden of Eden, but Adam and Eve, being “ignorant of causes” of the relation between their bodies and the fruit, took it as a prohibition and Eve could not obey without a reciprocal understanding of God’s commands (Deleuze, 1988, p. 23). The law appealed only to Adam’s ability to be obedient, rather than to connect with his powers of understanding (Deleuze, 1988). God made no attempt to illuminate the relations of his law to Adam’s body so that the law would be the immanent power of Adam’s body, or such that Adam could add God’s powers to his own. Spinoza considered that the presumed evil of the fruit was a moral relation because it referred to a transcendent hierarchy of
value in relation to God’s law. God said nothing to explain the rationale of the law, and cared only for obedience, at the expense of his apparent subject’s desire (Eve) to come into relation with the fruit by means of understanding and reciprocity. Spinoza argued therefore that only bad relations, not evil, diminish the body; these bad relations include “illness, and death . . . bad encounters, poisoning, intoxication (the bad kind), relational decomposition” (Deleuze, 1988, p. 22). To have indicated that the fruit is evil, rather than merely bad for our particular bodies is to assign a transcendent moral purpose in relation those bodies and interactions. The body that desires the evil fruit therefore becomes subject to the judgment of God, since its desires mark it as a lacking, flawed, and potentially evil in relation to God’s perfect laws.

Poisonous foods such as rhubarb leaves do not necessarily constitute a maniacal, evil plan belonging to the imagined food source or Satan. Spinoza and Deleuze’s arguments have suggested that poisonous food is merely bad for our bodies, and perhaps good in contexts other than for oral consumption. On this point Deleuze (1988) wrote: “good and bad have a primary, objective meaning, but one that is relative and partial: that which agrees with our nature or does not agree with it” (p. 22). The fruit, like ideas, concepts, and thoughts is bad or good only in as much as it “agrees with our nature or does not agree with it” (Deleuze, 1988, p. 22). It is therefore demonstrated that the good and bad is registered as that which can affirm our power as existing or not. Good and bad are therefore seen to replace the dichotomy of good and evil. This will be further explained in the forthcoming explanation of active and passionate affections.

4.3.3 Spinoza’s rejection of “sad passions”

A last major aspect of Deleuze’s (1988) explication of Spinoza’s Ethics is the rejection of sad passions, and the sad characters of the moralist trinity. This discussion becomes a central part of my examination of the consequences of heterosexist discourses and other discourses that treat sex as if it has a cause of its own. It is impossible to explain how sad passions are denounced without explaining the difficult concept of affections.

4.3.3.1 Affections: actions and passions

Desire, sadness and joy are treated as primary affects. Affections are distinguished as actions and passions. Passions are joyful, and thus active, or sad by becoming acted upon in some way. Those affections that are adequate to our own powers, and that can be added to our
own power to act are joyful and lead to action. Those affections that are not adequate to our own powers cannot be added to our own, appear to act upon us, and diminish, block, or limit our capacity to be affected by them. No matter how desire is acted upon by the good and bad relationships that make up its capacities, it seeks to persevere in its capacity to act, but if we are robbed of a capacity to act in relation to that which is acted upon us, the result is a passionate sadness.

For clarification of the logical consequences of this view of affections, actions are the “degree of power” for a body’s “certain capacity for being affected” and “this capacity for being affected is necessarily filled by affections” (Deleuze, 1988, p. 27). All individuals for Spinoza (1996) and Deleuze (1988) are a “singular essence”, which can be defined by its capacity to act, and a capacity for being affected, insofar as these affections also continue to lead to action (Deleuze, 27). Actions are the affections of a body to persevere. Actions are thus necessarily active affections, “which are explained by the nature of the affected individual, and which spring from the individual’s essence” and cause it to act (Deleuze, 1988, 27). Actions are therefore an individual capacity to act for the perseverance of its passionate joy, which is also its desire to strive and affirm itself with activity.

“Insofar as it has clear and distinct ideas and insofar as it has confused ideas”, the body has a particular capacity for becoming affected (Spinoza 1996, p. 76, III-9). Spinoza (1996) argued that the body becomes active with ideas that are adequate to its nature, because its nature is to perpetuate itself, and thus the desire of this body to persevere in its degree of power is joyful. That which maintains that it is acted upon without augmenting its own powers results in sadness. One can have inadequate ideas therefore, but these will not lead the body to action. The body will remain passionately sad in relation to these affects that continue to act upon it, and lead it nowhere but to frustration. All passions of joy therefore are synonymous with that which augments the powers of the body, or causes affections in the body the lead to activity, because they become part of the body’s affective capacity to act.

Passions therefore are “explained by something else, and which originate outside the individual” as something that acts upon us, but with some becoming negative, sad, or positive, joyful experiences (Deleuze, 1988, 27). It is important to understand that joy and sadness, while both are considered to be passions, only occur when the body is acted upon, with the exception that joy also occurs in the activity of a body, as it is active in its relations. Deleuze (1988) pointed out that a capacity to be affected is related, “under variable conditions” (p. 50) to a
capacity to act, but that the “power of acting and the power of being acted upon vary greatly, in inverse ratio to one another” (p. 27). Some of the ways the body can be acted upon, can also lead to it to greater activity and augment its powers, say for example, to experience pleasure, and in other ways, it can be acted upon to cause it sadness, which in this model means robbing it of some of its powers to feel that it is in reciprocation to how it is becoming affected. Deleuze (1988) wrote “the nature of passions…is to fill our capacity for being affected while separating us from our power of acting, [and] keeping us separated from that power” (p. 27). Even though passion appears to originate “outside the individual” by acting upon it, it is the bad relation of the inadequacy of an idea to the nature of a given individual that produces the sad passion. Spinoza (1996) argued, “the actions of the mind arise from adequate ideas alone; the passions depend on inadequate ideas” (p. 74, II-145). Along with the caveat that joy leads to action, Spinoza (1996) also argued that “apart from joy and desire which are passions: there are other affects of joy and desire which are related to us insofar as we act.” (p. 102, II-188) Spinoza is making clear that passions are those transitions to “greater or lesser perfection” that affect an individual essence to act for its perseverance, and that its affected essences shape the quality of its desire to perpetuate itself. A joyful passion is created when the body is able to compose itself in a reciprocal relationship with another body, and “we may say that its power is added to ours . . . [since] our power of acting is increased or enhanced” (Deleuze, 1988, p. 28). To the extent that an idea is in a reciprocal relation to the body, a joyful passion will result and the capacity of this body to act in its relations and to be acted upon has been increased.

4.3.3.2 Sad passions: a limited capacity to act

A special problem for social relations emerges in this description of affections. Sad passions emerge from relations that become inadequate to increase the powers of the body to act in its relations and to be affected. Inadequate ideas are the precise inverse of action, and desire is suffocated and separated from its power to act. If therefore, one has thoughts that are adequate its capacity for freedom and autonomy, if affections are active, rather than being filled by affections of passionate sadness, the individual goes on to have passions of joy or sadness in relation to that which, respectively, adds or diminishes its capacity to act. As the nature of affectionate actions indicated, there must be some correspondence between a capacity for being acted upon, and its powers to act, such that the individual essence is not actually acted upon from the outside, but rather its powers to persevere are enhanced by the augmentation of its adequate affections.
So the special problem is simply that different and disparate ideas of subjection will work altogether to further enslave the body and mystify thought. So one can have, hypothetically, good relations mixed with bad ideas, but these bad ideas will continue to entrench relations of subjection. It ("being") can have joy but only in as much as its ideas are adequate to its existence or that enable it to act to persevere in its nature. If its existence on the other hand is a relation of subjection, it will seek only to affirm its sadness and powerlessness and therefore it will get great joy from this because, as many traditions have claimed, affirming its subservience and obedience can redeem it from condemnation. Either way, a transcendent order of moral value will produce an affective possibility to always feel “acted upon” by the sad passions produced in the transcendent relation of its essence, and therefore, this body will have a reduced capacity to be affected and to reciprocate in its own relationships with everything else (people and ideas alike). Even if a morally-affected body experiences joy through some circuitous route of self-acceptance in thought, which is quite common, it may still become separated from the power to act if it relies upon a power from the outside to act upon it and bring it joy as opposed to becoming active in its relations to organize its own joyful activity (Deleuze, 1988, p. 28). Again, a relation of dependency occurs here, and the body only possesses joy in as much as it is being acted upon from something else to bring it into activity. A transcendent ideal will create the affect of subjection in thought, and thought will turn against a life of freedom and autonomy. Sad passions, the result of a life of subjection, will limit the capacity of this body to reciprocate with the conditions it needs to live a life of freedom. When our body is opposed, diminished, blocked, or fixated, as it is when it is in relation to transcendent value, the eventual result is always sad passions. Deleuze (1988) argues that Spinoza denounces sad passions because they do not lead to becoming part of a body’s capacity to act to persevere in freedom.

If, for example, the narrative of this thesis expands the powers of the reader, it can be said that this work will lead to the joyful passion of increased autonomy and action. All comprehension depends upon the scaffolding of one idea to another, and the body is nothing at all unless it has been affected, so if this thesis is read by a body entrenched in theology or modernist notions of transcendent value, it will likely be comprehended in a way that results in sad passions, because the terms of life posited by the ethical affectations of this text do not correspond to the moral affections of the reader. This text will therefore act upon the morally affected reader in a way that does not immediately increase a power to act but rather their moral ideas will intensely resonate in thought and these concepts will frustrate attempts to create the
comprehension necessary to understand how one can also become potentially free to think differently. The body still has some other adequate ideas that are expressed as its potential to act and these are perhaps invisibly fused with bad ideas, but as the old order falls away with logical arguments, new cause and effect relationships are built in thought. There is coherence just beyond the perspectives that were once limited by something (anything) and enslaved to something else. The affects of moral ideas rob the body of its capacity to act, because the morally-affected body is always acted upon without the reciprocity of adequate ideas. Subjection becomes a type of test for the body that becomes the moral property of something else, like a transcendent God. The critique between morals and ethics is only to make power explicit such that we know how the body becomes acted upon by ideas, and how those ideas can lead the body to act or not, and produce joy or sadness for the body or not. We can know those individuals with a transcendent God, and know that the stakes of their lives form of life of judgment, and we can know that those with a capacity to critique moral ideals also have a capacity to be free. Deleuze’s (1998) reading of Spinoza’s (1996) philosophical contribution in Spinoza: Practical Philosophy helps provide a conceptual bridge between these two relations of knowledge so that a body (namely, the reader) may traverse and experiment with both, and determine how these relationships, with both moral values and ethical principles, are necessary or not.

4.4 Moral relations: The slave, the tyrant, and the priest

If we assume a notion of a sovereign and unitary (as opposed to transitive) consciousness, we will discover a body that is divided from the power of its own reciprocity with ideas and bodies. The affects of guilt, enslavement, powerlessness, and resentment will surely ensue as this body can only obey and it cannot be reciprocal to the truth that composes its possibility (as a subjected body) in thought (Deleuze, 1988, p. 23). Deleuze (1988) depicted three caricatures of “being” that become embodied when individuals are subjected to moral laws. These sad modes of existence comprise a moralist trinity: slave, tyrant, and priest. All characters in this trinity “are a burden both to themselves and others”; therefore, one must not be too certain that the creation of morals in social discourses is a luminary conspiracy from those who wish to control others, or from bad people- this could be true, but this is also enigmatic and difficult (Deleuze, 1988, p. 25). The slave exploits the sad passions of morals to condemn itself with the certainty of a higher
purpose beyond thought; the tyrant exerts power over others through these moral concepts to obey. The priest is altogether saddened by the human condition as being subjected to a greater whole, and embraces the nihilism of moral control as a prescriptive form of liberation for itself and others. Deleuze (1988) argued that what unites the slave, tyrant, and priest, and where a body, affected by morals, could perhaps enter into all of these roles is a general hatred of humanity and resentment against life, and where “wretchedness or impotence” becomes passion (Deleuze, p. 25). When powerlessness and resentment against life are affirmed, not only do the caricatures of the moralist trinity suffer, but they also cause bad relationships with others.

The sad characters of the moralist trinity are a way of conceiving how bodies are affected by moral ideas that spread sickness everywhere. A relationship between thought and the body, idea and object, and cause and effect, that is not based upon reciprocity leads to social relations that are also not reciprocal. Everyone is affected by joyful and sad passions differently and with variation and so every sad position we take is somewhat characterized by these relations. The problem of sad passions is that they do indeed cause action, but the actions that they are causing, conduct the relation in which they are affected as a subject of something else. Sad passions, therefore, conduct specific morals affects in social relationships, just in such a way that a moral affect can act upon the individual body to cause it sadness.

The distinction between morals and ethics and the caricatures of sad passions have a view of “intersectionality” such that the slave, priest and tyrant are all interconnected experiences of subjection. “Intersectionality” emphasizes the differences and interrelations between multiple forms of minoritization (Crenshaw, 1989). Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989) first coined the term intersectionality, while criticizing recurrent patterns of racist exclusion in feminist movements. Race, class, gender, ability, sexuality, and other categories of minoritization, all intersect by how individuals become judged and subjected to discrimination and social bias (Crenshaw, 1989). Moral discourses represent the overall logic in which subjection to identity-categories of “being” and other forms of minoritization become variously subjected to each other, and subjected to an ideal of perfection at the same time. The intersection between priests and tyrants is otherwise divergent from slaves on the basis that some bodies are additionally privileged in their social relations and can appear to legitimately rule over others. This privilege will also invariably work to prevent the freedom of everyone else through the activities associated with the sad passions of priest and tyrants. The “intersectionality” of the political struggle at stake in the difference between morals and ethics is how we all become situated in moral discourses, as subjects, in
relation to an ideal of perfection. The “intersectionality” in the theory of sad caricatures connects how even “tyrants” and “priests”, despite their relatively privileged roles, also experience a relationship of subjection to an ideal of perfection.

What is most useful about the characters of the moralist trinity is how this can work to explain how so many different people can be turned against a life of freedom in various ways, not only against themselves, but even in a way as to affect others and act on people in bad ways. In some ways this might also appear to contradict the distinction between actions and passions because I indicated earlier that passions act upon people rather than becoming activity. Sad passions however do indeed become actions, but only in the manner in which they work to re/subjugate life and to produce disempowerment in social relations. So the way one body is acted upon leads to another body becoming acted upon and so forth. If one learns that it is perfectly adequate to subject oneself, then their ideas will spread to activity that affirms this in social relations. It is indeed a life turned to love death, and turned to cause enslavement (Deleuze, 1988). Morals ideas lead to sad passions, and these sad passions become conducted in social relationships, but all they can do is work to separate people from their power of acting.

Resultantly, the explanation of the characters of the moralist trinity have finally culminated into a view of how moral affects can also lead to action, such that life affected by moral ideas become subject to these sad passions. After all, these morally affected ideas of individual bodies are always at risk of conducting moral affects throughout their social relationships and this is experienced as a type of judgement, or a test of becoming subjected to an ideal of perfection. The conduction of morals therefore works to impede the reciprocity between ideas, a life of action, and the social production of freedom and autonomy in social relationships. If one is enslaved to laws that one cannot understand and can only obey, and this situation is not made explicit to the ideas that combine to form thought, “thinking” can never have the capacity to agree to these moral values as something necessary, nor can it have the potential to become free.

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24 What if this power to subject another turns out to be necessary? In that case it is important for this to become explicit and fully comprehended so no life is spent as an accidental unwitting slave of some illogical relationship between cause and effect in thought.
4.5 The distinction between morals and ethics as a framework for understanding slavery and freedom

Most importantly, the distinction between morals and ethics is the difference between slavery and freedom. The substance of this distinction for philosophical theory is the absence or presence of concepts that refer to transcendent or extrinsic ideals in thought, but this is not only a theoretical distinction. The distinction between morals and ethics refers to the power of thought in discourses, frameworks, ideas, and concepts to create a life of freedom in our bodies (Deleuze, 1988). How thought is circumscribed by discourses of knowledge shapes the degree of autonomy and freedom that a body can have to act in its relationships and to organize its life for its own tolerability, but if these discourses refer to transcendent values, such as extrinsic powers and/or universalizing, deterministic moral truths, the body becomes enslaved and its loses this autonomous power. Deleuze (1988) and Spinoza (1996) specifically condemned moral values as inherent to notions of transcendent cause and productive of thoughts that turn life against itself, extinguishing its vitality and ability to persevere in freedom. These same philosophers hailed ethics as inherent to notions of immanence that form non-hierarchical relationships. These immanent relations between ideas produce capacities in thought that empower life to be free and autonomous, and to allow it to organize its suffering within tolerable limits instead of becoming enslaved to sad passions and robbed of autonomy and freedom.

Deleuze’s (1988) description of sad passions and the characters of the moralist trinity, demonstrates how individuals can be turned against themselves and against everyone else. The power of thought to persevere in its desire for freedom and personal tolerability becomes frustrated in morally-affected individuals, because moral ideas are inadequate to a life of autonomy and freedom and they present life as something to control and something that is tested within a system of judgment. Individuals affected by moral ideas, nearly everyone in some way, have reduced powers of autonomy and freedom, because moral affections work to limit their capacity to act and their capacity to be affected by adequate ideas. Moreover, moral ideas become conducted and spread relationships between individuals and thought, and between people, of disempowerment and enslavement. Individuals cannot easily produce reciprocal social relationships when moral discourses are also producing a limited reciprocity between thought and life at the same time because moral discourses embody the subjugation of desire to transcendent cause and this impacts the possibility of desire to become reciprocal in social
relations. In contrast, ethical discourses embody the freedom of desire to experience life as an autonomous and revolutionary agent of social change.

The framework that has been organized here to explain the distinction between morals and ethics can be applied to understanding some of the consequences of moral discourses of sex in our society.

5 An Explicit Theory of Good and Bad Discourses of Sex

Collectively, Spinoza (1996), Deleuze (1988), and Foucault (1990) all treat desire as the immanent power of a life. Butler (1990; 1993) described sex and gender as performativ social roles that become treated as the naturalized grounds of a compulsory heterosexist discourse, and Rubin (1993) explored how sex is drawn in negative terms that embody multiple hierarchies of value and that are dictated by an order of a true sex. All of these thinkers present distinct theories, yet they situate sex both as a discourse, and as a discursive effect of discourses, making it relatively easy to synthesize and apply their work to an imagined framework for an ethical understanding of sex and sexuality.

Foucault's (1990) concept of “scientia sexualis” helps to specifically organize how contemporary heterosexist discourses work to treat sex as a subject of social control, and describe how this became productive. Deleuze's (1988) reading of Spinoza’s life work also explicitly describes how moral ideas cause a body to turn against its own freedom, and how ethical principles can work to free the body from enslavement. Together they add to an understanding of the production of sexuality in social discourses as either bad or good for individual and social freedom.

Deleuze (1988), extrapolating a theory of post-structural relationships from Spinoza’s Ethics (1996) and Tractatus Theologico-Politicus (1670), specifically identifies how transcendent moral values produce sad passions in the body, and Foucault (1990) identifies sex as a prohibitive and moral domain that works to incite, consolidate, and intensify the production of subversive sexual discourses. Foucault's (1990) critical lens, like Deleuze's (1988) contemporary extrapolation of Spinoza's philosophy, starts from the position of univocity and examines those frameworks of thought that make the body into a subject and an individual “being”. Deleuze's (1988) treatment of Spinoza’s philosophy explicitly formulates the “nature” of the production of affects (capacities of power and desire) in the body and its relation to knowledge, as a relation of
reciprocity and understanding, or obedience and enslavement. Likewise, Foucault (1990) argues that wherever a truth about sex is deployed in discourse, in theological doctrine, in medical science, or in state law, sex is produced as a strategic relation within a prohibitive domain. Sex is drawn by Foucault (1990) as the field of prohibition where desire is inscribed by acts of resistance and, just as in Deleuze’s (1988) interpretation of Spinoza, “consciousness” becomes the executor of some extrinsic cause, and produces haphazard strategies of resistance to this hidden enslavement in the form of bad passions.

Sex is only one example of an idea that can be identified as referring to extrinsic causes, whereas any transcendent domain or concept can intersect the Deleuzian-Spinozist critique of “consciousness”. For example, a transcendent God, gender, or another order of “nature” in science and law, racialization, or even economic ideologies that justify subjugation as a necessary relationship between people, can all be treated as forms of relations that demand subjection to an extrinsic order of truth. Any extrinsic cause, such as sex, organized as a domain for thought, can similarly be criticized with the distinction between morals and ethics. Foucault (1990) argues that sex is not repressed, but that it is discursively produced as a discourse of repression. Affirming a notion of sexual repression can therefore never be the productive basis of a sexual revolution that leads to greater freedom, because sex has no “being”, no eternal character, other than how it is deployed in discourse. “Consciousness”, like the domain of sex, and particularly when it is used as a concept with a cause in its own right, produces only powerlessness because it subjugates the body and forces it to explain itself as a phenomenon of desire and action for some other extrinsic and transcendent cause.

5.1 Concerning bad discourses of sex

The combination of Foucault’s (1988) analysis of how moral discourses of sex become productive, together with the Deleuzian-Spinozist (Deleuze, 1988) explanation of the distinction between morals and ethics and its consequences, and with attention to the different sexed and gendered hierarchies described by Butler (1990;1993) and Rubin (1993), suggests that moral discourses of sex can attract the production of sad passions. Reading sex through the Deleuzian-Spinozist critique of morals provides a framework that explains how a discourse of sex can inscribe desires for both joyful and sad passions, and that some of these desires act upon the
individual body rather than becoming part of the body’s capacity to act. I will explain how this distinction of morals and ethics looks in relation to discourses of sex in detail.

The distinction between morals and ethics works to theorize a philosophy of sexual autonomy, as it simultaneously works to expose those relationships that organize a moral discourse of sex as a nonreciprocal relation of power. This distinction can specifically organize a view of how a moral order of sex attracts all sorts of social problems, at the same time that it accounts for moments of pleasure, social freedom, reciprocity, and justice. A new framework of an ethical discourse of sex would work to produce desires that are strategic for the production of pleasure, social freedom, reciprocity, and justice.

Returning to the Deleuzian-Spinozist (Deleuze, 1988) critique of “consciousness”, drop the word “sex” into the critique instead of “consciousness”, and look at the framework that emerges. The critique will now suggest that individuals with morally affected desires interpret their “sexual” desire as a form of finality and the effect of a prior state of “being” or existence. The critique will demonstrate how sexual desire is treated as the capacity of a volitional sovereignty (free will) and how individual desire becomes the substance of judgment according to a moral order of sex (theological illusion, or in relation to sex, an authoritative prohibition as well) that produces sad passions (desires) in the body and limits its “sexual” autonomy and freedom.

A “body” situated in morally affected relationships is separated and disconnected from its power to act for itself, because it is always being acted upon by the extrinsic idea of a moral order of sexual being as well as sexed and gendered categories of identification.

Relationships affected by moral concepts and ideas, such as those in western discourses of sex, work to poison the body so that it desires its own servitude to a transcendent hierarchy of moral truth. It works to affirm its “being” as a subjected-identity of a heterosexist order of gender and sex. The morally affected body, nonetheless, can only correspond to those bodies and ideas that will affirm its servitude to a notion of “being” because its powers of correspondence, or reciprocity, are limited by this notion of “being”. Any moral discourse of a true sex, such as heterosexism, therefore produces sexual desire as a form of subjugation to the idea of sex.

There can be much suffering and confusion when desires are not a tolerable experience of reciprocity in social relationships. Sadness occurs wherever there is subjection of the body. Sadness indicates a lack of reciprocity between thought and understanding in the individual, but in relation to sex this can also spawn resistance. The subject-being needs affirmation for its
servitude and it will desire those corresponding bodies and ideas that allow it to persevere in nonreciprocal relationships as an affirmation of its being. Since the desires of a moral being are produced in relationships where reciprocity is limited by its forms of subjection, it risks developing sad passions and it becomes frustrated and self-loathing. It also conducts a moral order or truth as it comes into relationships with other bodies and ideas, suffers its servitude, and reproduces the moral hierarchy by developing the capacity to desire the servitude of others as it works to affirm itself. Such a morally affected body is helpless to organize its “sexual” desires with personal tolerability since its being is also formulated as a subject that lacks autonomy in relation to the transcendent value that sex represents in this model. Sex is therefore hemmed in by moral ideas that incite the body to pleasure in subversive ways (necessarily) and produce sad passions that seek to affirm the body’s subjection to transcendent causes. When discourses of sex are subject to moral control, they promote the production of sad passions in individuals, and risk the further conduction of these passions in social relationships.

This can help to understand the challenges presented by heterosexist discourses in school curriculum. Students are particularly situated to become subject to school authority, and when this vulnerability is added to the condition that schools maintain discourses of sex as a subject of moral control; students are prevented from fulfilling their needs in relation to discourses of sex. The student body can only affirm their servitude to heterosexist prohibitions and morals, and this causes the student to struggle under the weight of this judgment, and to both resist and affirm its subjection to these discourses.

As long as sex remains subject to social control in schools, students will spawn a strategy for resistance in relation to their servitude, because they know that they are enslaved, out of control of themselves, and condemned (theological illusion) by sexual prohibition, yet they can find little way out of their subject relation to truth and their heterosexist frameworks of understanding in these authoritative spaces. For example, the student-at-risk, as the subject of a prior truth about sex, will affirm their “being” by enacting a strategy of power within these nonreciprocal relations of a moral sexual discourse in social relationships. The student will affirm their resistance to “being” by suffering, and with the hopes of some redemptive power to affirm their existence with a (sexual) pleasure that is at the same time, inevitably, organized as subversive.

If the student is otherwise ethically-affected by ideas or laws that privilege reciprocal relationships between thought and understanding perhaps they will work out a strategy for achieving some relation of reciprocity and pleasure in relationships. In any case, student bodies
affected by the discourse of a moral sex inevitably risk the development of a relation of servitude to their sexual desires because their desires are produced within the relation of the unreciprocal and illusory truth of “being” that characterizes heterosexist discourses. Finally, schools treat discourses of sex as a moral subject, impose habits of censorship and negativity, and exclude representations of sexed and gendered diversity, thereby working to promote the production of sad passions related to discourses of sex in our society.

5.2 Concerning bad sexual relationships

Extending the framework that explains the distinction between morals and ethics in Deleuze’s work produces a view of some of the character roles that become embodied in some of the activities and passions that people enter into and that are related to moral discourses of sex. When Deleuze’s (1988) depiction of Spinoza’s sad characters of the tyrant, the priest, and the slave is put parallel to moral discourses of sex, such as heterosexist discourses, it suggests that they promote the production of sad passions throughout our social relationships by creating sad characters within each of us. Any morally affected individual can enter into all of these roles. The predator-rapist, bully, misogynist and homophobe perhaps best exemplify the tyrant. The priest appears in discourses of sexual chastity as the hypocritical proselytizer of good authority in relation to sex, censorious prohibitions, and sexual identity conversion therapy. The example of slave is anyone, and everyone situated in moral discourses of western sexuality, and in authoritative schools, as I’ve argued, there is also the hapless, enslaved, tortured and rebellious student-at one time or another. Even the tyrant and the priest are slaves of their own malice and hypocrisy. One shouldn’t take these caricatures too literally in determining who is a consistently a victim or a perpetrator, because they are only a matter of probability and variability in our individual acts in social relations. They are also very interesting descriptions of how people become “beings,” or rather think and subsequently act in relation to moral ideas.

The tyrant and the priest work to exercise, or conduct, various ideas into social relationships and produce sadness related to discourses of sex everywhere. These first two caricatures of sad passions are very easy to signify because sex is conjured into discourse amidst the power relations of our society, is always in crisis, and attracts authoritative interventions and abuses of power. Sad passions have led some people to become systemically subjected to social prejudice and some have used sex and sexuality as a weapon of erotic gratification, persecution and dominance.
We are all situated in heterosexist, or other moral discourses, thus the slave is the most accessible caricature to discuss. Heterosexist discourses represent our power to strategically act in our social relationships, to find some expression for the unimagined possibilities of pleasure, and we are all situated by each other in this exploration. The caricature of the slave in relation to moral discourses of sex, such as heterosexism, is problematic because it works to incriminate everyone as a subject of these discourses, but it is at the same time very productive for understanding how everyone’s freedom is put at risk as long as these discourses of sex remain invisible to thought.

For Foucault (1988), everyone in the west is affected by how sex is organized as a discourse of moral control and is thereby perverted (p. 48). Foucault did not refer to those affected by heterosexist discourses as slaves, but if his understanding is intermeshed with the Deleuzian- Spinozist (Deleuze, 1988) sad moral caricatures, the meaning is similar. Because the manner in which sex becomes subject to moral control discursively works to inscribe desires, sexed and gendered identities in heterosexist discourses make slaves out of everyone who is compelled to think of these categories as adequate or not for their social situation. Slaves of a moral order of sex can have adequate ideas that are reciprocal to a life of freedom and joyful passion, despite enslavement that is specifically related to these discourses of sex. Reciprocity between slaves, or even tyrants and priests for that matter, within a moral order of sex is therefore possible, since each sad character has been subjected to sex and gender roles, they become a “being”, and each “sex” responds to this subjugation to become affirmed in its social relations.

“Heterosexuals”, for example, are allegedly privileged by how their gender roles are attributed to a natural order of sex through a discourse of heterosexism, and this discourse is a normative politic in which all other sexualities are deemed inferior and negative. Perhaps it is imagined that heterosexuals could claim that their bodies are not subjected to anything in particular, that they are socially privileged for having heterosexual desires, and that their bodies are free to act “naturally”. However, because heterosexuality is privileged in social discourses that continue to treat sex as a moral order of truth, and because performing sexed and gendered roles requires affirmation, even heterosexuals do not escape the sad consequences of moral discourses of sex. Heterosexuals and “othered” sexualities are defined within a gendered order and they are shaped within transcendent signifiers of unchanging, binary-gendered, and sexed identities. Treating sexed and gendered identifications as transcendent causes of a natural order
of sex can also be restricting and limiting, not just for the individual body, but also for understanding all that a body is capable of becoming (Butler, 1990).

We become signified as something or the other in our relationships with each other, and sometimes this means moral forms of judgement also come to signify us as “beings” (of a sex, and gender) in our social relationships and produce effects within our social relationships. The potential to find pleasure and for desire to become produced is a matter of strategic variability from body to body, and complex social histories and situations. Desires do not depend upon how one is allegedly situated by others, but rather, they are caught up in how the identity of each body is situated in the discourses of our politics in connection to the chain of thought-events that define its capacity to act and interrelate. The problem, whether one is minoritized or not, and irrespective of how their body is situated within particular relations of privilege, is that moral discourses are less reciprocal to an individuals’ strategy to persevere. In heterosexist discourses, some bodies are politically and economically vulnerable, rendering them easy targets for the sad affects of the priest and the tyrant, while other bodies are more privileged and able to affirm their own subject position as adequate to a life of freedom within heterosexist discourses. Some bodies are more or less situated to strategize for reciprocal relationships in heterosexist discourses, because they and their capacity to act are situated with different privileges, and they have a different significance as “beings” within a particular order of these moral discourses.

The subject-position of heterosexual male identity might be privileged on one hand, and it has become the substance of much historical social privilege in theories of social diversity, and this is reasonably accurate given who is most situated, by the signification of gender and sex, to adopt the role the tyrant in the west. Heterosexual man is not free at all because the individual body, when gendered as a male, is situated to become affirmed by a transcendent order of gender that asserts “maleness” as its cause. The individual body, gendered as male, is situated to use its gendered identity as a political strategy in morally-affected relationships. For example, women are often targeted for sexual violence to affirm masculine performances of power, but any “body” signified as vulnerable, sentimentalized, or politically and economically powerless, or otherwise “feminized” can be targeted to affirm masculine performances of power. Men are perhaps continually privileged to adopt the roles of tyrant and priest in relation to other gendered bodies because heterosexist discourses signify masculinity as dominant over femininity. This increases the probability that male-identified bodies will seek to dominate some feminized ‘other’ in social relationships but this in no way assures that this will occur either because life is
so complex. A performance of masculinity can affirm another performance of masculinity. Men are also situated as “slaves” to the heterosexist order that treats gender as a transcendent cause of heterosexual desire and perhaps ‘men’ are most often enslaved to the historical, social, economic, and political circumstances that work to legitimate their performances of domination (priests/tyrants) as the cause of their “being”. Even those bodies that are not considered minoritized in the politics of heterosexism remain subject to the dizzying array of problems emanating from treating sex as a natural order of transcendent cause.

When sexed and gendered identifications are used as a political claim for greater recognition of suffering and prejudice, they can be incredibly useful in challenging heterosexist political discourses, but this is not so when sexed and gendered identity is claimed as a transcendent cause of natural order of sex, as it appears to be treated in discourses of inclusive schooling (Equity Policy, 2000). There may be some liberation in this for a time and within a specific context of political organizing where identity is the grounds for political action, but this positioning of sexed and gendered identity as prediscursive and biologically natural situation also risks the continuation of the subjugating logic that festers within heterosexist discourses. For example, male identity is a necessary strategy for many bodies whether they are gendered as men or not. Furthermore, if men were politically subjugated, such as for those transgendered individuals who claim male identity, claiming male identity would become a necessary political act in order to fight against the political apparatus that attempts to judge their bodies as worthy of subjection. The claim of sexed and gendered identity is always invoked as a political strategy, but if this claim becomes alienated from its historical and social situation, and becomes treated as part of natural order of transcendent causes, it does little to free anyone from the logic of subjection inherent to heterosexist discourses.

“Slaves” (all people situated in heterosexist discourses) may not only be enslaved within heterosexist eroticisms and discriminations, and may indeed have adequate thoughts that lead to empowerment, yet all individuals become more or less enslaved within a morally affected society that situates their bodies as parts of a heterosexist order of truth in western society. Ideas that are adequate for a life of freedom are not limited to anyone in particular, and indeed these sexed and gendered individuals who I describe as becoming enslaved by heterosexist discourses may have other strategies that are more adequate to promoting freedom and reciprocity in social relationships, aside from identifying with gender and sex as a transcendent cause of their existence and spreading these relations everywhere. Relative degrees of subjugation to
transcendent causes are variable but ubiquitous, and strategies for reciprocity are variably complex depending on how a body is situated, but we are all variously implicated in these power relationships. This is not a deterministic theory, but rather only a theory of probability and risk. There are too many circuitous paths to adequate ideas that make life tolerable than can be considered here; rather, the moral ideal is always the risk for individual freedom and autonomy, and a safe and inclusive society.

We are all slaves of a morally affected discourse of sex, but the real assessment of this “slavery” examines whether we otherwise have the strategic capacity to reorganize these forms of discourse for our own individual purposes. Because we are all situated in heterosexist discourses, we all experience the consequences of these discourses differently, but sometimes we experience this in common ways as well. The ‘slave’ is the most ubiquitous and normative subject of heterosexist discourses in western society. Slaves can strategize to make their relationships more reciprocal with other ideas that adequately resist, contradict, disconnect, transcend (overcome) or are unintelligible to moral discourses. After all, claiming sexed and gendered identity is a useful strategy inasmuch as there are other bodies that similarly seek affirmation for their roles in a morally affected society. Given the pleasures organized by moral discourses of sex, and the forms of subjection inherent within these discourses, it is not at all a sad issue if there is some reciprocity of pleasure between slaves. Indeed, turning a discourse of subjugation into a social relation that works to reciprocate with the needs of others is the special challenge of the slave, or rather to all of three of the moral caricatures of sad passions. It is the very condition in which one can say one has found some freedom. Ethics are simply a critical capacity to view a moral idea as necessary, and thus, not moral at all, but immanent within a life of freedom and autonomy. The challenge for the individual that is represented by heterosexist discourses in our society is to find some power over pleasure that works to be reciprocal for everyone involved.

Even though I have explained how we are all situated as slaves in heterosexist discourses, I would like to shift gears, and treat the body that is worthy of the distinction of the term “slave” as an extreme example of having little or no degree of reciprocity at all. In this example, there is little or no pleasure organized as joyful. For example, victims of violent crimes involving activities related to sex and sexuality, and post-traumatic outcomes arising from sexual assaults are a very literal interpretation of being a “slave”. People have suffered a form of subjection that has turned their body into a target to gratify some other persons’ subject position. In using the
referent “slave”, I am also referring to someone who becomes turned against a life of joy by a particular intensity of moral affect in relation to sex that is likely disguised within their thoughts and inaccessible to their capacity to reorganize their life for greater tolerability. For example, someone who has desires that they wish they did not have, someone who treats themselves as a sovereign agent of choice and yet registers their desires as acting negatively upon those choices, someone whose desires are produced beyond their toleration, or someone who feels no autonomy over how sex is organized in their thoughts. The “homosexual” who signs up for conversion therapy, the sex-addict, the sex and gender minoritized teen at risk of suicide, and anyone for whom sexual relationships are desired but also too distressing, are all examples of how someone, anyone, can be affected by discourses of sex in ways that diminish their individual capacity to organize their own lives.

The consequences of treating gendered and sexed identities as the transcendent cause of social differences are not to be underestimated, because these bodies become self-disciplinary practices, and this leads to sad passions and the conduction of sad passions throughout our society. Moral discourses of sex, whether they assert “being”, will and sovereignty, or a transcendent order of heterosexist privilege, all work to subject the individual body to transcendent causes and rob the individual of the freedom and autonomy to organize what they can and cannot tolerate. The sad passions caricatured by the tyrant, priest, and slave do not mean that “sex” is only a control-system, just because we can say the word and organize the ideas of a “sex”, or that the relations related to pleasures we call sex, or gender and sexuality, are without the possibility for reciprocity. Moral discourses of sex, such as heterosexist discourses, turn the very possibility of reciprocal social relationships with all matters organized as “sex” into a very particular social challenge in which everyone is situated.

5.3 Towards an active and empowered discourse of sex

I have explained how a moral discourse of sex, such as heterosexism, works to risk the production of sad passions. I would now like to describe a very explicit theory of action in relation to pedagogical discourses of sex. In order for students to have adequate ideas that lead to action, sex cannot be treated in schools as only acting on the body from some extrinsic transcendent cause. Curricula that leads to safer sex may indeed become acceptable in schools, if students should desire this, but not if ideas of sex are conducted within the context of a space that routinely reshapes itself with authoritative prohibitions about sex. Within heterosexist
discourses, the treatment of safer sex practices risks becoming part of those ideas that are conducted upon the body and that multiply and extend the body’s powerlessness with regard to how it is becoming affected. Safer sex concepts, if taught in the context of sex as a moral and prohibitive discourse, could hardly be effective because these concepts would be likely to constitute and incite this ‘unsafe’ behaviour as necessarily titillating and appealingly subversive. Safe sex would therefore be perceived as less “natural”, less prohibited, and less exciting. Unsafe sex would be seen as sexy and desirable, not only for its signification as the natural conduct of a true sex, but also because it would affirm the prohibition of a true order of sex by organizing, and then inciting action as a derivative of sex’s subversive domain. Just as I cited from Foucault (1990) earlier in Chapter 2, and discussed further in section 2.1.5 of this thesis, I am simply using the argument that prohibition has become a very “basic and constitutive element” of sex (p.12). Pleasurable sex would therefore specifically be constituted as unsafe sex just because it’s naughty and the “real” thing. There might be a problem of incongruity between specific students’ bodies and the powers that authorize and implement safe sex curricula, since the idea of what constitutes a true and natural sex would only act on the body and inscribe its desires as a form of subjection to transcendent causes. A body would not be free and autonomous to practice safer habits in sexual activities, but would rather end up producing desire in all directions, incited by conformity with ‘natural’ laws, with all the ideas that connect to these laws, and with the desire to work to be enslaved, and spread these sad passions everywhere in social relations. In other words, entrenched pleasures must be validated and understood before one can also learn to become active in connection to risks presented by these same practices.

As I have interpreted these theories of the body altogether, moral discourses of sex can only incite resistances, and attract sad passions to their transcendent cause. Perhaps this more explicit perspective of how bodies are limited in the ways that they can reciprocate with moral discourses of sex, can deepen our understanding of questions such as how people continue to have unprotected sex and whether they find this adequate or not, how vulnerable people become targeted by tyrants, how people with known sexually transmitted illnesses can continue to put others at risk, how people can claim that they are not “in control” of their desires, or how sex addiction can become possible, or how people can have and exercise ‘unwanted’ desires, and spread hatred, malice, persecution and judgement everywhere. The pleasure of sex, when coupled to the force of an extrinsic cause, is profoundly habitual, affecting us all in ways that can become unconscious to us, but generally, a reciprocal relationship between thought and the
capacity of a body to act, also correlates to the quality of reciprocation that this same body can have in its social relationships.

Ontario schools have a long history of debating piecemeal moral preoccupations with what to teach about discourses of sex, but this practice also incites problems with an authoritative organization of sex as a subject of risk, control, prohibition, and transgression. Perhaps, if sex were to be discussed in terms of making the power of subjection explicit to thought, a critical capacity could be developed that would enable students to autonomously organize their own lives and sexual practices. The way to make this happen however means working to reciprocate with what students think is necessary to learn in relation to discourses of sex, as well as exposing how sex becomes a subject of moral control, because any other method can only work to be disempowering for students.

6 The distinction between morals and ethics as an intervention

The methodology for this thesis situated schools, sex and students as separate areas for analysis in the first three chapters, for how moral discourses work. I then discussed the difference between morals and ethics in Chapter 4 with close attention to Deleuze’s 1988 reading of Spinoza, and then constructed an explicit view of discourses of sex in Chapter 5. Now Chapter 6 will describe how this will reciprocate with students’ learning needs while ensuring the production of free and autonomous individuals in a democratic, inclusive, and secular society. This concluding chapter will first review the arguments made in each chapter thus far, and I will proceed to outline three interrelated recommendations to cautiously intervene in this complex issue of failing to meet students’ learning needs with positive discourses of sex in schools.

6.1 A review of main arguments in each Chapter

Data from the 2006 Student Census (Yau, 2007), The Toronto Teen Survey Report (Flicker, et al., 2009) and the Shaping a Culture of Respect in Our Schools: Promoting Safe and Healthy Relationships (Safe Schools Action Team, 2008), contrary to the aims of the Equity Policy

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25 The distinction between morals and ethics is a cautious intervention to the production of subversive discourses of sex.
argued that students are not receiving a curriculum that includes “lesbian, gay, and transgendered” identities, because also, sex is barely discussed, and when it is, often happens in a way that does not meet students’ learning needs. *Challenging Homophobia and Heterosexism: A K-12 Curriculum Resource Guide* sought to address the representation of sexed and gendered minorities, but by continuing to treat the sex activities of sex and gender minorities as prohibitive, it does not address the terms by how very particular sexed and gendered bodies become minoritized through heterosexist silences (Toronto District School Board, 2011). The power of inclusive policy, such as the *Equity Policy (2000)* has been limited to work to include sexed and gendered minorities, because sex remains subject to censorship. As it stands now, discourses of sex do not reciprocate with the needs of students, and policy discourses fail to become more active in curriculum such that sex and gender minorities are more frequently represented.

In Chapter 2, I borrowed from Foucault’s (1990) view of sex as a discourse, rather than only as a natural, or scientific order of reproductive possibility or any other transcendent order of truth. I also borrowed from Butler (1990:1993) and Rubin (1993) to complicate a perspective of heterosexism and how it might work, and using Foucault’s concept of “sexualis scientia”, I described heterosexist discourses as working within an overall context of treating sex as if it were an order of truth in which we are all subjected. I then applied these perspectives to understand how different interpretations of anti-heterosexist curriculum policy would produce different limitations in curricular practice using the *Challenging Homophobia and Heterosexism: A K-12 Curriculum Resource Guide*. I argued that heterosexist discourses still prevail by showing how often sex and gender minorities are represented in curriculum and linking this to how sex is treated as a subject of prohibition and censorship in curriculum policy.

I argued in Chapter 3 that the dynamic of not meeting students’ learning needs with more positive discourses of sex is particularly intensified because of structural relationships between what is recognized as the good use of authority in schools, sentimentalized, dependent, and vulnerable students, and moral discourses of sex in our society. In response to Ruffolo’s (2006) work, I affirmed that the queer body in theory is potentially useful to pedagogy, but when the queer body in theory works to validate the assumptions of authorities at the expense of student voices, it risks subjecting students to another order of a true sex. The force and use of assumptions by the authoritative powers granted to schools over students, which is currently the political organization of schools in Canada, works to disrupt the promise of queer freedom and
they are necessarily incompatible. Queer identified students also exist, and need to be included. Queer identity is necessarily subversive in political discourses, and this disruption can be productive for questioning an assumed heterosexist order, but because the student, a child, is treated as innocent, vulnerable and sentimentalized in relation to discourses of sex, any effective intervention around this issue is politically difficult.

Schools allegedly working to protect youth from exploitation, paradoxically treat discourses of sex negatively, and thus work to intensify the conditions where heterosexist/moral ideas of sex are exercised in our society. Schools are very significant locales for the transmission of negative discourses of sex, and this has real social consequences for the whole enterprise of a democratic, secular, plural, and inclusive society. Children do indeed need to be protected from “sex”, but specifically from the enigmatic way in which they become subjected to the transcendent causes of “true” and moral discourses of sex. Students are situated as political subjects of the state, as well as economic dependents, and thus they are typically disadvantaged from creating the conditions of their own curriculum. Schools are precariously situated as politically contested spaces. Schools may not be well positioned to overcome the challenges that heterosexist discourses present to our society because they are politically situated to treat both students and sex as subjects of social control.

I then asked how schools could conduct discourses of sex to support the free and autonomous organization of desire in students’ lives, and within the context of the on-going production of a secular, inclusive, pluralistic, and democratic society. It was equally a question of how to free sex from the discourses that make it possible as a subject. I also asked how discourses of sex could be strategically conducted in schools to interrupt heterosexism and meet students’ individual learning needs. I then used Deleuze’s (1988) reading of Spinoza’s distinction between morals and ethics to map a framework of pedagogical action that can intensify the situation in which students are able to have the power to safely create strategies that resolve their learning needs in relation to discourses of sex in school spaces. A cautious intervention for all differently situated cultural discourses of Canadian society is to prioritize all students’ learning needs first, because of the risk factors involved with moral discourses of sex in schools that are usually conducting authoritative forms of power.

In Chapter 4, I described Deleuze's (1988) analysis of Spinoza's philosophical work to provide an overview of the difference between morals and ethics as the difference between freedom and slavery and to map a principle of reciprocity for use in school curriculum. I have
used this framework in Chapter 5 to explain how desires, organized as sexual, become constituted by how a body is affected by moral discourses of sex. It was demonstrated with Deleuze and Spinoza’s distinction between morals and ethics, and the critique of consciousness, sex, and sad passions, that heterosexist discourses, and any order of a moral sex, subjects the body and risks the production of sad passions in our society.

6.2 Three recommendations for the TDSB and other secular schools of Ontario

Now with a more explicit theory that describes both the good and bad of discourses of sex, there is much that can be surmised for a useful discourse of sex in schools. Efforts to embed an inclusive and positive discourse of sex in school pedagogy become stymied because authoritative and moral powers, interwoven in the historically and socially specific interrelationships among schools, students, and discourses of sex, work to inhibit institutional change. This moral discourse in schools is very powerful because by not addressing students’ learning needs, students are treated as subjects of a moral order of sex, and this can only ignore the condition in which ‘everyone’ is situated as variably disempowered and enslaved in heterosexist discourses. As long as schools continue to organize sex as a prohibited subject, they work to produce their own self-fulfilling prophecy no matter what they attempt to teach to students. Sex becomes organized as bad, or even ‘evil’, and as the transcendent domain in which one is variably powerless, and thus schools keep organizing ‘sex’ as something to control in order, ironically, in an attempt to protect students. Foucault (1988) suggests that sexual prohibition sponsors sneaky strategies. We keep becoming preoccupied with how to control the danger related to sex in our society that we also keep producing by treating sex as a subject of danger.\(^\text{26}\)

Any moral discourse of sex can block students from having the capacity to be affected in particular ways that lead them to empowerment. Any moral and transcendent cause in thought, when exercised as a discourse in our social relationships, will always lead to sad passion to some extent and at some time because such discourses are not adequate concepts for a life of freedom. This is a framework of probabilities and variability, rather than of absolute determined outcomes, but as long as sex is subject to prohibition, moral control, and made the subject of authoritative

\(^{26}\) The “perpetual spirals of power and pleasure” that Foucault (1990) mentions illustrates how sex is continually grasped as an issue of moral control and cannot be easily unwound (p. 45).
interventions, it risks the development of sad passions that rob students of their power to organize their own lives with freedom and autonomy.

Safe sex education is certainly an adequate form of knowledge for the perseveration of life, but as argued in 5.2, if the capacity to act according to its teachings is to become a possibility, safe sex education cannot be organized around a sex that is subject to moral control. This will risk causing unsafe sex to become a particular focus of subversive pleasure in connection with other moral discourses. Similarly, as argued in close reference to some of the claims of the *Rainbow and Triangles: Challenging Homophobia Curriculum: A Curriculum Document for Challenging Homophobia and Heterosexism in the K-6 Classroom* (2002) in 2.5, inclusive discourses of sexual diversity cannot occur while treating sex as a subject of moral control, and if they do, they happen in a context that is not working to meet students’ learning needs anyway, and this works to fail all students in any case.

The power invoked by Spinoza and Deleuze’s genius in the philosophical critique between morals and ethics is situated within this thesis to join to the structure of authoritative discourses in education, and make philosophy become a critical capacity to act in reciprocity with others using school curriculum. The distinction between morals and ethics is necessary for curriculum, because it provides a framework by which to deconstruct all moral affects related to sex such that one has the capacity to act from how it has been affected, instead of being helplessly acted upon by bad ideas throughout our social discourses. Immanent activity can only be impeded by subjection to transcendent cause, which, for some, is also necessary. Nonetheless, autonomy and any freedom to act can only be assured by a capacity for reorganization and empowerment, and this is only possible with a critical capacity for thinking, and not helplessness and enslavement under enigmatic transcendent causes.

Inherent in the theoretical plausibility of making subjection more explicit with the distinction of moral and ethics, schools can overcome their own failure to treat discourses of sex more positively by observing a principle of reciprocity in relation to students. It is productive for the free and autonomous organization of desire if schools work to expose the legitimacy of their power to constitute sex and students as subjects of social control, and limit the exercise of their power in relation to discourses of sex by continuously developing curriculum to meet students’ learning needs - exclusive to all other political concerns. Schools can do this by organizing curriculum, and discourses of sex; to become based upon students’ learning needs in as many modalities as possible. The most efficient and obvious means of inducing this capacity is
creating space for students, organized by students. This work may also involve the use of particular authorities and experts, if this is what students should find necessary and practical for their learning needs. Attempting to reciprocate with students’ learning needs and to take their desires seriously, as the basis of further learning and social justice action, is necessary and practical. A curriculum that has legitimate practices of authority in relation to the production of a democratic, inclusive, plural and secular society will expose all forms of subjection in thought that limit freedom, and organizes sex as a moral discourse. The possibility of sad passions, (and their culmination into acts of social violence) related to the discourses of a moral sex can be greatly reduced if students, and citizens generally, can develop a critical capacity to address how they have been affected to act, or not, and how they are ruled or not.

I can only offer a framework, principles, and guidelines for this proposed work. A principle of reciprocity between discourses of sex and students’ learning needs can take many different shapes, and it involves all jurisdictions involved in curriculum development, which in the case of the TDSB also involves the Provincial Government of Ontario. I stress that it is best conducted on a local or an individual basis as soon as possible. Readers that accomplish this capacity to think with this distinction will hardly need to become authorized or validated by other organizational structures in order to act and learn. The guidelines are purely based in meeting students’ learning needs, and the production of student freedom and autonomy is based in acts that take students’ learning needs seriously within the context of a plural, inclusive, democratic and secular society. Any other intervention will only partially expose how sex and students are subject to moral control, will be too provocative to become politically useful, will exercise moral forms of power that will inhibit social change in relation to discourses of sex, will promote the development of sad passions, and put the whole production of student freedom, and a democratic society at risk. These following recommendations cannot be separated from each other except idealistically. I have nonetheless attempted to organize how the insights generated by these critiques can become enacted in curriculum.

6.2.1 Morals and ethics as a necessary theory for inclusive education in schools

The distinction between morals and ethics has become necessary for teacher education in Ontario, the rest of Canada, as well as for deployment throughout all aspects of school curriculum. The distinction between morals and ethics represents a critical capacity to act immediately upon understanding and though it is difficult, it works to understand individual
differences between students in a plural, inclusive and democratic society. The distinction between morals and ethics is particularly effective for acting in educational institutions, despite its depth and complexity, precisely because it efficiently and accessibly organizes how we are subject to power or how we are also situated as subjects of power in the discourses of our social relationships. Educators therefore need to know the difference between morals and ethics to understand how their students are variously situated and to accommodate each student’s needs according to their capacity to act. This teaching interrogates the forms of power at stake in transcendent ideals, and at the same time, it subsists in becoming devoted to the different learning situations of all individual students. Even though it is a very complex criticism, it only seeks to make power explicit, such that this power can become part of the students’ capacity to act, or not, depending on what is necessary for the student.

Ethical principles permit all moral values to exist together without privileging one over the other. The existence of both ethical and moral ideas within the student population is typically assured in each classroom in Toronto, Ontario, Canada because it is a particularly diverse community of students. Students require a capacity for moral critique, just to exist as free and separate from other identified groups, and as free and joyful and prepared for a life of democratic action. Students, variously situated, need only an understanding of the stakes of different ideas, and how they work in relation to discourses of sex to either free or subject life in different ways, in order to also ensure the possibility of freedom for those students’ who would otherwise live without subjection. In a Canadian classroom in Toronto, it is necessary to acknowledge differences between individuals, as well as to understand their different capacities in terms of the production of a plural, democratic, secular and inclusive society. This can only be done by exposing how thought can become subjected differently, and to celebrate each different capacity of students to reciprocate with how they have been affected. The distinction between morals and ethics can therefore become a useful requisite for understanding the capacities of differently affected bodies in a plural, secular, inclusive and democratic society, such that students can organize their own individual lives with as much reciprocity as possible.

Those students, for example, that are subjected to a transcendent God, or a true order of “nature” can affirm this on their own terms, or as a gender and sexual identity, and specify their subjection as their degree of freedom given from God or “nature”, or not, as necessary. Those that are situated without moral obligations, but are yet situated in moral discourses in social relationships can discover how they are situated in relation to others as well. Those students,
teachers, administrators with transcendent causes can therefore be understood and accepted within the cultural situation of their lives. No particular relation deserves stigmatization, but rather, any specific relation that disguises obedience and conducts this power regardless, is made explicit because of the potential for it to cause subjugation, and subject others to control.

In no way should moral affects be understood as monopolizing the constitution of religious value, and in no way are morals limited to religious practices of transcendent value. Foucault (1990) had identified scientific and legal discourses as sites where moral values greatly proliferated in modernity, and as modernism implies, this new “natural” basis of reality was thought to replace the political discourses of theological value. Subjection to power is not rare at all, since we are situated in these morally affected discourses together, and despite whether one is situated in privilege in these discourses or not, moral subjugation affects us all. To each that falters to a hierarchical expression of gendered identity, a moral ideal lingers. No one deserves stigmatization, but the ideas and concepts that invisibly act in our social relationships and communicate a form of subjection and stigmatization towards everyone must be brought into view in order for everyone to also be safely included.

In classrooms, there is little time to do everything, everyone must be included, and efficiency is a useful habit. Even though pedagogical strategies typically employ a variety of strategies for safety, comprehension, and efficiency, and may indeed oscillate between requiring obedience and understanding to achieve these goals, the distinction between moral and ethics remains relevant because it explains the qualitative differences of each approach to education in terms of the production of good and bad passions. The substantive question for any moral relation is whether its cause and effect relations are explicit enough in thought, such that this value can become understood as necessary and not moral at all. The consequence in this difference is that moral values become an act of enslavement and produce resistances, and though one hopes these are only joyful rebellions, they can also cause the production of sad passions that spread everywhere.

6.2.2 The necessity to intervene in moral discourses of sex

The overall consequence of teaching the distinction between morals and ethics, and of taking students’ learning needs seriously, is that because schools are situated in an inclusive, democratic, plural and secular society, they do indeed have an authoritative role to perform in relation to discourses of sex, but it is a very specific role. Everything in school and social
discourses that work to organize sex as a moral subject, or rather, do not work to expose how sex is made into a subject also limits students’ capacity to organize their lives (including sexual identifications, desires, and relationships) with freedom and autonomy, because sex is being treated as a transcendent cause, or an ideal, or something that requires authoritative intervention, or needs to be constrained. This acts upon students and not in relation to students’ actual learning needs.

School authorities need to become aware of how working to make discourses of sex disappear is itself a productive act. Sex is inseparable from any form of learning if it is also to become an ethical relation of reciprocity between all bodies. Privileging scientific perspectives that treat the body as a subject of nature, over religious discourses that treat the student as a subject of God, resolves little on the question of student freedom. The most important move forward is not to force an account of a true order of sex, but rather, to create the conditions for thought and social action where all diverse forms of moral discourses of sex can become disseminated and understood. How sex has been taken as an object of moral control in various discourses of the west, and globally by many diverse cultural traditions is therefore a critical question for all curriculum subjects. Curriculum policy makers therefore have a very specific agenda to undertake for the production of a democratic, plural, inclusive, and secular society, and that is specifically, to make all forms of subjection to transcendent causes more explicit.

Schools are not to conduct a true order of sex, but rather to expose the order in which sex has been taken as an object of a moral control by different cultural and historical situations. Schools should not need to be deliberately solicited by students in order for students to voice their needs and reshape discourses of sex in curriculum to meet their needs, in relation to sex or not. In the context of preserving the growth of a democratic, plural, secular, and inclusive society, the critical capacity represented by the distinction between morals and ethics is necessary. The whole potential of living together in a society that seeks to be democratic, plural, inclusive, and secular depends upon making subjection to transcendent causes more explicit, and this is schools’ only legitimate exercise of authoritative privilege in relation to discourses of sex without acting from students’ learning needs directly.

It’s not that sex must be condoned in curriculum or in schools only when it is in a critical framework. The domain of the educators’ initiative in relation to discourses of sex in schools must be limited to the concepts drawn by having the capacity of the distinction between morals and ethics in thought. Educators will use this critical tool to teach how sex is subjected to
discourses of moral control, and this tool will represent a certain capacity to actually act and intervene as necessary, and not for example, invigorating and frank discussions concerning the joys of sexual pleasure. Students’ positive expressions concerning discourses of sex and its various pleasures, on the other hand, is not for authorities to control but rather only for educators to organize and enforce the relevant boundaries required for the safety and inclusion of all students with students. The positive account of using discourses of sex as an intervention is simply to reciprocate with students’ learning needs with discourses of sex, and to develop a great sensitivity to how discourses can create relations of subjection that in some cases will not be necessary for individual students in secular schools. In this manner, educators can support the development of reciprocal relations in society—sexual or not, and for each individual student.

I find an unusual power in the distinction between morals and ethics because it is not only about sex. It is about how philosophy can work to create a life that is more powerful than before. The distinction works to make subjection more explicit to thought. It is superficial on one hand, as the difference between freedom and subjection, and it can circulate in curricular discourses with this singular power. On the other hand, it has immediate consequences for a life of action because the affect caused by knowledge of the distinction represents a critical capacity for thought and for acting in social relations. The distinction of ethics and morals needs to be taught, in order for its powers to multiply across bodies.

If moral ideas are nearly invisible, and the subjection to enslavement is cloaked and disguised in thought, then in order for schools to overcome something made as invisible and insidious as heterosexist discourses, they must work to make the forms of power that it exercises more explicit to itself. If schools are to accommodate all differently affected moral, or non-moral student capacities in the classroom, treating sex as a subject of moral control, such as with heterosexist assumptions, privileges some students over others, and condemns all students to the same destiny of a subversive sex anyway. By treating sex as a subject of moral control, schools also risk conducting one framework of moral life above the other, and conduct subjection and un-reciprocal relationships towards a particular group.

Schools need to support the freedom and autonomy of students to politically organize, and to assess students’ learning needs as a basic principle of all of its operations. If there is a political block, then indeed, it must be affirmed that sex is not the same moral issue for all students. Some students are not morally situated and do not deserve this. The bottom line is that schools cannot treat sex as a moral issue in a democratic, secular, plural and inclusive society.
It is not for secular, inclusive, and democratic schools to decide what is in error for each student’s social situation, but rather to take the students’ learning needs seriously as the basis of all further social justice action. I have argued that it is only the student’s desires that are useful to serve if pedagogies are to be productive for social freedom and autonomy related to discourses of sex.

6.2.3 Reciprocating with the learning needs of all students

The distinction of morals and ethics presents a principle of reciprocity between thought and a life of freedom, and this affects the reciprocity between individuals in social relations; and applied to students and schools, and discourses of sex, it appears that taking students’ learning needs seriously, and as the basis of all social development in classroom situations means structuring curriculum to meet students’ learning needs reflexively, and situating these needs as the basis for producing a democratic, pluralistic, inclusive, and secular society. The principle of a curriculum that will reciprocate with students’ learning needs involves not only that the distinction between morals and ethics become disseminated in all educational practices, but also that students’ learning needs are taken seriously as the basis of their capacity to act in their social relations. Without the distinction between morals and ethics, students are continually disempowered from demanding that schools meet their educational needs, representations of sexual diversity will continue to become minoritized through heterosexist silences and discourses of sex and students will continue to be subject to moral control.

A challenge might be in trying to grasp what this practice might look like in classroom environments, but it’s how it occurs that matters most. I am purposely avoiding any attempt to over-determine these specific practices because every individual has a capacity to act, and I am trying to create only the framework in which these competing discourses, morals and ethics, can be known as distinct interrelationships of knowledge. All students and all actors in education can become more active in determining how they are situated in schools and in moral discourses of sex. If the distinction between morals and ethics is in circulation in schools, as the basic principle of prioritizing students’ learning needs above all other concerns, students will have more power to understand the historical and cultural situation of their own individual lives and to become advocates for their own social situation in classroom environments. I purposely do not outline a specific curriculum of reproduction, safe sex or anti-homophobia, in order to organize sex as a prohibitive and authoritarian discourse, as has been the case in school policy over the
past century\textsuperscript{27}. It is probably best that students organize their own curriculum as much as possible, within the context of a plural, inclusive, democratic, secular education, and it’s best that individual student needs are taken seriously, even to the point of excluding all other authoritative concerns in schools, because of the defensive manner in which authoritative discourses work to treat discourses of sex and students as subjects of its moral control. The findings of all these investigations and assessments of student interests will likely be confused, multiple and distorted, but the administrative process to solicit students, and place their needs first, is itself a teachable moment. If schools are to support the development of healthy relationships in relation to discourses of sex, they first need to repair the relationships of subjection that it has in relation to students. Some directions for social change will be more dense and slower to change than others but there might be ways to amplify action with philosophical insight resonating throughout curriculum.

Even the architecture of public washrooms in schools, by separating genders, is equivalent to the manner in which many public washrooms are organized throughout western societies. Still, how this division can become arbitrary, limiting and restricting can become a ‘teachable’ moment in curriculum. It is important to reveal how the separation of gender works not only to exclude students but also how this practice represents gender as a transcendent form of “being” that is not only arbitrary, but a form of subjection to a naturalized order of sex and gender. Self-identified sex and gender minorities may feel excluded and the educator may accommodate the learning required by all students in this situation by addressing the forms of exclusion and subjection involved in the organization of gender. Once students understand that not every student can fit into one gendered role, for example, the whole division of gender becomes embodied in school discourse in the same contestable manner in which it is held in the discourses of our society, and the students simply have more capacity to deal with this enslavement and powerlessness because this contestation of gender is more explicit in curriculum than before. Any separation of boys and girls demanded or organized by the exercise of school authority is useless for student freedom unless it reciprocates with their needs, and if students should instigate this, educators can address the moral forms of power at stake in curriculum, forefront

\textsuperscript{27} See footnote in section 1.4 referring to the findings of Cristabelle Sethna (1995) historical analysis in \textit{The Facts of Life: The Sex Instruction of Ontario Public School Children 1900-1950}. 
the contestability of gender identity in curriculum, while also ensuring the relative inclusion and safety of all individual students.

Many children have the capacity to be affected by rules they understand and rules that they do not understand. If a child does not understand the principles of sharing in reciprocation with another, it can feel unfair to be caught up in relating with another, and this basic lesson of reciprocating with someone else is the beginning of understanding the difference between ethics and morals. Relating to children such that they are never ruled by what they do not understand, (except for the sake of the child’s or someone else’s perseverance), is an ethical rather than moral approach to child-development. It is necessary for children to understand why and how they are enslaved to necessary causes, and how they can become empowered or free, such that they are not ‘enslaved’ by forces that they cannot comprehend. For older students, perhaps the distinction of morals and ethics can be explored in the humanities and social sciences, or perhaps it can also be explained in close connection to thermodynamic systems- the science of how energy is transferred from one thing to another and becomes something else than what it was before. There is no certain limitation to how the distinction of morals and ethics can work as a critical capacity of thought in curriculum since there are so many different forms of moral values worth critiquing and so many ways to discuss how this distinction works to create a life of freedom or enslavement.

The possibility of social problems related to the discourses of a moral sex can be greatly reduced if students, and citizens generally, can develop a critical capacity to address how they have been affected (to act), or to be acted upon- how they are ruled or not. If people are to also reorganize relations of subjection and exclusion in relation to discourses of sex, there must first be an ethical discourse that works to care about becoming more reciprocal to students’ learning needs, and creates the conditions for discourses of sex without subjection. This way schools can increasingly become an inclusive space in which students are more active in reporting their needs and having these needs become satisfied.

Sexual violence, erotic injustice, increased risk behaviours, un-strategic reproduction, and other forms of relationships where social reciprocity becomes limited are all occurrences that can be diminished and/or prevented if transcendent causes in moral discourses can be made more explicit. Schools, however delicately situated to exercise authority upon students, have tremendous power to repeat patterns of oppression and also to break free of these practices by prioritizing students’ learning needs above all other concerns. The way out of this discursive
trap of prohibition, incitement, sad passions, and paranoia is to create educational spaces that continually work to identify and deliver curriculum in relation to students’ learning needs. This ethical principle of reciprocating to students’ learning needs for a positive and inclusive discourse of sex works to interrupt how school authorities’ work to treat sex and students as subjects of social control. If sex is to be conducted in schools, which is inevitable, it is only adequate to conduct discourses of sex that combine with student powers, instead of acting upon them, and this means providing students with the basic tools of understanding how they can become subjected to ideas, and also creating the conditions where students can report their needs and have them become acted upon in responsive curricula. Power is always conducted, but it needs to become explicit if it can ever be understood and to not act upon people in a manner that diminishes their capacity to intervene and reorganize how they are situated. Without understanding how we are ruled, or rather how we can also be “free” with nothing to rule us, learning will be confused with producing notions of obedience, and a form of tyranny will emerge that will variably privilege some students’ learning needs over others. Becoming reciprocal to students’ individual needs, and privileging their desires is the basis of how an ethical curriculum works, and it is a principled way that schools can escape from treating sex and students as subjects of moral control. These politics are local, reflexive, and as individual and multiple as necessary and they can easily occur in lockstep with the principles of a democratic, secular, and plural and inclusive society—where students’ desires are taken seriously as the basis of their capacity to learn and act. To offer examples however somewhat belies the dynamic power of the distinction of moral and ethics to help educators solve these problems with students.

Schools must attempt to reciprocate with students’ learning needs in order to negate the negative discourses of sexual prohibition that, allegedly, exist to protect children. In order for safe-sex practices, and reproductive discourses, and anti-heterosexist curriculum to be conducted adequately, all those forms of subjection that rob students from acting in accordance with their freedom, autonomy, and personal tolerability must be made explicit. Ignoring the individual desires of students, is also conducting power upon students, and tempting the production of sad passions and bad social relations that are specific to treating sex as transcendent cause. Discourses of sex, however they are organized, can only be productive for a democratic, inclusive, secular, and pluralistic society, if they are adequate enough for individual students to understand, and this first requires reciprocating to the learning needs of individual students in a
reflexive capacity and making the distinction between morals and ethics more explicit in curriculum.
References


*Educational Theory*, 469-487


Appendices

Selected area of investigation alongside the distinction between morals and ethics from Deleuze’s (1988) summary of Spinoza’s life and works in *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, in order to solve the problem of a curriculum that seeks to be inclusive with discourses of sex but is not reciprocating with students’ learning needs. Adapted by Jair Matrim © 2012.

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28 Life can only have ‘reciprocity’ with concepts and ideas that affirm subjection and this limitation is caused by a lack of correspondence between cause and effect in thought.
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